

# **Los Angeles Valley College Institutional Assessment Plan**

## **Introduction**

The mission, goals and core commitments of LA Valley College all focus on teaching, learning, and student success. In this, we recognize that successful learning means more than memorizing facts; it requires that students be able to apply this knowledge to solve problems, demonstrate skills and to think critically about what they have learned. In the same way, we recognize that measuring student learning is about more than course completion rates and grades; we need to think critically about how students learn and how each component of the college contributes to the learning process.

Although the language of student learning outcomes and assessment is relatively new, most areas of the college have always undertaken some form of evaluation. We are now engaging in a process of formalizing and expanding those efforts and tying assessment to other campus processes such as program review and planning. The student learning outcomes assessment cycle is a way for us to make our expectations explicit and public, to set appropriate criteria and standards, and to use information to document, explain, and improve performance. The goal of assessment is the continuous improvement of academic courses, programs, and services and is strongly linked to the college goal of institutional effectiveness.

This document sets forth the assessment philosophy and plans for the college. This includes:

- An assessment philosophy
- Relevant accreditation standards
- Means of assessment to produce quality data
- How to conduct a student learning outcomes assessment cycle (SLOAC) for courses, programs and service outcomes
- Process for establishing SLOs
- Process for reporting on SLOACs
- Assessment procedures for college-wide outcomes
- Links between the SLOAC and planning
- Roles and responsibilities

## **LAVC Mission**

Los Angeles Valley College is a comprehensive community college located in the center of the San Fernando Valley. The College serves the community by providing transfer, degree, career-technical, foundational, transitional and continuing education programs in an attractive and accessible learning environment that fosters student success. Embedded in these programs are the greater goals of critical thinking and life-long learning which are necessary for success in the workplace and for advancing one's education, personal development and quality of life.

## **LAVC Strategic Goals**

Goal 1: Increase student retention, persistence and success

Goal 2: Increase student access

Goal 3: Enhance academic programs and services to meet student needs

Goal 4: Enhance institutional effectiveness

## **LAVC Core Commitments**

We are committed to:

### *Learning*

We view the continuous pursuit and transmission of knowledge as central to the human experience and key to a better quality of life.

### *Access*

We promote access to educational opportunities for all in a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment that provides a place for critical thinking, learning and personal growth.

### *Student Success*

We recognize the inherent potential in all people and promote individual achievement of personal goals by encouraging students to be active participants in their learning and providing them with the foundational skills and support services necessary for success in the LA Valley College environment and beyond.

### *Quality*

We strive to achieve instructional excellence and maintain a learning-centered campus by offering a broad range of academic programs and services, fostering an environment of academic freedom and collaboration, and providing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

### *Mutual Respect*

We promote an environment of openness and integrity in which the views of each individual are respected and success is celebrated, and we acknowledge that greater understanding and consensus can be achieved through shared governance, collaboration, teamwork and an appreciation of all members of the College and the community we serve.

### *Innovation*

We promote a climate of discovery that values and embraces inquiry, continuous improvement and welcome creative solutions as we seek new, flexible and responsive ways to fulfill our mission.

*Diversity*

We embrace the rich and unique dimensions of each individual in our community and strive to maintain an open and supportive environment that instills an appreciation for a variety of perspectives and encourages the free exchange of ideas.

*Responsiveness*

We strive to remain current and to meet the educational, social, economic, cultural and workforce needs of the community we serve.

*Resourcefulness*

We promote physical, technological and fiscal responsibility to maximize institutional effectiveness and strive to be effective stewards in the utilization of public funds.

*Environmental Stewardship*

We foster responsibility and pride in our campus and serve as a model of sustainability, being mindful of the impact we have on the environment, as individuals and as a community.

## Assessment Philosophy

The mission, goals and core commitments of LA Valley College all focus on teaching, learning, and student success. In this, we recognize that successful learning means more than memorizing facts; it requires that students be able to apply this knowledge to solve problems, demonstrate skills and to think critically about what they have learned. In the same way, we recognize that measuring student learning is about more than course completion rates and grades; we need to think critically about how students learn and how each component of the college contributes to the learning process.

Although the language of student learning outcomes and assessment is relatively new, most areas of the college have always undertaken some form of evaluation. We are now engaging in a process of formalizing and expanding those efforts and tying assessment to other campus processes such as program review and planning. The student learning outcomes assessment cycle is a way for us to make our expectations explicit and public, to set appropriate criteria and standards, and to use information to document, explain, and improve performance. The goal of assessment is the continuous improvement of academic courses, programs, and services and is strongly linked to the college goal of institutional effectiveness.

