UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN COLORADO

UNC Institutional Learning Outcomes
Contextual Statement
University Assessment Council Fall 2020

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are statements that describe what students should know or be able to do as a result of an educational experience. SLOs provide a framework for making decisions about what and how educational content is delivered and the methods used to assess student learning. SLOs also communicate to educators, students, and other stakeholders what students are expected to learn through participation in an educational experience. Educators identify SLOs at multiple levels, from single lessons or activities to course, program, and institutional levels. Ideally, SLOs across these levels align, with the broadest statements of learning at the institutional level, increasing in specificity through the remaining levels (see figure 1).
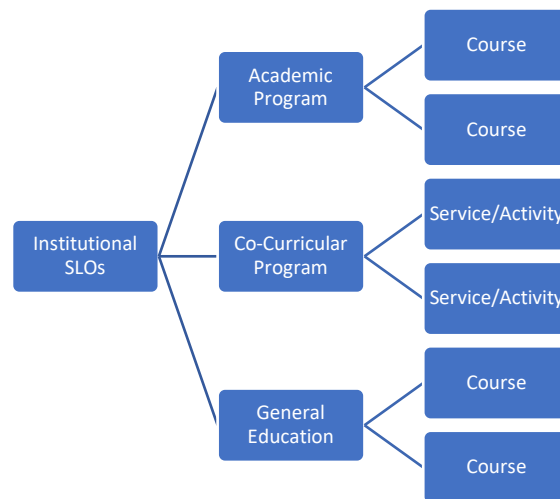

Figure 1: Learning outcomes alignment across levels

Institutional learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes an institution envisions for all of its students. ILOs are written broadly to be applicable to all educational programs at the institution. Few programs will address all of the institutional learning outcomes; however, the cumulative educational experiences in and out of the classroom should provide opportunities for students to attain all of the learning outcomes. UNC's institutional learning outcomes articulate qualities that all college-educated people should possess as well as the unique characteristics that define graduates of the University of Northern Colorado.

In 2015, UNC completed a comprehensive self-study review for reaffirmation of accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. The self-study found that UNC needed to update its ILOs, which were outdated and not well known by the majority of the campus (HLC Self-Study, 2015). The University

Assessment Council was charged by the Provost to lead a campus-side initiative that was inclusive and transparent, offered broad opportunities for input from faculty, staff, and students, and resulted in a set of clearly articulated learning outcomes that reflect the values and priorities of the UNC community. The Assessment Council used an iterative process to collect feedback through surveys and meetings with faculty, staff, students, and alumni. At each stage of the process, the Assessment Council worked to ensure the collective voice of the campus was represented. This process was completed in 2017. Additional information is available at www.unco.edu/assessment/assessment/initiatives/.

UNC's institutional learning outcomes are organized into five broad categories: mastering foundational skills, strengthening interactions with others, connecting ideas and experiences, developing professional competence, and engaging in healthy behaviors. Clarifying statements provide additional context (see Table below). UNC's institutional learning outcomes are as follows:

1. *Mastering Foundational Skills*
   a. Explain how knowledge is discovered or created.
   b. Apply critical thinking to analyze, integrate, and evaluate information.
   c. Apply ethical principles to evaluate and make decisions.
   d. Make informed decisions using numeric and scientific information.
   e. Express ideas through multiple media and modes of communication.

2. *Strengthening Interactions with Others*
   a. Develop the capacity to understand and interact effectively with others whose identities, beliefs, behaviors, and values differ from their own.
   b. Demonstrate teamwork skills that enable collaboration.
   c. Develop and sustain mutually beneficial relationships.
   d. Demonstrate the capacity to engage in civic, social, and political responsibilities.

3. *Connecting Ideas and Experiences*
   a. Apply multidisciplinary perspectives to gain new insights into issues and concepts.
   b. Describe issues from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, geographic, and global perspectives.
   c. Evaluate the social, economic, political, and environmental consequences of individual and group actions.
   d. Connect experiences in and out of the classroom.

4. *Developing Professional Competence*
   a. Use the tools, terminology, and methods related to their program of study.
   b. Apply the standards and practices of their major or program of study.

5. *Engaging in Healthy Behaviors*
   a. Describe factors that impact the health and wellness of individuals and their communities.
   b. Reflect critically on their own personal growth.
   c. Demonstrate practices that promote health and well-being.

