



# PLAN ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT PROCESS STEP I

# PLAN ASSESSMENT

You will complete an initial assessment plan now, and update the plan each year when you submit your assessment report. This connects the results from the previous cycle to the changes planned for the new cycle.



# SIX COMPONENTS OF AN ASSESSMENT PLAN





# ANALYZE PROGRAM MISSION

## COMPONENT ONE



# ANALYZE PROGRAM MISSION

It is important to consider the institutional, department, and program mission statements.

1. Institutional missions are the foundation upon which everything we do is based. Departmental mission statements, and in turn program mission statements, should flow from and directly support the overall institutional mission.
2. Accreditors will evaluate how well an institution executes its mission through its academic programs and other endeavors.
3. Assessment planning time provides an excellent opportunity to call our attention back to these statements of who we are and what we are about.
4. The program-level learning goals and outcomes for our assessment plans must be directly related to the program mission.

We want to be able to “connect the dots” all the way back up through the hierarchy to the institution’s mission

# TAMIU MISSION

Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society. TAMIU provides a learning environment built on a solid academic foundation in the arts and sciences. The University offers a range of baccalaureate and master's programs and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in International Business Administration.

In addition, the University pursues a progressive agenda for global study and understanding across all disciplines.

Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, TAMIU improves the quality of lives for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.



PLEASE REFERENCE “MISSION STATEMENT  
WORKSHEET” FOR PRACTICE



# OUTCOMES

## COMPONENT TWO



# OUTCOMES

**Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)** are a formal statement of what students are expected to learn in a degree program. Program learning outcome statements refer to specific knowledge, practical skills, areas of professional development, attitudes, higher-order thinking skills, etc. that faculty members and administrators expect students to develop, learn, or master during a degree program.

**Simply stated PLOs describe what students should know **AND** be able to do at the end of their degree program.**

# WRITING PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

## Learning Outcome Formula:

**Who** + **Action Verb** + **What** (desired learning outcome)

Clear, measurable PLO: Graduates of the program will be able to summarize the major theories of human development.

Ambiguous, not measurable PLO: Graduates of the program should ~~understand~~ basic human development theory.

Bloom's Taxonomy helps to select a measureable and higher order thinking verb when developing PLOs (Available on our OIARP website)

# HOW MANY OUTCOMES?

- Programs should identify at least three, and not more than five, program outcomes.
- The outcomes should reflect the primary things that program graduates should know and be able to do.
- Plan to assess only two or three outcomes each cycle, and think about how to rotate among them all.

## LEVEL I OUTCOMES – BRAINSTORMING

USE “HOW TO CREATE PLO WORKSHEET” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE

- Keeping that program goal in mind, use sticky notes or scraps of paper to jot down as many knowledge areas or skills as you can think of. *For now, don't think about any rules about writing learning outcomes – we'll get to the rules later.*
- Rearrange your sticky notes into groups or clusters that are at least somewhat related to another.
- As you recognize the cluster, you will probably identify several broad knowledge and skill areas for your program. Those broad outcomes will likely include discipline-specific content knowledge and skills, and general areas such as critical thinking, research skills, quantitative reasoning, communications, or others, depending on the discipline, the level (associates, baccalaureate, graduate, professional), and the specific purpose and focus of the program. Assign names to those broad outcomes.



## LEVEL 2 & 3 OUTCOMES – BRAINSTORMING

*USE “HOW TO CREATE PLO WORKSHEET” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE*

Each of the Level 1 outcomes for the program could be used to identify several program-level outcomes.

- Divide the Level 1 outcomes into several smaller outcomes that we'll call Level 2 outcomes.
  - Example: Level 1 Outcome: Communication → Level 2 Outcomes: Written Communication and Oral Communication
- Level 2 outcomes may also have several possible outcomes associated with them. We'll call those Level 3 outcomes.
  - Example: Level 2 Outcome: Oral Communication → Level 3 Outcomes: Public Speaking or Work Relations
  - If your Level 3 outcome is still broad, revise it to focus on the outcome statement you'll flesh out.



# GUIDELINES WHEN WRITING OUTCOMES

USE “HOW TO WRITE A PLO WORKSHEET” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE

1. Outcome statements should directly support at least one program goal.
2. Consider incorporating general education outcomes, but do so within the context of the field.

Example:

<b>Weak:</b> Graduates of the BS in Justice and Policy Studies program will be critical thinkers.	<b>Better:</b> Graduates of the BS JPS program will be able to analyze a current issue in criminal justice.
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3. Write outcomes that are observable and measurable.

Example:

<b>Weak:</b> Graduates of the BS JPS program will understand the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution	<b>Better:</b> Graduates of the BS JPS program will be able to analyze a current search and seizure issue.
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4. Write outcomes statements that focus on knowledge and skills graduates should possess.



# GUIDELINES WHEN WRITING OUTCOMES

## USE “HOW TO WRITE A PLO WORKSHEET” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE

- For programs that have specialized accreditation or certifications, write outcomes statements that take those assessment expectations in consideration.

