

## Accreditation Standards Related to Student Learning Assessment

(Adopted June 2014)

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES: INSTITUTIONAL

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- I.A.2. The mission...informs institutional goals for student learning...

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES: PROGRAMS

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- I.B.4. The institution defines...student learning outcomes for all instructional programs...using established institutional procedures.
- II.A.3. The institution identifies...learning outcomes for...programs, certificates, and degrees...using established institutional procedures.
- ER 9. The institution's principal degree programs...culminate in identified student outcomes.
- ER 11. The institution publishes for each program the program's expected student learning ...outcomes.
- II.A.13... The identification of specialized courses in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core ...include mastery, at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study.
- II.A.11. The institution includes in all of its programs, student learning outcomes, appropriate to the program level, in communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program-specific learning outcomes.

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES: GENERAL EDUCATION

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- ER 12. The institution defines and incorporates into all of its degree programs a substantial component of general education designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. The general education component includes an introduction to some of the major areas of knowledge...
- II.A.12. ...The [general education] learning outcomes include a student's preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning, and a broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences.

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES: COURSES

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- II.A.3. The institution identifies...learning outcomes for courses... using established institutional procedures.

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES: LEARNING SUPPORT

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- I.B.4. The institution defines...student learning outcomes for all...student and learning support services...using established institutional procedures.
- II.C.2. The institution identifies...learning support outcomes for its student population...

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### RIGOR: PROGRAMS

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- ER 9. The institution's principal degree programs...are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the degrees offered.



- II.A.1. All instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education...are appropriate to higher education...
- \* ☆ • II.A.5. The institution's degrees and programs follow practices common to American higher education, including appropriate...rigor...
- II.A.14. Graduates completing career-technical certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment standards and other applicable standards and preparation for external licensure and certification.

**RIGOR: GENERAL EDUCATION**

- ER 12. Degree credit for the general education component must be consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education.

**CURRICULAR COHERENCE**

- II.A.1. All instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education...culminate in student attainment of identified student learning outcomes...
- ER 12. ...General education courses are selected to ensure students achieve comprehensive learning outcomes in the degree program.
- II.A.13. ...The identification of specialized courses in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core is based upon student learning outcomes and competencies.
- \* ☆ • II.A.5. The institution's degrees and programs follow practices...including appropriate...depth...course sequencing...and synthesis of learning...
- \* ☆ • II.A.13. All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core...

**ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- ER 19. ...The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals...
- I.B.4. The institution...assesses student learning outcomes for all instructional programs and student and learning support services.
- I.B.7. The institution assesses accomplishment of its mission through...evaluation of...student learning outcomes, and student achievement...
- II.C.2. The institution...assesses learning support outcomes for its student population ...
- II.B.3. ...Evaluation of these [library and other learning support] services includes evidence that they contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes.

**QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES**

- I.B.7. ...Quantitative and qualitative data are disaggregated for analysis by program type and mode of delivery.
- I.B.8. The institution disaggregates and analyzes learning outcomes...for subpopulations of students...
- II.A.8. The institution validates the effectiveness of department-wide course and/or program examinations, where used, including direct assessment of prior learning. The institution ensures that processes are in place to reduce test bias and enhance reliability.
- ER 14. ...A clear statement of faculty responsibilities must include...assessment of learning.

**REGULAR, SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT PROCESSES**

- ER 11. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve the identified outcomes and that the standards for student achievement are met.
- ER 19. The institution systematically evaluates...how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning outcomes...
- II.A.16. The institution regularly evaluates...the quality and currency of all instructional

programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location...

- II.A.3. The institution...regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures.

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#### INTERNAL COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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- I.B.9. The institution broadly communicates the results of all of its assessment and evaluation activities so that the institution has a shared understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and sets appropriate priorities.
- I.B.1. The institution demonstrates a sustained, substantive and collegial dialog about student outcomes...
- IV.C.7. To ensure the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success, the governing board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning...and institutional plans for improving academic quality.

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#### EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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- ER 19. The institution...makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning outcomes...
- I.C.3. The institution uses documented assessment of student learning...to communicate matters of academic quality to appropriate constituencies, including current and prospective students and the public.

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#### USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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- II.A.9. The institution awards course credit, degrees and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes...
- ER 19. The institution...makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation.
- I.B.6. The institution uses assessment data...to support student learning and student achievement.
- I.B.8. When the institution identifies performance gaps [among subpopulations of students], it implements strategies, which may include allocation or reallocation of human, fiscal and other resources, to mitigate those gaps and evaluates the efficacy of those strategies.
- III.A.6. The evaluation of faculty, academic administrators, and other personnel directly responsible for student learning includes, as a component of that evaluation, consideration of how these employees use the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning.

