

## DRAFT, DRAFT, DRAFT

### **Process and Schedule for Developing CNR Program Outcomes and Assessment Strategies Fall 06 - Spring 07**

1. Develop program process and prepare for meetings to develop learning outcomes and assessment strategies (October-December)
  - Heads/Program leaders decide who will lead and facilitate the program meetings for development of outcomes and assessment strategies (October).
  - Heads/Program leaders and interested faculty and staff attend the following two workshops
    - Workshop 1 on “Outcomes” (Bill McLaughlin) (November)
    - Workshop 2 on “Assessment” (Bill McLaughlin) (November)
  - Heads/Program Leaders and faculty who will lead meetings review the UI Outcomes, the CNR program maps and outcomes which were generated in spring 04, and pertinent background information and examples on the UI website (November-December)
  - Heads/Program Leaders and faculty who will lead meetings schedule and plan January-February meetings, select faculty and staff who will participate in specific program meetings, and also invite professionals, employers, alumni, and students (November-December)
  
2. Develop outcomes and assessment strategies for each CNR undergrad and grad degree program and certificate program (January - February)
  - Conduct program meetings (faculty, staff, professionals from field, employers, alumni, and students). Use “experts” from campus, if desired, to facilitate meetings.
    - a. B.S. programs
    - b. M.S. programs, including MNR
    - c. Ph.D. program (to be completed as one collective degree)
    - d. Certificate programs (Restoration Ecology, Fire Ecology, and Environmental Education)
  - Finalize program outcomes and assessment strategies through appropriate discussion and review
  - Submit Program Outcomes and Assessment Strategies to Dean by February 23, and then the Dean will submit them to Provost/UI Assessment Office by **March 1 Deadline**
  
3. Begin assessment of outcomes to gain feedback for continuous improvement of programs (spring 07 – spring 08)

## **Suggested Process for Articulating Program Learning Outcomes from Goal 1 Implementation Team from the Provost Web Page**

### Purpose

Program learning outcomes are articulated for curricular and co-curricular programs. They must be articulated for every undergraduate and graduate degree and approved certificate program to meet NWCCU accreditation requirements.

### Products

The list of program learning outcomes is the end goal of this step of the process of articulating program learning outcomes on which to measure student performance and assess program effectiveness for continuous improvement.

### Timeline

Program learning outcomes need to be completed and submitted to Dwaine Hubbard on or before March 1, 2007 for inclusion in the 2008 *General Catalog* (December 15, 2006 for inclusion in the 2007 *General Catalog*).

### Participants

Faculty responsible for program design, delivery and assessment are key to the articulation of program learning outcomes. Participation by and/or input from students and key stakeholders can enrich the discussion.

### Materials to Have on Hand

Each unit has internal and external expectations for program graduates. Consider the essential materials that support your work in the articulation of program learning outcomes. Sources might include one or more of the following:

- University learning outcomes
- Statements of learning outcomes, goals, objectives
- Learner outcomes from spring 2005 program mapping
- Course syllabi
- Standards of professional societies and organizations
- Accreditation standards
- Program learning outcomes from other colleges and universities
- Print and web reference materials
- Other sources based on unit knowledge (e.g., professional conference documents)
- Examples from University of Idaho units

### Meeting Formats

The most effective environment for the articulation of program learning outcomes is in meetings attended by faculty, students, alumni, professionals in the field, and employers where shared expectations of graduates can be discussed and articulated. The format might include retreats, brown bag lunches, and/or informal get-togethers. Electronic discussions and shared documents may help increase dialogue and efficiency. A representative group may come together to develop a discussion set of program learning outcomes and then share them across the program or department. A three to four hour commitment will provide most departments with time to build on existing documents and develop a discussion and/or completed set of program learning outcomes. This sets the stage for the next steps of measuring student performance, assessing program effectiveness, and integrating the learning outcomes within courses and programs.

### Leading Questions

The following questions may help open and focus discussion among program faculty:

- What knowledge, skills, and attributes are employers, graduate schools, and agencies seeking in our program's graduates?
- What knowledge, skills, and attributes are essential for individuals to have to complete in our program?
- What are our students able to **do** upon program completion?
- What characteristics are embedded in each outcome? Can we describe what each outcome "looks like"? Is the outcome potentially measurable?

### Examples of Program Learning Outcomes

Examples of program learning outcomes are available at Examples on the Team 1 drop down menu.

### Lenses for Review of Program Learning Outcomes

Each of the following questions can be used to review program learning outcomes:

- What purpose does each learning outcome serve?
  - Are program learning outcomes global? How do they reflect university, college, department, and program mission, vision, and core values? Are they congruent with university strategic direction?
  - How do the program learning outcomes complement university learning outcomes? Do they align, do they expand upon, or do they reflect a different dimension that is essential to a specific program?
  - Are the program learning outcomes congruent with university learning outcomes?
  - How do the learning outcomes integrate curricular and co-curricular programs at the university?
- Are the essential elements/features of learning outcomes present?
  - Are they clear, concise, unambiguous, and understandable?
  - Are they measurable – defined to develop key measures to gauge performance?
  - Are they attainable? Can the learning outcomes be achieved within the learning community?
  - Do the learning outcomes provide for potential increases in learning and performance?

### Next Steps

Program learning outcomes are paired with assessment strategies that let programs know how well students are performing relative to the learning outcomes. Measures of student performance can be identified as the learning outcomes are developed. Processes to meet this next step will be shared in spring 2007 through the University Matters and Teaching series sponsored by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. This is an iterative process over time. Data gathered on student learning will help us improve our teaching and learning opportunities and give the UI an edge for the future.

### Source Materials

Additional materials and resources to support the work of articulating program learning outcomes are listed in the Resources drop down menu. Books and articles are available for check out from the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs office, Admin 104.