

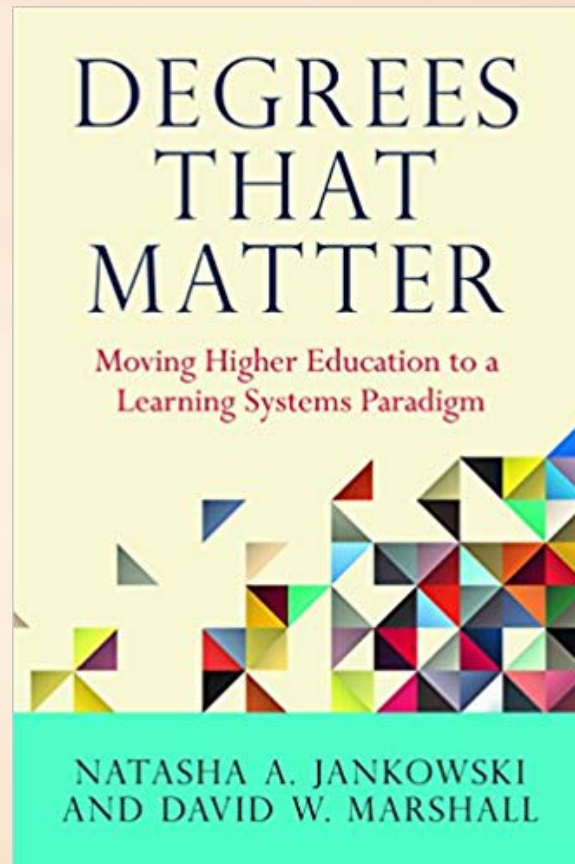
**SLOs:**

**Where do they come  
from?**

**Where are they  
taking us?**

Jarek Janio, Ph.D.  
Outcomes Assessment Coordinator  
Santa Ana College

# Reference



# What is the purpose of SLO assessment?

- The purpose of SLO assessment is improvement of teaching and learning.
- But why?

# What's lacking?

- What do students say?
  - “College didn’t teach me anything” – p. 3
  - College graduates fail to see, how their college or university experience developed the abilities and skills that have enabled them to be successful in their work lives – p. 4
- What do faculty say?
  - Faculty expressed a belief that the decline in student abilities is due to the inadequate preparation students receive, especially in secondary education, for success in college.

Mary Lou Fulton, Teachers College, Arizona State University, 2012
- What do employers say?
  - “Business leaders have begun to ask whether graduates have acquired the necessary skills to ensure economic competitiveness” (p. 1).
    - Arum and Roksa, *Academically Adrift*, 2018

# SLOs vs. Grades, What's the difference?

- Grades are inclusive of everything that happens in the course.

Grading Policy: The final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

HW and Class Participation	10%
Midterm Exams (3) <i>*4 Exams will be given but lowest grade will be dropped</i>	60% (20% each)
Final Cumulative Exam	30%

Your final letter grade will be based on the following tentative curve.

A	90 - 100	C	70 - 74
B+	85 - 89	D	60 - 69
B	80 - 84	F	0 - 59
C+	75 - 79		

[Flashes of insight](#)

# Closer look

- Course descriptions conceal intended learning more than they reveal.
- At the degree level, institutions rely on seat time or credit accrual as an indication that students are moving successfully through curricula that align to institutional degree expectations.
- Seat time and credit accrual are only proxy measures for student learning; they say nothing about what students have learned while sitting in their seats or in the process of accruing their credits.
- Alignment of outcomes and learning experiences, therefore, is often assumed but may not actually exist.
  - (Degrees, pages 56 – 57).

# Examples

- [C-ID College Composition](#)
- [English 101 Syllabus](#)
- [Math 101 Syllabus](#)

# SLO assessment

- SLO assessment focuses on specific skills and competencies that students acquire during a course.
- For example: if there are two distinct SLOs in a given course: one referring to theory and the other one to practical skills, then the grade of B+ at the end of the course will not reflect the extent to which a student acquired either one. SLO assessment data will show how well students have mastered theory and practice of the course.
- This has been said in 2010: [Sharing Student Learning Outcomes \(SLOs\) With Your College Community, ASCCC.](#)
- But that's only part of the story. What to do next?



