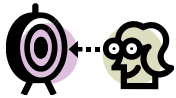




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# Assessment of Student learning outcomes

IMPROVING THE SUCCESS OF BLUEGRASS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE STUDENTS THROUGH THE EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES WITHIN THE TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

## EVALUATING FOR IMPROVEMENT

As we approach the end of the year, it is time to complete our 2013-2014 Assessment Plans. This requires documenting assessment results for the outcomes and describing how you plan to use the findings for improvements.



As you analyze and discuss your assessment results with the program faculty, consider the following:

- **What do the results tell you? Are the students meeting the expected level of achievement for this student learning outcome?** Even if they met the target level, did you notice students experiencing problems on specific steps or components within the outcome?
- If this is the first year you have assessed this outcome, **what**

**strategies are you going to put in place to improve the students' success?** Would extended lab time, additional hands on experiences, or more emphasis on a specific lecture component improve the students' success?

- If this outcome has been assessed for two cycles, **what new program outcome should be identified for 2014-2015?** Review your curriculum competencies to identify or suggest new outcomes for assessment. The *ABCD's of Writing Student Learning Outcomes* on page two of this Newsletter provides helpful information on writing student learning outcomes.

The documentation of your findings and "next steps" supports a culture of evidence, demonstrating BCTC's ongoing efforts to improve student success. This utilization of findings reinforces our mission as we strive to improve the quality of education through continuous improvement methods.

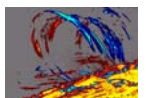
Karman K. Wheeler  
Academic Assessment

## CLOSING THE LOOP IN AIM

(by MAY 31)

### AIM Quick Steps

1. Log into ITES.
2. Verify plan year (2013-2014).
3. Select Planning Unit.
4. Scroll down to first "Student Learning Outcome", click [Edit].
5. [Edit Measure]
6. Provide information in appropriate text boxes for results and final achievement target status.
7. Describe plans or strategies for improvement in the "Use of findings/Next Steps" textbox.
8. [Save Measure]
9. If rolling over the outcome, click on "Roll-Over" under the Objective/Outcome box.
10. Click the [Overview] Tab at the top of the page.
11. Repeat the procedure for the remaining student learning outcomes.





## ABCD's of WRITING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME

- Are you identifying a new student learning outcome to be assessed?
- How do you start?
- What are the expectations for your graduates?

As we complete this year's assessment plans, it is necessary to consider whether the outcomes are going to be rolled over into the 2014-2015 Assessment Plans or if new outcomes are going to be identified.

The competencies within the program's curriculum, established by the KCTCS curriculum committee, is a great starting point. These competencies can serve as a foundation for the student learning outcome or spark an idea for a related outcome to be assessed.

All essential components of a student learning outcome are easily identified using the ABCD Outcome Writing Model (Henrich et al., 1996). Once the ABCD's are established, it is a simple process to place the outcome into BCTC's Assessment Improvement Measurement relational data base (AIM).

The ABCD Model includes four components: **A**udience, **B**ehavior, **C**ircumstances (or context that the learning will occur), and the **D**egree (or target level of achievement).

The **A**udience refers to the learners. For our purpose, this would be our students or graduates.

The second component of the student learning outcome is the

expected **B**ehavior that should occur. What will the student know, be able to do, experience, or value? Student learning outcomes can be written using the descriptive verbs associated with each of the learning behavior levels established using Bloom's Taxonomy.

<http://www.clemson.edu/assessment/assessmentpractices/referencematerials/documents/Blooms%20Taxonomy%20Action%20Verbs.pdf> )

Under what **C**ondition or circumstances will the learning occur? In other words, what will be used to demonstrate that learning has occurred? Will the students demonstrate their competency through a final project? Can questions on a final exam, specific for the outcome, demonstrate the student's mastery or knowledge of the competency? If the outcome is a performance skill, will a rubric or checklist be used to show the student's success with the task?

The final component is the target level or **D**egree of acceptability. If students respond/perform correctly 80% of the time, is this acceptable? Is it an outcome that requires 100% for total mastery? Or, does industry or professional organizations dictate an acceptable target level?

Once the ABCD's are identified, the outcome is ready to be placed into AIM. The outcome will utilize three sections in AIM: *Outcome/Operational Objective, Measure, and Target Level*. The *Operational/Objective/Outcome* will include the **audience** and **behavior**. The *Measure* textbox is used for the **condition** and

the **degree** will serve as the *Target Level*.

For an example, let's review a student learning outcome from the Surgical Technology Program:

*Students will demonstrate their ability to gown, glove, set-up the back table and mayo stand correctly for basic surgical procedures with 85% of the students scoring 14 out of 19 on this portion of the Mock Surgery Evaluation.*

In AIM, the outcome is: "Students will demonstrate their ability to gown; glove, set-up the back table and mayo stand correctly". The Measure is the Mock Surgery Evaluation. The Target Level is: "85% of the students scoring 14 out of 19".

Another example is from the Air Conditioning Technology Program:

*Graduates will be able to evaluate and service HVAC equipment with 90% of students obtaining a 75 or higher on a heat pump simulator.*

In this example, the outcome in AIM is: "Graduates will be able to evaluate and service HVAC equipment. The heat pump simulator is the measure and the target level of achievement is: 90% of the students will scoring 75 or higher.

The ABCD's to write a student learning outcome provides a quick and comprehensive method to develop new initiatives to be assessed and placed in AIM.

Before leaving for the summer, I encourage you to take this opportunity, while it is still fresh in your mind, to develop your assessment plan for 2014-2015.

### References

Hamilton-LaRosa, K. (2014, April). *Using your ABCD's to Write SLO's*. Presentation at the KCTCS teaching & Learning Institute: Spring 2014 Louisville, KY.

Heinrich, R., Molenda, M., Russell, J.D., Smaldino, S.E. (1996). *Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill. Henrich et al., 1996

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