Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Handbook

San Jose City College
2100 Moorpark Avenue
Spring 2016
San Jose City College

Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Handbook

Condensed Version

Spring 2016
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Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Handbook

What are SLOs?

Course SLOs vs Program SLOs vs GE SLOs

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are broad statements that reflect what the students (as a group) can “do” at the end of a course or after receiving services. They may be related to a course (CSLOs), a program (PSLOs), or the general education of students at SJCC (GE SLOs). All courses at SJCC must have SLOs. In general, SLOs should do the following:

- Communicate clear expectations about what is important in the course or program
- Inform students that they will be evaluated (or demonstrate what they have learned) in a consistent way
- Demonstrate that there is common core content across all sections of a course
- Allow all faculty and staff to make better decisions about courses and programs based on the assessment of the SLOs.
- Demonstrate an alignment with SLOs at the course, program and institutional/GE levels

How do I write SLOs?

Student Learning Outcomes answer the question, “What should students be able to do when they leave this course/program/institution?” These outcomes are not stand-alone outcomes, but rather the PSLOs should be related to the College GE SLOs, and the CSLOs should reflect the PSLOs of the Program they are in. Not all courses need to deal with every single PSLO or GE SLO, however they should be reflected somewhere in the program’s course offerings or services.

Please ask your dean for your Programs PSLOs. Below are SJCC’s GE SLOs.

1. **Communication**: Students will communicate effectively including reading, writing, speaking and listening.
2. **Critical and Analytical Thinking**: Students will analyze problems using evidence and sound reasoning to make decisions.
3. **Global Awareness and Social Justice**: Students will demonstrate an awareness of social, economic, ecological, historical, and cultural differences and their implications.
4. **Personal Responsibility, Ethics and Civility**: Students will demonstrate personal and civic responsibility and professional integrity.
5. **Technology**: Students will utilize technology effectively for informational, academic, personal, and professional needs.
6. **Aesthetics and Creativity**: Students will develop an appreciation of the arts and engage in the creative process.

Student Learning Outcomes relate to the Big Picture. Each one requires HIGHER LEVEL thinking skills, synthesizes many discreet skills, results in a product that must be observed, evaluated, or assessed by faculty/staff, and requires students to APPLY what they have learned. In order to write SLOs that fit the
above criteria, it is helpful to use language with action verbs from *Bloom’s Taxonomy*, and to understand Lower vs. Higher Thinking. Please see this page for a useful resource: http://www.sjcc.edu/Acad/Special/slo/pdf/SLO-Glossary-2010.pdf

When writing the SLOs it is useful to determine how to assess them, that is, how you will measure to what extent students have reached those goals. See the below discussion about SLO assessments.

**Mapping SLOs**

One way to help in ensuring that alignment exists between Courses and Program SLOs is to develop a grid or map of which courses in the Program reflect each of the Program SLOs. There are several ways to do this and each program or department should meet to determine what way works best for them. One example is below. Please see the full handbook for a more detailed discussion of mapping SLOs.

1 – introduced the SLO  
2 – developing the SLO  
3 – student mastery of the SLO

Here is an example of a map using the rubric above to map courses to Program SLOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course 1</th>
<th>PSLO 1</th>
<th>PSLO 2</th>
<th>PSLO 3</th>
<th>PSLO 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course 4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once you map the courses with the Program SLOs, it helps to determine if all PSLOs are being addressed in a sequential manner, and to the extent that is required, without being redundant.

Another useful map is to determine which Course SLOs and Program SLOs align with SJCC’s General Education SLOs. See the rubric below for a course with three CSLOs and a program with four PSLOs and how they might be mapped to SJCC’s 6 GE SLOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GE SLO 1</th>
<th>GE SLO 2</th>
<th>GE SLO 3</th>
<th>GE SLO 4</th>
<th>GE SLO 5</th>
<th>GE SLO 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSLO 01</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSLO 02</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSLO 03</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GE SLO 1</th>
<th>GE SLO 2</th>
<th>GE SLO 3</th>
<th>GE SLO 4</th>
<th>GE SLO 5</th>
<th>GE SLO 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSLO 01</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSLO 02</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSLO 03</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSLO 04</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SLO Assessments**

**Why do we assess SLOs?**

When writing assessments for SLOs it is often asked is “why aren’t grades enough?” SLO assessment provides useful information about the degree to which students as a whole are learning a particular core skill that all members of the program faculty and staff have deemed necessary. Although faculty and staff may choose different techniques in teaching and increasing student learning, there should be consistency through common outcomes, common instruments and common scoring.

