
The University of Texas Pan American

**Student Learning Outcomes
Assessment
2001 - 2005**

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Report

**Compliance Certificate Report
to SACS—September 8, 2006**

November 2006—Off-Site Review

April 2007—On-Site Review

Comprehensive Standards— Student Learning Outcomes

Programs

3.4 Educational Programs

- 3.4.1 The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded**
- (a) is approved by the faculty and the administration, and (b) establishes and evaluates program and learning outcomes.**

Comprehensive Standards— Student Learning Outcomes (cont'd.)

3.5 Educational Programs: Undergraduate

- 3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2005

- **Campus visit by Dr. Margaret Sullivan, SACS Consultant**
- **Raised the “level of stress” regarding SACS standards, accreditation process, and compliance, including assessment of student learning outcomes.**

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment Process at UTPA

**Long
Slow
Arduous
Exciting**

SLO Assessment Process (cont'd.)

Long:

Began work in Fall 2001

**Four years later, seems like
just beginning, a long way
to go.**

SLO Assessment Process (cont'd.)

Slow:

**Acceptance of process—who,
what, why, when, how**

**Learning—process, language,
procedures**

Integration with other processes

Staying on task

SLO Assessment Process (cont'd.)

Arduous:

Awareness

Understanding

Acceptance

Change

SLO Assessment Process (cont'd.)

Exciting:

**Many speaking the language
of assessment**

**Results being used for
improvement**

**Evidence of acceptance of
assessment as a “way of
life”**

Process and Chronology for SLO Assessment at UTPA

January 1999—President appointed a Core Implementation and Assessment Committee (CIAC), with university-wide representation, to oversee evaluation of core curriculum

Fall 2003—Provost expanded the role of the CIAC to include oversight of all SLO assessment

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

July 2001—UTPA initiated assessment of the core curriculum as part of UT System Plan for Assessment of Academic Programs

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

**UT System Plan designed to Phase-In
Assessments in General Education (Core
Curriculum) over a Three-Year Period in:**

- **Writing**
- **Mathematics**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Other General Education Core
Competencies**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2001

**Faculty Task Forces in English
composition and Mathematics
developed and refined Assessment
Plans for Writing and Mathematics**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2001

- **Conducted an analysis of existing general education (core curriculum) and degree/program student learning outcomes**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2001

Appointed Task Forces in the areas of:

- **Communication**
- **Natural Sciences**
- **Humanities and Visual & Performing Arts**
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences**
- **Critical Thinking**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

December 2001

Conducted a one-day retreat with all Task Forces (approximately 55 faculty) designed to:

- **Orient faculty to SLO assessment**
- **Initiate development of assessment plans in all core areas**
- **Engage faculty in writing student learning outcome statements**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2002

- **Conducted first assessment of Writing in May 2002**
- **Submitted SLO Assessment Report during summer 2002**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2002

- **Made presentations to various constituencies:**
 - Institutional Planning and Assessment Committee**
 - Faculty Senate**
 - University Curriculum Committee**
 - Administrators and Faculty in Six Colleges**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

AY 2002-2003

- **Developed and refined Assessment Plans, including SLOs, for the remaining areas of the core:**
 - Communication**
 - Natural Sciences**
 - Social and Behavioral Sciences**
 - Humanities and Visual & Performing Arts**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2002

- **Hosted a two-day workshop with national expert on assessment designed to orient faculty to the concept of SLO assessment and the writing of SLOs.**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2002

(and every year thereafter)

- **Attended Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) annual conference**
- **Acquainted with new standards that focus on student learning outcomes**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2003

- **Conducted first assessment of Mathematics in the Core**
- **Submitted first SLO assessment report during summer 2003**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

AY 2003-2004

- **Initiated discipline-based SLO assessment for 54 undergraduate and 46 graduate degrees/majors, 2 doctoral degrees, and 18 teacher certification programs.**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

AY 2003-2004

- **Conducted numerous awareness and faculty development sessions with College assessment committees as they developed and refined SLO Assessment Plans**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2004

- **Conducted second round of Writing and Mathematics assessment**
- **Conducted first assessment of SLOs in other areas of the core curriculum**
- **Submitted SLO assessment reports for other areas of core curriculum during summer 2004**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Use of Results

- **After each SLO assessment, task forces, departments and/or program revised/refined:**
 - student learning outcomes**
 - means of assessment**
 - criteria for success**
 - curriculum**
 - course syllabi**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

AY 2004-2005

Participated with the UT System in the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) project

- **Assessed a random sample of 100 freshmen (fall) and 100 seniors (spring)**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

**CLA assesses students' abilities
in:**

- **Critical Thinking**
- **Analytical Reasoning**
- **Written Communication Abilities**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

**CLA reports results for freshmen
and for seniors, as well as value-
added on abilities based on
comparison of freshmen and
senior results.**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

UTPA is using CLA scores and reports as part of assessment of core curriculum student learning outcomes.

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2005

- **Conducted student learning outcomes assessment for all students graduating in May/August 2005 in 45 bachelor's, 46 Master's, 2 doctoral degree programs and 20 teacher certification programs (not all degree programs had students graduating in May 2005).**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Summer 2005

- **All degree programs that conducted SLO assessments submitted a report**
- **Revisions/changes/modifications to assessment processes and procedures, curriculum, course syllabi, etc. were made and continue to be made, based on assessment results, thus closing the loop.**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2005

- **Assisting degree programs with revisions/modifications/changes to SLO assessment plans**
- **Conducting CLA assessment for random sample of 100 freshmen**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Fall 2005

- **Conduct SLO assessment for all students graduating in degree programs in December 2005**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Spring 2006

- **Workshop for improving development of SLO assessment**
- **Continued SLO assessment of core curriculum**
- **Continued SLO assessment of students graduating from degree programs.**

Process and Chronology (cont'd)

Summer 2006

- **Submit reports of Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 SLO assessment**
- **Continue revisions/modifications/changes to assessment processes, curriculum, etc.**
- **Continue the cycle of SLO assessment**

Rewards

- **Increased awareness of assessment of SLOs**
- **Increased understanding of the concept of assessment of SLOs**
- **Greater acceptance of assessment of SLOs as a “way of life” at UTPA**
- **Increased use of data/results to improve all aspects of programs: curricula, course syllabi, assessment processes and procedures, etc.**

Challenges

- **Increasing acceptance of assessment**
- **Improving the assessment process and procedures:**
 - SLO statements in measurable terms**
 - Measures of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes**
 - Means of assessment (multiple measures)**
 - Setting appropriate criteria for success**

Challenges (cont'd)

- **Ensuring the use of results to improve the quality of educational programs for undergraduate and graduate students.**

Challenges (cont'd)

- **Revise/Modify all bachelor's (undergraduate) degree programs to a minimum of 120 semester credit hours, which entails the re-examination of student learning outcomes and assessment processes.**