

(2010-2011, SBJ)

Guide to Division of Student Affairs Assessment Planning

Why should we engage in the development and use of a common, intentional Assessment Plan in Student Affairs?

- Improvement of Programs and Services (collecting and using data on student needs and learning outcomes, gaps in their experiences, and efficacy of our programs results in continuous improvement in the quality and relevance of our programs and services)
- Strategic Planning and Smart Decision-Making
- Accountability
- Middle States Accreditation Standards
- Charge of the University, with the assistance/resources of the Learning Outcomes Assessment committee - “At the Provost’s request, UDC is engaging in a university-wide process to strengthen academic programs and improve student learning through the development of an assessment system that includes Program Objectives, Student Learning Outcomes, rubrics and other assessment strategies, and data collection and analysis on student performance”⁵.

**Due dates for the steps for each phase will be outlined. Products will then be reviewed and feedback will be provided.*

Timeline	Academic Affairs	Student Affairs
(Pre) Phase I	€ Goals for UDC graduates articulated in Strategic Plan, Mission, and goals articulated in General Education curriculum	€ Goals for UDC graduates articulated in University Strategic Plan € Division Wide goals discussed
Phase I	€ Written Set of Program Objectives by each academic program/department)	€ Written Set of Program Objectives (See Appendix A) for each department (<i>--- due date---</i> feedback provided by assessment committee/goals subcommittee, then proceed with next step)
Phase I	€ Written Set of Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) _B € Map showing SLO’s link between SLO’s and Program Objectives.	€ Written Set of Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) (See Appendix B) that flow directly from program objectives. € Map showing link between SLO’s and Program Objectives _B .
Phase II	€ Matrix _C that maps SLO’s to specific courses that offer the content, assignments, and assessments that allow students to achieve the particular SLO’s	€ Matrix (See Appendix C) that maps SLO’s to specific activities that offer the relevant content
Phase II	€ Model syllabus that presents SLO’s in clear, direct language and aligns outcomes, assignments, and assessments.	€ Student affairs equivalent to a model syllabus – e.g. Sample outline of a workshop, outline of a program or initiative € Identification of Measures and

		Tools used to assess SLO's
Phase III & ongoing	€ Assessment Plan D & Cycle to begin based on products	€ Assessment Plan (See Appendix D) & Cycle

Appendices

Appendix A - Guide to Developing Program Objectives

Program or Unit Objectives:

Program objectives are overarching goals that describe what the unit aims to accomplish and will flow from the unit's mission statement. Programs will focus and define their visions and goals for the program as they re-examine and revise or articulate program objectives 5.

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in 5 years?
- What examples are there from other institutions that might give us a sense of current expectations in the field?
- What is your office's specific goal in relation to student services?
- Formulate them in a way that makes them measurable or be linked into measurable student learning outcomes.
- Do the program objectives reflect what we do with students?

Sample Program Objectives:

Career Services

- To provide preparative and comprehensive career services to all students.
- To increase students' knowledge of Career Center services including: career counseling, online job searches, experiential learning tools, and employment / internship events.

Financial Aid:

- To help students develop a comprehensive financial aid plan which supports timely their timely progress towards graduation.
- Teach students how to apply for and retain financial aid, ensuring that they understand critical deadlines and academic requirements

Student Organizations/ Student Government

- To motivate students to contribute as leaders, team members, professionals, and world citizens through experiential learning opportunities, training, and peer leadership opportunities.

Counseling:

- Help decrease students' psychological/emotional barriers that threaten academic excellence and personal well-being

- Teach students how to manage overwhelming feelings, resolve conflicts and develop healthy relationships
- Achieve the above by providing the high-quality, culturally sensitive psychotherapy, psychiatric services, crisis intervention services, consultation referrals, training and supervision.

Appendix B – Guide to Developing Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes in Student Affairs:

Student learning outcomes are statements that say what a student “**will know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate**” when they have completed or participated in a program/activity/course/project”⁴.

While learning activities are fairly easy to identify for most courses and classroom situations, learning activities within student affairs may not be as clearly apparent or as tangible. Upon examination, however, a broad range of contacts and activities can be identified as learning activities, with specific objectives. Moreover, the strength of our programs may be improved by developing specific objectives for our students and intentionally creating activities that are aligned with the specific objectives.

Focus on what students are expected to be able to do as a result of participation in your activity.

