Connecting Assessment of Student Learning and Student Success

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Student Success

- In pursing a degree in higher education, students invest a significant amount of time and money in their futures.
- It is our responsibility to make sure we are providing them with the learning opportunities they need to achieve the knowledge and skills our programs promise to offer.
- Successfully achieving the knowledge and skills (not just passing classes and getting a diploma) is what is needed for students to be successful in their careers.

Academic Program Assessment

- As part of KSU's quality assurance and continuous improvement process, each academic program assesses the extent to which their students achieve the expected knowledge, skills, and abilities by the time they complete their program.

- Each year, programs collect and analyze student achievement data and discuss the findings in program faculty meetings.

- These findings are used to make data-informed decisions about needed improvements in curriculum and pedagogy.
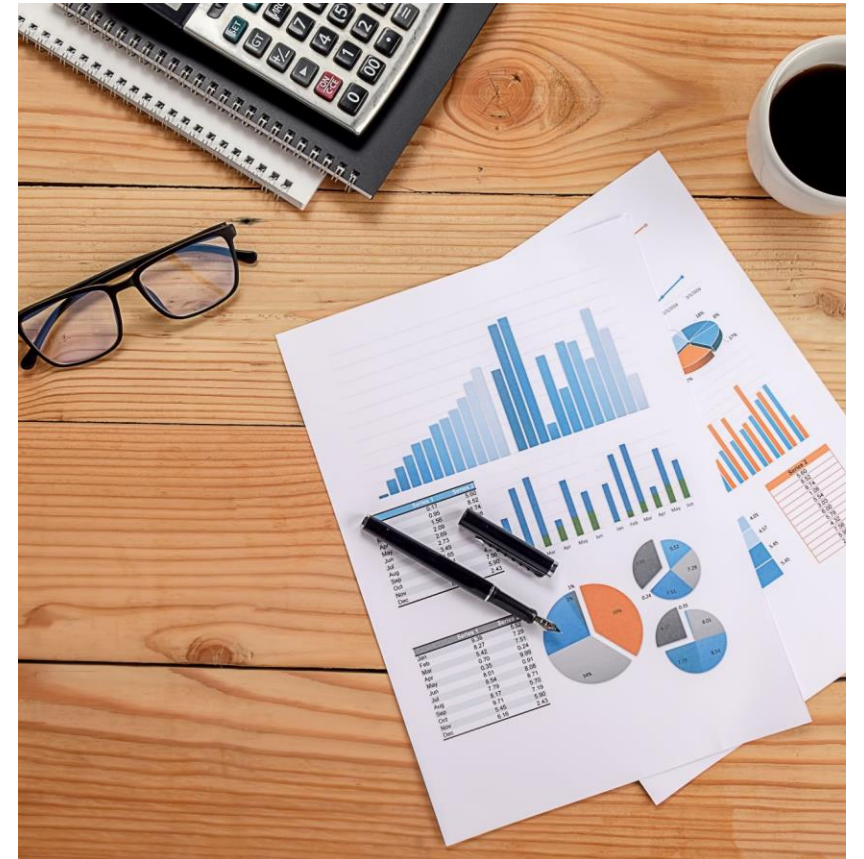
How do we know what our programs promise to offer and how we plan to deliver this promise?

- This information is conveyed in each program's mission statement, program student learning outcomes (PSLOs), and required courses.

- **Program Mission**: A brief, general description of the purpose of your program.

- **Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)**: Specific, measurable statements about what students should be able to know, do, and/or value by the time they complete the program.

- **Core/Required Courses**: The courses in a degree program that all students must complete to graduate. Certain courses may be designed to introduce or reinforce the program student learning outcomes.

