Components Required for all Academic Learning Compacts and Academic Learning Plans

1. Name of academic program as it appears in the University of West Florida catalog

2. Mission Statement

3. Program-level Student Learning Outcomes organized in four domains:
   - Content/discipline knowledge and skills
   - Communication
   - Critical Thinking
   - Integrity/Values
   Departments may include SLOs in additional domains that uniquely characterize work in their discipline (e.g., project management, team skills, hazard/risk management, diversity skills, community engagement).
   [BOG Regulation 8.016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, paragraph (1)(b)1.a.]

4. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes
   Paragraph that lists the types of assessments students may encounter in the program (e.g., capstone projects, juried performances, standardized exams, common embedded exam questions, portfolio requirements, etc.). [BOG Regulation 8.016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, paragraph (1)(b)1.c.]

5. Employment Opportunities for Graduates

6. Link to web site of academic department responsible for the program.

Guidelines for writing program-level Student Learning Outcomes

Program-level learning outcomes “should take into consideration the perspectives of appropriate constituencies (including but not limited to potential employers and graduate programs) regarding the knowledge and skills graduates need in the global marketplace and society.” [BOG Regulation 8.016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, paragraph (1)(b)1.b.]

Student learning outcomes should be written in jargon-free language that will be understandable to potential students. Program level SLOs should clearly differentiate between learning expectations established for the award of a bachelor’s versus a master’s or doctoral degree.

Graduate SLOs should reflect the progressively more complex and rigorous expectations associated with graduate study (SACSCOC Principle 3.6.1).
- Graduate SLOs should reflect learning based on academic content that is clearly more advanced and rigorous than that described for undergraduate SLOs.
- Graduate SLOs must describe advanced “knowledge of the literature of the discipline” (SACSCOC Principle 3.6.2).
- Graduate SLOS must describe skills required for “ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences” (SACSCOC Principle 3.6.2).
Program-level SLOs for Certificates and Stand-Alone Minors are not required for every domain mandated for ALCs and ALPs. Programs should identify 3-5 SLOs for these programs.

Suggestions for writing measurable program-level SLOs

- Use action verbs that describe observable behaviors or qualities of academic products students create.
- Bloom’s taxonomy is a useful, but incomplete, framework for articulating SLOs for advanced academic programs. Advanced work can be described using verbs selected from higher levels of Bloom’s taxonomy (apply, analyze, evaluate, and create). Contextual language in the SLO should describe disciplinary content and skills that clearly describe expertise associated with an advanced degree.
- Additional information on how to write measurable SLOs can be found on the website for the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CUTLA).

Procedures for the review of new and revised ALCs and ALPs

The department chair or program director has formal responsibility for submitting program-level SLOs for new programs and revised program-level SLOs for existing programs described in Academic Learning Compacts (ALCs) for all bachelor’s degree programs and Academic Learning Plans (ALPs) for all advanced degree programs through the Curriculum Change Request (CCR) system for documentation and archiving on a public University website. Department members are responsible for incorporating relevant elements of the Academic Learning Compact and Academic Learning Plan in new course proposals as well as new degree programs submitted to the CCR system. Relevant student learning outcomes related to the ALC or ALP should be included in the design of course syllabi. [from revised policy]

Revised SLOs for programs (bachelor’s degree programs, advanced degree programs, certificate programs, accelerated bachelor’s-to-master’s programs) must be submitted through a Curriculum Change Request (CCR) for appropriate faculty review and approval.

Requirements for public documents: Curriculum maps and current ALCs, ALPs, and SLOs for Certificate programs and stand-alone minors on the UWF web site

Departments are required to post ALCs, ALPs, and SLO documents for certificates and stand-alone minors along with a curriculum map for each academic program on the UWF web site. The official repository for these documents is the web site for the office for the Accreditation, Strategic Planning, and Institutional Research & Effectiveness (ASPIRE) but departments must provide links to these documents on departmental web page(s).