The aim of SLO assessment is to use the data to improve the quality of the education and services we provide. Faculty and staff meet to discuss and analyze the findings in order to make improvements. The later section about SLO Assessment Cycles will discuss that process more.

**How do I write SLO assessments?**

There are many different assessment methods, including evaluating a particular assignment embedded in all the sections of a course (portfolios, essays, tests, test questions, performances), or evaluating data collected outside of the regular course (surveys, interviews).

Many faculty do not write a separate assessment, but instead agree on an assessment that is already embedded in their course. Other faculty hand out an end-of-the-semester assessment, written as a team effort by all faculty that teach the course.

The assessment should be specific to the SLO being evaluated. So, to assess a communication-related SLO (related to GE SLO 01), it is not likely that a multiple-choice exam is going to reflect the student learning in regards to communication. In this case, an essay, presentation, or other assignment more closely related to communication should be used.

**SLO Assessment Cycles**

In order to be sure that you are assessing your SLOs in a regular and organized manner, it helps to have a long term plan. Each SLO needs to be assessed one time. Then, if the results indicate that improvement is needed, there needs to be an intervention and a second assessment. This intervention and second assessment is how we can improve our student learning.

This cycle is the same process used to assess SJCC’s General Education SLOs. Below is a table showing the plan for GE SLO assessment for a 5-year cycle. Each SLO is assessed one time. Then we can run interventions, including faculty meetings, division meetings, PDD events, etc. Then, the SLO is reassesses, and we can see if the interventions we chose were effective at increasing the Student Learning in that particular SLO, or if we should try a different intervention. Any course or program can mimic this SLO assessment cycle by using the same table, but including the CSLOs or PSLOs in place of the GE SLOs.
SJCC’s General Education SLO Assessment Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SJCC’s General Education SLO Assessment Cycle plan</th>
<th>FA 15</th>
<th>SP 16</th>
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<th>FA 17</th>
<th>SP 18</th>
<th>FA 18</th>
<th>SP 19</th>
<th>FA 19</th>
<th>SP 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Communication</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Critical and Analytical Thinking</td>
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<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Global Awareness and Social Justice</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Technology</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Personal Responsibility, Ethics and Civility</td>
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<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Aesthetics and Creativity</td>
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<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Past ISLO and GESLOs assessment reports can be found at the following link: [http://www.sjcc.edu/faculty-staff/student-learning-outcomes](http://www.sjcc.edu/faculty-staff/student-learning-outcomes)
**What is Closing the Loop?**

The idea of closing the loop is the idea of reassessing the SLO after an intervention has been made. Rather than assess SLOs and then do nothing about the findings, it is more helpful for student learning for faculty to discuss strategies and implement ideas that are likely to increase student learning. Therefore, it is critical that after the initial SLO assessment that the faculty discuss the findings, identify techniques to increase student learning, and then to evaluate whether or not that technique worked by completing a second SLO assessment.

Please see the figure below for a visual representation of the process.
How do I report SLO assessments?

Printable Assessment Reporting Forms are available on the SLOAC website on the Faculty and Staff page (screenshot), and can be filled out to help with the input of data into Tracdat. You should complete the form after the data have been reviewed and discussed within the department or program. Your report should not just be a statement of the plan for assessment, but should reflect an analysis of data and recommendations for implementing change in the service or curriculum. Do not include student information or specific questions on the reporting forms. Ultimately, the data collected needs to be input into Tracdat (see last section for details).

Assessment Reporting Forms

Course SLO Assessment Reporting Form
A printable Course Level Assessment Reporting Form (May 2011) can be found on the SLOAC webpage by clicking on “CourseSLOAReportFormAcademicSenateApproved.docx”.

Program SLO Assessment Reporting Form
A printable Program Level Assessment Reporting Form (May 2011) can be found on the SLOAC webpage by clicking on “Program SLO Assessment Report Form”.