  - **Course student learning outcomes** are established when a course is created by the program. The original set of course learning outcomes must be addressed and assessed every time the course is taught. Faculty can add additional outcomes, but they cannot remove original outcomes.
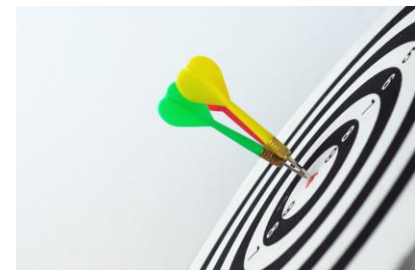
Know How Your Courses Contribute to the Overall Degree Program
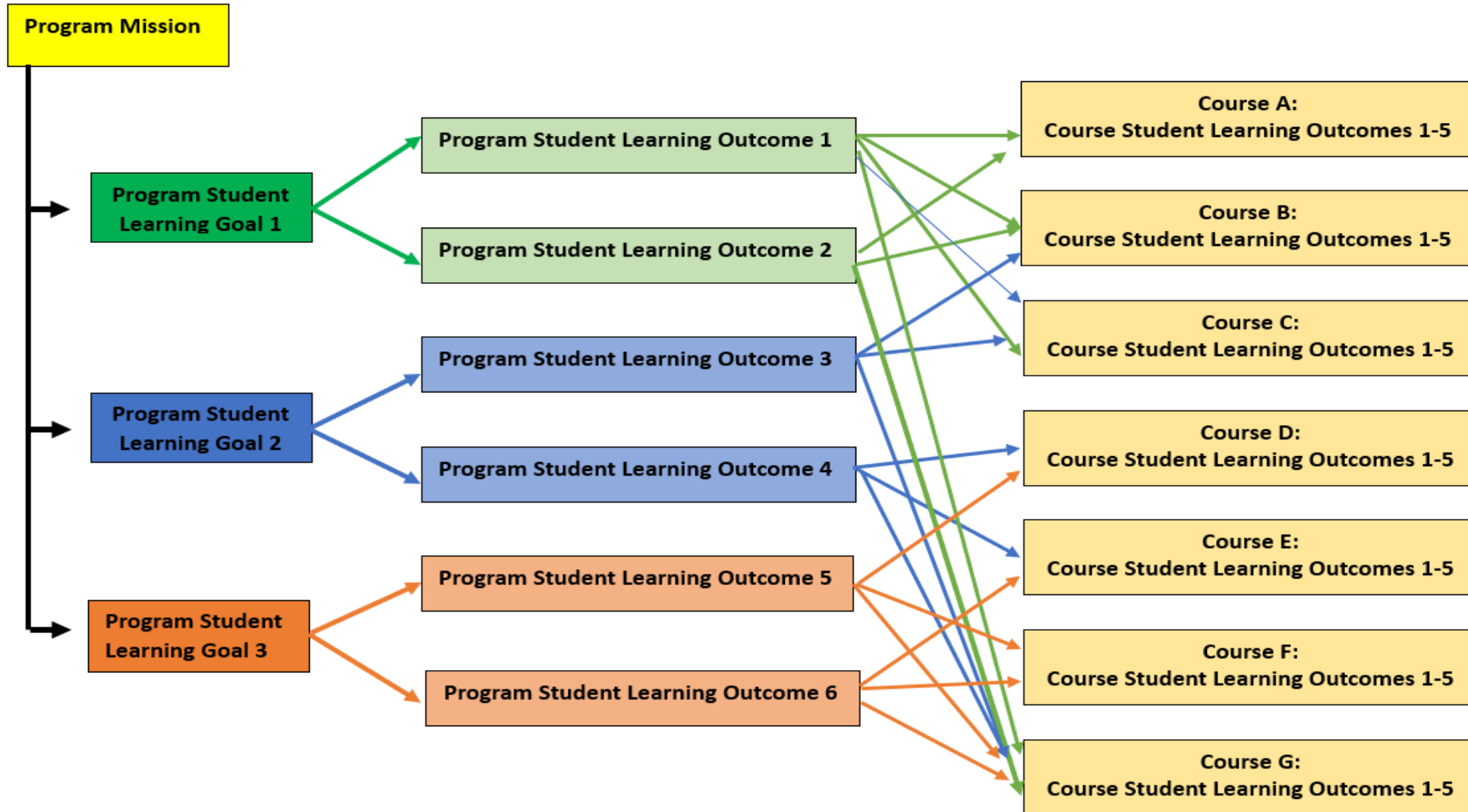
Where can I find the mission, PSLOs, and required courses for my program?

