

Instructional SLOAC Philosophy Statement for Cañada College

Cañada College is committed to facilitating student success. One means to fulfill this mission is through the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle (SLOAC), which asks campus constituents to engage in reflective practice. SLOAC will not interfere with the academic freedom and professional rights of faculty under the 10+1 agreement.

What is SLOAC?

SLOAC: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Cycle.

- Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) are explicit statements describing knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that a student will be able to demonstrate at the end (or as a result) of his or her engagement in a particular lesson, course, program, or collegiate experience.
- Assessment is the systematic collection of information about student learning and the use of that information to improve the learning and teaching process.
- After reflecting on the results, we "close the loop" by addressing ways to improve our services. The cycle continues for self-reflection and continuous conversations with our colleagues regarding curriculum. The results of this cycle will improve teaching

Why SLOAC?

- To improve student learning and services.

A student-centered institution should be self-reflective in order to gauge its effectiveness in an institutional, student-services, departmental, and course level because it is mandated by the accreditation commission.

In 2002, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) revised their standards to include the language of SLO's and assessments.

Who will be involved with SLOAC?

All the different college constituents must have a part in SLOAC. However, SLOAC must be a faculty driven initiative.

- **Instructional SLOAC:** Faculty are the experts! In collaborative settings within departments, the faculty will identify SLO's and assessments, and develop criteria by which student progress may be evaluated. Faculty shall maintain ownership of SLOAC.
- **Institutional SLOAC:** The faculty, in consultation with the entire college community, will shape, design, and disseminate institutional activities and will identify the core knowledge and skills that our students need to master.
- **Student Services SLOAC:** The division and departments of student services will develop and design student outcomes and develop assessments.

Where can we expect to see and implement SLOAC?

Program review:

Our program reviews ask for bi-annual reports on sample results of assessments of student learning outcomes. The bi-annual results of some assessments can stimulate departmental conversations regarding programs, curricula as well as on going student feedback.

Website:

Our institution will develop and maintain as SLOAC website to document the progress of our campus programs.

What is SLOAC for?

- SLOAC provides improved feedback, guidance, and mentoring to students in order to help them better plan and execute their educational goals
- SLOAC provides improved feedback about student learning to support faculty in their work.
- SLOAC helps us design and modify programs to better promote student learning and success.
- SLOAC develops common definitions for and gauges of important student abilities that will enable us to act more coherently and effectively to promote student learning.
- SLOAC helps us understand how different groups of students experience the college differently so as to adapt our courses and programs to the needs and capacities of all students.
- SLOAC helps us understand how our different courses and programs affect students over time so that we can better coordinate and sequence the student's experience to produce more and deeper learning.
- SLOAC provides staff and students with opportunities to reflect on their practice and their learning.

What is SLOAC NOT for?

- SLOAC will NOT use assessment of student learning as an end to itself. Assessment that does not help us to promote student learning is a waste of time.
- SLOAC will NOT use assessment of student learning punitively or as a means of determining faculty or staff salaries or rewards. The purpose of assessment is to evaluate student learning, not to reward or punish faculty or staff.
- SLOAC will NOT use any single mode of assessment to answer all questions or strictly determine program decisions.
- SLOAC will NOT use assessment in a way that will impinge upon the academic freedom or professional rights of faculty. Individual faculty members must continue to exercise their best professional judgment in matters of grading and discipline.
- SLOAC will NOT assume that assessment can answer all questions about all students. We need not directly assess all students in order to learn about the effectiveness of our programs and policies.
- SLOAC will NOT assume that assessment is quantitative. While numerical scales or rubrics (such as the four-point grading scale) can be useful, their accuracy always depends on the clear understanding of the concepts behind the numbers. Often the best indicator of student learning can be expressed better as a narrative or a performance than as a number.
- SLOAC will NOT use assessment only to evaluate the end of the student's experience or merely to be accountable to outside parties. Assessment must be ongoing observation of what we believe is important.
- SLOAC will NOT assume that **assessment is only grading.**

Adopted by the Academic Senate: Oct. 27, 2005