How to report

- TracDat Assessment Unit Reference Guide
- Directions on How to Log in to TracDat March 2015.pdf
- How to Deactivate an course SLO in TracDat
- How to Report Your SLOs in TracDat
- How to Map PSLO to Any of the Courses, July 2015.pdf
- CourseSLOAReportFormAcademicSenateApproved.docx
- Program SLO Assessment Report Form
Tracdat

In order to make the SLO assessment information available to everyone involved (faculty, staff, administration, ACCJC), the information collected is input into TracDat. Tracdat is the SLO repository and can be accessed by following the link below, or on the SLOAC webpage by going to the SLOAC webpage and clicking on “Directions on How to Log in to TracDat March 2015.pdf”

Please see the last two pages of this handbook for details about how to input SLO assessment data into Tracdat.

https://sjcc.tracdat.com/tracdat/

username: first initial, last name
example: wgretzky for Wayne Gretzky

Password: each user has a specific password

Please contact the TracDat Administrator so it can be reset.
Why do we have to report our assessment of SLOs?

Accreditation:

Our regional accrediting body, the ACCJC, has developed a rubric for evaluating institutional effectiveness regarding Student Learning Outcomes. It has also established and described a level of Proficiency that all institutions should meet. We need to record our assessment of SLOs to show to the ACCJC that we are at this level of proficiency.

ACCJC Proficiency Rubric Statements

- Student learning outcomes and authentic assessment are in place for courses, programs and degrees.
- There is widespread institutional dialogue about the results of assessment and identification of gaps.
- Decision-making includes dialogue on the results of assessment and is purposefully directed toward aligning institution-wide practices to support and improve student learning.
- Appropriate resources continue to be allocated and fine-tuned.
- Comprehensive assessment reports exist and are completed and updated on a regular basis.
- Course student learning outcomes are aligned with degree student learning outcomes.
- Students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled.

Source: ACCJC May 2011

Program Review and Resource Allocation

The Program Review process links SLO assessments to Resource Allocation. Student Learning Outcomes are created for every course and program at SJCC. As well, each Program or Unit must submit a Comprehensive Program Review every four years, and an Annual Program Review that summarizes changes and resource requests in the intervening years. The program reviews for each department include the identification of resource needs. These needs are prioritized by the appropriate vice president who forwards recommendations to the Finance Committee for the Budget Hearing process. Based on the findings of the Budget Hearings, final resource allocations are forward to the College Planning Council, with final allocations made by the college president.
Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

The Role of SLOAC

Through its deliberations, the committee envisions itself as a mentoring body and not one that evaluates other faculty, staff or their work. The SLOAC can offer suggestions on process and procedures, but each department or program should meet to determine what works best for them. The SLOAC views the overarching goal of SLO assessment to facilitate collaboration within and among departments while improving student learning, retention and program completion. While we have been motivated by accreditation concerns, the SLOAC assumes that through re-evaluating the manner in which we develop student learning outcomes, perform assessments and discuss among ourselves those results, the College as a whole can demonstrate more effectively our common commitment to academic excellence and to an ongoing dialogue about improving the services we provide to our students.

Present and past meeting agendas and notes of their meetings can be found at http://www.sjcc.edu/faculty-staff/committees/sloac-committee.
TracDat

Introduction

TracDat is the data management system that SJCC utilizes to maintain reports of SLO Assessment, Results, Analysis, and Mapping. It is a warehouse that can help faculty and staff track the SLO Assessment data that will be useful to insure student success through changes at the course, program, and institutional/GE levels.

TracDat is accessed at the following URL:
https://sjcc.tracdat.com/tracdat/

To Log In:
Username: first initial, last name
example: wgretzky for Wayne Gretzky
Password: college If “college” does not work, contact the SLOAC chair to reset it.

The main heading tabs and subheading tabs may vary according to assessment unit: Academic, Student Services, and Admin. Always check that you have selected the desired assessment unit. The examples below will be for Academic Units.

Note the names we will use for reference: The main heading tabs and subheading tabs.
Setting up Program SLOs

How to Input PSLOs

This process may already be completed for your SLOs. If so, please skip to the last page to input your SLO assessments and analysis.

