

Santiago Canyon College

Statement on Standards of Assessment Practice for Student Services Programs

In order to meet the mandate of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges ACCJC standard for proficiency in outcomes assessment by fall 2012 as well as to prepare for the acquisition and implementation of an assessment management system, the college has developed the following statement on standards of assessment practice as it relates to student services programs.

Assessment of student services at Santiago Canyon College meets each of the following criteria:

- 1) identification of at least one student learning outcome for each program,
- 2) use of direct and indirect assessment methods,
- 3) current and specific assessments of record for SLOs on file,
- 4) a regular, explicitly stated cycle of assessment for all programs on file,
- 5) reports of assessment results and action plans on file.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment serves as the central repository for receiving assessment information. Assessments of record, cycles of assessment, and reports of assessment results for all programs should be filed with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment.

The five criteria stated above represent the threshold for assessment practice in student services for the institution. They enable the institution to describe a common core of learning to external stakeholders and agencies. The college invites and encourages faculty and staff to engage in outcomes assessment practices that go beyond the threshold established by the criteria.

Each of the criteria is elaborated further below.

Number of Program Learning Outcomes

As previously agreed upon by the Student Services Program Leaders, each student services program is to specify at least one SLO. Programs may choose to do more and could specify one common SLO for each of the program's major program components *or* they could choose to specify one unique SLO for each of the program's major program components. The choice to specify more than one program SLO and to choose to use common or unique SLOs for each of the major program components is the discretion of each student services program. Program faculty and staff members are strongly encouraged to work collaboratively to

develop a set of student learning outcomes that best reflect the broad or overarching goals of their program.

Use of Direct and Indirect Assessment

The primary purpose of assessment at Santiago Canyon College is to understand and improve the teaching and learning process. To accomplish this, Santiago Canyon College strongly encourages *direct assessment* of student learning outcomes when possible. Direct assessment of learning should be embedded in program activities and assignments. Direct assessment is aligned with stated purposes and objectives of major program components and connected to student participation requirements or other assignments. Further, direct assessment uses summative measures to describe the achievement of learning outcomes rather than student self-assessments or perceptions of learning. For example, students participating in the Student Leadership Institute could have leadership skills evaluated through role plays, mock debates, or presentations. Direct assessment methods are preferred whenever possible because they provide *evidence* or confirmation that learning has occurred as a result of an intervention rather than an *indication* that learning has occurred. Some examples of direct assessments include evaluations of: exams, quizzes, presentations, performances, portfolios, case studies, and projects.

In contrast to direct assessment, which provides evidence of student learning, *indirect assessment* provides an indication or suggestion that learning has occurred. Because indirect assessment is not considered evidentiary, its use is reserved for programs which are more flexibly structured; or programs where directly evaluating student learning or development is not easily accomplished. For example, students may avail themselves of a small subset of program components related to Career Services or the program may not have the resources to directly evaluate student interviewing skills or resume development. In these cases, a direct assessment of learning using a rubric is not easily accomplished. An example of an indirect assessment method that could be used in these cases is a survey measuring student perceptions of learning in these specific content areas.

Faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to use direct assessment methods whenever possible to describe the achievement of stated learning outcomes as well as any other assessment methods they deem necessary to explain assessment results. Effective use of direct and indirect assessment methods ensures that the college will be prepared to provide consistent and uniform evidence to the ACCJC that reflects a more complete view of student learning and meets the proficiency requirements.

Assessments of Record

Assessments of record for programs identify in very specific ways both the type of assessment to be used and the evaluation criteria that will be used to determine the degree to which stated outcomes are achieved. Faculty and staff are encouraged to work collaboratively within their units or programs to develop assessments and evaluation criteria which reflect the collective knowledge of the program staff, foster consensus over individual preferences, and ensure continuity and consistency in the implementation of assessments and the evaluation of the achievement of outcomes. In developing assessment instruments and evaluation criteria, program staff should strive to develop consistent practices that allow for meaningful comparison and interpretation of results across terms and years.

For example, an assessment might consist of a quiz with unique sets of questions mapped to specific program outcomes. Using this type of assessment, program staff could implement the assessment instrument across a set of workshops, orientations, classroom presentations, or other informational sessions. Evaluation criteria using this type of assessment would include identifying the sets of quiz items, mapping quiz specific program outcomes, and specifying the average score, or the number or percent correct that is needed to meet the stated learning outcome.

Similarly, program staff could implement a performance evaluation related to a specific area of student development such as leadership. With a performance evaluation of leadership, evaluation criteria would need to be developed collaboratively and correspond to domains of learning or student development associated with the program outcomes related to leadership. As well, the evaluation criteria would also need to correspond to the stated achievement levels associated with the program outcomes for leadership. This can be accomplished by developing and implementing a common or standardized rubric for leadership. Common or standardized rubrics should be normed by the program staff and specify domains of learning or student development and the expected levels of achievement for each of the domains given the student's participation level in the program.