The development of assessment processes at LAVC is guided by the following principles:

1. Some portions of the campus community directly assist students to master learning while others indirectly help by making the campus a place where learning can occur. Indirect units participate in campus assessment activities by evaluating their services and asking the campus community for feedback on how they are doing and how they can improve.
2. Outcomes Assessment Plans are developed by the personnel in specific programs and assessment results are evaluated primarily by those same sectors.
3. It is the faculty's responsibility to create assessment methods and evaluation processes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees. LAVC agrees with the mandate of the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges that a successful SLO assessment process must engage faculty and be faculty driven (ASCCC Resolution 2.01 F04 "Insistence that SLO Design Originate with Local Faculty"). The responsibility for teaching and learning lies primarily with faculty, who are well versed in their disciplines, invested in student learning, and knowledgeable about the principles of their respective and professional associations and licensing boards.
4. Whenever possible, simplicity is encouraged in the development of assessment methods and plans.
5. Assessment can be quantitative or qualitative. Either way the assessment process should be cost-effective and yield reasonably accurate and truthful results that inform important decisions on student learning and success.
6. The Outcomes Assessment Cycle is an on-going process and dialogue that is embedded in the college's culture. All staff and faculty members are invited to participate, regardless of rank or tenure.

The central questions of assessment are: 1) Upon completion of courses and programs, what do we want students to be able to do? 2) How do we know that students can do these things? 3) What are the services and activities that support the campus and student learning? 4) How do we

know how well these services and activities are doing? 5) How can we use assessment results to improve student learning and campus services?

Assessment results will be used to:

- Promote student success.
- Make improvements at all levels.
- Generate and encourage self-reflection, collaboration and dialogue.
- Identify and respond in meaningful ways to student and community needs.

Assessment results will not:

- Be used as an end itself. Assessment that does not help promote student success and campus improvements is a waste of time.
- Be used punitively or as a means of determining faculty or staff salaries or rewards. The purpose of assessment is to evaluate student learning, not to reward or punish faculty or staff.
- Undermine or impinge on academic freedoms of professional rights.
- Be seen as a solution to every problem or as an answer to every question.
- Always be quantitative. While numerical scales or rubrics can be useful, their accuracy always depends on the clear understanding of the concepts behind the numbers. Sometimes the best indicator of student learning can be expressed well as a narrative or a performance than as a number.

Derived from: Cabrillo College, Palomar College, Long Beach City College

LAVC stands by the American Association of Higher Education's (AAHE) "Nine Principles of Good Assessment" (following page).

## **AAHE Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning**

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values. Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only *what* we choose to assess but also *how* we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time. Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.
3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes. Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations -- those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way -- about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic. Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students, or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved. Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/ae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.

7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about. Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.

8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change. Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.

9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public. There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation -- to ourselves, our students, and society -- is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

Authors: Alexander W. Astin; Trudy W. Banta; K. Patricia Cross; Elaine El-Khawas; Peter T. Ewell; Pat Hutchings; Theodore J. Marchese; Kay M. McClenney; Marcia Mentkowski; Margaret A. Miller; E. Thomas Moran; Barbara D. Wright

This document was developed under the auspices of the AAHE Assessment Forum with support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education with additional support for publication and dissemination from the Exxon Education Foundation. Copies may be made without restriction.

## **SLO MANUAL**

### **Accreditation Standards**

New accreditation standards were adopted in 2002 that make student learning and student learning outcomes (SLOs) a major part of the accreditation process. From the ACCJC 2002 Standards:

#### **Standard I B. Improving Institutional Effectiveness**

The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning. See additional details in the Standards (available at [www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org)).

#### **Standard II. Student Learning Programs and Services**

The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated student learning outcomes. See additional details in the Standards (available at [www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org)).

In addition, the ACCJC also includes program outcomes and assessment in its list of eligibilities.

#### **10. STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT**

The institution defines and publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and achievement outcomes. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes. (A complete list of eligibility requirements is available at [www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org).)

These standards are based on the idea that "covering" material in class does not guarantee that students have learned it. The process is intended to establish clear and transparent expectations for students and accountability for faculty. Success in this context is defined by students leaving a course or program with integrated, higher learning skills that they can demonstrate.

However, accreditation is not the only reason to assess SLOs. We believe that this process will both document the good work we already do and help us to improve student learning.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Defined**

SLO means Student Learning Outcome. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has given the following definition: "Student Learning Outcomes refer to overarching specific observable characteristics developed by local faculty that allow them to determine or

demonstrate evidence that learning has occurred as a result of a specific course, program, activity or process."

There are several levels of outcomes including course-level, program-level and service outcomes.

## **Course Outcomes**

Course outcomes express higher level thinking skills that integrate the content and activities. These are measurable or observable and demonstrate an overarching understanding and application of a subject beyond the specific course content. Outcomes can be measured or observed as a behavior, skill, or discrete useable knowledge and are supported by the content of a course. A typical course may have 1-2 course outcomes.