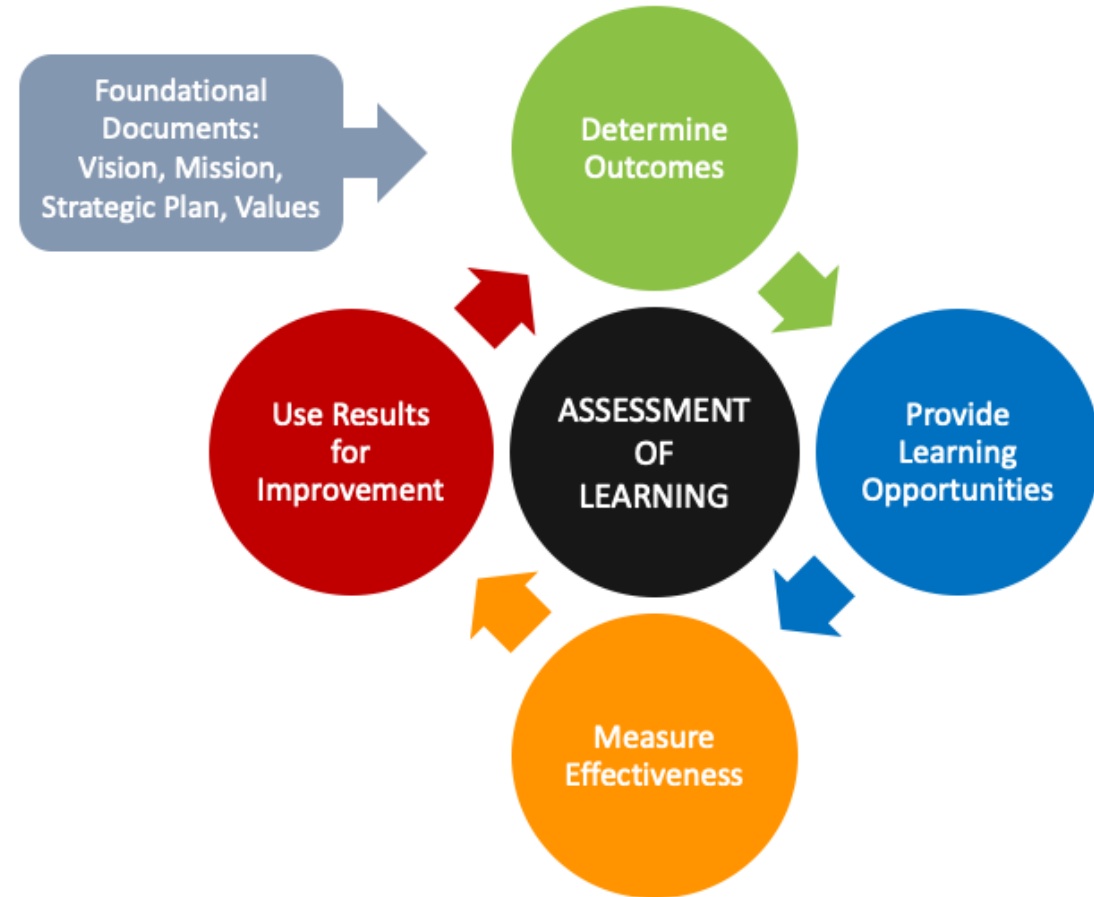KSU's [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) course catalogs include each program's mission, program student learning outcomes (PSLOs), and required courses (along with other course options).

Note: The course student learning outcomes are not currently published in the catalog. You will need to ask your chair/director and/or program coordinator for the approved list of course learning outcomes for your assigned courses.

How do we know if students are achieving the expected knowledge and skills by the time they complete our programs?