To ensure that all representations of SLO documents (ALCs, ALPs, curriculum maps, and related documents for certificate programs and stand-alone minors) posted to the UWF web site are consistent, the current electronic document will be archived on the web site of the Accreditation, Strategic Planning, and Institutional Research & Effectiveness (ASPIRE) web site. Departments must link to these documents from the departmental web page(s). All other university web sites (including the departmental web site) should access these electronic documents by linking to the appropriate file maintained on the ASPIRE site.
The ASPIRE web site will include an electronic copy of the UWF Academic Learning Compacts and Academic Learning Plans policy, BOG Regulation 8.016, and these Guidelines and Procedures for Implementing the ALC and ALP policy.

**Curriculum Maps**

Each academic program (undergraduate, graduate, certificate, and stand-alone minor) will create a curriculum map that describes the contribution of each required course (or menu of required courses when students have options) to the achievement and/or assessment of program-level SLOS. Curriculum maps will be archived with ALCs, ALPs, and other program-level SLO documents on the ASPIRE web site.

Guidelines, models, and templates for creating curriculum maps are posted on the CUTLA web site.

**Yearly Audit**

ASPIRE will conduct a yearly audit to ensure that departmental links to current ALCs and ALPs posted on the ASPIRE site are functional and initiate actions with departmental web masters to repair any broken or missing links.

**Seven-Year Assessment Plan**

Departments will create a 7-year assessment plan for each academic program it administers (undergraduate, graduate, certificate, stand-alone minor). The assessment describes when and how the department will implement a complete cycle of assessment for each program-level SLO articulated for the degree program. A complete cycle of assessment entails (at minimum) collection of initial assessment of learning for a given SLO (year 1), reflection on the findings and implementation of changes as needed to either assessment methods, curriculum, or learning activities (year 2), and follow-up assessment to determine impact and/or sustained performance on the SLO (year 3). Assessment plans should be updated as part of the 7-year program review to establish a plan for assessment of all program learning outcomes during the 7 years following the program review.

**Reporting Assessment Activity**

Each academic program and department will submit an annual report of its activities to assess and use assessment evidence for continuous improvement of teaching and learning. ASPIRE will manage the assessment report process. Reports will include the following elements:

1. Describe the SLO(s) assessed in the current assessment cycle
2. Describe the assessment methods used (including at least one direct measure for each SLO discussed in the report)
3. Briefly describe the assessment findings
4. Describe how the department used the assessment findings to guide decisions about instruction, curriculum development, improved student learning, and/or improved assessment practices

Departments will also participate in the annual Peer Review of Assessment, which provides an opportunity to share assessment findings, best practices for effective assessment, and effective strategies for improving student learning on common SLOs.

**Validation of Assessment Practices and Use of Assessment Evidence**

UWF programs and departments will seek external validation of selected SLOs and assessment plans. Evaluation of ongoing assessment activity and use of assessment evidence for improvement will be a
standard feature of the 7-year program review. Departments may also pursue other venues of external validation (e.g., comparisons with national test data, comparisons against benchmarks for comparable programs).

Use of Assessment Evidence

The University of West Florida is committed to the recursive nature of assessment for improvement and institutional effectiveness. The information gained by measuring student achievement on SLOs should be considered when departments make decisions about curricular design and choices of instructional strategies.

Period Review of SLOs and Assessment Evidence

- At minimum, departments or programs will devote at least one formal department meeting per year to review of their assessment data, discussion of curriculum, and evaluation of teaching and learning activities.
- Departments undergoing program reviews or discipline-specific accreditation review will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of assessment activities and review of the appropriateness of current program-level SLOs to ensure that these SLOs accurately represent the goals of the program and best practices in the discipline at the time of the program review or accreditation review.
- Findings from periodic review of assessment activities conducted by ASPIRE, CUTLA, or the Committee on the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL) will be provided to chairs and deans to inform ongoing assessment practices. These findings will be used to meet SACSCOC standards concerning institutional effectiveness and the assessment of student learning outcomes.
- ASPIRE will report periodically to the Board of Governors Office on the status of ALCs, related assessment activities, and processes for program evaluations and improvement as requested. [BOG Regulation 8.016 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, paragraph (2)(c)]