Common Themes in Outcomes in Student Affairs Divisions :

Teamwork and Collaboration	Goal-Setting	Global Awareness
Diversity	Communication	Leadership
Ethics/Values	Wellness	Generate
Interpersonal Skills	Healthy Relationships	Community Involvement
Self-efficacy and Identity	Critical Thinking	Social Justice
Intrapersonal Skills	Career Preparation	Self-Awareness
Responsibility & Accountability		

Basic Template for Student Learning Outcomes³:

“As a result of students participating in _____, they will be able to _____”

“When students complete our program ...activity/etc., the students should be able to....

Examples of Student Learning Outcome Statements:

- “Upon completion of a stress management workshop, students are able to identify 3-5 stress reduction techniques.”
- “As a result of participation in the SGA leadership retreat, participants will be able to describe leadership skills needed to effectively work towards shared tasks in a group of their peers.”
- “After participating in career counseling sessions and/or using online career interest inventories, students will be able to identify their skills, interests, and values as they relate to exploring career options.
- “As a result of participation in health education programs on obesity, students will be able to describe how to prevent health consequences of obesity and identify lifestyle habits for healthy living.”
- As a result of involvement in residence life for one year, students will demonstrate the ability to demonstrate skills for coexisting with peers in a residential setting, communicate with individuals from diverse backgrounds, and effectively resolve conflict with peers.

Words frequently used in Learning Student Learning Outcomes in Student Affairs departments:

Define
Describe
Identify
Label
List
Tell
Discuss

Explain
Give Examples
Summarize
Build
Prioritize
Implement
Arrange

Plan
Assess
Generate
Compose

Words that are Less Suggestive of actions and tend to result in weaker, less measurable learning outcomes:

