Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Progress Report for De Anza College

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Student Learning Outcomes Process

<u>Definition and Process</u>

Conceptual Framework

At De Anza College, we view Student Learning Outcomes as a cyclical process, one that spirals outwards, from a concentrated, specific core to a broader, inter-connected shell through reflection and improvement. We see the Student Learning Outcomes Process as an opportunity to develop a meaningful method of professional reflection for everyone at the College, that will encourage us to enrich our work, while still maintaining the shape of our institution.

Student Learning Outcomes Process

De Anza College views the Student Learning Outcomes Process as having three main layers—the first is at the course level, the second is at the program level, and the third is the institutional level. In order to shape our efforts at reflection and self improvement, we started with establishing the Institutional Core Competencies, which serve as the institutional outcomes. From those Core Competencies, the faculty are developing their course level Outcomes, and the Student Services areas will develop their Outcomes. Since the Core Competencies encapsulate our goals for both instruction and service, the College is currently revising its Mission Statement to incorporate the Institutional Core Competencies.

<u>Institutional Outcomes</u>

De Anza College created the Institutional Core Competencies to serve as our institutional outcomes. The five Institutional Core Competencies are: Communication and Expression; Information Literacy; Physical/Mental Wellness and Personal Responsibility; Global, Cultural, Social & Environmental Awareness; Critical Thinking. Each of these Core Competencies has been defined in terms that will allow us to assess how well students are achieving these goals. An example is the Competency of Communication and Expression, which is defined as:
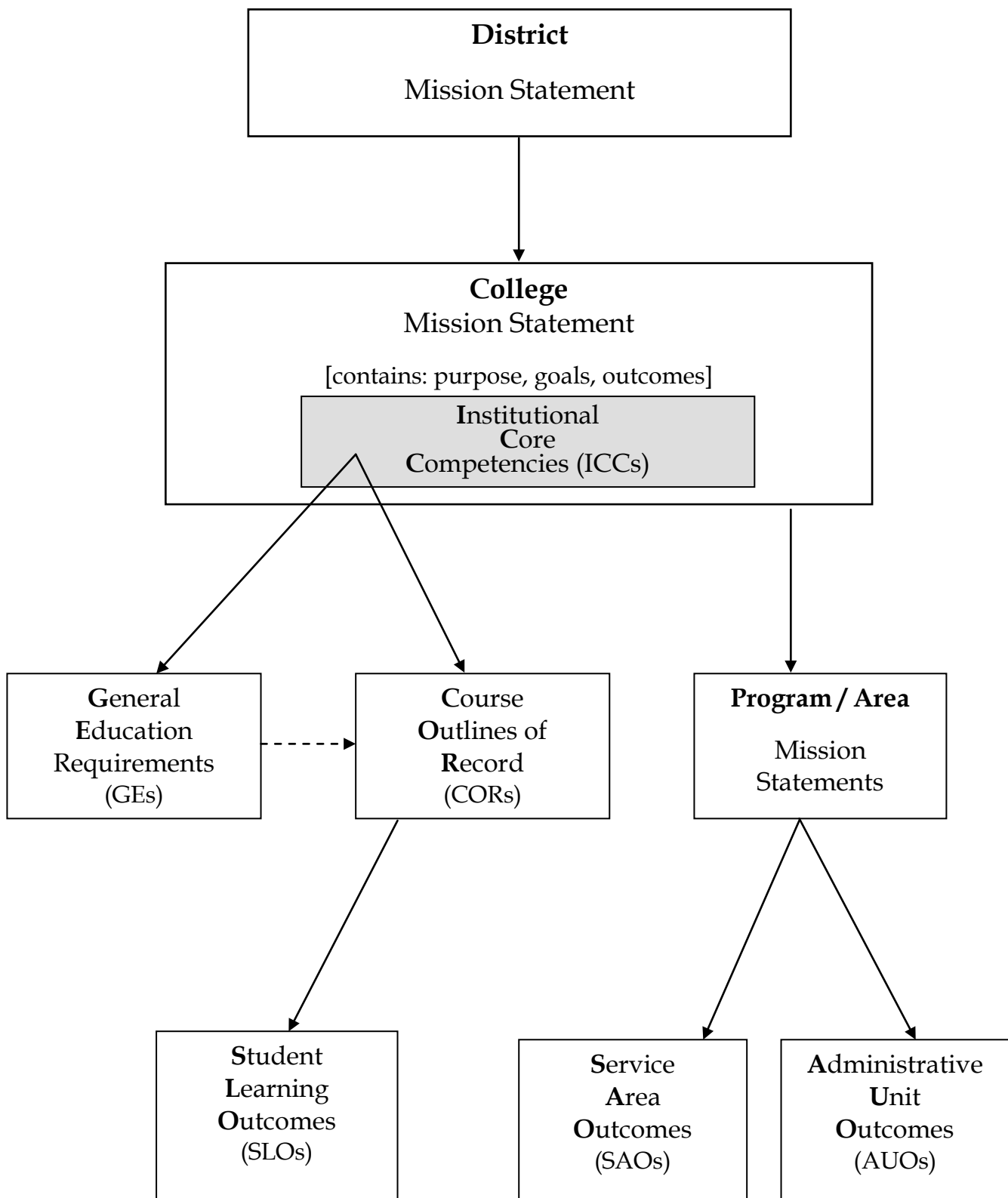
Students will:
- Communicate clearly
- Express themselves creatively
- Interpret thoughtfully and logically
- Engage actively in dialogue an discussion
- Pay attention to audience, situation, and (inter) cultural context