*Compiled by Linda Suskie, Assessment & Accreditation Consultant*



CHART OF SLO STANDARDS AND HOW THEY FIT TOGETHER

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS ADOPTED JUNE 2014		
Standard I.B.2: Student Learning Outcomes for all instructional programs and student and learning support services. [Other administrative units support student learning through their goals and objectives.]		
II.A. Instructional Programs	Standard II.A.3: Learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees. [Includes library and counseling courses.]	
	A. ALL PROGRAMS	C. DEGREE PROGRAMS Column A+B+C
	B. CTE CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES Certificates: Columns A+B; Degrees: A+B+C	II.A.12, II.A.13 General Education SLOs include: - Responsible participation in civil society - Lifelong learning and application of learning - Broad knowledge of the development of knowledge, practice and interpretive approaches in the arts, humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences  *[Some member institutions equate the GE outcomes with ILOs, because their ILOs only apply to degree graduates.]
Standard II.A.11 In all programs, appropriate to program level: - Communication competency - Information competency - Quantitative competency - Analytic inquiry skills - Ethical reasoning - The ability to engage diverse perspectives	II.A.14 Graduates completing CTE certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet: - Employment standards - Preparation for external licensure and certification - Other applicable standards	
	*[These are also ILOs at most member institutions which apply ILOs to all of their students]	
	Appropriate to the program level: - Program-specific learning outcomes	
II.B. Library and Learning Support Services	II.B.1, II.B.2 Library and learning support services support student learning	
	II.B.3 Library and Learning Support Services are evaluated to ensure they contribute to the attainment of student learning outcomes.	
	II.C.1 Student support services support student learning	
II.C. Student Support Services	II.C.2 Student support services and programs are appropriate to achieve the identified learning support outcomes for its student population.	
<p>Levels of Student Learning Outcomes</p>		
<p>Discipline/Interdisciplinary Core: - Mastery at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study</p>		

NOTES:  
\* There is no separate "institutional learning outcome" requirement in the standards, but most institutions use ILOs as an articulation of institutional goals and objectives which are specific to student learning, either for all students or for the degree graduate part of the mission.



## Examples of Community College Program Learning Outcomes

### Agriculture AS at Hawai'i Community College

- Plan and manage projects and cultivate horticultural crops using legal, sustainable, safe, and ecologically, biologically, and technologically sound practices.
- Design gardens that demonstrate the aesthetic principles of unity, repetition, balance, color, and texture congruent with the customers' desires
- Operate and maintain tools and equipment
- Set up and manage a business enterprise
- Interact with customers and co-workers in ways that effectively support the work to be accomplished.

### Business Administration AS at Victor Valley College

- Effectively use various channels of communication
- Successfully solve business related mathematical computations.
- Apply ethical principles (behavior) in a business environment.
- Demonstrate appropriate human relation skills in a work environment.
- Describe how the nature of management varies at different organizational levels.
- Demonstrate entry-level competence in recognizing and applying accounting principles and concepts to record and interpret business transactions.
- Perform financial and microcomputer accounting activities.

### Criminal Justice AS at the Community College of Baltimore County

- Distinguish between the components of the criminal justice system and the branch of government they are responsible to
- Identify and explain the procedural steps faced by an accused in the criminal justice system
- Analyze the elements of the "due process of law" clause guaranteed by the United States Constitution and enforced by American courts for both juvenile and adult offenders, as well as explain how "case law" originates and affects such "due process"
- Evaluate the importance of ethical behavior in the criminal justice professions and give examples of both ethical and non-ethical behaviors.

### Digital Media Arts certificate at Hawai'i Community College

- Use technology effectively to create visual artworks
- Gather, analyze, and evaluate information visually.
- Apply knowledge of aesthetics to the needs of the community.
- Demonstrate professionalism with a digital portfolio.

### English AA at Passaic County Community College

- Describe the social, political, and historical contexts of literature.
- Apply to skill of close reading to a variety of texts.
- Respond to literary styles, techniques, and genres.
- Exercise effective writing and research skills.
- Apply critical thinking skills in analysis and evaluation of literature.
- Communicate effectively in both speech and writing, using information resources and supporting technology.

- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by evaluating concepts from across various disciplines.
- Use scientific methods to analyze concepts in the natural and social sciences.
- Apply mathematical methods and tools to solve quantifiable problems.

