

SLOAC Steering Committee Minutes

March 26, 2012, 2-4, Room 6203

Present: Steve Aurilio, Michael Bishow, Luciana Castro, Jan Fosberg, Nick Kapp, Melissa Komadina, Jude Navari, Christine Roumbanis, Arthur Takayama, David Ulate, Mike Williamson, Dennis Wolbers, Karen Wong

Absent: Alice Erskine, Chris Gibson, Rick Hough, Rob Johnstone, Lucia Lachmayr, Regina Pelayo

- I. Approval of the 2/27/12 Minutes—approved as is
- II. Please remind faculty in your division/ department meetings...
 - A. ... to revise and/or create a six- year calendar of assessment, to be submitted to the Office of Instruction by the end of the Spring 2012 semester.
 - B. ...to update TracDat since it will be the primary vehicle through which everyone's assessment efforts will be noted
 - C. ...to contact me if they have any questions about participating in the Effective Communication ISLO assessment. (You also may want to remind them of the schedule: Research Office will provide a list of students with 36+ units after the census date; they should apply the rubric in the second half of the semester to at least the work from students with 36+ units; they should enter their rubric data on the spreadsheet that the Research Office provides by the end of the semester.)
- III. AFT article responses— [SLOAC coordinators letter](#); [faculty letter](#); [Senate Resolutions](#)
 - A. Approved Senate Resolution Draft: Steve Aurilio, Luciana Castro, Alice Erskine, Jan Fosberg, Chris Gibson, Rick Hough, Melissa Komadina, Regina Pelayo, Christine Roumbanis, Arthur Takayama, Dennis Wolbers
 - B. Approved Senate Resolution Draft, with Suggestions: Michael Bishow, Jan Fosberg, Lucia Lachmayr, Jude Navari
 - C. Status of the Senate Resolutions—Senate representatives will solicit feedback from their colleagues and vote on it at the next meeting on April 13; below is [the e-mail](#) that preceded the Resolutions.
- IV. Flex Workshops—many thanks to the presenters! The high number of participants suggests that faculty are interested in such workshops. Also impressive were the number of adjunct faculty who participated.

1. Getting Quick and Easy Feedback about Student Learning via CATS (Classroom Assessment Techniques)—Lucia Lachmayr and Vanson Nguyen -- (13, of whom 9 were adjunct)
2. Using Web Access to Administer Quizzes and Get Instant Assessment Data—Nick Kapp (22, of whom 10 were adjunct)
3. Documenting Assessment Efforts with TracDat-- Chandra Vanajashki, with Steve Aurilio and Andrea Nissen assisting (22, of whom 9 were adjunct)
4. Analyzing Course Level Assessment Data – Rob Johnstone & David Ulate (8, of whom 4 were adjunct)

V. Need to show that the SLOAC works—therefore, I need at least three models of assessment per division to feature on the SLOAC website -- > *Please send me a brief narrative paragraph along with any supporting documentation such as the TracDat four column-report, rubrics, surveys, etc. The narrative should encompass the assessment cycle: briefly describe the course, the assessment method(s), major findings and (if applicable) the resultant action plan.*

- A. Business
 1. CAOT 225
 2. ACCT 121
 3. FCS 310
- B. Language Arts (Need one more, ideally from COMM or ESOL)
 1. English 836/ 846
 2. SPAN 110
- C. Kinesiology
 1. INDV 101 + 105
 2. FITN 112
 3. FITN 106
 4. DANC 350
- D. Science/ Math/ Technology (Need two more)
 1. Math 811
- E. Social Sciences/ Creative Arts (Need three)
- F. Student Services
 1. Library (received)

VI. SLOAC Recommendations to update the Program Review instrument—please peruse the “Self Study Form,” “Course Outline, Prerequisite, and CO checklist” and “Mapping Instructional SLOs...”