Course-level SLOs should describe the broadest goals for the class and involve higher-level thinking (i.e., Bloom's Taxonomy level 3 or higher). The SLO should require students to synthesize many discrete skills or areas of content.

When writing course outcomes, consider the following questions:

- What should students be able to do with what they've learned?
- How will they demonstrate this?
- What can they produce to show faculty that they have learned to apply their new knowledge?

Sample course SLOs include:

- Biological Anthropology – Students will be able to analyze human anatomy and behavior from an evolutionary perspective.
- Broadcasting (Voice-Over Techniques): Students will be able to bring written words to life using copy analysis and word coloration for dialogue, storytelling, industrial voiceover and personal signature.
- Principles of Economics – Students will be able to apply basic economic principles to individual and business decision making.
- Fire Technology - Students will be able to analyze wildland fire behavior and draft a plan for fire suppression
- Drawing I - Students will be able to employ and verbally articulate linear perspective and light logic to develop the illusion of 3-dimensional space.
- Softball – Students will be able to perform the fundamental softball skills of throwing, catching, hitting, and fielding.

## **Program Outcomes**

### *The Pathways Model*

LA Valley College has defined an instructional program as a major education pathway that a student takes through the institution. We have three such pathways: the Foundational Program, the Career-Technical Education (CTE) Program, and the General Education (GE)/Transfer Program. The three programs have a few common goals, such as Communication Skills and Reasoning Skills, and a few that are unique to the program (e.g., Technical Skills for the CTE Program and Global Awareness for the GE/Transfer Program).

### *Foundational Program Outcomes*

The Foundational Program includes those courses coded as being at the basic skills, pre-collegiate level. The goals focus on the improvement of communication skills, reasoning skills, and academic habits of mind. Students in this program may be seeking personal enrichment, the strengthening of skills relative to employment, or to progress to collegiate-level courses.

The outcomes are: 1) Communication Skills, 2) Reasoning Skills, and 3) Academic Habits of Mind.

Communication Skills: Students will have improved skills in reading and writing.

Reasoning Skills: Students will be able to ask appropriate questions and acquire, evaluate, and interpret information at a foundational level. Included in this are improved skills in mathematics.

Academic Habits of Mind: Students will develop academic habits of mind in order to become successful learners.

### *Career-Technical Education Outcomes*

The CTE program includes disciplines that have a CTE TOP code. The primary emphasis of the program is for students to achieve their goals relative to employment and includes general skills in communication and reasoning, specific technical skills appropriate to the field of study, and an emphasis on demonstrating professional behavior.

The outcomes are: 1) Communication Skills, 2) Reasoning Skills, 3) Professional Behavior, and 4) Technical Skills.

Communication Skills: Students will be able to clearly communicate through writing, speaking, listening and reading.

Reasoning Skills: Students will be able to acquire, evaluate and interpret information. As a result, students will be able to solve problems relevant to their field of study.

Professional Behavior: Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate professional behavior (e.g., timeliness) and interpersonal skills (e.g., teamwork, leadership, cultural diversity).

*General Education/Transfer Program Outcomes*

General Education/Transfer outcomes represent skills and concepts students will learn upon completion of the general education requirements for a degree or transfer to a 4-year institution. These outcomes are broad based and cut across the curriculum bringing coherence and connection to the learning experience. Imbedded in these are the greater goals of critical thinking and life-long learning.

The outcomes are 1) Reasoning Skills, 2) Communication Skills, 3) Global Awareness, and 4) Social Responsibility and Personal Development.

Reasoning Skills: Students will be able to ask appropriate questions, collect accurate information, evaluate its quality, and reflectively and creatively analyze, synthesize and organize the information. As a result, students will be able to reason logically and come to reliable conclusions which will enable them to successfully navigate the world around them.

Communication Skills: Students will be able to clearly express, transmit, and interpret knowledge and ideas through writing, speaking, listening and reading.

Global Awareness: Students will be able to assess how the world has been and continues to be shaped by natural, social and cultural processes and evaluate how their own lives are impacted by these processes.

Social Responsibility and Personal Development: Students will be able to take responsibility for their own actions and well-being, make ethical decisions in complex situations, and participate actively in a diverse society.

*Aligning Course and Program Outcomes*

As part of the program review process, each discipline will complete an alignment grid showing how the courses in their discipline feed into the outcomes of the appropriate program.

For example:

	Program SLO 1	Program SLO 2	Program SLO 3	Program SLO 4
Course 1	M	m	m	m
Course 2		M		m
Course 3	m			
Course 4		m		m
Course 5			M	

M = Major emphasis of course; m = minor emphasis of course

As part of the assessment of each program, alignment grids will be reviewed to ensure that all outcomes are adequately supported by courses.

