



## Excellence in Assessment Designation Campus Application

### Student Learning Outcomes Statements

The campus has established institutional learning outcomes. [Graduate Learning Goals](#) were originally approved in 2002 and have been recently revised and approved by the Academic Senate in April 2016. The Goals will now be forwarded to the President for review. [Baccalaureate Learning Goals](#) were approved by both the Academic Senate and the President in fall 2015. The Baccalaureate Learning Goals were developed based on conversations at a campus-wide summit, department meetings, an ad hoc General Education taskforce, the Assessment of Student Learning (ASL) subcommittee, and the University Educational Policies Committee (UEPC). These goals were also aligned with the AAC&U's [Liberal Education and America's Promise \(LEAP\) Essential Outcomes](#) as required by the California State University System.

The current campus assessment infrastructure is focused on program-level assessment. With the establishment of institutional learning outcomes, the next step for the campus will be to review the assessment infrastructure and complete a mapping of program-level outcomes. This mapping has already been completed at the graduate level—all graduate programs have mapped their program learning outcomes to the Graduate Learning Goals. Due to the recent revision of the Graduate Learning Goals (spring 2016), alignment between program and institutional outcomes may need to be revisited and adjusted.

All programs have established learning outcomes and most are published in a variety of locations. All undergraduate programs are required to include their program learning outcomes in the campus catalog. Most programs also include a link to either the catalog or a list of program learning outcomes on their departmental website. Curriculum maps have also been developed for all programs demonstrating the alignment between coursework and program learning outcomes and are submitted to the Office of Academic Programs via the Academic Program Review process. Information on the publication of program learning outcomes is collected via the annual assessment reporting process and the Academic Program Review Process. [An inventory](#) of published outcome locations is also updated as part of WSCUC

accreditation requirements. Discussions are underway to encourage programs to link their courses to their curriculum map on their websites.

### **Campus-level Assessment Plan**

There is a campus-level assessment plan in place for Graduate Education connecting program-level data to the Graduate Learning Goals. As noted previously, the campus has recently developed and approved Baccalaureate Learning Goals and is currently in the process of discussing campus-level assessment planning for undergraduate learning. In early discussions in the University-Wide Assessment Advisory Council and University Educational Policies Committee, a proposed strategy has been outlined to map course and/or program level outcomes to both General Education and Baccalaureate Learning Goals. As part of this proposed plan, there would also be a summative assessment component through identified capstone courses.

As part of the campus reaccreditation effort, the Office Academic Programs has facilitated the process of assessing the Core Competencies of Oral Communication, Written Communication, Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Quantitative Reasoning with feedback and review occurring via the University-Wide Assessment Advisory Council. Pilots have been initiated for Oral Communication, Information Literacy and Quantitative Reasoning. Faculty Learning Communities are engaged in collecting assessment data at the junior and senior level for Quantitative Reasoning and Information Literacy. The Quantitative Reasoning community has expanded its reach to engage interdisciplinary faculty in creating learning modules to develop Quantitative Reasoning throughout the curriculum. Once the faculty learning communities have completed their work, the results will be reviewed through faculty governance, which will determine the best approach to close the loop. Faculty learning communities will also communicate their results through presentations offered through the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

As noted in the rationale provided with the approved [Baccalaureate Learning Goals](#) by the UEPC, the proposed campus strategy involves mapping program-level outcomes to the undergraduate learning goals. Program-level data will be utilized to assess student achievement of undergraduate learning outcomes. This mapping will be modeled on the alignment that has already taken place at the graduate level. Currently, department-level data collected through the campus' Academic Program Review process are utilized to assess the effectiveness of the General Education program. The General Education Goals and Outcomes have also been recently revised to meet CSU system requirements. The campus has established a General Education Assessment Council and is in the process of developing a certification and recertification process for General Education, which will include the alignment of course learning outcomes to

General Education Goals and Outcomes. The campus also plans to map Strategic Plan Priorities to activities occurring at the program level.

While the campus assessment plan will ultimately be routed and approved through faculty governance, Student Affairs and students are also represented on the University-Wide Assessment Advisory Council, which provides feedback to the Office of Assessment and the Interim AVP for Academic Planning and Analysis. As there are co-curricular elements embedded within the institutional learning outcomes, these stakeholders will have a pivotal role to play. Student Affairs currently uses the Council for Advancement of Standards (CAS) for the assessment of units. Co-curricular programs in Academic Affairs (e.g., Service Learning) are also required to submit annual assessment reports documenting achievement of established student learning outcomes. The campus will need to continue to engage in discussions of how to best align unit activities (across divisions) with campus level goals.

### **Campus-level Assessment Resources**

The Office of Assessment acts as the central location for assessment resources. The Assessment Specialist is available for one-on-one meetings with program faculty and maintains [a website](#) with various assessment resources. These resources include strategies for assessment planning and implementation, reporting templates, and external resources. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the website is accessed primarily to download forms. The Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning also maintains an assessment library and offers periodic course-level assessment workshops.