- A. Recommendations to the Curriculum Committee:

1. Integrate into the existing program review instrument the need to review course level assessments as a means to reflect on their program SLOs (or if they issue 20+ degrees/ certificates, to report on their program level assessment)
 2. Checklist that PSLOs have been uploaded onto TracDat
 3. Checklist (or perhaps report on the percentage of courses) that course level SLOs have been mapped to PSLOs and ISLOs on TracDat
 - a) The form that the SLOAC Steering Committee created to map courses to ISLOs no longer applies since TracDat requires that faculty map each course level SLO to ISLOs, so it should be removed from the CC and SLOAC websites.
 - b) The ISLOs need to be updated to reflect the recent decision to eliminate the Computer Literacy ISLO.
 - c) This year's group that is undergoing program review will be asked to address this step during their presentation, but not in their written program review report.
 4. Mechanism to simply attach report documents from TracDat and Curricunet rather than having to fill out a separate form
- B. The self- study form (the template of questions for the instruction program review instrument)
1. It already is undergoing a significant revision by a Curriculum Committee subcommittee.
 2. Request to delete the first question since that information can now be collected through other means, namely Mike's newly created SLOAC Grid, and responses to the Employee Voice Survey.
 3. Request to add questions:
 - a) What was assessed and when during this last six-year cycle? (or attach an ad-hoc report from TracDat)
 - b) What percentage of courses are mapped to PSLOs? (the intent is to reach 100% soon!)
 - c) What percentage of courses are mapped to ISLOs? (ditto)
 4. Revision of question #3: What additional resources are needed to implement each of the action plan(s)?
- C. The self- study form (the template of questions for the student services program review instrument)
1. Revision of question #3: Change to "which"
 2. Move question #4 to the data section rather than be listed under SLOAC
- D. The course outline, prerequisite, and student learning outcomes checklist

1. Delete SLOAC categories 7,8,9,10,11 and instead replace with attaching an ad-hoc report from TracDat

VII. Feedback about the SLOAC Grid (Mike Williamson)

VIII. Please designate the following Monday (the 4th Mondays of the month, except the first meeting of each semester), 2-4, for SLOAC Steering Committee meetings: April 23. If you cannot continue with the committee next year, please arrange for a replacement within your Division and update me.

3/8/12 Response to “The Advocate’s” February 2012 article, “SLOs creep into syllabi and faculty evaluations in violation of contract and academic freedom”

A MEANINGFUL SLOAC MUST BE FACULTY DRIVEN

As SLOAC coordinators on our respective campuses, we thank you for articulating some faculty’s concerns about the SLOAC and welcome the opportunity to respond. We prefer transparency, as much as with our fellow colleagues as our students. We hope that this ongoing dialogue will yield the best possible conditions for faculty to engage in the SLOAC and to accomplish what we see as its impetus: to improve student learning.

We want to make it very clear that we share your concerns about the SLOAC evolving into an insidious form of “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB), or assessment results being used in faculty evaluation. Back in 2005, when we were first told about the SLOAC as an accreditation standard, all three campuses quickly convened steering committees to create SLOAC processes with a clear philosophy. As articulated in our philosophies, the primary purpose of the SLOAC is to improve student learning, which is facilitated through faculty dialogue about the core elements of a course, grading methods and criteria, teaching methods, etc. These conversations aren’t intended to impose a uniform curriculum or course delivery on individual faculty. Rather, in discussing assessment results that point to a need to improve, faculty have an opportunity to troubleshoot, to share with each other what works, to articulate a grading criteria that they can share with students and therefore demystify the evaluative process. Granted, those conversations may already have been taking place; but the SLOAC provides a framework and focus for them. Clearly students stand to benefit from these discussions because we have their interests in mind. The longer we have a SLOAC process in place, the more time we have to work out the kinks and therefore have a proven process that works for us. Our proven process, in turn, serves as the most potent evidence against the need for an outside agency imposing their model on us, which may or may not include sanctions when our students fail to fulfill the SLOs.