### *Theme Years*

Valley College's theme years are a way for us to focus on our program outcomes. Events, speakers, contests and professional development activities are only a few examples of activities that will focus on the theme. Out of each theme year will come a set of resources to help the campus improve in that area.

### **Service Outcomes – Non-Instructional Areas**

In addition, there are service outcomes for non-instructional areas. A service outcome describes the primary service(s) provided by an area and how that service assists or aids the students in achieving their learning outcomes. In cases where the personnel in the area have direct contact with students, the service outcome describes how students directly benefit. In the case where personnel have no contact or only indirect contact with students, the service outcome may describe how what is done assists the faculty and staff in their contact with students.

For example, a maintenance department may enable the faculty and staff to serve students by making sure that classrooms and offices are kept in good condition. DSPS may assist students in achieving their learning outcomes by providing any needed accommodations. Academic Affairs may enhance student success by making sure that information is accurate and available in a timely manner.

Some areas may have both student learning outcomes and service outcomes.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is not an end in itself, but a tool for educational and institutional improvement.

In this process for instructional areas, evidence is gathered, analyzed, and interpreted to determine how well student performance matches faculty-defined expectations and standards. The results are used to improve teaching and learning.

Ruth Stiehl wrote that we "assess to assist, assess to advance, assess to adjust."

- Assist - provide formulative feedback to guide student performance
- Advance - summative assessment of student readiness for what's next
- Adjust - continuous improvement of curriculum, pedagogy

For non-instructional areas, evidence is gathered, interpreted and analyzed to determine how well the area meets staff-defined expectations and standards. The results are used to improve institutional effectiveness.

Assessment is an ongoing process, hence the name Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle (SLOAC). Faculty and staff define SLOs, assess SLOs, analyze the results, and institute improvements. Then the cycle begins again.

## **Quality Data**

The assessment loop is essentially a data-driven method of decision-making and instructional/institutional improvement. Assessment is a way of asking what works and what does not.

The goal of assessment is to gather quality data for faculty and staff members to analyze, interpret, and use to improve the teaching/learning process and services offered. Quality data are based on best practices, answer important questions, and benefit the student and institution by providing evidence to complete the SLOAC loop.

Quality data is:

- Valid - the data accurately represents what you are trying to measure. For instance the numbers of people that graduate don't necessarily represent good data on what has actually been learned.
- Reliable - the data are reproducible. Repeated assessment yields the same data.
- Authentic - the assessment simulates real-life circumstances.
- Relevant - the data answers important questions, and is not generated simply because it is easy to measure.
- Effective - the data contributes to improving teaching and learning.

## **Means of Assessment - Instructional**

When SLOs are well-written, the method of assessment is often clear. One-size doesn't fit all! Faculty are encouraged to use existing assessment methods and to think of the process as documenting what they are already doing.

There are two components to assessment:

- Assessment activity - what will students do to show you they have achieved the SLO
- Assessment measure - how will instructors evaluate what the students have done

To select the appropriate assessment tools, you need to understand the:

- Types of tools available
- Nature of the data
- Potentials and limitations of each tool

Much of this information can be found in the chart [Choosing the Right Assessment Tool](#) and the [Assessment Tool Checklist](#) (see Appendix).

To create your own assessment, start by looking at the SLOs for that course or program. Are there any assignments or activities that provide good data on outcomes? If not, you need to create one. Determine which type of assessment tool best would assess that students can DO the outcome. Remember that the assessment should be authentic - closely resembling a real life experience. Will the student perform a task, create a product, analyze a case study, or solve a problem?

After you have identified what the students will do, you need to decide how faculty will measure student outcomes. Start by identifying the major traits that determine a successful outcome. Describe the criteria relating to the traits and create a checklist, rubric or set of descriptive performance standards. Make sure to set the criteria at the appropriate level of thinking (see Appendix: [Bloom's taxonomy](#)). Try out your assessment on student work and make appropriate modifications.

When you submit your SLO to the curriculum committee, it will be evaluated with a checklist consisting of the following:

The assessment:

- Is directly related to the outcome and can realistically measure/document the outcome
- Is specific enough to show how the SLO is being assessed (e.g., it is not enough to simply write "exam" without showing how the exam will assess student learning)
- Will produce and/or document evidence of student learning
- Will produce manageable information and statistical knowledge
- Is a realistic, feasible way of collecting and analyzing evidence
- Can differentiate between different levels of achievement through the use of a rubric or other measure

### **Means of Assessment – Service Outcomes**

The means of assessment should follow from the outcome statement written. Is there a way to statistically evaluate the service provided? For example, number of students served, number of forms processed, or amount of time from request to completion. Are surveys an appropriate tool? For example, how satisfied are the people you serve with the services provided?