Here is where you will type in your SLO:

> **Program SLO name:** This is a 2-3 key word name or number to identify the PSLO.
> **Program SLO:** This is the complete PSLO statement being assessed.
> **PSLO Assessment Cycles:** This designates the time period of the PSLO assessment cycle from assessment to making recommendations, including implementing changes, if any

Don’t forget to save changes!
How to Input PSLO Assessment Methods

- Select *Program Assessment Plan* Main Heading Tab
- Select *Assessment Methods* sub-tab
- Select the *Program SLO Name* that you want to add an assessment to
- Select *Add New Description of Assessment Tool*

When adding the assessment method, keep these tips in mind:

> *Assessment Method Category*: Choose the kind of assessment method used.
> *Description of Assessment Tool*: Briefly describe the assessment process.
> *Criterion for Success*: Give a target goal/measure that would indicate success with the SLO, e.g., 75% of the students receives a Pass evaluation.

Don’t forget to save changes!
How to Map Courses to PSLOs

> Select **Program Assessment Plan** Main Heading Tab
> Select **Related Courses** Sub-tab
> Select the desired **PSLO Name** from the drop down
> **Check the box next to each Course** that relates to the PSLO (you can select/deselect all by toggling the topmost check box – next to the name of the Assessment Unit)
> Select the appropriate level of mapping (**Introduced**, **Developing**, **Mastered**)
> Select **Save Changes** button
How to Map PSLOs to GE SLOs (ISLOs)

- Select the *Program Assessment Plan* Main Heading Tab
- Select *Related ISLOs* Sub-tab
- Select the desired *PSLO Name* from the drop down
- Check the box next to each ISLO that relates to the *PSLO*
- Select *Save Changes* button
Setting up Course SLOs

How to Input CSLOs

When you input Course SLOs, the process is very similar to inputting Program SLOs. Please see the previous pages for screenshots of Tracdat.

> Select Course Assessment Plan Tab
> Select Course SLOs Subheading
> Select the desired Course from the drop-down menu
> Select Add New Course SLO or Select Edit, Copy, or Delete next to a current Course SLO
> Make changes
> Select Save Changes button after editing

When you make changes, keep these tips in mind:

> Course: Type in the name of the course.
> Course SLO name: This is a 2-3 key word name or number to identify the Course SLO.
> Course SLO: This is the complete Course SLO statement.
> SLO Assessment Cycles: This designates the time period of the assessment cycle of the Course SLO from assessment to making recommendations, and making changes, if any.
> SLO Status: Choose Active if still valid.

How to Input CSLO Assessment Methods

> Select Course Assessment Plan Tab
> Select Assessment Methods Subheading
> Select the desired Course from the drop-down menu
> Select the desired Course SLO Name from the drop-down menu
> Type in full Course SLO statement.
> Select Add New Description of Assessment Tool or Select Edit, Copy, or Delete next to a current Course SLO.
> Make changes
> Select Save Changes button after editing

When you make changes, keep these tips in mind:

> Course: Select the name of the course.
> Assessment Method Category: Choose the kind of assessment method used.
> Description of Assessment Tool: Describe the assessment process.
> Criterion for Success: Give a target goal/measure that would indicate success, e.g. 80% of the class gives excellent speeches.
How to Input SLO Assessment Data

> Select Results Tab
> Select By Unit or By Course Subheading
> Select Add Data Collected at bottom
> Select the SLO the results are for, which opens a Description of Assessment Tool/Task dialog box.
> Select the Assessment Method used to collect data. This opens up to Data Collected page. See the screen shots below.

Select the SLO to open a Description of Assessment Tool/Task dialog box.
When you make changes, keep these tips in mind:

- **PSLO or Course SLO** – This is the SLO statement you are working on.
- **Data Collected** – Give a brief summary or the salient data results of the assessment.
- **Data Collected Date**
- **Criterion for Success Met** – Indicate if findings show that the criterion for success was met.
- **Reporting Period** – This is the semester of the assessment.
- **Analysis of Findings** – Give salient but brief summaries of findings.
- **Communication and Lead** – Briefly describe the manner in which faculty/staff discussed the findings and arrived at recommendations. Include name/s of key/lead assessment faculty.

To Make Recommendations:

> Select the **Recommendations** tab
> Click the **Add Recommendation** link at right

Don’t forget to “Save Changes”!