Learning Outcomes: General Approach

Learning Outcomes

- Used to define intended learning goals, assess achievement of those goals, and improve purposeful learning experiences provided to people who are not students
- Learners may be University faculty or staff, members of the community, parents/families of students or children, visitors
- Required elements and structure are same as for student learning outcomes
- Careful attention to defining learning experiences and assessment strategies is required

Differentiating employee learning outcomes from performance measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is being assessed</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Employee Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance against standards</td>
<td>Achievement of intended learning goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject of assessment</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Learning experience (e.g., training; orientation; on-the-job supervision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form of assessment</td>
<td>Performance evaluation</td>
<td>Varies; common feature = show learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of assessment</td>
<td>Personnel actions</td>
<td>Improvement of learning experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intended Learning Outcomes

- Define a learning outcome, as distinguished from a student learning outcome.
- Identify at least three potential audiences, or groups of learners, who are not students but to whom Student Affairs might offer an intentional learning experience.
- Explain the four required elements of a learning outcome.
- Differentiate the alignment of a student learning outcome with institution-wide learning outcomes from the ways a broadly-focused learning outcome might be aligned with other purposes and priorities.
- Give at least one example of a learning experience that might support a broadly-focused learning outcome.
Four Required Elements of a Learning Outcome

- Group(s) of Learners Engaged
- Learning Experience
- Intended Learning Goal
- How Learning Will Be Demonstrated

Format for writing broadly-focused learning outcomes

- New staff members
- Parents of first year students
- Elders

Who: Will participate in
- Program
- Presentation
- Series of sessions
- Performance

Intended elements: Will be able to
- Interview
- Observed behavior
- Journaling
- Blog
- Portfolio
- Post-survey
- Performance

Identify: As demonstrated by
- Interview
- Observed behavior
- Journaling
- Blog
- Portfolio
- Post-survey
- Performance

List
- More/fewer than
- All

Describe
- At least... with X% accuracy
- More/fewer than
- All

Summarize

Discuss

Explain

Demonstrate

Major Categories of Learning Outcomes

Knowledge
- Cognitive Skills (problem-solving, analytic thinking)
- Life Skills (parenting, mentoring, teamwork, performance, leadership)

Relate to Self and Others
- Citizenship; Social Responsibility; Engagement with Difference; Multicultural Perspective

Guidelines for Learning Outcomes

- The more specific, the better
- Clearly define the learning experience
- Ask yourself: “How would you know the learner had achieved the intended learning?” Say, do, act like...
- Practical
- Measurable
- Meaningful
### Learning Outcome Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works Well</th>
<th>Do Not Provide Clear Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define, describe, discuss, explain</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name, identify</td>
<td>Be aware of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare, distinguish, conclude, synthesize, integrate</td>
<td>Understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate, assess</td>
<td>Appreciate, enjoy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 1: Define a Learning Experience

- Identify a learning goal linked to mission, principles, priorities of the department, unit, division
- Define a learning experience that would meet that need
- Clearly specify the details of the learning experience: who the learners will be, how they will be gathered, what will be done, how that will happen, when it will occur, etc.

### Step 2: Draft the Learning Outcome

- Draft a statement of the intended learning outcome for the learning experience.

### Step 3: Develop Assessment Plan

- Develop an assessment plan through which to determine whether the learning outcome is achieved.
- This will often require development of a rubric.
Rubric Structure Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Element 1</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Element 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Element 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Element 4</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 4: Close the Loop

- Determine the action steps that will be taken to improve the learning experience if the outcome is achieved at various levels of success.

Difference: Alignment

- Institutional / University Learning Outcomes
- Divisional Student Learning Outcomes
- Departmental/Unit Student Learning Outcomes
- Program Student Learning Outcomes
- Specific Activity-Based Student Learning Outcome

CAS SLO | U Vic Outcomes | Dimensions
---|----------------|-------------------
Knowledge | I, III, IV, V | Understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines; connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas, experiences; constructing knowledge; relating knowledge to daily life
Cognitive Complexity | II, V, VI, X | Critical thinking, reflective thinking, effective reasoning, creativity
Intrapersonal Development | X, XI | Realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics and integrity; spiritual awareness
Interpersonal Competence | VII, VIII, IX | Meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, effective leadership
Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement | VII, VIII, IX, X | Understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences, global perspective, social responsibility, civic responsibility
Practical Competence | III, VI, X, XI | Pursuing goals, communicating effectively, technological competence, managing personal affairs, managing career, professionalism, health and wellness, purposeful and satisfying life
Alignment

- Institutional or Divisional staff capacity/competency expectations
- New faculty or staff orientation goals
- Faculty development program/session goals
- Division/department mission, priorities
- Sequenced, progressive capacity development — leadership, supervision, mentoring, responding to students' behavior or needs

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