

Institutional Learning Outcomes
Executive Summary for Reports of Spring 2016 Survey Responses
Feedback on Draft 1 of ILOs
Assessment Council
May 17, 2016

In spring 2016, the University Assessment Council launched a campus-wide project to revise UNC’s [Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) (ILOs).¹ This project was initiated at the request of the Provost and in response to findings from the 2015 Higher Learning Commission self-study that suggested the current ILOs are outdated and not well known by the majority of campus. The Assessment Council developed a [draft of Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) and requested feedback from the campus community via an online survey. This executive summary provides an overview of the survey results. Detailed feedback can be found in two reports: one describing the results from close-ended questions on the survey and the second describing the results from open-ended questions. Both reports are available [online](#).

Who Provided Feedback

Surveys were distributed to all UNC employees and random samples of students and alumni in spring 2016. In addition, a link to the survey was provided on the Institutional Learning Outcomes website, and announcements inviting participation in the survey were posted in *UNC Today*. One hundred and sixty-five respondents completed the survey. Of those 165 survey respondents, 75 provided additional written comments to open-ended questions about the ILOs. The number of people who completed the survey is in the table below.

Role	Total Providing Responses
Full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member	34
Full-time non tenure-track faculty member	5
Part-time (adjunct) faculty member	4
Staff/administrator	23
Undergraduate student	24
Graduate student	33
Alumni	5
Role not indicated by respondent	19
Multiple roles indicated (e.g., student, staff, and alumni)	18
Total respondents providing responses	165

What Feedback Was Requested

Seventeen learning outcome statements were organized into four categories: Foundation in the Liberal Arts, Essential Skills, Personal and Civic Responsibility, and Preparation for Careers and Further Advanced Study. For each of the seventeen learning outcome statements, respondents were asked to answer the following close-ended questions:

- To what extent should each learning outcome be included in UNC’s ILOs?
- Is each learning outcome appropriate to undergraduate students, graduate students, both levels, or neither level?

¹ Information about the project can be viewed online at www.unco.edu/institutional-learning-outcomes/.

At the end of each category, respondents were asked to describe changes they would recommend to the learning outcomes in that category and also to provide any overall feedback about the learning outcomes.

Summary of Results

Close-Ended Questions

There was general agreement that the learning outcomes in Draft 1 should be included in UNC's ILOs, with 75% or more of respondents agreeing that each learning outcome should be included. In addition, the majority of respondents (58% or higher) also thought that each learning outcome is appropriate to both undergraduate and graduate students. Table 2 shows rates of agreement that each learning outcome should be included in UNC's ILOs along with the percent who think the learning outcome applies to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Table 2: Close-Ended Question Summary Results

ILO	% Agree for Inclusion	% Applies to UG and GR
Describe artistic, cultural, and historical methods for understanding the human experience	76%	58%
Apply the scientific method to examine natural and social phenomena	80%	62%
Connect experiences in and out of the classroom to reach deeper understanding of contemporary issues	88%	81%
Adapt knowledge and skills gained in one situation to new situations	85%	83%
Apply analytic inquiry to explore questions, problems, and texts	93%	88%
Analyze, integrate, and evaluate information	93%	90%
Demonstrate quantitative literacy	84%	69%
Express ideas in a variety of communication methods and media	92%	86%
Work collaboratively with others	91%	85%
Describe the principles upon which democratic societies are structured	84%	59%
Explain diverse positions on an issue from different cultural, socioeconomic, and geographic interests	91%	79%
Use ethical reasoning to explain and solve problems	91%	81%
Identify significant issues affecting communities, countries, continents, and cultures	92%	79%
Evaluate the social, economic, and environmental consequences of individual and group actions	93%	74%
Define the tools, vocabulary, and methods associated with their chosen field	91%	81%
Investigate complex problems using the methods of their chosen field	93%	78%
Demonstrate competence in a major field of study as defined by that program's learning outcomes	93%	84%

Open-Ended Questions

Many stakeholders suggested that the learning outcomes were well-written. Ninety respondents offered no written suggestions for improving the learning outcomes. The 75 respondents who provided written feedback suggested changes to the concepts and wording of the learning outcomes. Below is an overview of written feedback.

- There may be confusion about the difference between ILOs and the learning outcomes for the Liberal Arts Core. This confusion may exist because the first category of ILOs is called Foundation in the Liberal Arts.
- Some respondents suggested that several outcomes were not applicable to some disciplines/majors and were not applicable to both undergraduate and graduate student levels. They asked for a re-evaluation of those outcomes.
- Some outcomes contained terminology not familiar to a range of respondents. For example, quantitative literacy was a term unfamiliar to some respondents.
- Some respondents thought that there was too much focus on quantitative literacy.
- Some respondents thought that concepts related to diversity, culture, and social justice could be more strongly integrated into the outcomes.
- Some concepts were considered overemphasized by some respondents and underemphasized by others. For example, some respondents thought that more emphasis on science was needed; whereas, others thought that less emphasis on science was needed.
- Some respondents raised questions about whether some concepts, such as collaborative learning, can be taught by faculty. The respondents wanted a re-examination of these concepts.
- Some respondents thought that the focus on understanding democratic societies was too narrow and recommended broadening the outcome.
- Respondents provided a range of specific suggestions for rewording outcomes. For example, some respondents suggested that different action verbs be used in some outcomes or that some outcomes be combined.

Next Steps

The University Assessment Council will use this feedback to make revisions to the first draft of ILOs, paying particular attention to revising outcomes with lower levels of agreement, those viewed as less applicable to all students, and those whose language needs to be revised for greater clarity. A revised draft of ILOs will be presented to the campus in summer and fall 2016. Additional feedback will be solicited through open forums, which may result in further revision to the ILOs.