Service areas should work with the Office of Research and Planning to design, collect and analyze such data.

## **Closing the Loop**

The ultimate goal of assessment is to use assessment results to improve the curriculum, to improve pedagogy, and to improve services. The Student Learning Outcome Assessment Cycle (SLOAC) begins when faculty or staff develop an SLO statement and an assessment. The next step is to collect, discuss and analyze the assessment data. Out of this analysis and discussion come suggestions for improvement. The faculty then need to develop, modify, or revise curriculum, pedagogy, courses, or programs; staff need to develop or modify services or the way they are delivered. Another possible revision is to the outcome statement or assessment tool itself. And then the cycle begins again.

## **Process for Establishing SLOs**

### *Courses and Instructional Programs*

To establish SLOs for courses or instructional programs, the Course or Program SLO form (available at [www.lavc.edu/vccc/forms.html](http://www.lavc.edu/vccc/forms.html)) and a Discipline Approval Form need to be submitted to Academic Affairs. The form requires both the outcomes statements and a description of the means of assessment (both what the students will do and how the instructor will evaluate that activity).

The submission will undergo technical review by the SLO Subcommittee of the Valley College Curriculum Committee (VCCC). After technical review, the submission will be circulated to all members of the VCCC and will be voted on at a meeting of the VCCC. All approved submissions are available on the VCCC website ([www.lavc.edu/vccc/courseoutlines.html](http://www.lavc.edu/vccc/courseoutlines.html)).

### *Non-Instructional Programs*

The forms to establish SLOs for non-instructional programs or service areas are available on the SLO website (<http://www.lavc.edu/slo/Forms.html>). There is a separate form for Non-Degree Programs (e.g., the Writing Center), Student Services, Administrative Services, and the President's Office. The form requires both the outcomes statements and a description of the means of assessment.

The completed form should be submitted to the SLO representative from the appropriate area who will complete a technical review of the submission before submitting it to the SLO Steering Committee for approval. Submissions from Student Services areas will go to the Student Services Committee for acknowledgement before being presented to the SLO Committee.

All approved outcomes for non-instructional programs are available on the SLO website (<http://www.lavc.edu/slo/LAVCSLOs.html>).

## **Process for Reporting on the SLOAC**

All outcomes that exist in a department or area should be assessed within the five-year program review cycle. Reports on individual assessments are made on the Assessment Report form and submitted to the SLO Steering Committee. The following criteria are used to evaluate submissions:

- Sampling – Sampling methodology is adequately described (i.e., how sampling was done, number of students and faculty/staff involved out of the total) and is appropriately done.
- Description of Methodology – The methodology is clearly described and contains detailed information about the tools used (e.g., student activity, rubric elements) and how inter-rater reliability was achieved.
- Valid Data – The assessment accurately measures what it was trying to measure.
- Effective Data – The data contribute to the improvement of teaching, learning or institutional effectiveness.
- Collaborative Review – The data was collaboratively reviewed by members of the discipline/service area.
- Proposal of Improvements – A clear plan is presented for improvement that is based on the data given. The plan includes how results will be shared with others in the discipline/area.

As part of the Annual Plan process, all departments and areas report on their overall progress in assessing SLOs (e.g., number of assessments completed and planned), summarize assessment results to date and how those results will be used for improvement. Annual plans are reviewed in their entirety by the IPC Committee and the appropriate dean or VP. The SLO Committee reviews only the SLO portion of the Annual Plan.

As part of the comprehensive program review process, all departments and areas report on the SLOAC process in more detail as part of the overall evaluation of their programs. This includes an alignment grid of course and program outcomes and a review of all course assessments for instructional areas.

## **LAVC Program Assessment Process**

Assessment of our three instructional programs (Foundational, CTE, and GE/Transfer) is coordinated at the college-level with the help of the major committees and disciplines most involved with each program.

The first grid below shows the alignment between the learning and achievement goals of the three programs. The remaining grids show for each program the goals, student learning and achievement outcomes, what evidence will be gathered and how it will be evaluated, how collaborative review and proposal of improvements will take place, and how results will be shared.

