

**SLOAC Steering Committee Minutes: Special Town Hall Co-sponsored by the  
Academic Senate pertaining to the SLOAC Resolutions**

**April 23, 2012, 2-4, Room 6203**

Present: Steve Aurilio, Michael Bishow, Luciana Castro, Alice Erskine, Chris Gibson, Rick Hough, Lucia Lachmayr, Nick Kapp, Melissa Komadina, Jude Navari, Christine Roumbanis, Arthur Takayama, Dennis Wolbers, Karen Wong

Guests: George Buckingham, Nina Floro, Tom Hewitt, Johannes Masare, Jennifer Merrill, Michael Moynihan, Leigh-Anne Shaw, Lori Slicton, Jeff Westfall

Absent: Jan Fosberg (fundraiser for Skyline)

History: Prompted by AFT's article in "The Advocate" critiquing the SLOAC, the three SLOAC coordinators wrote a response that was published in the subsequent issue to address concerns as well as correct some misunderstandings. Skyline's SLOAC Steering Committee helped a great deal in shaping the tone and content, for which Karen is *very* grateful. (See "The Advocate," February and March 2012.)

We also felt it was important to involve the Senate more in this conversation since the SLOAC is a faculty responsibility. These Resolutions were intended to reiterate our SLOAC philosophies, which were adopted early in the process. When these Resolutions were initially brought forward to the Senate on 3/23/12, representatives expressed a desire to solicit input from faculty within their division. The Senate President followed up this request by e-mailing the draft to the campus on 3/26/12. At the second meeting with the Senate on 4/13/12, representatives still felt that more input was needed, so they requested a Town Hall for the campus community to weigh in on them, which was co-hosted by the SLOAC Steering Committee. The AS President re-sent the Resolutions along with an announcement about the Town Hall, on 4/22/12.

After a very respectful though direct discussion about the SLOAC, a fifth resolution was added to address the workload issue, in addition to more specific feedback about the draft of the first four resolutions. (See below.) Via an e-mail vote, the following Steering Committee members approved: Steve Aurilio, Michael Bishow, Luciana Castro, Alice Erskine, Chris Gibson, Rick Hough, Melissa Komadina, Lucia Lachmayr, Jude Navari, Christine Roumbanis, Arthur Takayama, Dennis Wolbers, Karen Wong.

The SLOAC Senate Resolutions were approved unanimously by the Academic Senate on 4/27/12. They're now posted on Skyline's AS website: <http://www.skylinecollege.edu/facstaff/GovCommittees/acadsen/resolutions.html>.

## **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 Appendix D, 2006-2009](#));

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

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

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](#));

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](#));

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:**

### **Opposed 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 the results from assessing student learning outcomes will not be used “punitively or as a means of determining faculty or staff salaries or rewards” ([SLOAC Framework 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 results from assessing 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 3:  
Support for a Meaningful and Sustainable Workload**

WHEREAS, Faculty's primary responsibility is to their students, some of whom face significant economic, academic, and social challenges;

WHEREAS, Faculty support student success in multiple ways that require their energy and time, ranging from engaging and innovative classroom curricula and instruction to individual assistance to formal processes such as program review;

WHEREAS, the SLOAC is one model required by accreditation to discuss student success and act on these realizations, so all departments should be engaged in it annually ([Accreditation Standards, 2002](#));

WHEREAS, Faculty take ownership over the SLOAC process, ranging from determining which courses are most important to assess, how to assess, and how to interpret the results ([Statement of Principles on Assessment, 2005](#));

WHEREAS, Faculty insist on a SLOAC process that is meaningful rather than perfunctory, that it makes a difference for our students;

WHEREAS, Some departments/ programs are staffed by only one full-time faculty member, and/or are staffed predominantly by adjunct faculty, and are therefore shouldering a disproportionate number of responsibilities for assessment purposes;

WHEREAS, adjunct faculty constitute a significant percentage of instructors and are welcome and strongly encouraged to participate in the SLOAC but may not be able to due to other professional obligations;

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Skyline College support faculty participating in the SLOAC process while also determining what is manageable, sustainable, and meaningful for their respective department, given the resources that are available to them to foster student success.

**RESOLUTION 4:  
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 5:**

**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 Appendix D, 2006-2009](#));

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, the Accreditation visiting teams in Fall 2007 recommended all three colleges to address [Standard III.A.1.c of the 2002 Accreditation Standards](#), which 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" ([Skyline Visiting Team Evaluation Report, 2007](#));

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate of Skyline College is opposed to including the results from assessing 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 requests that the PERC address 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