

## **Student Learning Outcomes and Administrative Unit Outcomes Assessment**

*References: Ed. Code Section 70902 (b)(7)  
WASC Standards I, II, III and IV*

As the College District enters a new era of education, the instruction, measurement and assessment of learning will now include assessment based on successful completion of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and Administrative Unit Outcomes (AUO). Our goal is to work in partnership with our students in the development of skills necessary to become successful life-long learners in the four Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO), which include communication skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), thinking and reasoning (creative thinking, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning), information competency (research and technology) and global awareness (social, cultural, and civic responsibility).

To better help Southwestern College enact its value of student success and high academic standards, the Southwestern College Governing Board has adopted this district policy on SLO/AUO Assessment. Setting expected outcomes for student learning and assessing students' level of achievement through ISLOs/SLOs/AUOs will help guide future decisions regarding instruction, student services and administrative support.

As per Policy and Procedures 2515, Faculty are given the right by our Governing Board to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards, such as development and assessment of SLOs. SLO assessment data provides information to faculty for development of strong programs, effective curricula, innovative teaching, and high quality student learning. In addition, SLO assessment assists disciplines, programs and our institution by providing evidence of quality teaching and student learning expected by Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation (WASC).

The Academic Senate, Student Service Programs, and Administrative Units supports SLO/AUO assessment as a means of understanding and improving student learning. At Southwestern College, assessment of student learning outcomes is never a part of faculty/staff evaluation as there are too many variables that can impact student learning that are beyond faculty/staff control. Individual institutions make individual choices about how they will use the tools of student learning assessment. Southwestern College will not use the tools of assessment in any of the following ways:

- The College District will not use assessment of SLOs as an end in itself to meet an Accreditation requirement. Rather the assessment data generated will be directly used to promote and improve student learning.

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- The College District will not use assessment of SLOs punitively or as a means of determining faculty or staff salaries or rewards. The purpose of SLO assessment is to evaluate student learning.
- The College District will not use any single mode of assessment to answer all questions or strictly determine program decisions.
- The College District will not use assessment in a way that will impinge upon the Academic Freedom or professional rights of faculty established in education code. Individual faculty members continue to exercise their best professional judgment in matters of curriculum, assessment and grading.
- The College District will not assume that a single assessment can answer all questions about all students. We will not assume that we need to directly assess all students in order to learn about the effectiveness of our programs and policies.
- The College District will not use assessment only to evaluate the end of the student's experience or merely to be accountable to outside parties.
- The College District will not assume that assessment is only quantitative. Indicators of student learning can be expressed both as quantitative and qualitative data based on established criteria.
- The College District must not assume that SLO assessment consists only of grading. While numerical scales or rubrics (such as the four-point grading scale) can be useful, their accuracy always depends on the clear understanding of the concepts behind the numbers.

This policy reaffirms the central role of faculty/staff in the assessment process and allows academic, student service programs, and administrative units flexibility to choose measurement and assessment methods that will be most useful and appropriate to faculty disciplines and staff.