General Education Assessment Reporting

Institutional Effectiveness
UNA Office of Academic Affairs

To access Watermark:

On the Academic Affairs page:
Click on Assessment and IE (left side)
Then, click on the Annual Report Log In
(gold button top left)
Use your UNA username and password to log in
Click on 2023-2024 General Education Assessment

Annual Report: Required Components

1) Gen Ed Core Competencies for the course

2) At least 3 Student Learning Outcomes, each addressing one Core Competency

3) At least 2 direct measures per Student Learning Outcome

4) Description of each measure, why it was selected and what it measures

5) Analysis of assessment results that identifies any gaps in learning

6) Continuous Improvement Actions based on these analyses of results. These actions must utilize best instructional practices to improve student learning.

General Education Core Competencies

1. Information Literacy

2. Critical Thinking

3. Effective Communication

4. Scientific Literacy

5. Aesthetic Awareness and Creativity

6. Cross-cultural and Global Perspectives

7. Informed Citizenship

General Education Core Competencies

UNA's General Education Core Competencies are listed in the UNA Undergraduate Student Handbook.

Each of the competencies has been strategically mapped across our general education curricula.

Each program must assess student learning outcomes addressing these competencies, analyze results and use these data to design and implement continuous improvement actions that support student learning.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) describe the specific, measurable *knowledge, values, or skills* that students will be able to demonstrate.

They measure what students should know, think or be able to do.

These outcomes must be written in precise language focused on the student (not the program).

They must address one General Education Core Competency.

Identifying Student Learning Outcomes

Do not write learning outcomes that you know your students have already mastered.

If you anticipate that 100 percent of your students will meet benchmark on a particular assignment or assessment used to measure a learning outcome, there is no point in selecting that as an outcome.

Consider where there are gaps in student learning in your program.

Where have you noticed students struggling?

If your program uses post-graduate surveys or focus groups to track graduate satisfaction, where are the areas that graduates perceive themselves to be less prepared? In what ways do employers say graduates are unprepared?

Where have faculty noticed poor performance in class?

Where are areas for growth identified by student performance on state licensure exams?
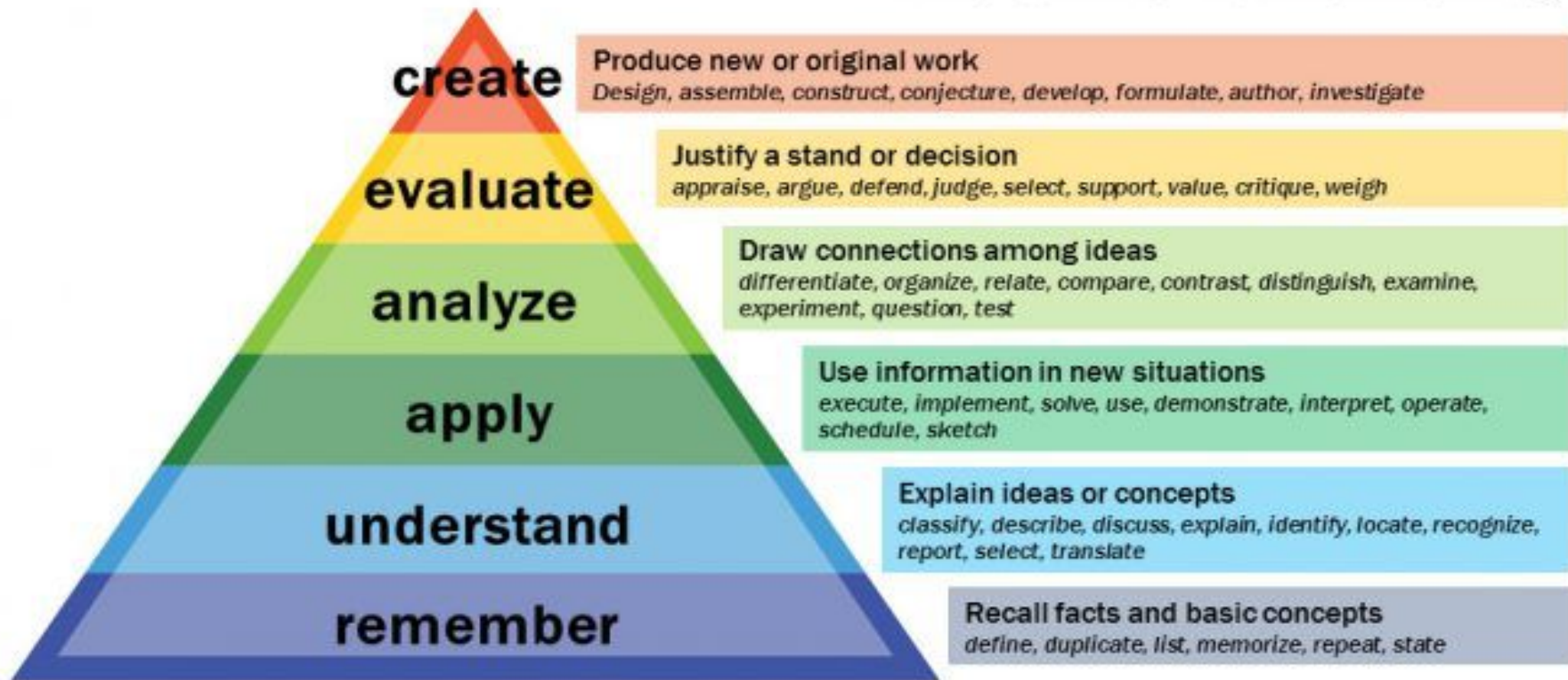
Writing Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes should be written as:

Students will be able to …. (insert action verb) (insert subject content *specific knowledge, value or skill*) (insert level of achievement) (insert condition of performance if applicable).

