

COURSE-LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES PLAN

For review by Curriculum and Instruction Council and Academic Senate

Student Learning Outcomes Committee

April 30, 2008 (revised May 8, 2008)

INTRODUCTION

The Academic Senate's Resolution 2008-04 directs the Student Learning Outcomes Committee (SLOC) to propose a plan and a timeline to help guide faculty in the creation of course level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). The purpose of this resolution is to respond to both internal and external conditions affecting the use of SLOs at Mt. San Antonio College:

- The college's new mission statement, "to support [students] in achieving their personal, educational, and career goals in an environment of academic excellence," is our overriding impetus.
- The accrediting agency for California Community Colleges (ACCJC) uses the application and integration of SLOs as an integral part of its accrediting standards.

Although we believe that the fundamental drive behind the SLO process should always be the improvement of student learning, we must also respond to accreditation mandates that require the visibility of specific components that reflect the appropriate institution-wide application of SLOs:

- The creation of course-level SLOs for all active courses¹
- Full transparency of these SLOs (attachment to course outlines of record and inclusion on course syllabi)

The process of developing and measuring SLOs must remain the responsibility of faculty. We also believe, however, that the best planning occurs when we encourage and support appropriate input from all college constituencies (i.e., managers and classified). Through this collaboration, we become a more efficient and effective team.

Because the SLO process provides a context for the assessment and improvement of student learning, it is also an integral element of institutional planning at Mt. SAC (see Appendix A). Within this context, the foundation of department planning comprises clearly articulated goals related to the improvement of student learning as well as the delivery of unit services. The planning process allows for documentation of efforts related to these goals, to improve our institutional effectiveness, and is essential to the thoughtful use of our complex resources.

¹ We define "course-level SLOs" as any SLO that has an Intended Outcome statement as well as a clearly articulated Means of Assessment (columns 2 and 3 in the Nichol's 5-column model—see Appendix B). All active courses" includes all credit, non-credit, and community services courses listed in the catalog.

In requesting the Academic Senate and Curriculum and Instruction Council to review and approve this plan and timeline, we realize a need for future resolutions to support the work of this committee. Our long range plan is outlined in the separate informational document. This informational piece covers future assessment cycles and includes professional learning opportunities to support innovations in assessment, institutional planning, and awareness of our assessment management system, e-PIE. It is our hope that this plan and subsequent documents will provide departments with flexible and efficient ways to achieve all parts of assessment within the Nichol's five-column model (see Appendix B) and with an understanding of how that model is embedded within e-PIE.

Our ultimate goal is institutional effectiveness—the effective establishment and improvement of student learning and institutional services. Therefore, throughout this plan we specifically view the application of SLOs as essential to the planning activities for traditional academic areas as well as Basic Skills, VTEA, Learning Communities and more. We hope you find this plan of value.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The following are the suggested goals and activities. Please note that when circumstances change, there may be a need to re-evaluate the plan and make appropriate changes. When substantial changes are needed, SLOC will discuss it further with Academic Senate and Curriculum and Instruction Council.

1. Goal: By 2010, 100% of active courses will have two SLOs and the Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success.

Activities

- a) Beginning in June 2008, in cooperation with EDC departments will be asked to review and deactivate courses not in use and be finished by December 2008.
- b) By September 2008, SLOC will provide good examples of existing course-level SLOs and the full 5-column model.
- c) By June 2008, SLOC will provide a rubric to evaluate the quality of all 5 columns.
- d) By June 2008, SLOC will offer different methods for creating student learning outcomes². The final result is that 75% of active courses will have at least two course-level SLOs by June 2009.
- e) SLOC will recommend that for each course-level SLO that the department also includes at least one Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success. The result is that 75% of all active courses will have Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success for at least two course-level SLOs by June 2009.

² Create two SLOs on each course using one or more methods:

1. using the course measurable objectives as a guide for creating one or two overarching SLOs (60% of the department course SLOs are created using this approach)
2. creating one SLO from each course measurable objective (20% of the department course SLOs are created using this approach)
3. using a holistic approach to review the course and its link to the program (slower but perhaps more intrinsic value (20% of the department course SLOs are created using this approach))
4. using the program-level SLOs to create overarching course-level SLOs

- f) SLOC will work with the SLO Coordinator and Research to create an SLO/AUO guidebook and e-PIE handbook with a first draft by June 2008 and final copy available in September 2008
- g) Departments will be encouraged to create, where reasonable, their own SLO sub-committees to oversee SLO processes. These sub-committees could be formed by September 2008 or earlier. Examples of such committees can be found in Mathematics and the Library.
- h) By October 2008, SLOC will review existing policies, procedures and planning strategies that promote or hinder faculty in identifying learning outcomes.
- i) By October 2008, SLOC will review existing policies, procedures and planning strategies that promote or hinder faculty in identifying assessment.
- j) SLOC will provide recommendations to Professional and Organizational Development on continuing education for faculty, staff, and managers regarding the overall institutional planning process (PIE) and how SLOs and AUOs are part of that process. The recommendations will be completed by October 2008.

2) Goal: By 2010, 100% of active courses will have transparent course-level SLOs.

Activities

- a) In order to achieve transparency, SLOC is recommending further discussion on how to efficiently use technology for this goal. The discussion and formulation of a plan should be completed by September 2008.