## LAVC Program Outcomes

### Alignment of Program Goals

<b>Foundational Program</b>	<b>Career/Technical Education Program</b>	<b>General Education/Transfer Program</b>
Communication Skills	Communication Skills	Communication Skills
Reasoning Skills (critical thinking, math)	Reasoning Skills (critical thinking, problem solving)	Reasoning Skills (critical thinking, math competency, information competency)
Academic Habits of Mind (study skills)	Professional Behavior (work readiness skills)	Social Responsibility/Personal Development (including study skills)
	Technical Skills	Global Awareness
[Achievement: personal/work enrichment, progress to college-level courses]	[Achievement: employment related]	[Achievement: AA and/or transfer]

## Foundational Program

<b>Goal</b>	Communication Skills (Reading/Writing)	Reasoning Skills (Math/Critical Thinking)	Academic Habits of Mind (Study Skills)	Achievement: achieve goals
<b>Outcomes</b>	Students will have improved skills in reading and writing.	Students will be able to ask appropriate questions and acquire, evaluate, and interpret information at a foundational level. Included in this is improved skills in mathematics.	Students will develop academic habits of mind in order to become successful learners.	Students will be able to achieve their goals relative to foundational skills (e.g., personal enrichment, strengthen skills for employment, progress to college-level courses)
<b>Evidence/Evaluation</b>	Course-level assessments; student survey; student success in subsequent classes where appropriate; review course-program alignment grids	Course-level assessments; student survey; student success in subsequent classes where appropriate; collection of samples for critical thinking across disciplines; review course-program alignment grids	Student survey; student ethnography project; review course-program alignment grids	Analysis of student progress; student survey; student ethnography project
<b>Collaborative Review and Proposal of Improvements (by whom)</b>	Basic Skills Committee; Developmental English, Developmental Communication, and Speech faculty.	Basic Skills committee; Developmental English, Developmental Communication, Speech and Math faculty	Basic Skills committee	Basic Skills committee
<b>How Results Shared</b>	Department meetings; Academic Senate/IPC; SLO website	Department meetings; Academic Senate/IPC; SLO website	Department meetings; Academic Senate/IPC; SLO website	Department meetings; Academic Senate/IPC; SLO website

## Career/Technical Education Program

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Communication Skills</b>	<b>Reasoning Skills</b>	<b>Professional Behavior</b>	<b>Technical Skills</b>	<b>Achievement: work-related</b>
<b>Outcomes*</b> (*Outcomes partially based on SCANS competencies.)	Students will be able to clearly communicate through writing, speaking, listening and reading.	Students will be able to acquire, evaluate and interpret information. As a result, students will be able to solve problems relevant to their field of study.	Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate professional behavior (e.g., timeliness) and interpersonal skills (e.g., teamwork, leadership, cultural diversity).	Students will be able to demonstrate technical skills appropriate to their field of study.	Student will be able to achieve their goals relative to CTE (e.g., employment, work advancement, skill attainment)
<b>Evidence/Evaluation</b>	Collection of samples across CTE curriculum (portfolios when possible); develop rubric; review course-program alignment grids	Collection of samples across CTE curriculum (portfolios when possible); develop rubric; review course-program alignment grids	Student survey; evaluations from work experience/ internships (if applicable); develop rubric for instructor use; review course-program alignment grids	Review of course assessments; licensing exam results (if applicable); survey of former students; advisory board evaluations;	Survey of former students; EDD data; student ethnography project
<b>Collaborative Review and Proposal of Improvements (by whom)</b>	CTE committee and individual CTE disciplines	CTE committee and individual CTE disciplines	CTE committee and individual CTE disciplines	Individual CTE Disciplines	CTE committee and individual CTE disciplines
<b>How Results Shared</b>	Presented through program review process; shared with Advisory Boards; discussed at CTE meetings; Academic Senate	Presented through program review process; shared with Advisory Boards; discussed at CTE meetings; Academic Senate	Presented through program review process; shared with Advisory Boards; discussed at CTE meetings; Academic Senate	Presented through program review process; shared with Advisory Boards; discussed at CTE meetings; Academic Senate	Presented through program review process; shared with Advisory Boards; discussed at CTE meetings; Academic Senate

## General Education/Transfer Program

<b>Goal</b>	Communication Skills	Reasoning Skills	Social Responsibility/ Personal Development	Global Awareness	Achievement: AA or transfer
<b>Outcomes</b>	Students will be able to clearly express, transmit, and interpret knowledge and ideas through writing, speaking, listening and reading.	Students will be able to ask appropriate questions, collect accurate information, evaluate its quality, and reflectively and creatively analyze, synthesize and organize the information. As a result, students will be able to reason logically and come to reliable conclusions which will enable them to successfully navigate the world around them.	Students will be able to take responsibility for their own actions and well-being, make ethical decisions in complex situations, and participate actively in a diverse society. Students will develop academic habits of mind in order to become successful learners.	Students will be able to assess how the world has been and continues to be shaped by natural, social and cultural processes and evaluate how their own lives are impacted by these processes.	Students will be able to earn an AA degree and/or successfully transfer to a baccalaureate program.
<b>Evidence/ Evaluation</b>	Student survey; review of course-level assessments in English and Speech; collection of samples across GE curriculum (portfolios when available); develop rubric; review course-program alignment grids	Student survey; review of course-level assessments in critical thinking GE area; collection of samples across GE curriculum (portfolios when available); develop rubric; review course-program alignment grids	Student survey; student focus groups; student ethnography project; review of health course assessments; review course-program alignment grids	Student survey; review of course-level assessments in social sciences, natural sciences and humanities GE areas; collection of samples across curriculum (portfolios when	AA degrees granted; number of students who transfer; survey of former transfer students (preparedness for BA program)

