8-2016

UNO Guide for the Assessment of Program SLOs 2016-17

Academic Affairs
University of Nebraska at Omaha

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

Student Learning Outcome Assessment

A Guide to the Review Process for Degree Program Assessment: 2016-17

Nebraska
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Omaha

ASSESSMENT OF END-OF-PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES[1]

The UNO Academic Assessment Committee is responsible for guiding the process of campus-wide academic assessment of student learning, and to that end, it conducts regular reviews of student learning outcome (SLO) assessment in each degree granted. Assessments of student learning occur at different levels (e.g., task level, course level, program level). The focus here is on *program level* assessment with an emphasis on end-of-program student learning outcomes and objectives. This guide is intended to assist academic units with developing an assessment plan for each degree program and organizing the relevant information into an assessment report.

Program level SLO assessment requires consideration of the general question, "How are students different as a result of completing this degree?" Or, "What are the defining characteristics of the degree program in terms of the knowledge, skills, and experiences a graduate should have?" Program level SLOs are broader than the learning objectives for a particular course, and instead represent the larger, overall goals for student learning that characterize a program of study.

Units are asked to develop an assessment plan for each degree program and to routinely prepare assessment reports. The *assessment plan* describes the assessment process for the degree program and includes SLOs and information on how, when, where, and by whom assessment data will be collected, analyzed, and shared with faculty. *Assessment reports* describe how the assessment process was carried out in a particular year or assessment cycle and include information on the measures used, the results of the analyses, and any decisions made or actions taken as a result of the assessment data. The assessment plan and reports can be completed using the template in this guide. All units are asked to have a current assessment plan and to submit assessment reports routinely to Academic Affairs for review and feedback from the Academic Assessment Committee. The assessment reporting cycle is available online on the Academic Assessment Committee website.

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[1] Last updated July 2016, Candice Batton, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs.

High quality assessment plans and reports offer detailed information on the assessment process within the unit including the program's SLOs, how and when data are collected, an explanation of what determines a successful outcome, evidence of whether proficiency levels were achieved, and information on how the unit responded to the findings. The following questions are central to the process of program level SLO assessment at UNO:

I. **What are the program's key SLOs?**

SLOs should be specific and possible to measure. There is no prescribed number of SLOs for a degree program, but faculty are encouraged to start by identifying approximately 3-5 key SLOs that summarize the fundamental student competencies of a program (i.e., what should students know and be able to do at the time they graduate?).

II. **How is student performance on the SLOs measured?**

Measures should be directly aligned with the SLOs, and at least some direct measures should be employed. Examples of *direct* measures include assessments of student products (e.g., essay, portfolio, paper), examinations (e.g., nationally standardized tests, locally created tests, comprehensive examinations), and performance of skills or creative activity (e.g., speech, presentation, theatre performance). Examples of *indirect* measures include student self-assessments (e.g., student surveys about what or how much they have learned, course evaluations), course grades, or feedback from community partners on the preparedness of graduates for the work force. Both types of measures can provide useful data.

III. **What results have been obtained?**

Data should be collected regularly and systematically, and be sufficient for meaningful analysis. The frequency of data collection and analysis is determined by the faculty, but at a minimum, annual data collection is recommended. Data do not need to be collected on every student, but should be collected on a sufficient number of students that analyses yield useful results. Ideally, data will be collected on students nearing graduation though this is not always possible.