TIMELINE

A timeline for creating and documenting course-level SLOs and its measurement can be found in Appendix C.

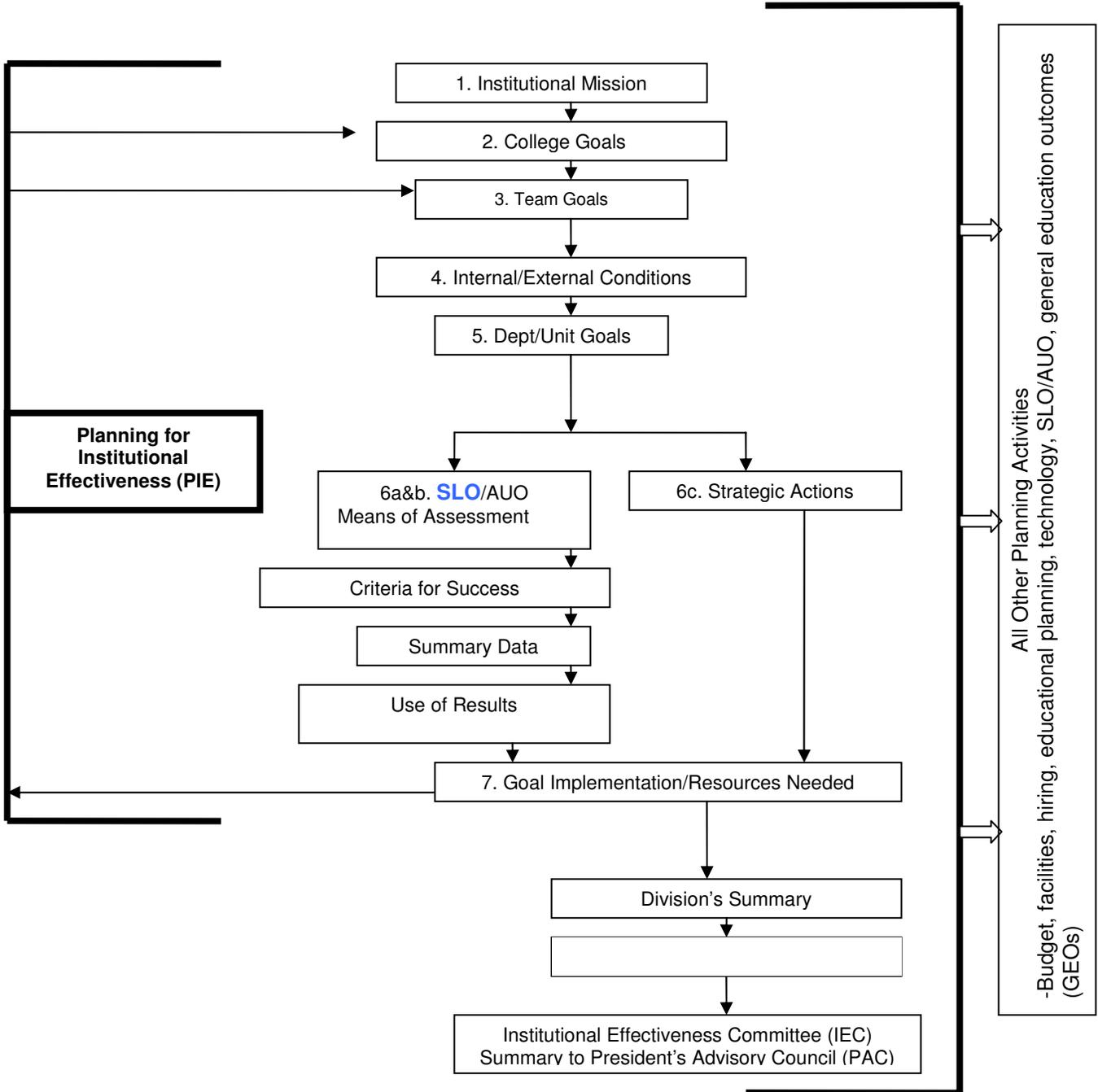
CONCLUSION

Although this plan includes some timelines, it should be noted that planning resides at the unit level and is assumed to be continuous and flexible as conditions change at the college and in the broader environment. We expect, similar to any planning exercise, slight changes are always necessary. Large changes in the plan, would, of course, need to be first reviewed by Curriculum and Instruction Council and Academic Senate.

SLOC believes that this plan, while ambitious, is necessary in order to adhere to the fundamental drive behind the SLO process, which is the improvement of student learning with the continued understanding of accreditation mandates. Faculty members are doing SLOs and their assessment every day. It is time to provide a venue for their documentation, exploration, collaboration and celebration.

APPENDIX A

MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE PLANNING FRAMEWORK



APPENDIX B

Nichol's 5-Column Model for SLO/AUO Development and Assessment

Mission & Goals	Intended Outcome(s)	Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success	Summary of Data Collected	Use of Results
The mission of the program, department or administrative unit.	What will the student think, feel know or do as a result of a given educational experience?	What are the criteria for success? What tools will be used to establish and measure success?	Summarize the findings.	What do the data tell us about our process? What, if anything, do we need to do to our program, department, or course to improve student learning? What resources are necessary?

APPENDIX C

Student Learning Outcomes on Courses: Timeline

