

Writing Program Student Learning Outcomes

Miramar College

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Adopted from College of the Canyons, Writing Program SLOs, Spring 2010

This guide has been developed to assist departments and programs with the design and assessment of program-level or service area-level SLOs. For additional assistance, please contact your department SLO Liaison, department chair or supervisor, or the SLOAC Facilitator (see Appendix C).

Step 1: Determine how many internal “programs” your program has.

Miramar has defined an instructional program as a field of study that includes at least one award and at least one subject area. Programs are designated by “grey box” sections in the Degree Curricula and Certificate Programs chapter of the San Diego Miramar College Catalog with the exception of Interdisciplinary Studies which is a grey box section but is not a program. An instructional services “program” is an organizational unit that has its own distinct mission, separate budget, and at least one full-time employee. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of programs, departments, and awards.

However, Title 5 defines a program as “an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education”. Because of the difference in definitions between Title 5 and Miramar, you may find that:

- Many programs by Miramar’s definition will have numerous awards – the number will vary by the number of degrees and certificates. These awards are considered programs by Title 5.
- Programs can also be defined as “student pathways”.
- Your department may have a course or two that is part of another department’s program
- Some departments may not have a program solely contained within the department – they may, instead, be part of the GE program and/or one of the General Arts and Sciences degrees

Some questions to ask:

- ***Does my Program have multiple degrees and certificates?***
 - If yes, each degree and certificate should be identified as an internal program, and each one should have one or more specific program SLOs.

- **Why do students take the courses in my department?**

- If it is primarily to fulfill GE requirements, then those courses are part of the GE program (you'll be working with the SLO Committee (or identified GE Group) to write and assess GE program SLOs)
- If students take a series of courses in preparation for another program (for example, biology as pre-nursing preparation or basic skills courses as preparation for transfer-level), that cluster of courses could be defined as a program.
- If students take a sequence or concentration of courses in your department as preparation for a major they will declare after transfer, that cluster of courses could be defined as a program.

Step 2: Consider the purpose/goals of each program.

When trying to write program SLOs, it is often helpful to create a **mission statement** for the program:

- Program mission statements may or may not be different from the mission statement for your department. A department with a single program may have the same mission statement for department and program, while a department with multiple programs will likely have a broader department mission statement and more specific program mission statements.
- A mission statement will often begin with the program in question, then make a statement about what that program does or provides, and to whom or for whom it is provided.

If desired, try drafting program mission statements here:

Program Name (official Miramar Program name, award name, or "student pathway")	What does the program do or provide?	To whom or for whom does it provide it?

You also might **ask yourself questions:**

- What will a student who completes this program be able to do?
- What concepts or skills run throughout all (or many) of your program's courses?
- What skills or knowledge will students who complete the program have?
- What will students gain from completing this program?

Use the space below to brainstorm answers to these questions:

Step 3: Decide how many SLOs your program needs.

Some programs may only need one SLO:

- Some programs consist of courses that all develop a single skill through various topic (for example, literary analysis is a single skill developed through practice with multiple literary traditions and genres)
- Some programs have a capstone course that ties together elements from all of the other courses – in this case, the capstone course SLO(s) can also be the program SLO(s) (for example, a paralegal studies capstone course that integrates concepts from previous courses and provides students the opportunity to practice them in a workplace setting)

Other programs may need several SLOs

- Some programs' courses may develop two or more "strands" of knowledge or skills within the program (for example, a psychology program may include courses that fall into biological and social psychology or a modern language program may have goals in both linguistic and cultural competence)
- Some programs may have a split focus between content knowledge or theory and the application of that knowledge (for example, a science program that has lecture and lab components or a CTE program that focuses on both content area and workplace (or "soft") skills)

Step 4: Draft your program SLOs.

Writing program SLOs is very similar to writing course-level SLOs:

- Keep the SLOs focused on the students (what will the student be able to do?) as opposed to the teacher (what will be taught?)
- Use critical thinking verbs .
- Avoid verbs that are not readily observable (such as “understand” or “know” or “feel”)

Step 5: Double check your SLO with assessment in mind.

Make sure that the program SLO is something that is readily observable and measurable – in other words, build in assessment from the beginning. Don't create a program SLO that you can't envision a way to observe or evaluate or that requires data that you won't be able to access. See Appendix B for examples of Assessment Methods.

Step 6: Map your Program SLOs to the Institutional SLOs (ISLOs).

