

Recommendation for reframing course outcomes

Over a decade ago the college brought in Ruth Stiehl and adopted the current format for course outcomes language. To move faculty away from a long list of competencies, she encouraged writing of outcomes with an 'out there' perspective - *describe what we intend the students to be able to do "out there" (in their roles as worker, family member, community citizen, global citizen or life long learner) as opposed to an activity "in here" or in the classroom.* This framework was embraced by some SACs and resisted by others.

Many SACs felt that the 'out there' focus was artificial and a barrier to aligning course outcomes and assessment. So, in moving toward the alignment of course outcomes and assessment we want to remove 'out-there' language as a requirement and make it optional.. Additionally, we want to acknowledge the importance of aspirational goals for some SACs.

A collaborative group (representing the EAC, Curriculum Committee, Degrees and Certificates, Academic Policies and Standards, the LAC, and the Curriculum Office) requests your feedback on the following:

1. Remove 'out there' language as a requirement for course outcomes. Note: If the 'out there' framing works for a SAC, there is no need to make changes to outcomes. If it does not feel authentic, then SACs can revise the course outcomes for better alignment to content.
2. Clarify the difference between course outcomes and aspirational goals and have a place in the CCOG for optional aspirational goals.

For illustrative purposes, key ideas are listed below.

Criteria for Outcome Statements

Outcomes should reflect the essential course content. Typically, a course will have one to six outcomes, a one-credit course would likely have few outcomes, whereas a multi-credit course would likely have more.

The stem for the list of outcomes is: "Upon successful completion of the course students should be able to . . ."

Course outcome statements should:

- Describe what students should be able to do upon successful completion of the course to demonstrate their knowledge of and/or their capabilities relating to course content.
- Represent themes, key concepts, or comprehensive skill sets.
- Be supported by all other sections of the CCOG.
- Be measurable and assessable.
- Be aligned with degree, certificate, and/or PCC core outcomes where appropriate.
- When possible, use language that is accessible to a broad audience including students, faculty, external agencies, and the public.

Aspirational goals

Apart from outcome statements, some SACs may have goals for a course which are not measurable or for which students may not be held accountable (e.g., “enjoy a life enriched by calculus” or “take pride in one’s work”). These aspirational goals may be essential to a SAC’s conception and/or motivation for the course and its hope for the students; however, they are not outcome statements as outlined above. There will be a new optional field for SAC-determined aspirational goals in the CCOG. Faculty may also include their own individual aspirational goals in their syllabi.

[Current course outcome guidelines](#) from the Curriculum Office webpage

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