Use [Bloom's Taxonomy (1956)](#) to select appropriate verbs for your learning outcomes.

The Core Competency should be included in the title of the learning outcome in Watermark..

Bloom's Taxonomy

create — Produce new or original work
Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate

evaluate — Justify a stand or decision
appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh

analyze — Draw connections among ideas
differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test

apply — Use information in new situations
execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch

understand — Explain ideas or concepts
classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate

remember — Recall facts and basic concepts
define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state

Verbs Matter

Use concrete action verbs that specify a terminal, observable, and successful performance rather than passive verbs that are not observable.

For example, these are <u>not</u> observable and are difficult to quantify:
"be exposed to"
"be familiar with"
"develop an appreciation of"

[Bloom's Taxonomy Action Verbs](#) provide strong verbs that specify a terminal, observable and successful performance.

Examples of Student Learning Outcomes

Natural Sciences

- Students can apply the scientific methodology in a research proposal.
- Students can evaluate the validity and limitations of theories and scientific claims in experimental results.
- Students can assess the relevance and application of science in everyday life.

Psychology

- Graduates can write research papers in APA (American Psychological Association) style.
- Graduates can analyze experimental results and draw reasonable conclusions from them.
- Graduates can recognize and articulate the foundational assumptions, central ideas, and dominant criticisms of the psychoanalytic, behaviorist, humanistic, and cognitive approaches to psychology.

History

- Students can list major events in American history.
- Students can describe major events and trends in American history.
- Students can apply their knowledge of American history to examine contemporary American issues.

From the University of Hawaii at Manoa

Questions to Consider

Are the outcomes aligned to one assigned core competency?

Do the outcomes describe the knowledge, abilities, and/or attitudes expected of the competency?

Do outcomes represent higher levels of learning domains?

Do outcomes reflect learning through the general education curriculum?

Do outcomes focus on student learning rather than instructional or administrative processes?

Are outcomes stated in clear and precise language?

Do outcomes focus on key areas in which outcomes assessment will enable the program to improve?

Direct Measures

Each Student Learning Outcome must be assessed by at least two direct measures that assess the extent to which learning was achieved.

Direct measures directly assess the student learning outcome - the knowledge, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate.

They measure what students <u>have learned</u> and <u>to what extent learning has occurred</u>.

Identify the target score for the measure. Justify it by explaining how it is appropriate for the student learning outcome, the measure and the specific student population.

Examples of Direct Measures

comprehensive exams

course-embedded exams

pretest/posttest evaluations

standardized tests

performance on licensure exams

course projects

case study problems

papers

performances

theses

discussion/debates

capstone projects

samples of individual student work

portfolios of student work

internal or external juried review of student work

externally reviewed internship or practica

presentations

documented observations and analysis of student performance

Indirect Measures

You may also choose to use an indirect measure, in addition to the required two direct measures. This is optional.

Indirect measures indirectly measure learning. For example, they may capture student perceptions of their learning. These measures may include questionnaires, surveys, reflections, and curriculum analyses.

Note: Course grades cannot be used to measure student learning outcomes.

Data Analysis

Data analysis should discuss progress toward target/benchmarks for the assessment and should describe any gaps in student learning.

Analysis should describe whether the core competency was appropriately mastered.

If more than one core competency was addressed by the SLO, data analysis must disaggregate and provide data (aligned with rubric rows, specific test questions, etc.) for each core competency.

Continuous Improvement

Based on an analysis of data, programs must identify continuous improvement actions that change curriculum and/or pedagogy to support student learning. These must be aligned with the appropriate core competency.

These changes must be monitored over time to determine if they were successful in supporting student learning.

Programs should track the progress of these changes and report them.

Examples of Continuous Improvement Actions

Providing more examples in class or Canvas modules

Adding opportunities for students to receive feedback related to particular content

Adding more coverage of particular content in the course

Adding more practice opportunities or changing content in labs

Adding a method of content delivery (i.e. incorporating a video on the topic or a hands-on activity, a collaborative discussion or experiential learning)

Collaborating with the UNA Center for Writing Success to incorporate one-on-one sessions for students to revise papers

Collaborating with partners in the field to develop a new module for the course

Providing a new or different type of field experience to support experiential learning of the content

Offer additional opportunities for review of content

Outcomes Mastered

What do I do if most, or all, of my students met the benchmark on the direct measures? How do I identify ways to continuously improve?

Analyze the data closely. Identify any gaps that might be addressed - even if just a few students fell below benchmark.

Even if all students met benchmarks, look for trends that indicate gaps on particular questions or sections of the assessment.

How can you adjust curriculum to address their learning gaps? Can you offer additional opportunities for practice or feedback for them?

Questions?

Contact Dr. Lorie Johnson
SACSCOC Liaison

ljohnson15@una.edu

765-4723