- Format may be: written, oral, verbal or nonverbal, informational or artistic

The Institutional Core Competencies and specific skills such as those listed above will serve as a template for the College when establishing, defining, and evaluating the Student Learning Outcomes Process.

This relationship between the Core Competencies and Outcomes can be best expressed in the following diagram on page 4.

Mission Statements, Institutional Core Competencies, & Outcomes

District

Mission Statement

College
Mission Statement

[contains: purpose, goals, outcomes]

Institutional
Core
Competencies (ICCs)

General
Education
Requirements
(GEs)

Course
Outlines of
Record
(CORs)

Program / Area

Mission
Statements

Student
Learning
Outcomes
(SLOs)

Service
Area
Outcomes
(SAOs)

Administrative
Unit
Outcomes
(AUOs)

Course Level Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes

The Student Learning Outcomes Process begins with the desire to improve; in order to improve effectively, the College began with the following question, at three levels (the course, program, and institution) of the Student Learning Outcomes Process: What are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes we want our students to develop, deepen, and carry with them, at the end of their studies at De Anza College?

The underlying aim with this question is to ensure that the entire college is meeting the needs of the students, to create the most effective learning environment. In order to determine how well we are meeting the students' needs, the Outcomes process also contains an assessment phase, which begins at the course level. At this level, the faculty ask: How do we know what students have learned? What do we expect students to be able to do when they have completed a degree, program, or course? More importantly, what can we do, or what can we change, to deepen our students' learning? These questions guiding our evaluation of what our students are learning will allow us to gather information in a systematic way, to enable us to devise effective changes. These changes will flow into the program and institutional outcomes, via the process of Program Review.

Program Level Outcomes

Service Area Outcomes

Just as the Instructional area of the College is focusing on Student Learning Outcomes, the Service areas are also developing and implementing Outcomes to enhance their program effectiveness. They are developing their Outcomes based on the College Mission Statement and their Program Mission Statements. The Service areas have already established a culture of self-improvement and assessment, so their main task is to codify what they are currently doing in a format corresponding to the Student Learning Outcomes Process.
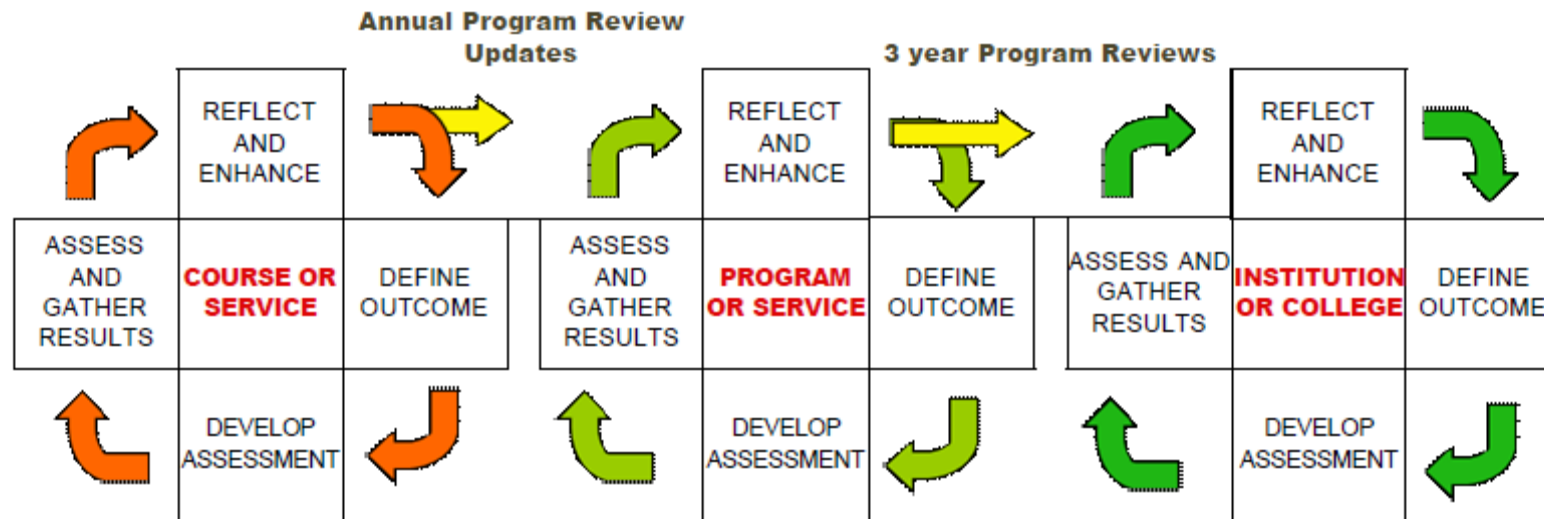
Administrative Unit Outcomes