Although a campus-level assessment plan is still in development, the campus does have infrastructure established for discussing assessments conducted at the university level. This includes the regular administration of the CLA+, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). The campus has also administered local surveys including a Graduating Senior and Alumni survey. Results from these surveys are discussed in various forums, including the cross-divisional Student Success Committee. University-wide assessments have also been integrated into the current Strategic Plan priorities.

Retention, Promotion and Tenure Elaborations are developed at the departmental level. While most elaborations require faculty to maintain high academic standards, some departments do specify assessment activities in the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process. For example, the Department of Social Work's departmental elaborations specify "Providing evidence of student engagement in learning via course assignments and activities that correspond to course learning objectives." The Department of Liberal Studies describes teaching proficiency as including "course assessments and rubrics." The University's [Principles of Assessment](#)

[of Student Learning](#) (2004) clearly separates the assessment of student learning from faculty evaluation. Through the campus application team’s review, it was acknowledged that more support and activities need to be provided for course-level assessment.

### Current Campus-level Assessment Activities

The campus has held Assessment Spotlight presentations to highlight best practices in program assessment. A series of General Education and Institutional Learning Outcome Summits were held in recent years to discuss the revision of General Education Goals and Outcomes and the development of Baccalaureate Learning Goals. A listing of University Wide Assessment Methods are posted on the [Office of Institutional Research website](#) and Assessment Planning resources and a description of program review processes are provided on the [Office of Assessment website](#). As part of the CSU system, Stanislaus State also links assessment methods and findings via the Voluntary System of Accountability [College Portrait](#).

Although the current campus-level assessment plan is in early development, the campus has an infrastructure in place for the development and review of assessment processes (see Fig.1). As indicated by the campus application team, the campus will need to develop a communication plan to increase connections and integration between the various groups on campus. The Office of Assessment is working to revive an Assessment Newsletter that will be sent out quarterly to the campus and will highlight departmental best practices, accreditation news, and institutional assessment activities.

