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## **SLO Task Force**

### **Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment: Report and Recommendations**

#### **Introduction**

The Las Positas College (LPC) Student Learning Outcomes Task Force was formed in fall, 2004, to facilitate a college-wide student learning outcomes assessment plan. The Task Force spent the 2004-2005 academic year creating a list of core competencies (institutional outcomes) for the college, organizing a student learning outcome (SLO) flex-day workshop, facilitating departmental SLO workshops, establishing a pilot program for SLO projects, attending SLO training workshops, gathering SLO information from other institutions and sources, and presenting that training and information to the LPC community.

The goal of the Task Force for this fall (2005) was to create a recommended process for systematically and cyclically incorporating SLOs and assessment at LPC. After reviewing the myriad SLO assessment processes in place at California community colleges, the new accreditation standards, and the accreditation reports from community colleges that have been reviewed under the new standards, the Task Force tried to come up with an authentic assessment cycle that not only would improve our institution, but also would provide a simple and easy process, in keeping with the size, organization and culture of our college.

This report summarizes the Task Force's ideas and recommendations concerning the process, responsibilities and resources necessary for a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle (SLOAC) at Las Positas College.

#### **Implementing a Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Process at LPC**

The Task Force recommends a two-year development period in which the college begins a SLOAC process which allows for change and modification along the way. To begin the process of an assessment cycle, the Task Force recommends the following:

1. Establish 2 Faculty Leads with reassigned time:
  - a. SLO Campus Liaison (in place by August, 2006):
    - Chairs Steering Committee (formerly Task Force)
    - Archivist for SLO work, updates web content with Scott Vigallon (PDC)
    - Logistics for campus-wide SLO coordination: works with Administration
    - Budget

- Links team (SLO Training and Resource Coordinator, SLO Mentor Faculty, Administration, Institutional Researcher, Professional Development Center)
  - Coordinates SLO work with Curriculum Committee
  - Sits on Academic Senate as SLO liaison. Reports all information from the Steering committee to the Senate for dissemination to Divisions.
  - Liaison with other colleges as LPC's SLO faculty representative.
- b. SLO Training and Resource Coordinator (in place by August, 2006):
- Sits on the Staff Development committee as SLO liaison
  - Trains faculty and staff on electronic reporting system
  - Plans workshops, trainings, conferences
  - Mentor resource
  - Resource for tools and information (Internet, books, etc.) needed by faculty initiating SLOAC or encountering problems as they work through the first rounds of SLOs and Assessment.
  - Identifies resources and support (technology, meeting times, etc.) needed by faculty to meet goals of 5 year plan/accreditation mandate; presents resource needs to the Steering Committee.
2. Establish Reporting System for SLOAC (in place by January, 2007)
- a. Use Elumen software as institutional reporting system for SLOs
- SLO Training and Resource Coordinator holds workshops and trains faculty and staff to use reporting system
  - Faculty enter SLOs and assessment on system
3. Establish SLO Steering Committee (in place August, 2006)
- a. The Task Force recommends an SLO Steering Committee (formerly the Task Force) for the next two years (fall 2006 -- fall 2008), which will oversee the implementation of the SLO/assessment process, collect information and suggestions from the college community, and make recommendations for modifications in process and responsibilities.
- b. Steering Committee will meet once or twice a month to inform the work as it progresses. The faculty leads, a student services representative, and a PDC/technology representative will all sit on the Steering Committee. VP of Academic Services will serve as the lead Administrator with support from Deans and Institutional Research. VP Student Services will serve for fall semester to provide transition. Each Dean will work with one of the leads as a resource.
4. Resource Plan (submitted March, 2006)
- a. Request .5 release time for leads
- b. Request software resources for SLO reporting system (Elumen)
- c. Request funds for Conferences/Flex Day Workshops
- Local workshops and conferences for faculty/staff/admin
  - Guest presenters and experts
  - Flex Day activities

## **Recommended SLO Assessment Cycle**

### **Proposed Process for Two-Year Trial**

Currently we have a draft of institutional outcomes (Core Competencies, 2005 Edition); our goal is to assess these outcomes, as well as Program outcomes, using a course-embedded assessment process. The following list outlines the proposed process:

- Using an “Assessment Plan” form (see attached example), faculty will list core competencies, intended outcomes (SLOs) and assessment for one course.
- Assessment plan is submitted on-line (system to be determined by SLO Steering Committee).
- Faculty collect assessment results for at least one outcome on their assessment plan form. (This may be coordinated by the institutional researcher to correlate with assessment of a core competency.)
- Faculty evaluate the results of the students’ assessments, identify any issues or needs that the results reveal and, using the assessment plan form, record how they will use results for any improvements or modifications. The completed form becomes an “Assessment Report” (see attached example).
- Completed assessment reports are submitted on-line. (Submission process and accessibility of information to be determined by SLO Steering Committee.)
- The assessment reports are discussed in flex-day sessions; discussions include analysis of what help the department or program needs to improve teaching and learning.
- If support is needed for the improvement of teaching and learning, based on assessment reports, recommendations are submitted to Deans, PBC or Vice President for Academic Services (to be determined by SLO Steering Committee).
- Faculty continue to write or revise assessment reports each semester (determined by the courses they are teaching and possibly through the coordination of Deans, SLO liaison, and institutional researcher).
- The college’s institutional researcher collects and sorts course assessment reports in order to cyclically assess achievement of institutional core competencies.
- Programs use the course assessment reports in the program review process to analyze program outcomes. A “Program Matrix” (see attached example) is used to assess alignment and correlation of course outcomes and program outcomes.

**The Task Force recognizes that a student learning outcomes and assessment cycle at LPC will be a campus-wide endeavor. Responsibilities should be fairly distributed to faculty, staff and administration. The Task Force recommends the following:**

**Faculty:** Working individually or in groups, faculty write assessment plans and reports as described in the process listed above.

**Program Review:** A program review committee should determine program-level assessment report procedures and timeline.

**Academic Senate:** Academic Senate reviews and provides feedback concerning the decisions, documents and recommendations made by the SLO Steering Committee.

**Technology:** Technology provides technical support to develop an on-line assessment report process and any other technical support needed for SLO projects and research. **PDC** helps train faculty, staff and administration to use technical support.

**Research and Planning:** Research and Planning provides support to faculty as they collect and interpret assessment data (last stages of assessment report). Researcher also compiles report out tools, maintains college portfolios for assessment of core competencies, and writes college-level assessment reports.

**Deans:** Deans monitor the SLO/assessment process for courses in their divisions. They keep track of the course assessment plans being developed for the semester, and make available to faculty a list of courses that do not have assessment plans or reports. They also provide support for faculty developing SLO plans/reports, including time for discussion of the SLO/assessment process at division meetings. Deans work with Research and Planning to select a sample of courses for assessment of core competencies.

**Student Services:** Student Services develop and maintain SLO assessment reports for non-academic services offered by the college. These reports will be available on-line to the college community for use in analysis of course/program/college assessment reports.

**Vice President of Academic Services:** The Vice President for Academic Services serves as key coordinator, synchronizing the SLO/assessment timeline with program review, course outline review and accreditation, as well as working with deans to fairly organize faculty workload based on these tasks.

### **Conclusion**

This report serves a starting point for the student learning outcomes and assessment cycle at LPC. All points made in the report are recommendations; the Task Force expects that modifications and changes can and should occur as the campus discovers what works and doesn't work in the proposed process.