

The

April 2012

SLO NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the inaugural edition of the SLO Committee Newsletter!

Next academic year we plan to communicate with you via electronic newsletter twice each semester. Our goal is to improve assessment-related practices and communication campus wide. Each edition will include current information on SLO-related compliance rates and goals, a Question Corner where frequently asked questions are addressed, SLO success stories, and comments from campus leaders.

Many thanks for all you are doing to ensure AVC continues to make student success and student-centered learning our top priorities!

The SLO Committee

What's New? A new look for the SLO Committee!

Beginning Fall 2012 the SLO Committee resumes work under the leadership of a new Faculty Co-Chair, Dr. Fredy Aviles, and an expanded membership roll. In order to improve communication and more effectively facilitate SLO-related work, the committee will include representatives from each campus division, at-large representatives appointed by the Academic Senate from adjunct, full-time, and Student Services faculty, and representation from ASO, administration, classified employees, and confidential management. Committee members will receive updated WEAVE online training each semester, work closely with AP&P reps to ensure consistent practices, and coordinate data collection efforts. Representatives are still needed for some divisions and areas. Please contact Gloria Kastner in the Academic Senate Office if you need further information.

Question Corner

I am confused about the difference between Course Objectives and SLOs – can you please explain this?

Course objectives are specific, measurable steps toward content learning that all instructors teaching a course must follow. Course objectives are required by Title V as part of the Course Outline of Record. Course objectives measure the learning of individual students in a course.

SLOs are overarching products of a course that allow faculty to provide evidence that learning has occurred. SLOs have been developed in response to Accreditation standards, usually incorporate critical thinking, and often synthesize learning from several course objectives. SLOs measure the learning of specific groups of students.

Where can I find more information and forms I need to fill out?

Go to avc.edu and select Student Learning Outcomes from the A-Z Index.. Select Documents from the menu on the left side of the page. You will find forms used for developing and revising SLOs, PLOs, and OOs along with other useful information.

What if I print out the 5-step Guide to WEAVE SLO Entry and am still confused?

Please contact Aaron Voelcker, Research Analyst and WEAVE-online Administrator, for assistance with WEAVEonline. Aaron can be reached at ext. 6826 or avoelcker@avc.edu.

Back by popular demand...join us for help with your

WEAVE data entry.

WEAVE Data Days

Tuesday through Thursday, June 5, 6, and 7, 2012

8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. — BE 321

Takin' a Ride on the SLO Train

Tina Leisner McDermott, Accreditation Coordinator

In 2003 the college started exploring the SLO process and the writing began. After several years of writing and revising, we breathed a collective sigh of relief when all disciplines and departments were finished. Whew, that's done, now we can get back to what we love doing: teaching! Then came the call to assess the SLOs we had written, training in WEAVE online, (which threw some of us into techno-phobic spins and avoidant behaviors) and a sudden push to develop Action Plans. Meanwhile, the chug-a-chug wheels of the SLO train kept churning down the track. Accreditation team visits, a recommendation letter, SLO workshops, Paul Revere videos, more workshops, e-mail reminders; it never seems to stop. Understandably, the culture change that SLOs have created can be both exciting and unnerving at the same time. However, it is clear to me that we can make the SLO ride valuable and worthwhile for ourselves as educators.

Let's refer to the idea mentioned in the first paragraph: *we love teaching*. One of the reasons I commute 2 hours a day to teach

at AVC is not only to be in the classroom with my students, but also the inspiration I draw from so many of my talented and dedicated colleagues. I never want to stop learning from all of you. Every hallway conversation, coffee chat, flex event, and department or division meeting, I pick up some gem from someone that helps me be a better educator. The work of SLOs – assessment and discussion amongst colleagues – has always been done organically. It’s nothing really new. The difference is that the SLO process is a way to make concrete the intangible. Have you had a sense your students were improving but not sure why? Have you wondered why that one concept never seems to be successfully learned? Have you discussed ideas and shared teaching methods with your colleagues? Of course, you have been doing this all along. Chances are it’s one of the most rewarding aspects of your job.

SLOs and PLOs are a method to document and make concrete these aspects of our job, which we have always enjoyed. There are many creative and engaging ways to make the SLO process rewarding and interesting. There are also many ways to streamline the process, save time and energy, and incorporate it all smoothly into our existing teaching and departmental practices.

In each edition of the SLO Newsletter, faculty will share positive experiences and ideas that can help lead our whole campus not to just “get it done” but to make this journey an enjoyable and gratifying one for us as educators. As your Accreditation Coordinator, I encourage you to jump on board and join the ride. Bon voyage!

