

How do you write a Course-Level Student Learning Outcome?

Write each SLO to meet the following four criteria.

Criteria 1: An SLO states the knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities a student is expected to have upon successful completion of the course.

Start each SLO with the phrase “Upon successful completion of this course a student should be able to ...”

Ask yourself questions such as:

- Ultimately what do you hope students will walk away with when they leave this class?
- In terms of the big picture, what do you consider to be the main goals of this course?
- What would you hope or expect that students can do in terms of applying the knowledge or skills that you have covered in the content of this course?

Additional issues to consider:

- If the course is required for a degree or certificate consider whether the SLO could also serve as a Program Learning Outcome (PLO). For more information about PLOs read the Chapter in the Learning Outcomes Handbook on PLOs.
- The SLOs should be consistent with the course objectives and course content in the Course Outline of Record.

Criteria 2: An SLO is expressed using active verbs.

Examples of active verbs are *classify, design, summarize, contrast or critique*. Refer to Appendix D in the Learning Outcomes Handbook for a list of examples of active verbs from each of the six categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation.

Criteria 3: An SLO is stated in terms that make it measurable.

Example 1

Here is an example of a Course-Level SLO that is not measurable:

Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to write a paper.

Here is an example of a Course-Level SLO from Shasta College that is measurable:

ENGL 1A English Composition

Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to write a clear, logically-organized research paper. The paper used will be expository in nature, use MLA-style documentation, and show competency in these five areas: quotation and summary integration; MLA manuscript format; MLA citation conventions; conventions of written English; and development of the thesis and argument.

Example 2

Here is an example of a Course-Level SLO that is not measurable:

Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to participate in a debate.

Here is an example of a Course-Level SLO from Shasta College that is measurable:

CMST 40: Argumentation and Debate

Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to identify and evaluate examples of evidence that can be used in a problem-solution policy debate.

Criteria 4: An SLO should support one of the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO). For more information about ISLOs see Chapter 6 on ISLOs in the Learning Outcomes Handbook.

Rubric for Evaluating Learning Outcomes

Criteria	Meets	Does Not Meet
1 – Learning Outcome states the knowledge, skills, attitudes or abilities a student is expected to have upon successful completion of the course.	<p>Learning outcome clearly states what the student will be able to do upon successful completion of the outcome</p> <p>Is stated as a single outcome</p>	<p>Does not clearly state what the student will be able to do upon completion</p> <p>Combines multiple outcomes</p> <p>Stated in terms of what the instructor will do rather than what the student will do</p>
2 – Learning Outcome is expressed using active verbs.	Uses active verbs (Refer to Appendix D in the Learning Outcomes Handbook)	Does not use active verbs (Refer to Appendix D in the Learning Outcomes Handbook)
3 – Learning Outcome is stated in terms that make it measurable.	Criteria for successful completion are clearly identified and leave no room for confusion or varying interpretations among faculty or staff.	Criteria for successful completion are vague and ambiguous leaving room for confusion and varying interpretations among faculty or staff.
4 – Learning Outcome is aligned with one of the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes	Linked to one ISLO based on the specific outcome and not on the overall course content	<p>Linked to more than one ISLO</p> <p>Not linked to any ISLO</p>

