

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Vargas and members of Executive Staff Council
 From: Bethany Alden-Rivers, Associate Provost, on behalf of the Academic Assessment Committee
 Date: May 4, 2018
 Re: Proposal to Adopt Institutional Learning Outcomes

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline a rationale and proposal for adopting institutional learning outcomes for Southeast Missouri State University. Members of Executive Staff Council are invited to consider and provide final approval.

2.0 BACKGROUND

To date, Southeast Missouri State University has used its goals for general education to fulfill the accreditation requirements for “common learning outcomes” (Criterion 1.1, AQIP Category 1) by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). As the University renews its plans for academic assessment, the Academic Assessment Committee proposes adoption of institutional learning outcomes. To facilitate this discussion, the University invited a consultant from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes and Assessment (NILOA) to facilitate a workshop called *Selecting Institutional Learning Outcomes*. Thirty-three faculty and staff participated in the workshop on Friday, March 9. The outputs from this workshop include a draft set of five institutional learning outcomes, which are outlined in Section 4.0 of this memorandum.

3.0 A CASE FOR INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Assessment of learning occurs at multiple points in time and levels of analysis within a university setting. At the micro level, learning is typically assessed in terms of whether a student is achieving the learning goals of the course or lesson. At the mezzo level, learning is usually assessed in terms of whether students are achieving the learning goals of the program or major. At the macro level, learning can be assessed in terms of whether students are achieving the learning goals of the institution (see Figure 1).

Macro	Institutional Learning Outcomes reflect the institutional values and priorities for student learning across the university.
Mezzo	Program Learning Outcomes reflect the expectations for student learning during the program or major.
Micro	Course Learning Outcomes reflect the goals for learning during specific courses.

Fig. 1 Levels of analysis for academic assessment in higher education (adapted from Hutchings, 2011, p. 2)

The Committee proposes the adoption of institutional learning outcomes for the following reasons.

- a. Institutional learning outcomes reflect the University's priorities for student learning to all stakeholders.
- b. As such, institutional learning outcomes provide a framework for accountability for student learning.
- c. Institutional learning outcomes support the notion of a liberal education by providing guidelines for what students should be learning that are flexible enough to accommodate multiple perspectives and approaches toward that learning.
- d. Institutional learning outcomes provide an assessment of student learning framework that transcends general education learning outcomes. The Committee argues that this is especially important for students who transfer to Southeast having already achieved their general education requirements in another institution and for graduate students.
- e. Together with the assessment of general education learning outcomes, the assessment of institutional learning outcomes is a powerful indicator of student learning throughout their university trajectory.
- f. Institutional learning outcomes provide a framework for strategic alignment of curricular and co-curricular activities.

4.0 PROPOSED INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR SOUTHEAST

This section outlines the proposed institutional learning outcomes that were developed in consultation with our Assessment Coach from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes and Assessment. These institutional learning outcomes were the output of a collaborative activity with faculty and staff on March 9, 2018.

4.1 Communication

Students will communicate effectively in a variety of ways across multiple contexts.

4.2 Experiential learning

Students will apply new concepts within authentic experiences and reflect on these experiences for the purposes of learning and development.

4.3 Specialized knowledge for professional preparation

Students will demonstrate the knowledge required to engage effectively in the workforce or in further studies toward their profession.

4.4 Civic and global engagement

Students will demonstrate skills and attributes for participating in society as a global citizen.

4.5 Inquiry, critical thinking, and problem solving

Students will ask questions, evaluate evidence, and formulate effective solutions to problems.

5.0 ALIGNMENT TO OTHER FRAMEWORKS FOR STUDENT LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Table 1 shows the alignment of the proposed institutional learning outcomes to other locally and nationally recognized frameworks for student learning.

Table 1. Crosswalk of proposed institutional learning outcomes to other frameworks for student learning outcomes.

Proposed Institutional Learning Outcomes	Alignment to Lumina’s Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) Outcomes	Alignment to AAC&U’s LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes	Alignment to MHDE CORE 42 Learning Outcomes
1. Communication	Communicative Fluency	Written and Oral Communication	Communicating
2. Experiential Learning	Applied and Collaborative Learning	Integrative and Applied Learning	N/A
3. Specialized Knowledge for Professional Preparation	Specialized Knowledge	Integrative and Applied Learning	N/A
4. Civic and Global Engagement	Civic and Global Learning	Civic Knowledge and Engagement—Local and Global	Valuing
5. Inquiry, critical thinking, and program solving	Intellectual Skills	Intellectual and Practical Skills	Managing Information; Higher Order Thinking

6.0 CONSULTATION AND ENDORSEMENTS

As part of the consultation process, the Committee invited input on this proposal from the following groups.

- **University Studies Council**—April 23, 2018
- **Graduate Studies Council**—April 23, 2018
- **Student Government**—April 23, 2018
- **Division of Enrollment Management and Student Success**—April 23, 2018
- **Professional Staff Council**—April 24, 2018
- **Workshop Participants** (from March 9 activity)—April 25, 2018

- This proposal was endorsed by the **Academic Assessment Committee** on May 1, 2018.
- This proposal was endorsed by **Academic Council** on May 1, 2018.

7.0 REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

The Committee requests your approval of this proposal for the purposes of moving forward with planning and implementation. Thank you for your consideration and support.

8.0 SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

- American Council of Colleges and Universities (2018). Essential Learning Outcomes. Available online at: <https://www.aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes> [accessed March 15, 2018].
- Hutchings, P. (2011). What new faculty need to know about assessment. National Institute for Learning Outcomes and Assessment. Available online at: <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/ABfaculty.pdf> [accessed March 15, 2018].
- Lumina Foundation (2018). Degree Qualifications Profile. Available online at: <http://degreeprofile.org/> [accessed on March 15, 2018].
- Missouri Department of Higher Education (2018). Core Curriculum Transfer (CORE 42). Available online at: <https://dhe.mo.gov/core42.php> [accessed on March 15, 2018].