**STUDENT LEARNING OTUCOMES (SLOs)**

**IMPROVEMENT ACTION(S) GUIDE For GENERAL**

**EDUCATION**

The primary goal of the General Education Assessment process is to make data-guided decisions related to improving student learning in those courses. Whether or not the goals/benchmarks set for Student Learning Outcomes have been met, academic program faculty and leadership should establish a plan of action for the next academic year based on the most recent year’s results and take-aways from internal discussions about the data. Implementing enhancements and then circling back to check whether they indeed led to the desired improvement is one of the best assessment practices and is an accreditation requirement.

**SOME COMMON IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS:**

**IMPROVE THE** **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**:

* *Identify a unique, individual assignment (or a portion of an assignment) best suited to assess a given SLO. (Aim to have a 1:1 alignment between assignment and SLO)*
* *Specify or change the Assessment Instrument(s) used to measure the SLO:*
  + List specific course assignment or learning experience (or a series) that will be used to assess SLO,
  + Replace one assignment with another that is better aligned with the nature of the learning outcome (e.g., switch from a multiple-choice quiz to an essay in order to better assess student’s written communication skills),
  + Use a specific subset of questions from an exam that are specifically focused on the SLO instead of using the overall exam score, which may include student performance in areas not related to the SLO.
* *Change the instructions/prompts in the Assessment Instrument(s) used to measure the SLO:*
  + Expand, shorten, rephrase, clarify, or otherwise edit the directions associated with the Assessment Instruments so that students better understand performance expectations,
* *Design or change a rubric used to measure one or several SLOs:*
  + Create a rubric to better assess multifaceted observable performance by a student on a single assignment using a set of predetermined expectations (e.g., a capstone project is used to assess 3 SLOs, each corresponding to a separate criterion on a rubric (analysis of data, interpretation of results, and oral presentation/communication) using a 3-point scale (exemplary=3, acceptable=2, unacceptable=1)),
  + Change the rubric type, used dimensions/criteria, rating scale, or description of expected performance (e.g., add a previously missing important assessment criterion ‘flow, logic and clarity of writing’).

**IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND/OR PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES**:

* *Change or add new instructional materials:*
  + Provide more and/or enhanced in-class and/or outside-of-class opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and skills in certain areas (e.g., supplement lecture with a small-group activity focused on application of learnt content/skills),
  + Conduct an evaluation of course topics for their currency and make any necessary updates (e.g., update course syllabus and slides to include content covering some latest technological advancement),
  + Create a rubric to accompany the high-stakes, culminating/final course assignment so that students can better understand the performance and grading expectations.
* *Organize or strengthen pedagogical and assessment structure:*
  + Embed formal assessment of student learning into annual workflow (e.g., reserve half-a-day during faculty retreat before the start of the academic year to jointly review prepared report on general education SLOs, to analyze achieved levels of learning, to discuss enhancements, and to document the process),
  + Collaborate with institutional partners on assessment design (e.g., work with faculty in the Center for the Advancement of Teaching to enhance how a given course reinforces an SLO),
  + Consider standard instructional and/or assessment materials to be used in different course sections where the same SLO is assessed (e.g., embed a set of same 10 questions that assess target SLO into every final exam in course sections taught by different instructors).

**EXAMPLES OF IMPROVEMENT ACTION(S) NARRATIVES:**

* To ensure continued success on an SLO, the instructor of the course will spend an extra class period devoted to the content assessed by rubric criteria #2, which results for this SLO suggest students are not understanding as well as we would like them to. Student learning results from different campuses were comparable (Distance/Online = 84% and Tallahassee Campus = 86%), these improvements will be implemented at both location/modalities at the same time.
* First, even though the SLO goal/benchmark has been consistently achieved for the last four academic years, academic program faculty decided to redesign the ‘easy’ exam questions to test higher levels of learning. Specifically, exam items #17 and #25 will be modified to test middle levels of Bloom’s taxonomy (application and analysis). We plan to deploy the redesigned exam during the upcoming academic year. To better prepare our students for a higher level of learning, we changed one in-class activity and modified one homework assignment. Now, in addition to teaching students what a t-test and a correlation test are, we want them to be able to apply this knowledge to analyze and interpret results of these two statistical tests.