				available); develop rubric; review course-program alignment grids	
<b>Collaborative Review and Proposal of Improvements</b>	Task force made-up of English, Speech and at least one other GE faculty rep, led by Program Assessment person	Task force made-up of English, Speech, Math, Philosophy, Psych and at least one other GE faculty rep, led by Program Assessment person	Task force made-up of Health and at several other GE faculty reps, led by Program Assessment person	Task force made-up of natural science, social science and humanities GE faculty reps, led by Program Assessment person	Reviewed by all four GE taskforces; coordinated by Program Assessment person
<b>How Results Shared</b>	English and Speech department meetings and program review process; presentations to Department Council, Academic Senate; SLO website	English, Math, Speech, Philosophy, and Psych department meetings; presentations to Department Council, Academic Senate; SLO website	Presentations to Department Council, Academic Senate; SLO website	Department meetings in appropriate disciplines; presentations to Department Council, Academic Senate; SLO website	presentations to Department Council, Academic Senate; SLO website

## **Student Experience**

At the proficiency level of the ACCJC Rubric on SLOs is the statement: “Students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled.”

All course syllabi must include approved course SLOs. At the discretion of the instructor, program SLOs and how the course supports program outcomes may also be included.

SLOs will be published in the catalog, available on the LAVC website, and should be included in any brochures or other ways that information about programs is disseminated. Counselors should consider course and program outcomes when advising students.

A bulletin board in the Administration Building and a student-oriented SLO website will be used to inform students about SLOs.

The student experience, however, is about more than just building student awareness of SLOs. Students should contribute to the process by having a student representative sit on campus-wide committees that deal with SLOs, including the SLO Committee, and by participating in student research projects such as the Student Ethnography Experience.

## **Relationship between Assessment and Planning**

SLO Assessment results and planned actions are reported in both the Annual Plan and comprehensive Program Review processes. For more information, see the Planning Handbook.

## **Assessment of the Assessment Process**

Evaluation of individual assessment efforts is inherent in the process of closing the assessment loop. Individuals must evaluate the outcome itself, the assessment tools, and the assessment process as part of interpreting the assessment results.

On a broader scale, the SLO Committee will assess the overall effectiveness of assessment on campus by conducting periodic surveys of faculty, staff, and students and by reviewing existing forms and committee meeting minutes.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### Faculty:

- Participate in the establishment and assessment outcomes of courses and programs in their discipline
- Include established SLOs on course syllabi
- Consider outcomes when designing course content and assignments
- Generate and gather data for assessment
- Participate in the Annual Plan and Program Review processes for their departments
- Serve on appropriate committees

### Staff:

- Participate in the establishment and assessment of outcomes for their areas
- Consider outcomes when designing and conducting area activities
- Participate in the Annual Plan and Program Review processes for their areas
- Serve on appropriate committees

### *Faculty Positions*

#### Discipline SLO Representatives

- Coordinate SLO efforts at the discipline level
- Work with SLO Coordinator as contact person for the discipline

#### Discipline SLO Representatives

- Coordinate SLO efforts at the discipline level
- Work with SLO Coordinator as contact person for the discipline

#### Department Chairs

- Work with department members to ensure steady progress on SLO assessment
- Include participation in the SLO assessment cycle in faculty evaluations

#### SLO Coordinator

- Oversee and coordinate SLO efforts on campus
- Respond to ACCJC Annual Report on SLOs and aid with SLO accreditation responses
- Chair SLO Steering Committee
- Maintain and grow SLO website
- Write/edit SLO Newsletter
- Attend District SLO Coordinator meetings
- Sit on Educational Master Plan Committee

#### Course Outcomes Assessment Trainer

- Educate faculty members about various course assessment techniques (e.g., rubrics)
- Sit on Curriculum Committee and chair VCCC SLO Subcommittee
- Coordinate with faculty colleagues about progress on course SLOs and assessment
- Assist faculty in analyzing results of assessments

#### Program Outcomes Assessment Coordinator

- Coordinate assessment of college-wide outcomes (GE/transfer, CTE and Developmental Programs)
- Coordinate assessment of General Studies degrees and IGETC/CSU Breadth Certificates
- Coordinate campus theme-years on college-wide outcomes
- Educate faculty about various program assessment techniques (e.g. surveys, portfolios)
- Coordinate with faculty colleagues about progress on program SLOs and assessment