IV. **How has the program used the results to inform decisions and actions?**

Data-informed decisions and actions taken should be documented. Include information on the process within the unit for reviewing and sharing assessment results with faculty (e.g., results initially reviewed by assessment committee, and then shared with full faculty along with recommendations at last faculty meeting of the spring semester). Also include a
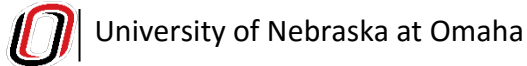
summary of any decisions or actions taken (e.g., curriculum revision, no changes recommended, explore senior seminar/capstone options). To the extent possible, indicate how program level assessment contributes to the achievement of larger academic program goals and quality assurance that emerge through the academic program review process.
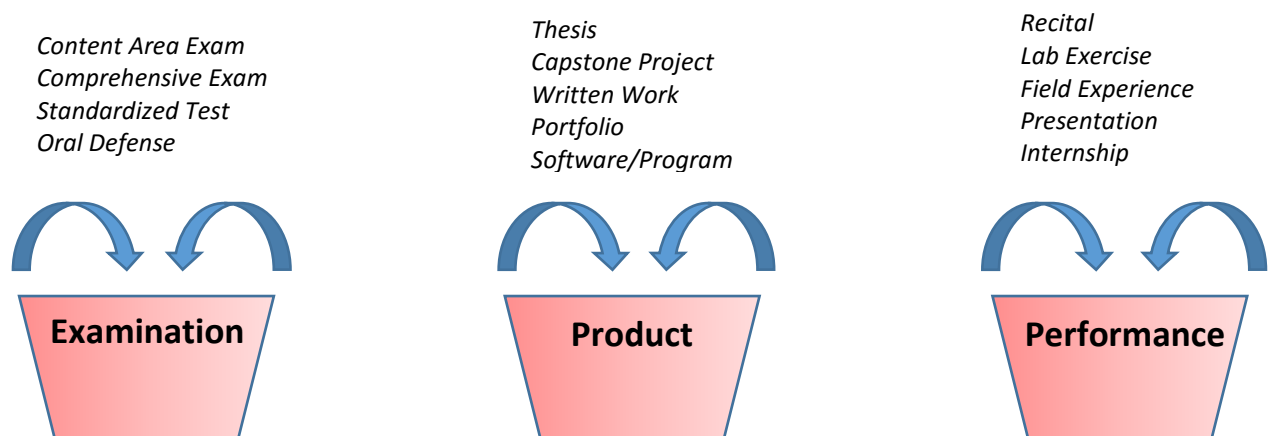
ASSESSMENT DOMAINS

Units are also asked to indicate whether their end-of-program SLO assessment practice represents the domain of Examination, Product, or Performance. Each unit should identify an assessment activity in *at least one of the three domains*, and may opt to report results of assessment activity in more than one domain.

- **Examination**: *includes standardized tests or qualifying exams, content exams, pre- and post-test comparisons, oral defenses, comprehensive exams, exit exams, etc.*
- **Product**: *includes refereed student portfolios, theses, publications, capstone projects, original creative works, software, apps or programs, etc.*
- **Performance**: *includes presentations, recitals, exhibits, speeches, demonstrations, field experiences, internships, etc.*

Illustration of UNO's End of Program Domain Categories.

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Student Learning Outcome Domains- End of Program

Content Area Exam
Comprehensive Exam
Standardized Test
Oral Defense

Thesis
Capstone Project
Written Work
Portfolio
Software/Program

Recital
Lab Exercise
Field Experience
Presentation
Internship

Examination   **Product**   **Performance**

SLO ASSESSMENT PLAN AND REPORT TEMPLATE

Academic year in which report completed: (e.g., 2016-17)

College: (e.g., Arts and Sciences)

Unit: (e.g., Psychology)

Degree Program: (e.g., B.A. in Psychology)

I. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for this Degree Program

Define the unit's fundamental student learning competencies in this degree. Focus on learning outcomes (e.g., content mastery, skills) that students should know or be able to demonstrate upon graduation. Identify outcomes (as many as deemed appropriate) that are to be systematically measured and analyzed by the unit. For example:

> *"Students will demonstrate proficiency on a test of critical thinking."*
> *"Students will produce a refereed portfolio of their best papers demonstrating effective written communication skills."*
> *"Students will deliver a successful oral presentation on a current research article."*

II. Measures Used

For each SLO identified in Section I, explain the associated measurement or method of assessment employed. If desired, tables such as the samples below may be used as aids in compiling information.

SLO #1 addressed (from Section I)	Students will demonstrate proficiency on a test of critical thinking.
Element or artifact measured	Ability to identify and reconstruct argument patterns.
Assessment method	Standardized exam.
UNO's assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Examination
Assessment data collection (i.e., when, where, by whom)	Approximately 25-30 students from PSYC4XXX in Fall 2016 (Professor Nye) and Spring 2017 (Professor Cruz).
Proficiency definition and target	70% or above is a passing score on the exam; target is 95% of all students passing.