#### General Studies AA at the Community College of Baltimore County

- Apply written and oral communication skills for clear expression and problem solving, employing both quantitative and qualitative reasoning in the scientific process with a focus on technological and information literacy
- Analyze issues and problems from a multidisciplinary perspective with an appreciation in the arts, humanities, sciences, and math promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills

#### Health Care AS at Passaic County Community College

- Integrate knowledge and skills from the science and liberal arts into healthcare.
- Describe the evidence on racial/ethnic disparities in healthcare and healthcare use in the United States.
- Apply ethical principles and rules to selected ethical problems in healthcare.
- Communicate effectively with consumers, providers, employees and other healthcare professionals from diverse backgrounds.
- Access information from appropriate sources relevant to contemporary healthcare issues.

#### Homeland Security AS at Passaic County Community College

- Analyze the history of terrorism.
- Explain the impact of terrorism on society.
- Demonstrate in a simulated situation, the fundamental decision-making process in emergency management.
- Explain how the private sector is involved in Homeland Security.

#### Information Technology AS at Hawai'i Community College

- Plan, develop, and implement the hardware, software, and procedural components of a data processing system in a business environment.
- Plan, develop, and implement the hardware, software, and procedural components of a data communication system in a business environment.
- Plan, develop, implement, and document computer programs that meet the data processing requirements of a business organization.
- Work independently and cooperatively to deliver reports, programs, projects, and other deliverables that document a business organization's information technology requirements.
- Base decisions and actions on the legal, ethical, and professional guidelines and practices of the information technology field.
- Search, analyze, and synthesize current information and solutions in the rapidly changing information technology profession.

#### Liberal Arts AA – Psychology option at Passaic County Community College

- Apply mathematical methods and tools to solve quantifiable problems.
- Communicate effectively in both speech and writing, using information resources and supporting technology.
- Use scientific methods to analyze concepts in the natural and social sciences.



- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by evaluating concepts from across various disciplines.
- Apply psychological knowledge and methods to personal, social or organizational issues.
- Apply APA format to an academic paper.

#### Natural Science AS at Hawai'i Community College

- Analyze data effectively using current technology
- Communicate scientific ideas and principles clearly and effectively
- Analyze and apply fundamental mathematical, physical, and chemical concepts and techniques to scientific issues.
- Apply fundamental concepts and techniques in their chosen concentration [biological science or physical science]

#### Tropical Forest Ecosystem and Agroforestry Management AS at Hawai'i Community College

- Apply basic ecosystem concepts to natural resource management
- Use an understanding of general scientific concepts in design of forestry systems
- Use knowledge of applicable laws and regulations to make decisions about managing ecosystems.
- Apply effective interpersonal and communication skills
- Recognize, collect, and interpret field data.
- Apply effective management practices to commercial or conservation efforts.

### Examples of Potential or Designated Associate Degree Capstones

Program	Potential or Designated 200-Level Capstones
Agriculture AS at Hawai'i Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture Business Management course</li> <li>• Sustainable Crop Production course + lab</li> <li>• Tropical Landscape Horticulture course</li> </ul>
Criminal Justice AS at Community College of Baltimore County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics &amp; Diversity in Criminal Justice course</li> <li>• Internship</li> </ul>
Digital Media Arts certificate at Hawai'i Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internship</li> <li>• Practicum in Digital Arts</li> </ul>
English AA at Community College of Beaver County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Advanced writing" course</li> <li>• Literature course</li> </ul>
English AA at Passaic County Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Literature course</li> <li>• Topics in Literature course (taken after 45 credits and at least one other English course are completed)</li> </ul>
Health Care AS at Passaic County Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern Issues in Healthcare course</li> </ul>
Homeland Security AS at Passaic County Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Issues in Homeland Security/Capstone Project course</li> </ul>
Human Services AS at Community College of Baltimore County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis Intervention course</li> <li>• Internship</li> </ul>
Information Technology AS at Hawai'i Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT Program Internship</li> </ul>
Liberal Arts AA – Psychology option – at Passaic County Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Psychology course (taken after 45 credits and at least one other psychology courses are completed)</li> </ul>
Psychology AS at Community College of Beaver County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research methods course</li> </ul>
Tropical Forest Ecosystem and Agroforestry Management AS at Hawai'i Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Restoration Ecology and Ecosystem Management Practicum</li> <li>• Silviculture and Forest Plan Propagation course + lab</li> </ul>





**Breakout Exercises**  
**Certificate in Intercultural Studies**

Calada College wants to offer a 15-credit certificate in Intercultural Studies. The purpose of the program is to prepare students to work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The college has asked you and your tablemates, all world-renowned curriculum design experts, to help Calada design this program.

For better or worse, Calada has identified 3 program learning outcomes and over 20 *potential* courses that *might* be offered in the program. Calada has completed a curriculum map for the program shown on the previous page.

The person at your table whose birthday is closest to today (either coming or going) will play the role of the director of the program. He or she will come up with answers to any questions you have about the program or courses.