#### *Administration*

##### Academic Affairs Deans

- Review SLO submissions, annual plans, and program reviews as appropriate
- Encourage and support departments in the SLOAC

##### Student Services/Administrative Services/President's Office SLO Representatives

- Sit on SLO Steering Committee
- Tech review submissions from their areas
- Bring forward submissions from their areas to the SLO Committee

##### Dean of Research and Planning

- Sit on SLO Steering Committee
- Advise SLO Committee and disciplines on research matters
- Conduct data gathering and analysis for assessment as appropriate
- Work to include assessment results in all planning processes

##### Vice-Presidents

- Encourage and support SLO efforts in their respective areas
- Include participation in the SLO assessment cycle in evaluation process
- Conduct assessment cycles in their own offices

##### President

- Encourage and support SLO efforts on campus
- Ensure SLOAC efforts in areas that report to the President's Office and in the office itself

#### *Committees*

##### SLO Steering Committee

- Oversee and coordinate SLO efforts at the campus level
- Propose forms, processes, and SLO-related policies
- Review and approve outcomes for non-instructional programs and areas
- Review outcomes assessment reports for all areas
- Showcase SLO efforts and promote the campus-wide understanding and integration of SLOs

- Bring instructional policy items to the Academic Senate
- Bring non-instructional policy items to College Council

#### Curriculum Committee

- Review and approve course and instructional program outcomes
- Post approved SLOs on VCCC website

#### Academic Senate

- Review and approve Curriculum committee actions
- Review and approve SLO policies proposed by the SLO Steering Committee relevant to instructional programs and faculty roles

#### Instructional Programs Committee

- Include SLOAC reporting in Annual Plan and Program Review processes
- Consider SLOAC results in planning and allocation of resources

#### College Council

- Review and approve SLO policies proposed by the SLO Steering Committee
- Consider SLOAC results in planning and allocation of resources

#### Student Services Committee

- Support and encourage SLO efforts in Student Services areas
- Review SLO submissions by Student Services areas before submission to the SLO Committee

#### Professional Development/ STARS Steering Committee

- Conduct activities related to the GE outcome theme years
- Conduct training on SLO-related activities

## **Additional Resources**

ACCJC Webpage ([www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org))

LAVC Educational Master Plan ([www.lavc.edu/emp/EdMasterPlan.html](http://www.lavc.edu/emp/EdMasterPlan.html))

LAVC Accreditation Webpage ([www.lavc.edu/Accreditation/index.html](http://www.lavc.edu/Accreditation/index.html))

LAVC Curriculum Webpage ([www.lavc.edu/vccc/](http://www.lavc.edu/vccc/))

LAVC SLO Webpage ([www.lavc.edu/slo](http://www.lavc.edu/slo))

LAVC IPC Webpage ([www.lavc.edu/ipc](http://www.lavc.edu/ipc))

LAVC Program Review Handbook ([www.lavc.edu/ipc/prgrvw.html](http://www.lavc.edu/ipc/prgrvw.html))

LAVC Fact Book ([www.lavc.edu/research/index.htm](http://www.lavc.edu/research/index.htm))

LACCD Institutional Effectiveness: SLOs ([www.laccd.edu/inst\\_effectiveness/Student\\_Learning/](http://www.laccd.edu/inst_effectiveness/Student_Learning/))

**Choosing the Right Assessment Tool**

([online.bakersfieldcollege.edu/courseassessment/Section\\_4\\_Assessment\\_Tools/Section4\\_8b.htm](http://online.bakersfieldcollege.edu/courseassessment/Section_4_Assessment_Tools/Section4_8b.htm))

**Assessment Tool Checklist**

([online.bakersfieldcollege.edu/courseassessment/Section\\_4\\_Assessment\\_Tools/Section4\\_9.htm](http://online.bakersfieldcollege.edu/courseassessment/Section_4_Assessment_Tools/Section4_9.htm))

## **Appendix**

### SLO Forms to Establish SLOs:

- Course-SLO form
- Program SLO form
- Non-Degree Program SLO form
- Student Services SLO Form
- Administrative Services SLO Form
- President's Office SLO Forms

### SLO Forms to Report on Assessments:

- Course SLOAC Report Form
- Program SLOAC Report Form
- Non-Degree Program SLOAC Report form
- Student Services SLOAC Report Form
- Administrative Services SLOAC Report Form
- President's Office SLOAC Report Forms

Annual Plan Form – Instructional Areas

Annual Plan Form – Non-Instructional Areas

Program Review Form

Bloom's Taxonomy

ASCCC SLO Glossary

ACCJC Rubric on SLOs

SLO Committee Interpretation of ACCJC Rubric on SLOs