
LEARNER OUTCOMES INSTITUTE FACT SHEET

PURPOSE: An eight-day summer training, held from 1999-2002, introduced faculty to assessment theory and practice. Faculty converted one class to the learner outcomes assessment model by:

- defining outcomes
- planning learner-centered teaching activities to help students master the outcomes
- designing assessments to test them

Follow-up meetings in the fall helped tracked implementation of their plans.

WHO ATTENDED? Fifty-seven full-time and adjunct faculty from transfer and occupational disciplines. Participants included the two past and current Faculty Senate presidents and the CCFI President and Vice President. Disciplines represented include:

Biology	ECE	Math
Business	Engineering	Library
BOST	English	Medical Assisting
CIS	ESL	Music
Chemistry	French	Nursing
Computer Applications	Geography	Philosophy
Counseling	Geology	Photography
Criminal Justice	History	Political Science
Culinary Arts	Horticulture	Psychology
Dental Hygiene	HPERD	Speech

RESULTS:

- Faculty successfully applied this approach to their classes.
- Faculty produced a *Learner Outcome Handbook* and *A Toolkit for Working with Learner Outcomes*, describing how they applied these assessment methods to specific courses and disciplines.
- Cabrillo's approach has been presented at several statewide conferences as a model of good assessment practice.
- At least two others Institutes, based on Cabrillo's, have been developed at other community colleges.
- Institute alumni are taking the lead in developing Cabrillo's approach to the new accreditation standards.

HAS THIS APPROACH IMPROVED TEACHING AND LEARNING AT CABRILLO? A recent follow-up survey of Institute alumni revealed that:

- 95% of respondents are continuing to use this method.
- 75% have applied the method to other classes.
- Faculty feel that their teaching has improved. They are:
 - More focused and better organized.
 - More transparent (able to articulate the reasons for class outcomes, activities, assessment criteria and standards to students).
 - More aware of student involvement in their own learning.
 - Teaching to different learning styles.
 - Using learner-centered activities along with lectures.
 - Articulating their expectations more clearly through the stated outcomes and assessments (especially the use of rubrics for grading).
 - Aware of a better framework for curriculum development.
- As a result of this approach, students:
 - Turn in higher caliber work.
 - Take more responsibility for their own learning.
 - Are more engaged in the course due to the learner-centered activities.
 - Are less frustrated by the grading process because they know precisely how they will be evaluated and why.
 - Develop meta-cognitive skills – the ability to “learn how to learn.”
- The following evidence of improved student learning was cited:
 - Exam scores have improved.
 - The quality of written work is higher.
 - Final grades are higher along with better final exams and presentations.
 - A comparison of self-evaluations from year to year, test scores and selected assignments show that students are grasping the material in different, deeper ways.
- Faculty felt that the following factors contributed to the improvement:
 - Performance criteria is better defined; more feedback is provided.
 - Students report that they like this new approach and are learning more; they “own” the power to succeed.
 - “Students must take more responsibility for their own education. This works for some and some don’t like it as much, but I feel it brings a sense of what the real world is like and better prepares them for careers in engineering.”
- Faculty felt the learner outcomes approach has positively affected the campus as a whole because:
 - In some departments, Institute faculty are instructing others in this method.
 - During the program planning process, faculty can look at how course outcomes interrelate and link course curriculum and sequencing.
 - It will help us develop a better response to the new accreditation standards.