1. With the program director, identify one or two courses that might serve as the program's capstone or quasi-capstone.
2. With the program director, identify one or two courses that might serve as the program's foundational or cornerstone course(s).

Sample Curriculum Map for a Hypothetical 15-Credit Certificate in Intercultural Studies

	Interacts appropriately with those from other cultures.	Identifies similarities and differences in values, world views, and practices of oneself and those from other cultures.	Proposes realistic solutions to intercultural interaction challenges.
ASL 105 Deaf Culture and History		X	X
BUS 116 Human Relations in Business	X		X
BUS 144 Business Communications	X		X
BUS 182 Customer Service	X	X	X
COMM 105 Intercultural Communication	X	X	X
CT 101 Critical Thinking in a Diverse World		X	X
ECHD 106 Child, Family and Community		X	X
GEOG 101 Cultural Geography		X	
GLOB 104 Introduction to Global Studies		X	X
REL 101 Comparative Religion		X	
REL 113 Religion and Society			X
POLS 110 Contemporary World Affairs		X	X
SOC 102 Institutional Racism (Prereq SO 101)		X	X
SOC 107 The Ethnic Experience in American Society	X	X	X
ANTH 202 Cultural Anthropology		X	
BUS 216 International Business (Prereq BUS 101)	X	X	X
BUS 223 Behavior in Organizations (Prereq BUS 101)	X		X
CRIM 201 Community and the Justice System			X
GLOB 211 Global Issues	X	X	X
POLS 203 Comparative Government and Politics		X	
SOC 204 Cultural Comparisons		X	

*Capstone standard: recognize, identify resources needed*

### Rubric for Evaluating a College's Program Learning Assessment Processes

This tool can be used to help a college assess the status of its program learning assessment efforts. It can be particularly helpful when preparing for a review by any regional accreditor.

- No plans = **No documented evidence that we have plans to do this.**
- No evidence = Our college community is aware that we should do this, but there is **no documented evidence that this is happening.**
- Nascent = We have documented evidence that this is happening in **just a few programs** (for example, only in programs with specialized accreditation).
- Some = We have documented evidence—not just assurances—that this is happening in **some but not most programs.**
- Most = We have documented evidence—not just assurances—that this is happening in **most but not all programs.**
- Pervasive = We have documented evidence—not just assurances—that this is happening **everywhere**, including in liberal arts as well as professional programs, off- as well as on-campus locations, online as well as face-to-face programs, certificate as well as degree programs, and programs developed and delivered by third parties as well as your college.

	No plans	No evidence	Nascent	Some	Most	Pervasive
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

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	No plans	No evidence	Nascent	Some	Most	Pervasive
1						
2						
3				X		
4				X		
5					X	
6			X			
7			X			
8				X		
9		X				
10		X				
11		X				
12		X				

**Rubric for Evaluating a Program's Learning Assessment Processes**

This checklist can be used to assess a program's work to assess its program learning outcomes.

1	The program has identified who coordinates the assessment of program learning outcomes.
2	Program faculty collaborate to ensure that students achieve program learning outcomes.
3	Program faculty have identified key program learning outcomes.
4	The program learning outcomes are well stated.
5	The program is designed so that every student in the program has enough opportunities, in multiple courses, to achieve every program learning outcome.
6	Program faculty have identified a capstone or other key points where students can demonstrate satisfactory achievement of each program learning outcome.
7	Program faculty have defined rigorous but achievable standards for satisfactory achievement of each program learning outcome.
8	Program faculty, including adjuncts as appropriate, understand their roles and responsibilities in assessing program learning outcomes.
9	The program has a process for collecting assessment evidence, aggregating it, and sharing and storing the results.
10	Program faculty analyze the results and use the results to identify and implement improvements in teaching and learning throughout the curriculum, as appropriate.
11	Program faculty use the results to support budget requests, goals, and plans.
12	Program faculty periodically reflect on their assessment work and identify ways to keep it as simple and useful as possible.

Developed by Linda Suskie, Assessment & Accreditation Consultant

*Time*

## REFLECTIONS ON ASSESSING PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. When I get back to my college, what might I say, if I have a chance to speak to my colleagues, about assessing program learning outcomes?
2. In what ways is my college well-prepared to assess program learning outcomes?
3. What is the *one* biggest challenge my college faces in assessing program learning outcomes?
4. What do I want to learn more about regarding assessing program learning outcomes?
5. What are my three major goals for launching program learning outcomes assessments over the coming year?
  - 1) Map PLO to course outcomes
  - 2) Faculty assess PLO
  - 3)
6. When I get back to my college, what are the first three things I need to do to get things going?
  - 1) SLO handbook
  - 2) Integrate PLO assessment into program review.
  - 3)

*Developed by Linda Suskie, Assessment & Accreditation Consultant*