The Administrative areas of the College will also develop and implement Outcomes because even though they do not directly interact with students, their direction and leadership influence the functioning of the entire college. Their Outcomes will also be assessed and incorporated into their Program Review.

Program Review

All three kinds of outcomes: Student Learning Outcomes, Service Area Outcomes, and Administrative Unit Outcomes will form the basis for current and future Program Reviews and the College's Planning and Budgeting processes.

The chart below illustrates this upward spiral, starting at the course outcomes whose assessment results then influence the program outcomes, which then direct the institution's process of needs assessment.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES PROCESS

Annual Program Review Updates

3 year Program Reviews

	REFLECT AND ENHANCE			REFLECT AND ENHANCE			REFLECT AND ENHANCE	
ASSESS AND GATHER RESULTS	**COURSE OR SERVICE**	DEFINE OUTCOME	ASSESS AND GATHER RESULTS	**PROGRAM OR SERVICE**	DEFINE OUTCOME	ASSESS AND GATHER RESULTS	**INSTITUTION OR COLLEGE**	DEFINE OUTCOME
	DEVELOP ASSESSMENT			DEVELOP ASSESSMENT			DEVELOP ASSESSMENT	

Note: Ideally, these three levels would work almost simultaneously, but would begin at the Course level.

Our Plans: Past and Present

De Anza's approach has focused on creating a lasting process, through deliberately creating a streamlined, straightforward process into which faculty, staff, and administration can fully engage. To this end, we have emphasized educating the College, both the faculty and the service areas, so that they understand what Outcomes are, in order to progress in a meaningful way.

2007-2008
In the 2007-2008 Academic Year, the College began to focus on defining its Institutional Core Competencies and raising faculty awareness about the concept of Outcomes.

2008-2009
In the 2008-2009 Academic Year, the Academic Senate revised and finalized the Institutional Core Competencies, and also realized the need to focus on Outcomes for both the Instruction and Service areas of the College. The College had initially planned to focus on the Instruction (Learning) Outcomes first, since the those outcomes extend into each and every course in contrast to the Service Area outcomes, which extend to the broader program level. However, upon reviewing the SLO Rubric of the Accrediting Commission, the Academic Senate recommended to the administration that the SLO Coordinator position be split into two positions, one for Instruction, and the other for Student Services, since outcomes are required in both areas.

Once the two new Outcomes Coordinators were hired, a group, consisting of the two Outcomes Coordinators, the Vice President for Instruction, Vice President for Student Services, the Academic Senate President, and the Faculty Co-Chair of Curriculum, began to meet monthly to brief the Vice Presidents on current activities and plan how to meet future needs.

Additionally, faculty composed an ad-hoc SLO Team consisting of: the two Outcomes Coordinators, the Academic Senate President, and the Faculty Co-Chair of Curriculum, which meets weekly (or more frequently as needed) to identify and plan for future needs, identify and develop resources, implement training and update others on campus as needed. The Academic Senate President informs the Academic Senate as needed, as does the Faculty Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

Activities for 2008-2009

In the Fall 2008 quarter, the College sponsored a workshop for members of the Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee to learn about assessment methods for outcomes. As a result of this workshop, the Academic Senate chose the course-embedded assessment method as a first step in evaluating learning outcomes.

In January 2009, the two new coordinators, one for Instruction and the other for Student Services, began working with the Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee to develop plans and timelines for establishing outcomes at the College.

On February 3, 2009, De Anza received a response from Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, expressing its concern that De Anza College was sufficiently delayed in its Student Learning Outcomes work that the College should make a concerted effort to meet the deadline. The excerpt from the letter is pasted below.

Recommendation 1

The team recommends that the college engage in a broad-based dialogue that leads to the establishment of a process for the assessment of student learning outcomes, including the establishment of timelines and the identification of responsible parties. This process should result in:

- the identification of student learning outcomes for courses, programs (instructional, student support services, learning support services), certificates, and degrees;
- the assessment and evaluation of student progress toward achieving these outcomes; and
- the use of the results to improve student learning.