Miramar currently has 5 Institutional Student Learning Outcomes, as published in the SD Miramar College Catalog and found in Appendix D. Programs, and Program SLOs, should support at least one of the ISLOs. Check the box provided on the Program Form to indicate which ISLO(s) the Program SLOs support.

Step 7: Create a timeline for Program SLO assessment.

Once you have determined your Program SLOs and assessment methods, you need to perform a cycle of assessment. This includes implementing the assessment method, gathering data or evidence, dialoguing with involved faculty/staff, and identifying improvement strategies to be included in program reviews and planning. With the next Accreditation Self Study due in Spring 2016, programs and areas should plan to complete at least one cycle of assessment by Fall 2015.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: My department doesn't have any degrees or certificates – does that mean it is not a program?

What it likely means is that your department's classes are part of other programs – the GE program, for example, or a degree or certificate housed in another department. In those cases, you'll participate in those program SLO activities as needed. But there may also be clusters of courses in your department that are not degrees or certificates but that do form student pathways. In those cases, you will need to decide as a department whether those should be considered programs. If you decide there is a program, you will need to create program SLOs for it.

Q: My program has 12 different degrees and certificates. Do I really need a program SLO for each one? Why?

Yes. Accreditation standards require that program level SLOs be developed, assessed, and used in decision-making for each degree and certificate.

Q: My program only does one program review – how can there be multiple programs within it?

Miramar has defined an instructional program as a field of study that includes at least one award and at least one subject area. Most of these “programs” contain multiple awards or specializations, and you will likely have several distinct programs within it, in other words, “internal programs”. You complete one program review because we organize our program review system in this way, at this college.

Q: I've just written my program SLOs – where do they get recorded? Does anyone need to approve them?

Program SLOs are recorded and published in the SD Miramar College Catalog. Starting in Spring 2014, they will also appear in Taskstream. Approval of program SLOs is done through the members of the department in which they are written, as long as they adhere to the guidelines and expectations set forth by the ACCJC.

Q: I'm still thinking about what my program SLOs should be. How long do I have to get this done?

In Spring 2014, Miramar will be migrating its SLO data management and reporting functions to the Taskstream system. At that time, you should be ready to input your revised program SLOs and assessment methods. In addition, you need to complete at least one complete assessment cycle (including reflection and improvement strategies/action plan) before Fall 2015. But you should not wait until Spring 2015 to get started– often it may take a few semesters to make the needed decisions and pilot an assessment method. If you haven't already started talking about program SLOs in your department, you should start now. If you have program SLOs drafted,

spend this semester working on a plan for how to assess them. If you have an assessment method identified, try it out sooner rather than later.

Q: What if my department has a course that is not part of a degree or certificate for my department?

Likely, that course fits into a program somewhere on campus. If it is not part of a program in your department, it may be part of another department's program, or it might be part of a General Arts and Sciences degree or part of the GE program. As the college moves forward with its assessment of these larger, interdisciplinary program SLOs, you will be contacted to participate as needed.

Q: What about courses in my department that are part of another department's program?

As the other department works on its program SLOs, you will likely be contacted for information about your course-level assessments. You may also be asked to collaborate on writing the program SLO for that program.

Q: Can I use the same SLO for my program's degree and certificate?

It depends. If the only difference between the degree and the certificate is the completion of GE requirements, then it would be appropriate to use the same program SLO for both programs. However, if there is additional or more specialized learning that takes place in either the degree or certificate, you will need to adjust the program SLOs to match the learning that takes place in each degree and certificate.

Q: Can I use the SLO from one of my courses as my program SLO?

Possibly. If you have a capstone course that integrates the learning from the other courses in the program, the SLO from the capstone course could be used as the program SLO as well. Alternatively, if you have overlapping SLOs for the courses in your degree or certificate (as in the English example in Step 3 above), you can base your program SLO on a more general statement of the overlap in the course SLOs.

Q: Once I've written program SLOs, how do I get started assessing them?

You should have a general plan for how you would go about assessing your program SLO as you are writing it. In general, it depends on how many program SLOs you have and how your program is organized.

- If you have several "strands" in your program, you will want to map your course SLO assessments to your program SLOs.
- If you have a "capstone" course, you can use the same assessment for your program that you do for that course.
- If you have overlapping course SLOs, you can combine the assessment data from your courses to assess your program.
- You may also choose to use an indirect method (such as a survey) to measure students' perceptions of their own learning in the program and/or gain information about your students after they leave your program.

