

Special points of interest:

- A Student Service Outcome Training was held on Feb. 9, 2017
- Lively discussion regarding multiple strategies for the collection of authentic useful data
- This training was an opportunity for cross-services dialogue and to “reboot” the SLO/SAO efforts
- Next steps include: department assessments, a newly designed student service satisfaction survey, and targeted focus groups

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Student Service Outcomes Training

A service area outcomes workshop was held on February 9th. During this multi-hour workshop WCC’s SLO Coordinator worked with the Dean of Student Services and the Dean of Student Success to coordinate a focused discussion about our current service area outcomes. The presentation materials from this workshop can be found under the document tab on the WCC SLO committee’s webpage. During this training session, The SLO Coordinator reinforced the purpose and benefits of outcome assessment, shared characteristics of effective assessment, and provided additional resources that our student service faculty, staff, and administrators could use as we revise and update our outcomes and assessment plans for this area of our college. Although there was a focused presentation for the participants, there were several opportunities for dialogue and discussion about authentic assessment and useful data to improve our services.



Discussions during the Student Service Outcomes Training

Suggested next steps were outlined during this training. All departments in Student Services were tasked to review and revise their current SLOs/SAOs. It has been several years since the original SLOs/SAOs were developed for the various services. Coordinator Howerton framed this session as an opportunity to “reboot” our SLO efforts for all student services, especially after our realignment with the Lake County Campus. Dean Ortiz-Mercado has expressed interest in using time during the spring semester for continued cross-services dialogue about outcomes to strengthen the program reviews that are submitted in October. SLOs are only one tool for review and assessment of a program. The development of a student satisfaction survey is underway. Results from this one tool will be useful for multiple service areas, and allow multiple services to have a focused conversation about impact on students. Also targeted student focus groups will be conducted. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected, and able to be disaggregated to help the college assess the services and interventions we provide.

Something from Stephanie

By: Stephanie Touchman (WCC SLO Committee Part-Time Representative)

At the last part-time dinner (August 2016) I shared some interesting findings from my review of teaching strategies and the impact on student learning in my courses. I “flipped” one of my classes and wanted to know if this was an effective format, in terms of student learning and if it is, how effective was it? To answer these questions, I used my SLO data and compared the flipped class to another section where I used a traditional lecture style format.

In the flipped classroom, I required students to introduce themselves to a topic at home prior to a class session. Then during class-time, we went over the topic again in more detail. Class sessions were now dedicated to small group work to solve problems, class discussions, and case studies. Where as in my traditional mode of delivery, I would typically use class time to introduce topics and students (on their own) would work on problems at home.

The SLO assessment was made of a pre and post-test that had 5 questions that correspond to each course SLO. Both sections of my class were assessed with the same tool. My results showed no difference between the two classes (Mean of flipped class = 4, Mean of traditional class = 4). Initially, I was a little disappointed. But after some reflection, these results were good news because it meant that students from both classes were able to demonstrate an achievement of the designated Student Learning Outcomes from taking my class! Which is the whole point of having SLOs in the first place!

Although students were able to demonstrate a level of expected competency in both classes, I did notice something for further investigation. When I compare the performance on the final exam for both groups during their summative evaluation for the semester, students in the “flipped class” did better!

Assessment Method Highlight:

Direct and Indirect Assessments

Over the last few years, the WCC SLO committee has received a number of questions about various assessment methods. I have used the publication of *The SLO Lane* to discuss specific strategies, and provide recommended resources to highlight strengths and challenges. But there are a few questions that I want to address regarding the overall difference between direct and indirect assessment methods.

Q: What is the difference between direct and indirect methods of assessment? **A:** Direct methods of assessment ask students to demonstrate their learning while indirect methods ask students to reflect on their learning. Tests, essays, presentations, etc. are generally direct methods of assessment. Indirect methods include tools such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

Q: Can grades be used for assessment? **A:** Grades are a source of information about a student's achievement; however, they are typically insufficient in measuring the student learning outcomes of a program. Grades may not identify whether the SLO has been achieved and may include factors not related to SLOs such as class participation and variations in faculty grading policies.