# Alignment of skill and assessment

- Students create meaning in the processes by which they learn.
  - Teachers align their learning activities to their assignments
  - Teachers create pedagogies and activities for students that enable them to create the learning that is stated in the learning outcomes established for a class.
  - (Traditionally) students in the non-aligned program found it disconnected and experienced a gap between the assessment criteria and their perceptions of the learning objectives.
  - Course-level outcomes are the superstructure that governs the pieces of assignment design.
- Alignment (Degrees, p. 55)

# Implications to practice

- If students are to be held accountable to a skill mastery, then why not grade them on skill mastery?
- As long as faculty calculate grades and assess SLOs as a separate activity, the effort will always feel like an imposition and not genuine effort to improve student learning.
- “When faculty and researchers have to devise means of collecting SLO data apart from regular instruction, they make extra effort.”
- “When grades equal level of mastery of SLOs, there’s no more duplication of effort.”

From: [California Association for Institutional Research](#),

[Karen McClendon and Eileen Eckert](#)

# Mastery of skill

- Course SLO alignment and design
- Communicate those SLOs to students
- Teach and assess the stated SLOs (rubrics)
- Document mastery of skill
- Issue grades like you always do ...
- Collect SLO assessment data for course, program and institutional improvement
- Improve!

# Resources for Monday morning

- Rubric makers
  - <https://rubric-maker.com/>
  - <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>
- More rubrics
  - <https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/free-online-rubric-maker/>
  - <https://www.quickrubric.com/r#/create-a-rubric>

# Imagine grading reflective of skills

## Grading scale for each SLO:

- Nonexistent            0 points
- Minimal                1 point
- Developing            2 points
- Adequate              3 points
- Good                    4 points
- Superior                5 points

From: [California Association for Institutional Research,](#)  
[Karen McClendon and Eileen Eckert](#)

# Grading

From this:

To this:

# Implications:

- Final grade tied to the level of mastery as documented by assessment of student skills
- Students know what they can do
- Transparent grading criteria
- Passing grade requires documented competence in every SLO in class.

From: [California Association for Institutional Research,](#)  
[Karen McClendon and Eileen Eckert](#)

# How to make it all happen?

- Professional Development for faculty and administrators
- Involve students!
- Regional support for SLO assessment
- Faculty Learning Communities on local campuses



# Status Quo...

- Few things set off frustrated rumblings among faculty more than discussions about accountability and the assessment of student learning.
- Why? Why isn't anyone asking the question?
- SLOs were never written for students.

# Why the frustration?

- SLOs weren't written for students (Degrees, p. 36)
- “It’s one thing to get a grade in a class and it’s another to actually take something from it, you know ...”

Alexander Astin, *What Matters in College*, 1993

# What questions do faculty bring?

- SLOs and equity
- How to write SLOs?
-

# What are we to do?

Today's student lives in a world of hyper-connectivity and information exchange. They receive their information in five-minute episodes and it comes in many modalities—sound, text, video. The typical college classroom is a stand and deliver environment that does not foster engagement, interaction or exchange. We might wish today's student could tolerate this dated approach to instruction. But even if they could, the lives many lead do not conform to our conception of the traditional student [...] we are working increasingly with students who face competing demands for their time and attention [...] Giving students more advice and support and actually explaining to them what we expect them to do would go a long way toward improving student learning outcomes.

# Accreditation

- Few things set off frustrated mumbling among faculty more than discussions of accountability and the assessment of student learning – p. 5

# The Purpose of Assessment

- Assessment of student learning is essential
  - (Chronicle of Higher Education, April 2, 2019)

# Student Success Metrics

- <https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/Student-Success-Metrics>

# Outcome measures

- + GENERAL INFORMATION
- + TUITION, FEES, AND ESTIMATED STUDENT EXPENSES
- + FINANCIAL AID
- + NET PRICE
- + ENROLLMENT
- + ADMISSIONS
- + RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES
- + OUTCOME MEASURES
- + PROGRAMS/MAJORS
- + SERVICEMEMBERS AND VETERANS
- + VARSITY ATHLETIC TEAMS
- + ACCREDITATION
- + CAMPUS SECURITY
- + COHORT DEFAULT RATES



# Information on School Policies

- Parents have the right to information on academic requirements of the school program.
- Parents have the right to inspect their child's record and respond to any statement.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal school policies.
- Parents have the right to be informed of and to appeal administrative decisions.

# Information on Special Programs

- Parents have the right to be informed of all programs in special education.
- Parents have the right to appeal the placement of their child in a special education class.
- Parents have the right to extra assistance from the school, including counseling, tutorial, and remedial programs.

# Participation in Decisions

- Parents have the right to give feedback on any changes in scheduling of extracurricular activities.
- Parents have the right to meet and give feedback on final candidates for principal.
- Parents have the right to participate in faculty evaluation, recognizing that the responsibility for final evaluation rests with the principal.

# Question and Answer Period