Secondly, all three campuses explicitly state in their philosophies that assessment results will not be used punitively against faculty. We recognize that faculty are better poised to improve courses and programs if we can first acknowledge that something isn’t working,

Given that each campus has entrusted a group of faculty to create a SLOAC process, we were puzzled that the SLOAC was cast as administration driven. All three campuses have SLOAC Committees, which are represented by faculty across the disciplines. We’ve deliberated for hours to forge processes that are meaningful, manageable, and complement our respective campus cultures. We’ve also provided

considerable training in writing good SLOs and designing valid assessments. And so now at this point, we've asked the administrators to further support our efforts to get faculty involved.

Some faculty feel that the SLOAC is just a fad, or that it's a waste of time. Anyone serving on an accreditation writing team knows that the SLOAC is not only here to stay, but very much woven throughout the accreditation standards.

However, faculty should be engaged in the SLOAC not because it is required by accreditation standards or our deans, but because we should always have the goal of improving student learning in our courses and programs. If students were succeeding in our courses and graduating at a 90 to 100% rate, perhaps the SLOAC is a waste of time. The fact of the matter is that our students are not succeeding at that rate. The SLOAC offers one means to reflect on what is within our purview and control so that we can offer students the best possible learning experiences. The onus is on faculty to make the SLOAC process worthwhile; it's only as good as we make it.

Ultimately the SLOAC is about students, and student success, which leads us to our last point: SLOs on course syllabi. SLOs on syllabi are not required by our collective bargaining contract; however, there are many items that are good practice to include and are not required. Examples of these items are policies on late or missed work, classroom behavior, electronics in the classroom, academic integrity, and how to succeed in the course. More importantly, SLOs on syllabi help students to better understand the relevance of the curriculum since SLOs explicitly articulate what students are expected to be able to *do* with what they learn. That should be the aim of any college, according to the Accreditation Standard II.A. "The institution assures that students and prospective students receive clear and accurate information about educational courses and programs and transfer policies." We would venture to add that the stated grading policy should include grading criteria, perhaps even rubrics, so as to make transparent for students how their work is being evaluated. Secondly, the union does not have exclusive say over what goes in a syllabus; the Academic Senate is charged with this oversight as part of the 10+ 1 A.S. responsibilities.

Furthermore, SLOs do not infringe on academic freedom. First of all, course outlines (and addendums) and therefore SLOs are written and vetted by discipline faculty, not by an external agency or by administrators. Secondly, faculty do not have to abide by any single curriculum or pedagogy in order to help the students fulfill the SLOs. In fact, we totally agree with and embrace the principle Teeka James articulated, "While faculty are expected, and rightly so, to teach their courses as described in the official course outlines, academic freedom preserves faculty's right to teach a course as they wish within the parameters of the course outline" (6). Bear in mind that SLOs are not an exhaustive list; they are the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes that presumably all

faculty teaching the course consider core to the course. Thus, while faculty abide by those SLOs and the related course objectives, each faculty member determines how to enable students to achieve those SLOs. The variety of instruction will ideally address the needs of the diverse learners in our midst. And so long as faculty address those core SLOs, they are welcome to go above and beyond them.

We'd like to wrap up by thanking you again for re-initiating dialogue about the SLOAC, and for doing what you're entrusted with doing: defending faculty interests. But we are not your adversaries. Faculty assessment committees at all three colleges have done everything possible to create SLOAC processes that empower faculty and are ultimately about improving student learning while still fulfilling the somewhat nebulous accreditation standards. United, we stand to have a much stronger voice both regionally and locally. Regionally, we need to stand strong against one SLOAC model being imposed on us with total disregard of our respective campus cultures, as well as assessment results being used punitively against campuses, let alone faculty. And locally, we are presented with a very timely opportunity to negotiate the best conditions for faculty to engage in the SLOAC in a meaningful yet manageable way when the Performance Evaluation Review Committee (formerly the Trust committee) convenes in the Fall.

We look forward to working with you,

SLOAC Coordinators David Locke, Carol Rhodes, and Karen Wong

Dear Advocate,

We are many faculty throughout SMCCCD who disagree wholeheartedly with the sentiments expressed in the article in the February *Advocate* newsletter entitled, “SLOs Creep into Syllabi and Faculty Evaluations in Violation of Contract and Academic Freedom” (James). The opinions stated in the article are not widely shared by the faculty that AFT represents. We feel the AFT 1493 has grossly misrepresented faculty and endangered our accreditation status with its unfounded statements.