Collaboratively developed assessments and consistency in evaluation make learning expectations and standards of performance explicit for students and enable the institution to validly and reliably describe core achievements within and across specific areas of student learning and development.

Cycle of Assessment

The institution expects faculty and staff to assess achievement of student learning outcomes using a regular cycle of assessment that is connected to the program review schedule. This schedule specifies that all programs are reviewed once every three years. In keeping with this schedule, the institution expects that the achievement of *all* program student learning outcomes will be evaluated holistically, using longitudinal data when possible, at least once within the program review cycle. For example, during the program review process, programs should discuss the degree to which all program outcomes were achieved rather than specific outcomes for a particular program component at one point in time.

Further, in an effort to ensure that each program continues to make progress in achieving the standard of sustainable, continuous quality improvement as well as engages in a robust dialogue related to the achievement of student learning outcomes, the college uses a standard assessment cycle for outcomes assessment. This cycle specifies the assessment schedule for student services programs as follows:

- assessment of program outcomes will result in a report of results submitted by June 30th of each year;

In addition, assessment and dialog about student learning should occur at least once annually. For example, if a program specifies only one program SLO, they would need to conduct assessment of their SLO once a year. Programs that choose to specify more than one program SLO may choose to evaluate all program outcomes within a given term or they can choose to evaluate specific outcomes for within a given term. For example, if a program has three outcomes, the program staff might choose to assess all three outcomes at once within a given term, or assess one outcome each fall for three successive years, or assess one outcome per term until all three are assessed and then repeat the cycle, etc. However, if the department chooses to assess all program outcomes in one fall term, assessment for that program would need to be conducted each fall term to meet the requirement that outcomes be assessed and dialog about student learning and achievement of outcomes occurred at least annually. Each program outcome should be evaluated at least once within the three-year program review cycle and each program should follow the guideline that assessment, dialogue, and reporting of results occurs at least once annually.

Using the three-year cycle of holistic assessment in conjunction with the standard cycle for program outcomes assessment creates a systematic cycle of assessment that is connected to larger college planning and resource allocation processes and helps to develop widespread dialog about student learning and outcomes across programs. Frequent assessment and dialog about student learning and

achievement of outcomes are necessary to foster deep learning and demonstrate proficiency with the ACCJC standards for outcomes assessment. Appendix A contains a sample Assessment Cycle report.

Results

Assessment results are used by faculty and staff to understand and improve teaching and learning and other student development processes. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment serves as the central repository for receiving assessment reports. Faculty and staff should file reports of assessment results for all programs with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. Reports should follow the student services SLO template and identify the degree to which stated outcomes have been achieved as well as any plans for improvement or change (see Appendix B). Rather than submitting multiple, separate assessment reports for each program component, one annual report of the entire program outcomes assessed that year should be aggregated by program component prior to submission.

Appendix A

Assessment Cycle

All SLOs should be assessed at least once within a three-year cycle. A complete assessment cycle includes: gathering assessment data, analyzing assessment data, sharing results within the department or discipline, and reporting results. In the matrix below, indicate the term in which each of your course SLOs will be assessed (inclusive of the entire assessment cycle).

SLO	Data Gathered	Data Analyzed	Data Shared Improvement Dialogue	Results Reported	Changes Implemented
Sample: SLO 1 (analyze statistical data)	Fall 2011 – by November 1	Late fall 2011 – before end of term	Flex – mid-January	By June 30th	Summer/Fall 2012
SLO 1					
SLO 2					
SLO 3					
SLO 4					

Appendix B

Santiago Canyon College

Student Services

Student Learning Outcomes Annual Report

1. Program-Department Name

2. Program-Department Mission Statement

3. Student Learning Outcome(s)

4. Methods
 - a. With criteria for each outcome
 - b. Add limitation, if applicable

5. Implementation of Assessment Process: Who? How? When?
 - a. Identify who is responsible for doing each step in the evaluation process (list all of the individuals involved in the assessment process).
 - b. Outline the timeline for implementation
 - c. Identify who will be evaluated
 - d. Identify other programs who are assisting with the evaluation
 - e. Identify who is the intended user of the data that will be collected

6. Results
 - a. Summarize the results for each outcome
 - b. Summarize the process to verify/validate the results

7. Decisions and Recommendations

- a. Summarize the decisions/recommendations made for each outcome
- b. Identify the groups who participated in the discussion of the evidence that led to the recommendations and decisions.
- c. Summarize the suggestions for improving the assessment process (including improvement of outcome, evaluation methods, criteria, etc.)
- d. Identify when each outcome will be evaluated again (if the outcome is to be retained)
- e. Identify those responsible for implementing recommended changes