Q: What are embedded assessments? **A:** These types of assessments use existing student course work as both a grading instrument as well as data for assessing SLOs. These may also be referred to as "classroom-based" or "continuous" assessments. Reporting this type of data can be in aggregated or disaggregated format. Also these types of assessments could be used as a formative or summative assessment.

Q: Um, you just used "formative or summative assessment". What is that? **A:** Summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Formative assessments provide both students and instructors with information to improve the learning process while it's happening.

Q: What should I consider as I select an assessment method? **A:** You will want data/information that will help you answer the questions you have about your program. Multiple methods can be used to assess a single outcome. You may want to consider using both direct and indirect methods. Find ways to assess both strengths as well as weaknesses. If you have a capstone course as part of a program, this may be an excellent source of summative assessment of learning outcomes.

Accreditation Corner

The WCC SLO committee is working with the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) to provide supporting material as the college drafts the next full self-evaluation report. In addition to this collaboration, WCC recently submitted an annual report to ACCJC. In this report, as a college, we are showing a growth in the number of courses, programs, and services we are offering. This increase is due to our realignment with the Lake County Campus, and the additional Associate Degrees for Transfer that have been approved by the state. If you have any suggestions for WCC's self-study, or would like to be involved with the writing of our Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) please contact a member of the ASC.

SLO Tips and Reminders

- **All course syllabi should be submitted to the Office of Instruction each semester.** Please make sure that you have proper course SLOs listed on each syllabi that you submit. The SLOs should match the official Course Outline of Record. This is required for Accreditation!
- Be sure to submit and/or upload into TracDat your SLO results by **June 1, 2017**. The Same day all grades are due from instructors.
- If you have questions about SLOs (and/or would like to request SLO assistance) please contact a member of the WCC SLO committee.



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A word from your SLO Coordinator...

I would like to introduce you to Fernando Pessoa. The man who's statue I sat down with during my recent spring break trip to Lisbon. Some of you may be wondering, who is this man and how does this relate to SLOs? Pessoa (1888-1935) was a national modernist poet of Portugal and is most famous for creating numerous authorial personae. In his writings (as the various personas) he would have them write letters to each other. These multiple personalities held on-going dialogue. These conversations that were happening in Pessoa's head (and in his writings) provided a process for him to investigate themes and ideas.

The assessment of SLOs produces data that we can consider. Yet, it is meaningless unless we have dialogue! Dialogue is vital. We should be having our own on-going conversations (sometimes with ourselves) about what the data means; and how do various

strategies affect student achievement of our expected outcomes. In this issue of *The SLO Lane*, our part-time faculty SLO committee member Stephanie Touchman has shared how a recent SLO assessment has given her insight to her classes.

I found it interesting that I was 5,602 miles away from Woodland and I was reminded about this often overlooked aspect of dialogue about what we do.

Like many of you I find myself struggling to meet multiple deadlines and deliverables. However, taking time to reflect and discuss how our students are doing is equally important and is expected. Especially as we strive for continuous quality improvement in our programs and courses.

Therefore, as we near the end of the semester, I would like to challenge everyone to find a moment in the next few weeks to share and discuss at least one reflection about your students and data that you are collecting.

Regardless if these conversations are formal or informal, it is rewarding, energizing, and reminds us why we do what we do.

Recently, I experienced this phenomenon first hand, and I hope you can experience the same joy. After one of my many committee meetings I had an impromptu hallway conversation with a couple of fellow faculty members (both FT and PT). Although we teach in various disciplines we had a lively discussion about our SLOs and what we were doing in our programs. This brief interaction with others provided a fresh perspective, and reinforced some assessment strategies that we are already using. We did not feel alone in this important endeavor. We are a community of educators, and we can learn from each other.

Although Fernando Pessoa may have had an undiagnosed case of a multiple personality disorder, we can still follow his example of dialogue to help us all investigate themes and ideas.