- You could choose to do an additional assessment for the program SLO that integrates skills and content learned throughout the program (this may be challenging if you have a large number of students and are not easily able to track students close to completion)
- You might consider additional information such as licensing exams and/or job placement if you are able to access that data.

Q: Can I include program SLOs that are measured outside the classroom (such as passing a licensure exam or job placement)?

Only if you have a way of accessing that information. For example, if you are considering a program SLO related to job placement, consider whether you have the ability to track your graduates' employment after they leave the college. If you can, then this would be an acceptable measure. If you cannot (or if it is very difficult), you would be better off using a measure that can be observed within the classroom.

**APPENDIX A: LIST OF DEPARTMENTS, PROGRAMS, AWARDS, AND
SUBJECT AREAS** *DRAFT 2013-2014*

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Instructional Services

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Audiovisual

Independent Learning Center

Instructional Computing Support

Library

The PLACe

Interdisciplinary Awards

Occupational/Technical Studies – AS

Selected Studies – AA

CSU General Education-Breadth – CA

Intersegmental General Education Transfer (IGETC) – CA

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Department	Program	Awards	Subject Areas
Administration of Justice	Administration of Justice	Administration of Justice for Transfer – AS-T Advanced Traffic Accident Investigation – CA Contemporary Police Technologies – AS, CA Correctional Technologies – AS, CA Correctional Training for Deputy Sheriffs – CA Investigations Specialization – AS, CA Law Enforcement Specialization – AS, CA Law Enforcement Supervision – CA Law Enforcement Technologies – CA Technical Achievement for Field Training Officers - CA	ADJU HSEC
Fire Technology and Emergency Medical Technician	Fire Protection Technology	Fire Prevention – AS, CA Fire Protection – AS, CA Fire Technology – AS, CA Open Water Lifeguard Professional – AS, CA	EMGM FIPT

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, TECHNICAL CAREERS, & WORKFORCE INITIATIVES

Department	Program	Awards	Subject Areas
Automotive & Diesel Technology	Automotive Technology	Automotive Chassis – CA Automotive Electrical – CA Automotive Engine Performance – CA Automotive Transmission – CA Automotive Technology – AS	AUTO
	Diesel Technology	Diesel Equipment Repair Technology – CA Engine Overhaul, Caterpillar – CA Engine Overhaul, Cummins – CA Engine Overhaul, Detroit Diesel – CA Engine Repair, Caterpillar – CA Engine Repair, Cummins – CA Engine Repair, Detroit Diesel – CA Heavy Duty Transportation Technology – AS, CA Heavy Equipment Technology – AS, CA San Diego City Civil Service Equipment Mechanic Apprenticeship – AS, CA San Diego Transit General Mechanic – AS, CA	DIES SDCS
Aeronautical & Aviation	Aviation Maintenance Technology	Airframe – AS, CA Airframe & Powerplant – AS, CA Aviation General Studies – AS, CA Pilot Studies – AS, CA Powerplant – AS, CA	AVIM

	Aviation Operations	Aviation Business Administration – AS Aviation Operations Management – CA Professional Aeronautics – AS Professional Piloting – CA	AVIA
Business	Accountancy	Accountancy – AS, CA	ACCT
	Business	Business Administration – AS, CA Business Management – AS, CA Mortgage Brokerage and Banking – AS, CA	BANK BUSE ECON MARK REAL WORK
	Computer Business Technology	Administrative Assistant – AS, CA Microcomputer Applications – AS, CA	CBTE
	Computer and Information Sciences	Computer and Information Science – AS, CA	CISC
	Paralegal	Paralegal – AS, CA	LEGL
Child Development	Child Development	Associate Teacher – CA Child Development – AS Human Development Studies – AA Master Teacher – CA Site Supervisor – AS Teacher – CA	CHIL CONF

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Department	Program	Award	Subject Area
Arts and Humanities	Art	Art/Visual Studies – AA Combined Drawing/Painting – AA Craft Skills – AA Graphics – AS, CA Studio Arts – AA	ARTF ARTG ARTD DFLM
	Humanities	Humanities Studies – AA	BLAS HUMA LIBS PERG PHIL
	Music	Music Studies – AA	MUSI
English, Communications, and World Languages	English	English – AA English/Literature Studies – AA	ENGL ESOL
	Communications Studies	Communications Studies for Transfer – AA-T	COMS JOUR
	World Language Studies	World Language Studies – AA	SPAN TAGA