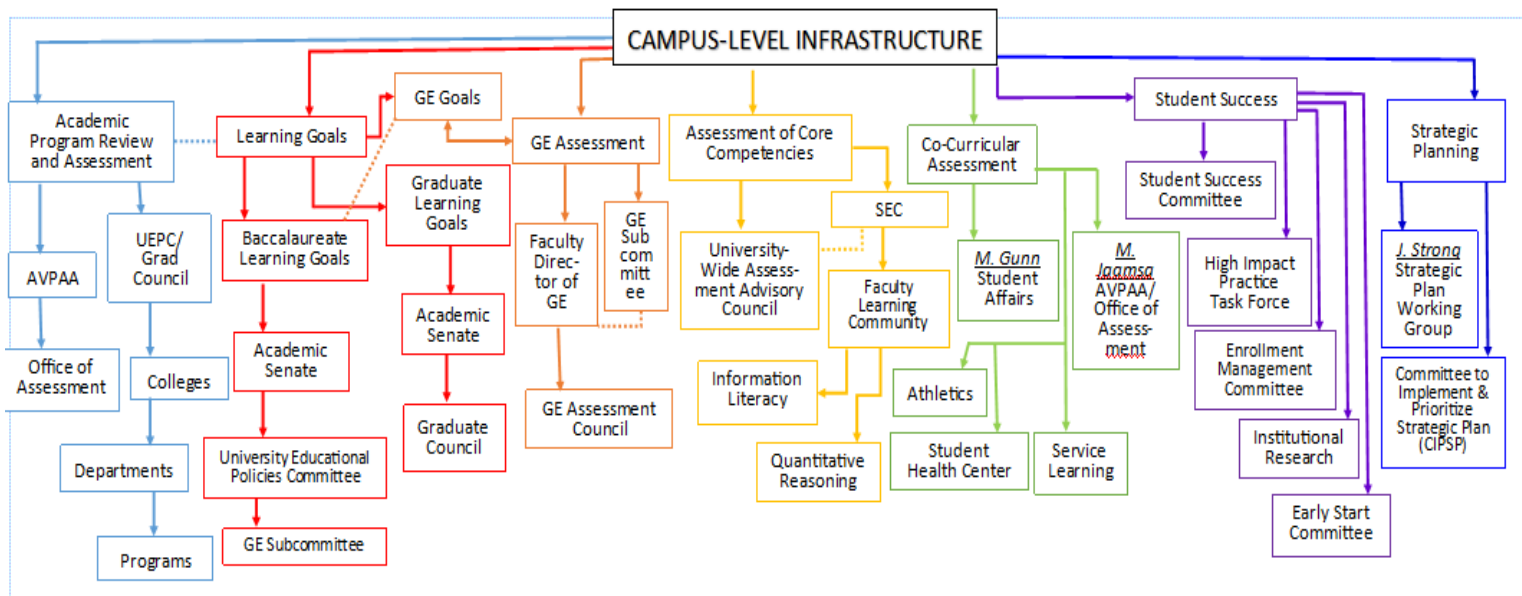


Figure 1: Stanislaus State Campus-Level Infrastructure

#### Highlighted Committees:

- **The Assessment of Student Learning (ASL) Subcommittee**  
Develops policies and procedures related to the assessment of student learning that are submitted to the standing committee – the University Educational Policies Committee (UEPC). The ASL Subcommittee also reviews department assessment planning documents as part of the Academic Program Review Process, as requested.
- **General Education Assessment Council**  
Recently established to develop an assessment plan for General Education based on the recently approved GE Goals and Outcomes. This assessment plan will include the development of a process for GE course certification and recertification, which will be done by the General Education Subcommittee of the University Education Policies Committee. The General Education Assessment Council is chaired by the Faculty Director of General Education (FDGE). The FDGE is also leading the writing of the General Education Academic Program Review.
- **Graduate Council**  
Evaluates assessment of Graduate Learning Goals and recommends actions for university-wide improvement.
- **Senate Executive Committee (SEC)/Academic Senate**  
The SEC facilitates policy discussions and improvement and the Academic Senate approves and recommends policy to the President.

#### **Campus-level Evidence of Student Learning**

The campus has recently adopted CampusLabs as the University's Accountability Management System (AMS). The campus is in the process of transitioning hardcopy assessment reporting to electronic management. In doing so, the campus hopes to develop a campus-level assessment plan that will utilize technology for the integration and mapping of program-level assessment to institutional goals and Strategic Planning. The AMS will be utilized by the Offices of Assessment, Accreditation, and Institutional Research to compile and track assessment activities at the program and university levels. The Office of Assessment is currently working to develop training materials to onboard Deans, Department Chairs, and unit heads into the system.

As noted previously, the campus also conducts review of co-curricular programs. Co-curricular programs (e.g., Library, Health Services) report on the achievement of student learning outcomes and will be integrated into the AMS reporting. The campus is currently reviewing the Support Unit Review process to increase integration with Strategic Planning. The Division of Student Affairs is conducting a review under the Council for Advancement of Standards (CAS) which will

also be reported via CampusLabs and linked to the Strategic Plan and campus-level assessment.

### **Use of Campus-level Student Learning Evidence**

The campus is currently in the process of developing a plan to integrate program-level and campus-level assessment activities. The campus hopes to achieve this through mapping via CampusLabs. Institutional level assessments have been mapped to the Strategic Plan Two-Year Priorities (CLA+, NSSE). All survey findings and performance assessment results are posted to the [Office of Institutional Research website](#)

Campus-level assessments (surveys, performance test results) are shared in various forums, including monthly meetings with Deans and Department Chairs. Survey results and performance assessment findings are also discussed at the cross-divisional Student Success Committee and the University-Wide Assessment Advisory Council. The activities of the Student Success Committee provide an example of use of institution-level results. The Student Success Committee reviewed the CSU Graduation Initiative Planning Recommendations (2003) in light of campus NSSE/FSSE results. As a result, a Student Success Plan was developed that identifies areas for improvement, including increasing student-faculty interaction, increasing opportunities for integration of knowledge through the development of GE Pathways, enhancing advising, and promoting improvement of student learning through supplemental instruction and course redesign. Although the campus shows valued added in the CLA+, the campus is also actively supporting the improvement of student writing with the online writing tutoring program and the Presidential Greatness Relies on Writing Scholarships.

### **Reflection and Growth/Improvement Plan**

Completion of the application and review of the EIA rubric revealed both promising practices as well as areas for improvement.

#### Promising Practices

The campus application team, composed of members of the University-Wide Assessment Advisory Council, noted that the campus has a robust infrastructure for assessment. All academic programs are engaged in assessment through annual reporting and the Academic Program Review process and there has been significant streamlining of the two processes in recent years. The campus has also made significant process on institution-level assessment through the development and approval of both revised General Education and new Baccalaureate Learning Goals over the past year. Team members agreed that the Office of Assessment provides a centralized location with assessment resources for both staff and faculty and that the foundation has been laid for the development of an institutional assessment plan.



As addressed in the application, the campus hopes that the implementation of the Accountability Management System (CampusLabs) will allow for the integration of course, program, and institution-level assessment. Use of this system will also provide a mechanism for tracking progress and sharing campus-level findings.

#### Areas for Improvement

With this said, it was clear to the application team that challenges still remain. The campus will need to engage in a review of the current infrastructure to engage in effective campus-level assessment. This conversation has been initiated in faculty governance and will continue over the next year. This discussion may include a review of the Stanislaus State [\*Principles of Assessment of Student Learning\*](#) (2004) which focuses primarily on program-level assessment. Discussion also revealed the need to implement actions to close the loop at both the college and institutional level and develop a process for linking unit reporting to Strategic Planning.

The campus application team noted that the EIA rubric felt restrictive to apply because it does not address the impact of course-level assessment. Some campus application team members also noted that they felt that there is a disconnect between university-level discussions and assessment occurring at the course level. Traditionally, the Office of Assessment has provided resources and support for assessment at the program and institutional levels. More should be done to collaborate with the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to provide support for course-level assessment. As noted by the campus application team, one of the difficulties the campus has faced is developing a culture where faculty feel that they have the time and support to attend such events. Support for assessment activities must also extend to the Retention, Promotion, and Tenure process. While some examples of recognition of assessment in the departmental elaborations exist, campus application team members agreed that additional support and recognition of assessment at all levels of the University is necessary.