# JSU Educational Programs
# Guide for Developing and Reporting Learning Outcomes

## SACSCOC Requirement 8.2a – Educational Programs

*The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results for student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.*

- JSU defines a program using the definition used by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE): Program of Instruction: An organized set of courses and related activities for which, upon satisfactory completion, some degree, diploma, or certificate is awarded.
- Programs in the same field taught at different levels are viewed as distinct programs
- Learning outcomes specify the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes students are expected to attain in the program.
- Learning outcomes are specific and measurable
- Most outcomes should be a result of direct assessment of student learning
- Plans are created and reported using assessment teams lead by the Department Head.
- Incorporate any programmatic accreditation outcomes whenever possible.

## Documenting Learning Outcomes

### Development of a New SLO

Outcome Statement

- Program specific expected student-learning outcomes for educational programs
- Specific things students should know or be able to do when graduating from the program in order to be successful furthering their education and/or in a job.

Method of Measurement

- Description of assessment instrument used to determine successful learning
- Selection of measure that demonstrates successful learning
  - Example: XX% of students will score a/an XXXXX (SUCCESS) on the XXXX assessment (INSTRUMENT)
  - Common Examples Shown in the Table Below (not an inclusive list)

| Common Assessment Instruments | Measure Type | Corresponding Common Measures |
|---|---|---|
| Embedded Exam Questions | Direct Assessment | Percentage of Correct Answers |
| Licensure or Certification Exams | Direct Assessment | Pass or Cut Scores |
| Project or Internship Rubric | Direct Assessment | Percentage Scoring at a Proficient Level |
| Exit or Final Exam | Direct Assessment | Score on Exam |
| Major Field Exam | Direct Assessment | Score on Exam |
| Comprehensive Exam | Direct Assessment | First Attempt Pass Rates |
| Survey Data Questions* | Indirect Assessment | Percentage of Students Rating Specific Questions as “Satisfied” or “Highly Satisfied” |

* Example: ETS Proficiency Profile (EPP), Graduating Senior Survey (GSS), Graduate Student Exit Survey(GSES), National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

### Yearly Reporting on Each Outcome

Results

- Provide a summary of the data collected in the report form
- Keep the data collected on file

Use of Results

- Analyze the data and determine how the data will be used for improvement of student learning.
    - Describe how findings from the analysis were used for program improvement if goal **is not** met. It is our practice to have at least 2-years of data below the goal before making program changes. Consideration is given to cohort size, programmatic accreditation, etc.
        - What does your assessment team review when this happens?
    - Describe how findings from the analysis were used if goal **is** met.
        - Is the assessment instrument still relevant? Does your team monitor this periodically?
        - Is the assessment instrument still a good indicator of measuring success? Does your team monitory this periodically?
        - What do you take into consideration when determining improvement when you do meet the goal?
        - If many years' worth of data shows above threshold performance, consider whether assessment of other areas of the program or an increase in the goal is appropriate.

It can be helpful to use a Curriculum Map to better visualize where a concept is introduced, reinforced and assessed. A curriculum map is not a SACSCOC requirement but it is a helpful tool in determining where program improvement can or should occur.

**Sample Curriculum Map**
Curriculum maps are not required but can be a very useful tool when making decisions regarding improvement in your outcomes.

Curriculum Map (generic example)
**Bachelor of Science in Science**

| PLO | SCI 200 | SCI 300 | SCI 350 | SCI400 | SCI 450 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students will articulate the principles of taxonomy | I | | R | | A |
| Students will be able to explain the core scientific concepts related to the discipline | | I | R | A | |
| Students will show that they can critically analyze scientific research and findings | | I | R | | A |

Key – (I) indicates concept is being introduced, (R) indicates concept is being reinforced, (A) concept is being assessed.

***The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is available to host one-on-one sessions, group consulting and/or provide assistance as needed for the development, implementation and reporting of any of your Institutional Effectiveness processes. Please contact Mandy Abernathy, Coordinator of Institutional Effectiveness, by email at abernathy@jsu.edu or by phone at 256-782-5157.***