Assessment of Learning (AoL): KSU's Approach to Academic Program Assessment and Continuous Improvement

KSU's Simplified Assessment Framework

PSLOs	Y1	Y2	Y3		Y4	Y5	Y6		Y7 *Academic Program Review (APR)
PSLO 1	Results	Results	Results & Analysis	**Action Plan:** Develop Improvement Strategies for Select PSLOs Implement Strategies Over the Next 3 Years	Results	Results	Results & Analysis	**Action Plan:** Develop Improvement Strategies for Select PSLOs Implement Strategies Over the Next 3 Years	6 Years of Data for All PSLOs Continuous Improvement Efforts Reported on Some PSLOs Note: Assessment of PSLOs is just one part of APR. APR is a comprehensive review of a program's overall quality, viability, and productivity of efforts in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.
PSLO 2	Results	Results	Results & Analysis		Results	Results	Results & Analysis		
PSLO 3	Results	Results	Results & Analysis		Results	Results	Results & Analysis		
PSLO 4	Results	Results	Results & Analysis		Results	Results	Results & Analysis		
PSLO 5	Results	Results	Results & Analysis		Results	Results	Results & Analysis		
PSLO 6	Results	Results	Results & Analysis		Results	Results	Results & Analysis		

Note: Programs with specialized accreditation may follow a modified assessment schedule.

Program Curriculum Map Example:
Connecting Course Assessments to Program Assessment

Program Overview			Curriculum Map									Program Assessment		
Mission	Program Student Learning Goals	Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)	SOCI 1101	SOCI 2210	SOCI 2251	SOCI 3300	SOCI 3305	SOCI 3314, 3324, 3350, or 3354	SOCI 3304 or 3333	SOCI 3396, 3398, or 4490	SOCI 4499	Assessment Schedule	Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
The B.S. in Sociology prepares students to understand and deal with diversity, modernization, and social change ranging from the local to global scale. The core competencies of the program prepare students to enter careers requiring technological facility, communication skills, data gathering and analysis skills, community awareness and involvement, problem-solving, critical thinking, an understanding of the structure and functioning of groups and organizations, greater awareness of their environment, critical self-reflection, and interpersonal and intercultural skills. Besides career preparation, specific concentrations in the major also provide background for graduate study in sociology and other related disciplines.	Program Goal 1: Students will be able to summarize basic questions, issues, and current research, and theory relative to cultural diversity, modernization, and social change ranging from a local to a global scale.	Outcome 1: Students will be able to apply sociological concepts (e.g., race, gneder, class) to explainations of complex social problems and institutions.	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R, A	Yearly	SOCI 4499 paper, Rubric Item 1	Exit Survey, Item 1
		Outcome 2: Students will be able to use sociological theories to analyze complex problems in society.	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R, A	Yearly starting 2025	SOCI 4499 paper, Rubric Item 2	Exit Survey, Item 2
	Program Goal 2: Students will be able to demonstrate competence in research.	Outcome 3: Students will be able to critically evaluate sociological research.		I	I	R	R	R	R	R	R, A	Yearly starting 2025	SOCI 4499 paper, Rubric Item 3	Exit Survey, Item 3
		Outcome 4: Students will be able to design a sociological research study in an area of choice and explain why various decisions were made.	I	R			R, A					Yearly	SOCi 3305 Research Proposal, Rubric Item 1	Exit Survey, Item 4
	Program Goal 3: Students will be able to demonstrate communication skills, including spoken and written communication.	Outcome 5: Students will be able to demonstrate a facility in speaking before groups.		I					R, A			Yearly	SOCI 3396, Presentation Rubric Item 1	Exit Survey, Item 5
		Outcome 6: Students will be able to write correctly and document properly according to proper social science format.	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R,A	Yearly	Senior Seminar Paper, Rubric Item 4	Exit Survey, Item 6

I=Intoduced   R=Reinforced   A=Assessed for Program Assessment

For an outcome that is only addressed in 3 required courses, there needs to be careful coordination among the program faculty regarding how and to what extent the outcome is introduced or reinforced in each course.