Example:


<p><b>External Standard:</b> American Bar Association Standard 302(a)(2) A law school shall require that each student receive substantial instruction in legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem solving and oral communication.</p>	<p><b>Outcome Aligned with Standard:</b> Graduates of the Juris Doctor program will be able to make effective use of technology in legal research.</p>
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- Write outcomes statements that do not combine multiple outcomes in a single statement.

Example:

<p><b>Multiple Outcomes (5):</b> Graduates of the _____ program will be (1) lifelong learners who (2) understand the concepts of psychology and can (3) apply those concepts to (4) design and (5) conduct research studies.</p>	<p><b>Single Outcomes (1):</b> Graduates of the _____ program will be able (1) conduct research.</p>	<p><b>Complex Outcome (1):</b> Graduates of the _____ program will be able to function in a team-based interdisciplinary environment to solve complex problems.</p>
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- Write outcome statements that are short and concise.
- Write outcome statements in form of “Graduates of the \_\_\_\_\_ program will be able to \_\_\_\_\_.”



PLEASE REFERENCE “PLO EXAMPLES USING DEGREE  
QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE” FOR MORE OUTCOME  
WRITING ASSISTANCE





# MEASURES

COMPONENT THREE – “IF YOU CANNOT MEASURE IT YOU CANNOT IMPROVE IT” – BARON KELVIN

# MEASURES

Measures answer the question of how we know whether graduates **know** and can **do** the things in our outcomes.

It helps us to find where in the curriculum students have opportunities to learn the content or skill of the outcome, and where they have chances to try out and demonstrate their learning.



## DIRECT MEASURES AND INDIRECT MEASURES *USE “DIRECT V. INDIRECT” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE*

Best practice suggests identifying two direct measures of student learning, and one indirect measure.

Direct Measure – Students demonstrate their learning through a performance of some kind.

Indirect Measure – Does not call on students to demonstrate their knowledge of skill, but provides other information from which we can draw inferences about student learning.



# GUIDELINES WHEN IDENTIFYING MEASURES

*USE “GUIDELINES FOR MEASURES” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE*

1. Identify at least two measures for each outcome.
2. Measure student learning on the outcome near the end of the program.
3. Avoid purchasing or creating additional tests or other assessment activities simply to satisfy your assessment data collection needs.
4. Course grades and course completion are **NEVER** appropriate measures of student learning.
5. An overall grade for an exam, project, etc. may or may not be appropriate.



## GUIDELINES WHEN IDENTIFYING MEASURES

*USE “GUIDELINES FOR MEASURES” ALONGSIDE THIS SLIDE*

6. Be specific.
7. Do not write a long description of the measure.
8. Don't combine multiple measures as one.
9. Don't use pre-post measures.
10. Use the same measure for more than one outcome, if relevant.



# TARGETS

## COMPONENT FOUR



# TARGETS

Targets communicate our expectations about how well students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skill on the outcomes.

**Primary Target** – Identify the level of performance necessary to satisfy us that total student performance on the measure indicates that the program outcome has been achieved.

**Secondary Target** – Identify a lower threshold below which we do not want student performance to fall. Can be useful in programs with high percentage of at-risk or developmental students.

Targets must be identified prior to the collection and analysis of assessment data. Be careful about setting targets too high or too low.

# PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TARGET WRITING

A primary target is written as a statement indicating that *at least* some percentage of students will perform at or above a certain level on the measure.

A secondary target is written in conjunction with a primary target, and indicates that *no more than* some percentage of students will fall below a certain level on the measure.

A primary target must be provided for every measure. Secondary targets are optional

Example:

(P) 80% or more of students will earn 75% or higher on [subset of outcome-related test items] on the final exam. (S) No more than 10% of students will earn below 60% on [subset of outcome-related test items] on the final exam.





# GUIDELINES TO SETTING TARGETS

1. The target must be directly related to measure.

Example: Exam = threshold of performance on the exam. Survey item = respondents' ratings on that particular item

2. Write targets in this format:

- “XX% of students will earn a grade/rating of YY or higher on the [name of exam/project].“
- “XX% of students will [pass/successfully defend] the [licensure exam, exam, dissertation] on the first attempt.”
- “XX% of respondents will report that [use scale points from survey item].”

3. Course grades and course completion are not appropriate for use with targets.

4. No pre-post targets



# SAMPLING

## COMPONENT FIVE



# SAMPLING

It is important that you collect and analyze data from a group of program majors about whom inferences will be drawn.

The goal is to identify a reasonably representative group of program majors in your data collection.

Do not include students enrolled in a course used for data collection if they are not majors in your program.



# GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE SAMPLING STRATEGIES

1. Before the fact. The sampling strategy statement reflects the decision about how you will select a reasonably representative group of program majors AND minimally answers the following questions:
  - How many students will be included in data collection?
  - Who will those students be?
  - What timeframe is associated with data collection? This is dictated by when the course is offered during academic year.
  - Other unique parameters (e.g., specific course section; specific level of student, e.g., junior, senior)?
2. Program Majors only.
3. Reasonably representative

# ASSESSMENT PLAN

You have now completed the complex and time consuming work of planning your assessment activities.

# REFERENCES

- Baker, W. (2012). *Assessment 101: Academic Assessment*  
<http://www.counciloakassessment.com/>