Know

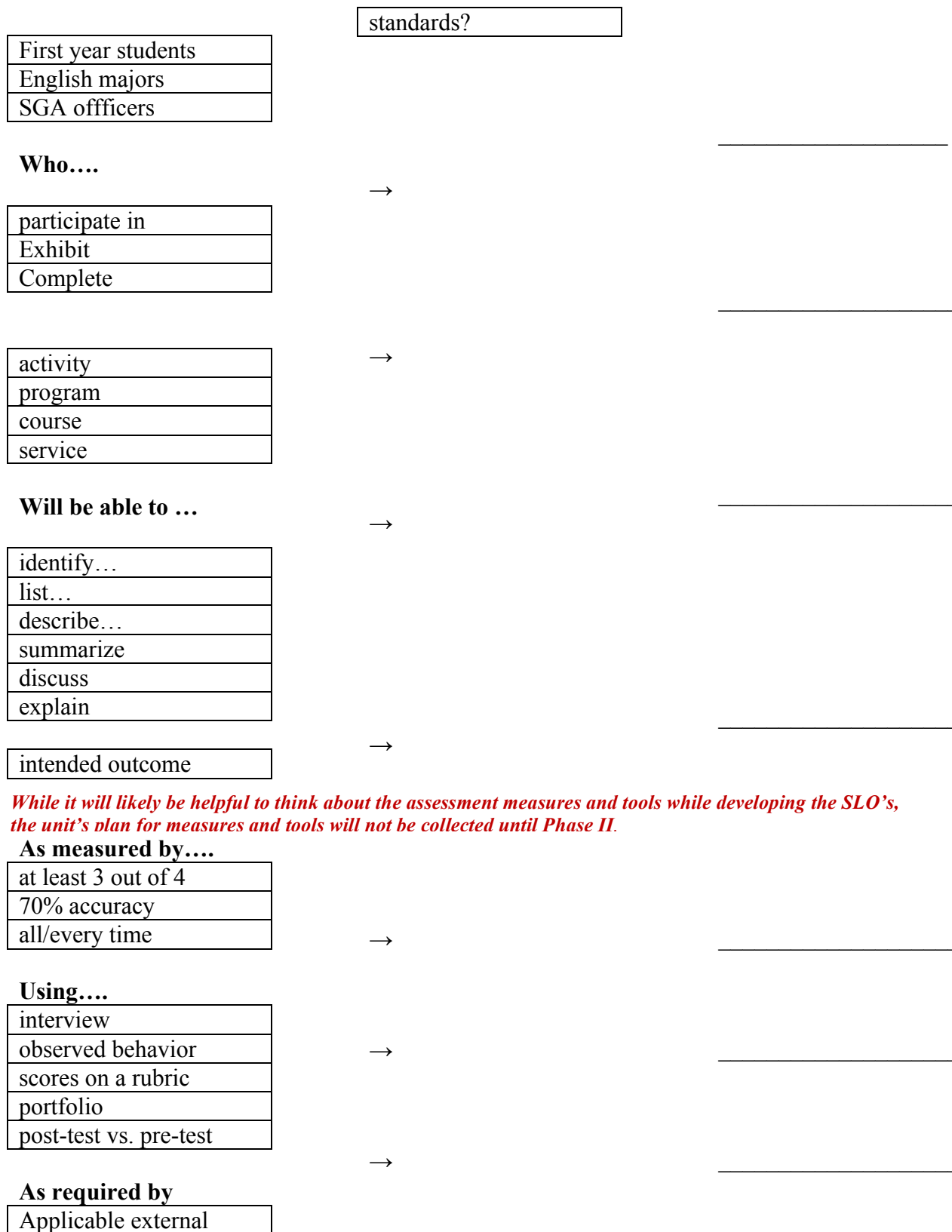
Understand

Feel

Learn

Appreciate

Flowchart for Developing Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures



Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes Map Template:

Program Objective	Student Learning Outcome
1.	a. b. c. d.
2.	a. b. c. d. e.
3.	a. b. c. d. e.
4.	a. b. c. d.
5.	a. b. c. d. e.

After creating a draft of your unit's student learning outcomes, you may find it helpful to review the following checklist:

- € Does the outcome support the program objectives?
- € Does the outcome describe what the program intends for students to know (cognitive), think (affective, attitudinal), or do (behavioral, performance)?
- € Is the outcome important/worthwhile?
- € Is the outcome detailed and specific?
- € Is the outcome measurable/identifiable?
- € A result of learning?
- € Do you have or can you create an activity to enable students to learn the desired outcome?
- € Can the outcome be used to make decisions on how to improve the program?

Program Objective	Student Learning Objective	Activity Name/ Course	Activity Name/ Course	Activity Name/ Course	Activity Name/ Course	Activity Name/ Course	
1	1-1	x		x			x
	1-2				x		
	1-3			x		x	x
	1-4	x				x	
2	2-1				x		x
	2-2		x			x	
	2-3	x	x		x		x
	2-4		x	x		x	
3	3-1			x			
	3-2	x		x			x
	3-3	x		x		x	
	3-4	x					

Appendix C – Phase II Products* – Matrix that maps Specific Activities to the SLO’s

*Details forthcoming in Phase II.

Model Outlines – parallel component to model syllabus (Details forthcoming in Phase II.)

Measures & Tools to Assess Student Learning Outcomes A variety of resources will be provided with sample questionnaires, surveys, templates, tools for the collection of qualitative data, and other measures used in Student Affairs divisions. (Details forthcoming in Phase II.)

Appendix D – Preview to Phase III Products

Ongoing Assessment Plan and Use of Data * Details forthcoming

- Continuous cycle of data collection for assessing student learning outcomes
- Meetings to discuss the outcomes and develop plans for improving based on data
- Documentation of data and decisions

Elements for Accreditation₂ (UDC Middles' States next visit – Fall 2011)

- Assessment for accountability and improvement
- Stakeholders involved
- Goal and outcome articulation and alignment
- Assessment is comprehensive, systematic, ongoing, cyclical
- Appropriate assessment methods used
- Assessment of assessment processes
- Stakeholders involved

Sample University Procedure for Ongoing Assessment₇:

<http://www.studentaffairs.umd.edu/toolkit.html>

References

1. Education Advisory Board Company 2010, "Private Institutions: Common Themes for Outcomes".
2. Bayless, Laura. *Assessment Strategies for Student Affairs: Implementing an Effective Accreditation Process*. St. Mary's College of Maryland. Philadelphia, PA. Dec 2010. Presentation at 2010 Annual Conference – Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
3. "What are Learning Outcomes" Brigham Young University. Retrieved at: <https://deanofstudents.byu.edu/content/what-are-learning-outcomes> Retrieved 2/22/11.
4. "Student Learning Outcomes 101" University of Rhode Island. Retrieved at: http://www.uri.edu/assessment/media/public/page_files/uri/outcomes/student/outcomes/outcomes_tools/Handout_Student_Learning_Outcomes_101_8_7_06.pdf Retrieved 2/22/11.
5. UDC Guide for Developing Program Objectives, Learning Outcomes, and a Career Pathways Map: Phase I Assessment Guide. Fall 2010.
6. UDC Guide for Linking Learning Outcomes and Courses, Developing Syllabi, and Considering Career Pathways: Phase II Assessment Manual.
7. "Division of Student Affairs Assessment and Reports: Learning Outcomes Tool Kit" University of Maryland. Retrieved at: <http://www.studentaffairs.umd.edu/toolkit.html>