	Curriculum Map									Program Assessment		
Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)	SOCI 1101	SOCI 2210	SOCI 2251	SOCI 3300	SOCI 3305	SOCI 3314, 3324, 3350, or 3354	SOCI 3304 or 3333	SOCI 3396, 3398, or 4490	SOCI 4499	Assessment Schedule	Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
Outcome 1: Students will be able to apply sociological concepts (e.g., race, gneder, class) to explainations of complex social problems and institutions.	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R, A	Yearly	SOCI 4499 paper, Rubric Item 1	Exit Survey, Item 1
Outcome 2: Students will be able to use sociological theories to analyze complex problems in society.	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R, A	Yearly starting 2025	SOCI 4499 paper, Rubric Item 2	Exit Survey, Item 2
Outcome 3: Students will be able to critically evaluate sociological research.		I	I	R	R	R	R	R	R, A	Yearly starting 2025	SOCI 4499 paper, Rubric Item 3	Exit Survey, Item 3
Outcome 4: Students will be able to design a sociological research study in an area of choice and explain why various decisions were made.	I	R			R, A					Yearly	SOCi 3305 Research Proposal, Rubric Item 1	Exit Survey, Item 4
Outcome 5: Students will be able to demonstrate a facility in speaking before groups.		I						R, A		Yearly	SOCI 3396, Presentation Rubric Item 1	Exit Survey, Item 5
Outcome 6: Students will be able to write correctly and document properly according to proper social science format.	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R,A	Yearly	Senior Seminar Paper, Rubric Item 4	Exit Survey, Item 6

I=Intoduced   R=Reinforced   A=Assessed for Program Assessment

If assessment data shows that students are not achieving the outcome at the expected level after completing the most advanced course, then improvements may be needed in one of the earlier courses and/or in the most advanced course. This needs to be discussed and coordinated among the program faculty.

Course Assessments and Program Assessments

- **Course-Level Assessments:** Collecting, analyzing, and using information about student learning to guide instructional decision-making (formative assessment) and determine the extent to which students have achieved the course learning outcomes (summative assessment).

- **Program-Level Assessments:** Collecting, analyzing, and using information about student learning to determine the extent to which students have achieved the program student learning outcomes (PSLOs) and to determine if any improvements are needed in the program curriculum to improve student achievement of the PSLOs. The PSLOs are published in KSU's undergraduate and graduate course.

- Since courses and their associated student learning outcomes were designed to provide students with sufficient learning opportunities throughout the program to learn, practice, and achieve the PSLOs, programs often use common assessments (specific course assessments administered in all sections of a course) to assess both course student learning outcomes and program student learning outcomes.

- For additional information, see: https://learning.northeastern.edu/explore/assessment/

Example from KSU's Integrated Health Science (IHS) Program

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)	Curriculum Map - IHS														Program Assessment Information		
	HHS 2100 or HIS 2100	HS 2300	WELL 2000	HPAL 2250 or BIOL 2251	IHS 3010 or SOCI 3380	HHS 3500	PHE 3400	PHE 3330	IHS 3230 or ECON 3478	IHS 3260 or COMM 3320	HHS 3200 or IT 3503	HHS 4800	IHS 3398 or HIS 4445 or HS 4900	IHS 4760 Senior Seminar	Assessment Schedule	Assessment Tools (Direct Measures)	Assessment Tools (Indirect Measures)
PSLO 1: Apply interdisciplinary knowledge from related disciplines to identify critical gaps and opportunities in health and healthcare.	I		I		I		R	R	I, R	R	I, R	R	R	R, A	Yearly	IHS 4760: Senior Seminar Final Project, Rubric Item 1	IHS 4760, Student Survey, Item 1.1
PSLO 2: Identify diverse health needs and concerns of individuals or communities based on key determinants of health.	I		I		I		R	R		R		R	R	R, A	Yearly	IHS 4760: Senior Seminar Final Project, Rubric Item 2	IHS 4760, Student Survey, Item 1.2
PSLO 3: Develop communication and advocacy skills to address individual and community health needs and concerns. .	I	I	I		R		R	I		R			R	R, A	Yearly	IHS 4760: Senior Seminar Final Project, Rubric Item 6	IHS 4760, Student Survey, Item 1.3
PSLO 4: Manage various solutions to respond to individual and community health needs and concerns.	I		I		I			I	I, R		I,R		R	R, A	Yearly	IHS 4760: Senior Seminar Final Project, Rubric Item 4	IHS 4760, Student Survey, Item 1.4
PSLO 5: Apply principles, best practices, and standards that govern health professionals and institutions in their work.				I, R				I	I, R	I		R	R	R, A	Yearly	IHS 4760: Senior Seminar Final Project, Rubric Item 5	IHS 4760, Student Survey, Item 1.5
PSLO 6: Develop interdisciplinary skills that integrate evidence-based practices to improve individual and community health outcomes through research, inquiry, networking, and problem solving.	I				I	I	I	I	I, R	R	I, R	R	R	R, A	Yearly	IHS 4760: Senior Seminar Final Project, Rubric Item 3	IHS 4760, Student Survey, Item 1.6
	I=Introduced R=Reinforced A=Assessed for Program Assessment																

Integrated Health Science: All PSLOs Aligned to Rubric Items from One Assignment

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

PSLO 1: Apply interdisciplinary knowledge from related disciplines to identify critical gaps and opportunities in health and healthcare.