Misrepresentation #1: That SLOs have “crept in” to syllabi in a hidden, top-down manner. This is patently untrue. The SLO process at SMCCCD has been completely transparent and faculty-driven. All campuses are actively engaged in the SLO process as evidenced by myriad trainings, flex day sessions, printed materials and manuals, online support systems, meetings, Senate presentations, our last Accreditation process, and the required inclusion of SLOs in all course outlines. The AFT mischaracterizes SLOs as being a sudden directive pushed upon an unwilling faculty by administration.

Misrepresentation #2: That including SLOs on syllabi compromises academic freedom for faculty. This is blatantly untrue. The article cites the district definition of academic freedom:

“Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach and express ideas, including unpopular or controversial ones, without censorship or political restraint. Academic freedom, rather than being a license to do or say whatever one wishes, requires professional competence, open inquiry and rigorous attention to the pursuit of truth.”

We faculty do not believe that putting an SLO on a syllabus violates any of the above tenets. SLOs are, in fact, an example of “open inquiry and rigorous attention to the pursuit of truth” in that they inform students of what departments have determined students will be able to do upon passing courses. The creation of syllabi that are consistent with course outlines is totally the responsibility and purview of faculty.

Misrepresentation #3: That SLOs on syllabi directly result in SLOs being used as evaluation criteria. This is a falsehood. Our current evaluation process is a negotiated process that has nothing in it about SLOs; henceforth, we cannot be evaluated on SLOs.

Misrepresentation #4: That “it is not AFT 1493’s contention that faculty should refuse to include SLOs in their syllabi.” Later, the article says, “AFT’s position remains: faculty are free to include or not include SLOs on their syllabi.” To acknowledge the truth of the latter is to contradict the message of the former; acknowledging one’s freedom to include or not include is to support the choice to agree, or refuse, to include. It is difficult to see how the article could be taken in any way other than to dissuade faculty from participating in the SLO process, and this act of dissuading is reckless, irresponsible, and inappropriate.

The publishing of this article by AFT leadership may imply that the faculty of the three campuses, led by the faculty union, are refusing to comply with the SLO process. In fact, several faculty groups throughout the district are now discussing their own dissatisfaction with the ideas contained in the article, evidencing broad disagreement and concern over misrepresentation of faculty opinion. We faculty look forward to complying with the Accreditation process and providing SLOs on our syllabi in the same faculty-governed, student-focused manner in which SLOs have been generated.

Sincerely,

SMCCCD Faculty in Support of Including SLOs on Syllabi:

Leigh Anne Shaw, Patty Dilko, Jan Fosberg, Kate Browne, Ray Lapuz, Jenny Castello, Steve Aurillio, Tiffany Schmierer, Christine Roumbanis, Alicia Aguirre, Dani Behonick, Rhonda Chaney, Kurt Devlin, Amelito Enriquez, Doug Hirzel, Evan Innerst, Pam Jones, Jeanette Medina, Annie Nicholls, Robert Tricca, and 6 additional faculty who have chosen to support this letter anonymously

Reference

James, T. " SLOs Creep into Syllabi and Faculty Evaluations in Violation of Contract and Academic Freedom." *The Advocate* 35:4. (February 2012):1,6. Online and print.