<p>Social and Behavioral Sciences</p>	<p>Social and Behavioral Sciences</p>	<p>Anthropology for Transfer – AA-T History for Transfer – AA-T Psychology – AA Social and Behavioral Sciences – AA Sociology for Transfer – AA-T</p>	<p>ANTH DSPS EDUC FILI GEOG HIST POLI PSYC SOCO SUST</p>
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SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS, BIOLOGICAL, EXERCISE, & PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Department	Program	Award	Subject Area
Exercise Science, Health, and Nutrition	Exercise Science	Health and Physical Education Studies – AS	DANC
		Kinesiology for Transfer – AS-T	EXSC
		Fitness Specialist – CA	HEAL
			NUTR
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics for Transfer – AS-T	MATH
		Mathematics Studies – AA	
Biological Sciences	Biology	Allied Health Track – AS Applied Biology Track – AS Biology Studies – AS	BIOL
	Medical Laboratory Technology	Medical Laboratory Technician Training – AS, CA	MLTT
Physical Sciences	Chemistry	Chemistry Studies – AS	CHEM
	Physical Science	Earth Science Studies – AS Physics for Transfer – AS-T Pre-Engineering Studies – AS	ASTR GEOL PHYN PHYS

APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT METHODS

Out of class (co-curricular and support areas)	In class (programs/ courses)	
	Direct	Indirect
Methods to track success in modeling outcomes for students	Pre- and post- test growth (repetition of placement exams)	Percentage of student passing “capstone” course directly related to the ISLO
Methods to track success in supporting learning outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct: support of students • Indirect: Support of faculty and staff so they, in turn, are able to support student learning 	Course Embedded Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally developed test • Research paper • Final exam questions • Reflective essays • Lab reports 	Surveys: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni • Employer • Student
	Licensing exams	Job placement
	“Capstone” project or presentation	
	Portfolio of student work	
	Field work performance, internship performance, or service learning projects	

APPENDIX C: LIST OF SLO LIAISONS *(Fall 2013)*

Department/ Area	Programs	Chair/ Supervisor	SLO Liaison
Administration of Justice	Administration of Justice	Jordan Omans Steven Lickess	VACANT
Fire Tech and EMT	Fire Protection Technology	Mary Kjartanson	John Salinsky
Automotive and Diesel	Automotive Tech Diesel Tech	Joseph Young Dan Wilkie	Mark Dinger
Aeronautical and Aviation	Aviation Maintenance Tech Aviation Operations	David Buser	David Buser Arnold Huntley
Business	Accountancy Business Computer Business Tech Computer and Info Science Paralegal	Wahid Hamidy	Lawrence Hahn
Child Development	Child Development	Dawn DiMarzo	Dawn DiMarzo
Arts and Humanities	Art Humanities Music	Bob Fritsch	Bob Fritsch
ECWL	English Communication Studies World Languages Studies	Sheryl Gobble Ken Reinstein	Ken Reinstein
Social and Behavioral Sciences	Social and Behavioral Sciences	Tom Schilz	VACANT
Exercise Science, Health, Nutrition	Exercise Science	Nick Gehler	Kevin Petti
Math	Math	Francois Bereaud	Julia Gordon
Biological Sciences	Biology Medical Laboratory Tech	Marie McMahon	Andy Lowe
Physical Sciences	Chemistry Physical Sciences	Linda Woods	Becca Bowers-Gentry
Student Support Services		Adela Jacobson	MaryAnn Guevarra
Instructional Support Services		Gerald Ramsey, Acting	VACANT
Administrative Services		Brett Bell	Denise Kapitzke
SLOAC Facilitator			Laura Murphy

APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO)	
ISLO	Description
1: Communication	Students communicate effectively through reading, writing, speaking and listening
2: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving.	Students use appropriate creative thinking, decision-making and problem-solving approaches, reasoning, analyses of numerical data, and learning strategies.
3: Global Environment.	Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical, social, political, and cultural environments in which they live, including sensitivity to diversity, cultural differences, and community needs
4: Information Management.	Students can effectively collect and analyze information and/or demonstrate technological literacy
5: Personal and Professional Abilities.	Students can understand and manage themselves, change, personal responsibilities, their own wellness, as well as demonstrate teamwork and relationship maintenance, conflict resolution and workplace skills.