

Palo Verde College

SLO ASSESSMENT PLAN

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Foundation of the Plan

- SLO Coordinator established: teaching faculty member who is also the college ALO and institutional researcher
- SLO Committee, formed in 2008 to provide guidance and direction on SLO formulation and assessment
- Accreditation website created in 2012-13, to make SLOs, assessments, results and action plans for improvement publically viewable, www.paloverde.edu
- Inclusion of SLOs and course objectives in course outlines-of-record, since 2008
- Inclusion of SLOs and findings in program review reports, since 2006
- Inclusion of SLO assessment activity in faculty evaluation process, effective Fall 2013
- Several Academic Senate resolutions in support of SLOs, since approximately 2006
- Degree and certificate SLOs placed in 2013-14 College Catalog

PVC's Definition of an SLO vs. an Objective

There is an occasional confusion between SLOs and objectives largely because neither of these terms is defined in ACCJC documents. PVC attempts to follow the definition offered in the statewide Academic Senate paper, "Principles of SLO Assessment," adopted by the Senate in 2010: objectives are a series of smaller steps leading to outcomes—which are broadly defined skills and knowledge students acquire from the course.

Assessment Process for Courses

Systematic assessment of course SLOs began in 2012-13 and were performed by faculty members individually and as part of academic divisions. In Fall 2012, faculty were asked to extract maximum of two SLOs from course-outlines-of record and to identify assessment methods. In Spring 2013, faculty performed assessments of those SLOs and wrote action plans for improvement for each. Courses offered only in Spring 2013 were assessed in Fall 2013, completing one year of assessments.

An ongoing cycle of course assessments has not yet been established; however, the college is considering the following three-year cycle:

2012-13 Assessment and formulation of action plans for improvement
2013-14 Review and evaluate results of action plans, implement changes as needed
2014-15 Review and evaluate results of action plans, implement changes as needed

2015-16, Review all course SLOs, revise where needed, re-assess
2016-17, Review and evaluate results of action plans, implement changes as needed
2017-18, Review and evaluate results of action plans, implement changes as needed

Assessment Process for Degrees and Certificates

Faculty formulated two SLOs for each AA and AS degree: one SLO is mapped to the assessment results of two or three key, discipline-specific courses required for the degree; the other SLO is mapped to two or three courses required for the general education portion of the degree. For certificates, one or two SLOs were selected by faculty teaching in the discipline. Assessments of degrees and certificates, based on assessment results of several courses, require substantial dialog among faculty. To date, assessments of most degrees and certificates has not been completed. The cycle of review and re-assessment is expected to follow the cycle for course SLO assessments.

Assessment Process for Learning Support Services

Learning support services (e.g. counseling, library, financial aid) formulated in 2012-13 one or two SLOs each, based on what the learning support service faculty and staff expect students to learn from the services provided. Most support services have performed assessments and formulated action plans. The cycle of review and re-assessment is expected to follow the cycle for course SLO assessments.

Assessment Process for Institutional SLOs

Institutional SLOs have been developed and the plan is to map such SLOs to degree, certificate and learning support services assessment results. However, to date no assessments of institutional SLOs have taken place. The accreditation standards do not require the formulation or assessment of institutional SLOs. PVC needs to determine whether to go forward with any work on institutional SLOs.

Problems Encountered to Date

- Quality of SLOs and assessments is uneven, requiring SLO coordinator to intervene with technical assistance.
- As SLOs are revised and improved, the course outline-of-record needs to be revised accordingly, requiring extra time and effort.
- Faculty concern for disclosing assessment results publically has required prudence and judiciousness in the manner in which assessment results are described.
- Some faculty resistance surfaced early on, but has diminished in recent years.
- Absence of dialog particularly in reviewing assessment results is of concern.