RESOLUTION 1:

Support of Faculty Role and Responsibility in the Development and Use of Student Learning Outcomes to Improve Student Learning and Program Effectiveness

WHEREAS, The values of Skyline College include a commitment to academic rigor and quality with relevant, recent, and evolving curriculum (*Values Statement*, 2010-2011);

WHEREAS, The professional duties and responsibilities of faculty include evaluation of student performance and evaluation and revision of courses and programs (*AFT Contract 2006-2009 Appendix D*);

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges maintains that “outcomes assessment is a productive activity that can improve teaching practices and thus enhance student learning,” and that “faculty should engage in SLO development and assessment not because it is a requirement for accreditation but rather because it is good professional practice that can benefit programs and students” (*Guiding Principles for SLO Assessment*, 2010);

WHEREAS, The assessment of learning outcomes is an integral strategy in achieving the College Goals (*Goals and Strategies*, 2010 Update);

WHEREAS, The 2002 Accreditation Standards of ACCJC require that colleges incorporate measurable student learning outcomes at the course, program, degree and institutional level;

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate of Skyline College maintains the primary, active and essential role of faculty in articulating and assessing SLOs, and analyzing the data and its implications (*SLOAC Philosophy Statement for Skyline College*, 2005);

WHEREAS, the development and assessment of student and program learning outcomes does not infringe upon Academic Freedom as defined by the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments* (AAUP Policy Tenth Edition 2006);

WHEREAS, The California Education Code §70902 (b) (7) makes direct reference to “the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards;”

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges supports the embedding of SLO assessment in program review (*Resolution 9.05*, 2010);

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College supports the primary role and responsibility of faculty in the development and assessment of course, program, and institutional student learning outcomes;

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College maintains that the processes established for assessment of course, program, and institutional student learning outcomes should be designed to empower faculty to improve their professional abilities as educators and to encourage meaningful collegial dialogue about improving student learning and program effectiveness.

**RESOLUTION 2:
Support of Publication of Student and Program Learning Outcomes**

WHEREAS, The values of Skyline College include a commitment to academic rigor and quality with relevant, recent, and evolving curriculum (*Values Statement*, 2010-2011)

WHEREAS, the placement of student learning outcomes on instructor syllabi supports and does not infringe upon Academic Freedom as defined by the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments* (AAUP Policy Tenth Edition 2006);

WHEREAS, the SLOs are a binding part and driving force of what is taught since faculty are required to follow the principles of the course outline of record, but faculty retain academic freedom in HOW they help students to achieve the SLOs;

WHEREAS, Recognition and implementation of specified student learning outcomes ensures that a student taking any section of a course will be expected to achieve the same fundamental outcomes, regardless of the method of instruction utilized;

WHEREAS, When academic standards and expectations are made transparent, students have a clear understanding of what is required of them in order to attain a desired level of academic success;

WHEREAS, Many students experience greater motivation to learn when they understand how a course or program may benefit them and further their educational and professional goals;

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges supports the alignment of SLOs from the course level upward through the program and institutional level (*Guiding Principles for SLO Assessment*, 2010);

WHEREAS, Standard II.A.6 of the 2002 Accreditation Standards requires that the college “describes its degrees and certificates in terms of their purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning **outcomes** consistent with those in the institution’s officially approved course outline;”

WHEREAS, In its *Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness - Part III: Student Learning Outcomes*, ACCJC requires that “students demonstrate awareness of goals and purposes of courses and programs in which they are enrolled;”

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College strongly encourages all faculty to promote transparency and accountability by including student learning outcomes in their course syllabus and supports the publication of program learning outcomes for degrees and certificates in the College Catalog and college website.

RESOLUTION 3:

Opposition to the Use of Student Learning Outcome Attainment in Faculty Evaluation

WHEREAS, Standard III.A.1.c of the 2002 Accreditation Standards states, “Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes;”

WHEREAS, Varying and conflicting interpretations of Standard III.A.1.c have caused concern among faculty and institutions and have not been clarified by the “Questions to Use in Institutional Evaluation” provided by the ACCJC *Guide to Evaluating Institutions*, 2011;

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate of Skyline College declared that SLOAC will not be used “punitively or as a means of determining faculty or staff salaries or rewards” (Statement of Principles on Assessment, 2005);

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges states that “using SLOs as a basis for faculty evaluations (III.A.1.c) demonstrates an egregious disregard for local bargaining authority and interjects a threatening tone into what the ACCJC claims is a collegial peer process” (*The Accreditation Standards: Implementation*, 2004);