UNC Institutional Learning Outcomes

Category	Learning Outcome Statements	Clarifying Statements
Mastering Foundational Skills	Explain how knowledge is discovered or created.	Describe how existing knowledge is advanced, tested and revised in one or more disciplinary fields. Evaluate how methods of inquiry in one or more disciplinary fields are applied to address important societal issues, problems, or challenges.
	Apply critical thinking to analyze, integrate, and evaluate information.	Describe an issue to be explored or analyzed. Clearly present relevant evidence from credible sources to support a larger argument. Offer conclusions reflecting a clear understanding of the implications and consequences of the findings presented.
	Apply ethical principles to evaluate and make decisions.	Identify and elaborate on key ethical issues. Articulate the ways in which two or more differing ethical perspectives influence decision making. Develop and effectively defend an approach to address an ethical issue.
	Make informed decisions using numeric and scientific information.	Accurately present information in mathematical forms such as equations, graphs, diagrams, and tables. Draw appropriate inferences based on quantitative information and mathematical forms. Use quantitative analysis as the basis for deep and thoughtful judgments and conclusions. Describe assumptions and provide compelling explanation for why assumptions are appropriate. Apply mathematical concepts to financial management decisions.
	Express ideas through multiple media and modes of communication.	Develop sustained, coherent argument or explication of issues, problems, or processes. Use one or more modes of communication, media, or language. Demonstrate rhetorical knowledge and the ability to respond effectively to a given audience, purpose, and context.
Strengthening Interactions with Others	Develop the capacity to understand and interact effectively with others whose identities, beliefs, behaviors, and values differ from their own.	Reflect on how their own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of people from other cultures and communities. Exhibit curiosity about what can be learned from a diversity of communities and cultures. Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively across and within cultural and community contexts and structures.

Category	Learning Outcome Statements	Clarifying Statements
	Demonstrate teamwork skills that enable collaboration.	Work cooperatively within a team structure, including negotiating and managing conflict. Motivate team members by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. Provide assistance and encouragement to team members.
	Develop and sustain mutually beneficial relationships.	Demonstrate the ability to treat others with respect. Manage interpersonal conflicts effectively. Demonstrate appropriately assertive behavior. Seek help from and offer assistance to others when needed. Learn from the contributions and involvement of others in group projects. Accept supervision and direction as needed.
	Demonstrate the capacity to engage in civic, social, and political responsibilities.	Reflect on their own learning from an experience in civic, social, or political activity. Articulate a sense of civic identity and continuous commitment to public action. Analyze the aims and accomplishments of civic, social, and political action.
Connecting Ideas and Experiences	Apply multidisciplinary perspectives to gain new insights into issues and concepts.	Frame an issue, problem, or controversy within a field of study Evaluate competing perspectives on an issue, problem, or controversy. Present a reasoned analysis of an issue that demonstrates multiple perspectives.
	Describe issues from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, geographic, and global perspectives.	Explain diverse positions on a contested public issue, including positions representing different cultural, economic, and geographic interests. Evaluate issues in light of diverse cultural, economic, and geographic interests. Explain substantial connections between worldviews, power structures, and experiences of multiple cultures historically or in contemporary contexts.
	Evaluate the social, economic, political, and environmental consequences of individual and group actions.	Develop and justify a position on a public issue and relate to the consequences of views held by the public or within the policy environment. Address ethical, social, and environmental challenges in global systems and evaluate the local and broader consequences of individual and collective interventions. Evaluate the global impact of one's own and others' specific local actions on the natural and human world. Explain the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of local and national decisions on global systems.
	Connect experiences in and out of the classroom.	Link knowledge or skills acquired in work, community, or research activities with knowledge acquired in one or more fields of study.

Category	Learning Outcome Statements	Clarifying Statements
		Evaluate the effects of learning outside the classroom on the research or practical skills employed in executing a class assignment.
Developing Professional Competence	Use the tools, terminology, and methods related to their program of study.	Describe the major theories and methods of inquiry in their field of study. Investigate complex problems using theories and methods of inquiry from the field of study. Demonstrate competence in the tools, terminology, and methods of the discipline through projects, papers, exhibits, or performances.
	Apply the standards and practices of their major or program of study.	Demonstrate integrity in academic, scholarly, and research activity. Explain the source of standards and practices of their major or program of study. Determine which standards and practices of their major or program of study apply in a given situation.
Engaging in Healthy Behaviors	Describe factors that impact the health and wellness of individuals and their communities.	Explain the behaviors that promote health and reduce risk both for individuals and their communities. Articulate the relationship between health and wellness in accomplishing goals both for individuals and their communities.
	Reflect critically on their own personal growth.	Describe how their personal strengths and weaknesses affect their ability to achieve desired outcomes. Identify opportunities and roadblocks for their personal development goals. Demonstrate confidence in their ability to attain their goals.
	Demonstrate practices that promote health and well-being.	Demonstrate behaviors and choices that are congruent with personal identity, ethical, spiritual, and moral values. Seek and receive feedback and help when needed. Exhibit competence in practical life skills such as time management, financial management, and self-care.