PSLO 2: Identify diverse health needs and concerns of individuals or communities based on key determinants of health.

PSLO 3: Develop communication and advocacy skills to address individual and community health needs and concerns. .

PSLO 4: Manage various solutions to respond to individual and community health needs and concerns.

PSLO 5: Apply principles, best practices, and standards that govern health professionals and institutions in their work.

PSLO 6: Develop interdisciplinary skills that integrate evidence-based practices to improve individual and community health outcomes through research, inquiry, networking, and problem solving.

IHS Senior Seminar Capstone, Research, or Innovation Final Project Grading Rubric – 100 points

Criteria	Excellent 10 points	Fair 7 points	Needs Improvement 4 points	Unsatisfactory 0 points
1. Introduction – Identification of concern or problem **PSLO 1:** Apply interdisciplinary knowledge from health-related disciplines to acknowledge critical gaps, research opportunities, interests, and concerns within the target population for project concern or problem.	Introduction reflects a thorough understanding of using interdisciplinary knowledge to identify a concern or problem and how it acknowledges critical gaps, research opportunities, interests, and concerns within the target population Concepts are clear, distinct, and insightful.	Introduction reflects an understanding of using interdisciplinary knowledge to identify a concern or problem and how it acknowledges critical gaps, research opportunities, interests, and concerns within the target population Concepts are clear and distinct.	Introduction reflects a minimal understanding of using interdisciplinary knowledge to identify a concern or problem and how it acknowledges critical gaps, research opportunities, interests, and concerns within the target population Concepts are not clear or distinct.	Introduction is not present, or it does not meet any of the identified criteria.
2. Social Determinants of Health **PSLO 2:** Alignment with Social Determinants of Health and Objectives	Clearly and accurately described how concern or problem aligns and connects to social determinants of health.	Described how concern or problem aligns and connects to social determinants of health.	Alignment is unclear and connections to social determinants are poorly made.	There is no alignment made with the Social Determinants of Health and Objectives.
3. Research of Evidence-Based Practices in the health sciences field **PSLO 6:** Use interdisciplinary skills that integrated evidence-based practices to improve individual and/or community health outcomes for project concern or problem through research, inquiry, networking, and problem solving.	Provided thorough summary of the use of evidence-based practices in the health science field to address chosen concern or problem through research of the literature, inquiry, networking, or problem solving.	Provided summary of the use of evidence-based practices in the health science field to address chosen concern or problem through research of the literature, inquiry, networking, or problem solving.	Vaguely provided summary of the use of evidence-based practices in the health science field to address chosen concern or problem through research of the literature, inquiry, networking, or problem solving.	Did not provide any evidence-based practices
4. Solutions **PSLO 4:** Identify and manage various solutions to respond to individual and community health for identified concern or problem.	Clearly identified possible solutions to concern or problem are clearly identified and overview provided with excellent detail, including descriptive of why the solution	Identified possible solutions to concern or problem are identified and overview provided with detail, including descriptive of why the solution or solutions were selected.	Possible Solutions to concern or problem are identified but there are limited to no details of why the solution or solutions were selected.	There are no possible solutions identified.
5. Standards **PSLO 5:** Identify and apply principles, best practices, and standards that govern health professionals and/or institutions in their work to address the identified concern or problem.	Clearly identified principles, best practices, and standards that govern health professionals and/or institutions and provided excellent detail of how this applies to their work to address the identified concern or problem.	Identified principles, best practices, and standards that govern health professionals and/or institutions and provided details of how this applies to their work to address the identified concern or problem.	Vaguely Identified principles, best practices, and standards that govern health professionals and/or institutions and provided unclear details of how this applies to their work to address the identified concern or problem.	Did not address standards
6. Communication and Advocacy **PSLO 3:** Communication and advocacy plan to address individual and/or community identified concern or problem.	Clearly identified and provided an overview of a communication and advocacy plan with excellent detail, including descriptive information to address the identified concern or problem.	Identified and provided a communication and advocacy plan with detail, including descriptive information to address the identified concern or problem.	Vaguely identified and provided a plan that may or may not have addressed communication and advocacy to address the identified concern or problem.	Did not address communication and advocacy plan