SLO #2 addressed (from Section I)	Students will produce a refereed portfolio of their best papers demonstrating effective written communication skills.
Element or artifact measured	At least three formal papers of eight pages or longer.
Assessment method	A faculty committee reviews and scores papers using a faculty approved rubric, prepares feedback, and discusses improvements with students.
Assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Product
Assessment data collection (i.e., when, where, by whom)	Approximately 16 students enrolled in PSYC4XXX in Spring 2017, reviewed by faculty committee in April with 2 faculty scoring each student portfolio.
Proficiency definition and target	Proficiency is measured by several factors (see attached list); target is that 90% of students complete a portfolio of papers judged as proficient.

SLO #3 addressed (from Section I)	Students will deliver a successful oral presentation on a current research article.
Element or artifact measured	Ability to accurately interpret current research in the field and communicate the salient points effectively in an oral presentation.
Assessment method	Presentations graded by the course faculty using a faculty approved scoring rubric.
Assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Performance
Assessment data collection (i.e., when, where, by whom)	Approximately 40 students in two sections of PSYC4XXX in each academic year, Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, course faculty.
Proficiency definition and target	Proficiency requires a score of 8/10 or better on the rubric (see attached); target is that 80% of all students in the course deliver a presentation rated proficient.

III. Results

For each SLO identified (in Section I), include a summary of the data the unit has obtained by measuring the elements or artifacts specified (in Section II). Data should be sufficient for analysis. For example, data may be collected from 1) more than one administration of a program, 2) most students who complete the program, 3) a purposeful representation or representative sample of students who complete the program, and/or 4) more than one measurement of a single SLO. At a minimum, complete the following table:

The following table refers to the total number of students who participated in the assessment (i.e., examination, product, performance) for each SLO measured by this program. If multiple SLOs are being measured by a single assessment tool, responses can be reported together.			
	Total # Students Who Participated in End-of-Program Assessment	# Who Meet or Exceed Proficiency Score	% Who Meet or Exceed Proficiency Score	Does % Met or Exceeded Meet Your Program's Proficiency Target? (Y/N)
SLO 1				
SLO 2				
SLO 3				

IV. Decisions and Actions

Analyze the results presented in Section III, noting any relevant context, prevailing trends, or concerns the unit may have. How were the proficiency targets identified, and what are the unit's expectations for the performance of its students? In what way does the unit regularly review its assessment results?

Additionally, explain how the results and data have informed the unit's decisions and actions. Please document the decisions made, actions taken, or future plans that resulted from this review. Also describe how assessment data and decisions are linked with the unit's long-term goals related to quality assurance in academic programming, which is the focus of academic program review.

Please send the completed assessment report, along with a copy of the unit's current assessment plan, to Candice Batton at cbatton@unomaha.edu.

Sample of worksheet used by Academic Assessment Committee members to provide feedback to units.

PROGRAM:				
Category		**Red** **(Does Not Meet / Did Not Include)**	**Yellow** **(Meets with Concerns)**	**Green** **(Meets)**
I. Student Learning Outcomes				
Student learning outcomes are *specific*	OS			
Student learning outcomes are *measurable*	OM			
II. Measures Used				
At least some *direct* measure is employed	MD			
Measures are directly *aligned* with student learning outcomes	MA			
III. Results Reported				
Data are *regularly collected* against the measures	RC			
Results are *sufficient* for analysis	RS			
IV. Decisions and Actions based on Results				
Evidence of *data-informed decisions* is provided	DI			
Action is taken as result of decision	AT			
General Comments				

NOTES

Questions about End-of-Program Student Learning Outcome Assessment?

Institutional policies and procedures related to end-of-degree program student learning outcome assessment are housed in Academic Affairs and are the responsibility of the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, who works closely with the UNO Academic Assessment Committee to ensure that assessment is being used effectively for academic program quality assurance. The Academic Assessment Committee has broad, campus-wide representation with members from every college, Faculty Senate, and Academic Affairs.

Questions about assessment policies and resources that might be available to assist units with assessment planning and/or reporting should be directed to Candice Batton, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at 402.554.4452 or cbatton@unomaha.edu.

For additional information contact:

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