(Standards I.B, II.A, II.B, II.C, III.A.1.c; Eligibility Requirement 10; Eligibility Requirement 19)

With regard to Recommendation 1, the Commission is concerned that due to the late start, DeAnza College will have difficulty meeting the 2012 deadline for compliance with the rubric and standards related to student learning outcomes and needs to accelerate its efforts to fully address the recommendation.

After receiving the Accrediting Commission's response to the Mid-Term focused report, the College decided to accelerate its efforts. One of the more notable efforts is to institute an Annual Program Review so that by the end of next year, we will be able to incorporate the assessment results into the College's planning, rather than waiting for the regularly scheduled program review in 2011-2012.

In Winter 2009, the College sponsored a workshop to train the Faculty SLO Division Liaisons. The Liaisons are currently (in Spring 2009) piloting an assessment model which they will share with the College during the Fall 2009 Opening Day activities. The Liaisons are also educating faculty in their divisions about what Student Learning Outcomes are, and train them so that they write Student Learning Outcomes for courses in their areas. In the Fall 2009, faculty will then concentrate on developing assessment methods for those Student Learning Outcomes.

In the Spring 2009 quarter, the College sponsored a workshop for staff, faculty, and administrators in how to write and assess Service Area Outcomes. These attendees will take that knowledge to their areas so that each can develop Outcomes and assess them in the 2009-2010.

The College is also working towards the following:

- Sponsoring a workshop for the Administrative areas in developing Administrative Unit Outcomes and delineating the responsibilities of Administrators in the Student Learning Outcomes Process.

- establish a website for the SLO efforts, to inform the entire campus community of what we are currently doing, and future plans. It's still in development, but please visit   http://www.deanza.edu/slo
  Note: Many, many thanks to Andrew LaManque and Julie Ceballos for developing the website!

- lengthen the Coordinator positions to three year terms, rather than yearly, to ensure a greater level of continuity in the Outcomes efforts.

- allocate a portion of a faculty position to Staff Development, to assist in training faculty and staff in assessment methods and analysis of the results.

- work with the Institutional Researcher and Webmaster to augment and expand a computer database system to integrate outcomes and assessment results into the program review process.

- also work to augment and expand our computer-based system that will integrate with the web-based Electronic Curriculum Management System (ECMS) to integrate the instructional Outcomes into the Course Outlines of Record.

- Establish the time and space, at an institutional level, for Outcomes work to occur. Examples would be flex days, department/division meetings, workshops, conferences, etc. But the prime opportunity would be flex days in which the entire College would be present to ensure as high a level of participation as possible, so that all faculty and staff are educated and included in the Outcomes work of the College.

The chart below summarizes contains the activities and accomplishments of previous years and summarizes our current plans.

2007-08 FALL	WINTER	2008-09 SPRING	SUMMER	2009-2010 FALL
DRAFT ICCs	ICCs FINALIZED	PROGRAM REVIEW UPDATE Revising Mission Statement	*PLAN FLEX DAYS FOR 2009-2010*	OPENING DAY --SLOP & SAO ASSESSMENT AND REFLECTION
EDUCATE FACULTY-- SLO Awareness / EDUCATE FACULTY- Assessment Workshop	PILOT GROUP- Training Workshop	PILOT GROUP ASSESSES AND REFLECTS 1-2 OUTCOMES	PILOT PROGRAM REVIEW UPDATE	PILOT GROUPS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH COURSE-EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT ALL FACULTY TRAINED IN ASSESSMENT
	DIVISION LIAISONS PLAN FACULTY WORKSHOPS	DIVISION LIAISONS CONDUCT WORKSHOPS: DEPARTMENTS WRITE 1-2 STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR 50% OF CURRICULUM		FACULTY CREATE ASSESSMENTS FOR SLO'S WRITTEN DURING THE SPRING OF '09--IMPLEMENT FALL AND WINTER '09
	SLO & SAO Coordinators Hired	SAO GROUP LEADERS ARE TRAINED		
		SAO GROUPS GATHER TO CHOOSE CORE PURPOSES AND PLAN A TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTING ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES		SAO GROUPS GATHER TO REFLECT AND ENHANCE THEIR PROGRAMS
		AUO GROUPS WILL BE TRAINED (DEANS, VP'S, PRESIDENT, PBTs)?	AUO GROUPS CREATE PROGRAM REVIEW UPDATE QUESTIONS	AUO GROUPS CREATE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
				AUO GROUPS REVIEW AND DISCUSS PROGRAM REVIEW UPDATE CRITERIA