Programs with Exceptional Assessment Plans: Exceeding Minimum Expectations

Curriculum Map: Exceptional Example									
Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)	KSU 7702	KSU 7703	KSU 7704	KSU 7705	KSU 7706	KSU 7712	KSU 7998 or 7990	Assessment Tools (Direct Measures)	Assessment Tools (Indirect Measures)
PSLO 1: Students will be able to synthesize research from the current *[enter discipline]* literature.	X	X	X	X	X, A		X, A	**Rubric Item: Existing Knowledge, Research, and/or Views**	Student Exit Survey, Item 1
PSLO 2: Students will be able to identify a contemporary *[enter discipline]* problem and propose a feasible solution.	X	X	X	X	X, A		X, A	**Rubric Item: Define Problem** **Rubric Item: Propose Solutions**	Student Exit Survey, Items 2 & 3
PSLO 3: Students will be able to use an appropriate method of inquiry to examine a contemporary *[enter discipline]* problem.	X	X	X	X	X, A	X	X, A	**Rubric Item: Design Process**	Student Exit Survey, Item 3
PSLO 4: Students will be able to present and analyze evidence and form a conclusion about a contemporary *[enter discipline]*					X, A	X	X, A	**Rubric Item: Evidence** **Rubric Item: Analysis** **Rubric Item: Conclusion**	Student Exit Survey, Items 4 & 5
PSLO 5: Students will exhibit effective communication skills in written and/or oral form.	X	X	X	X	X, A	X	X, A	**Rubric Item: Sources and Evidence** **Rubric Item: APA Style** **Rubric Item: Writing Syntax and Mechanics** **Rubric Item: Oral Presentation Delivery**	Student Exit Survey, Item 6 & 7

X=Addressed in course   A=Assessed for Program Assessment

Uses the minimum number of direct measures needed to create valid measures for each PSLO (**required**), additional rubric items/measures that the program believes will provide more meaningful information (**optional**), and an indirect measure for each PSLO (**optional**).

Data are collected from a course near the end of the program as a summative program assessment (**required**) as well as from a course earlier in the program as a formative program assessment (**optional**).

Roles and Responsibilities for Program Assessment

Role	Responsibility
Chair/Director	Provide leadership and oversight of the assessment of all academic degree and stand-alone certificate programs in their unit.
Academic Program Coordinator	Updating the assessment plan, collecting and analyzing assessment data, sharing results with program faculty, and leading the development and implementation of improvement strategies.
Program Faculty	Ensuring they provide sufficient learning opportunities related to the PSLOs in their courses (as determined by the curriculum map. Administering assessments, collecting and scoring work, and/or providing assessment data (as determined by the assessment plan). Reviewing and interpreting assessment findings during program meetings and assisting with the development and implementation of improvement strategies.
Dean/Associate Dean	Provide high-level leadership and oversight of program assessment in the college. Assist with communicating with faculty and chairs/directors about assessment expectations and initiatives.
Office of Assessment	Provides resources, trainings, support, and consultations focusing on PSLO assessment and continuous improvement. Communicates assessment and continuous improvement expectations. Coordinates the yearling collection of assessment documentation and reports and maintaining a central repository for SACSCOC reporting.

If you are teaching a core/required course in your program, we recommend asking your program coordinator and/or chair/director the following questions:

- *What is the official course description and the established course student learning outcomes?*
- *Which program student learning outcomes (PSLOs) should be addressed and assessed in the course.*
- *Is there a common assessment that is used in this course to assess one or more of the program student learning outcomes (PSLOs)?*
- *May I review sample syllabi for the course?*