Student and Program Learning Outcomes for Stakeholders ASPA Spring 2014 Conference

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In the context of institutional effectiveness, learning outcomes are viable means for communicating student success and career readiness. Specialized and professional accreditors are best suited to support programs in developing appropriate outcomes to ensure comparable levels of academic integrity and accountability.

Definitions

Learning outcomes state what a student is able to do at the completion of a learning activity. Learning outcomes may be of two types: either Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) or Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). SLOs are typically presented in course syllabi and address what a student should be able to do at the end of a course. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are broader and reflect learning across a discipline-specific curriculum. More specifically, PLOs communicate to stakeholders what a graduate of a program should be able to do upon graduation.

Writing SLOs and PLOs

1. Think "outcome". Focus on results vs. contents.

2. Use active verbs. Consult Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (1956).
3. Eliminate fuzzy phrases and vague language. State the behaviors in explicit terms.
4. Determine the measurement. Devise the assessment and deliverable.

5. Stay focused. Avoid multiple behaviors and assessments in single outcome statements.
6. Write for stakeholders. Develop statements as

policy issues inherent in organization and knowledge

resources.

2. Learn about