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges affirmed its “opposition to including the attainment of student learning outcomes as an aspect of individual faculty evaluations,” and declared its intent to work with ACCJC “to ensure that accreditation recommendations do not use student learning outcomes in any manner that would undermine either local bargaining authority or the academic freedom of individual faculty members” (Resolution 2.01, 2008);

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College affirms its resistance to including the attainment of student learning outcomes as an aspect of individual faculty evaluations, **but rather should be used for course and program improvement;**

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College will work with the ACCJC and with other concerned statewide faculty organizations to ensure that accreditation recommendations do not use student learning outcomes in any manner that would undermine either local bargaining **processes** or the academic freedom of individual faculty members.

RESOLUTION 4:

Support for the Performance Evaluation Review Committee (PERC) to Address the ACCJC Requirement Pertaining to the SLOAC and Faculty Evaluation

WHEREAS, The professional duties and responsibilities of faculty include evaluation of student performance and evaluation and revision of courses and programs (*AFT Contract 2006-2009 Appendix D*);

WHEREAS, The faculty of Skyline College are committed to the development, use and assessment of student learning outcomes and program learning outcomes as a means of improving student learning and program effectiveness (*SLOAC Framework, 2005*);

WHEREAS, Standard III.A.1.c of the 2002 Accreditation Standards states, “Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes;”

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate of Skyline College is opposed to including *the attainment* [emphasis added] of student learning outcomes as an aspect of individual faculty evaluations;

WHEREAS, **Reflection on instructional and assessment practices and results are** hallmarks of good educators, and evaluation and revision of curricula and programs are professional obligations;

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College support the PERC in addressing the ACCJC requirement pertaining to faculty evaluation and the SLOAC.

April 26, 2012 E-mail that precedes the Senate Resolutions

Hello Academic Senate officers and representatives, thanks for welcoming me to your meeting this past Friday. Please find attached the Resolutions so that you can gauge whether your division generally supports them, as well as any other feedback. I thought it would be helpful to provide some general background information as to what prompted the SLOAC Steering Committee to come forward with these Resolutions:

- 1) Now that the College has been engaged with the SLOAC for the past six years, and with the AFT's concerns that were recently expressed in "The Advocate," **the College will benefit from revisiting principles that the College adopted at the beginning of the SLOAC initiative.** Among the most important are that the SLOAC will be a faculty driven initiative which will be used as one means to improve student success. A second is that assessment results will not be used punitively against faculty. All of those principles are articulated in the *Skyline College SLOAC Framework*, and the SLOAC Philosophy, which was signed by college leadership in April 2005: the Senate President, the Senate Curriculum Co-chair, the College President, the Vice President of Instruction, the Vice President of Student Services, the Classified President, and the Associated Students of Skyline College President.
- 2) **The Senate Resolutions are also a means for the Academic Senate to assert its primacy in academic matters.** What role the SLOAC plays on campus is certainly an academic matter since the SLOAC is a primary means of maintaining the integrity of our courses and programs.
- 3) **The College also needs to respond to the District Recommendation from our last accreditation visit,** which is on the Final Evaluation Report (2007), page 4: "The team recommends that the district develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes" (Standard III.A1.1.c). The Senate Resolutions begin to address this Recommendation to which we will be accountable during our upcoming accreditation visit. The Performance Evaluation Review Committee (PERC) will also play a critical role, though they'll ideally work out more of the details. **Since this accreditation recommendation is for all three colleges, ideally Skyline's Senate response will be aligned with our sister college's Senates, who also are presently considering these Resolutions.** I highlighted in green the revisions that the SLOAC Steering Committee made; most of these "revisions" echo our sister

college's statements, except we cited Skyline's references. The major change is to Resolution Four; rather than specify what should be done in faculty evaluation, we simply requested that the PERC address this Accreditation Recommendation.

If you have any questions, please contact me and/or your SLOAC division representative. (See <http://www.skylinecollege.edu/facstaff/GovCommittees/sloac/members.html>.) I look forward to our conversation on April 13.

Thanks,

Karen