

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 6715S

Date of Senate Approval 04/09/15

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

IDC Document 1: **Revision of LAC (General Education) Assessment Protocol and Student Learning Outcomes**

Effective Date: Fall 2015.

1. Delete Senate Document SD9313S University Student Learning Outcomes, Approved May 2, 2013

- **Outcome 1: Students develop and use intellectual capabilities.**
 - Knowledge of a Discipline, Specialization, or Area of Study
 - Connections among Disciplines and among Peoples and Cultures
 - Application of Knowledge to New Settings
 - Creative Solutions to Increasingly Complex Problems
- **Outcome 2: Students acquire and apply lifelong learning skills.**
 - Critical Thinking
 - Inquiry from a Range of Perspectives
 - Effective Communication and Expression
 - Civic Engagement—Local and Global
 - Ethical Reasoning and Action
 - The Practice of Sustainability

2. Add Core Curriculum (LAC) Outcomes

- Critical Thinking
- Written Communication
- Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Perspectives
- Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning

Summary:

In order to facilitate an organized, effective assessment model, the LAC Outcomes are restructured by this document to better fit the needs of our curricula. By reducing Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 criteria to those four areas that comprehensively adjudicate learning and proficiency we are providing a design to more appropriately address the results of our students' progress and more accurately inform our academic structures.

Impact Statement:

This change will not have any impact on majors, minors, or university requirements. The major impact will be a streamlined compliance with SACS requirements for UNCA's next five-year review and a reduction in faculty and staff workload related to assessment. By bringing the outcomes into closer alignment with our LAC curriculum and reducing the levels of assessment from two to one, faculty time can be regained and directed towards teaching, scholarship and service. No additional staffing or resources are anticipated.

Rationale:

UNC Asheville has historically had a two-tiered assessment system where each component of the General Education Program (Integrated Liberal Studies or ILS) had its own assessment plan and each component linked its outcomes to the University Student Learning Outcomes (USLO's) to provide data on each USLO at the university level.

In the fall of 2013, the university completed a three-year curriculum review and recommended a new general education program designated as the Liberal Arts Core (LAC). This provided an opportunity to review determined goals for general education and how we assess those goals. In this design, the outcomes for the LAC are streamlined into one assessment level (as opposed to the previous two-level system). Instead of examining 10 components for USLO's, there are only four outcomes to be assessed in the new LAC outcomes.

It is the philosophy of IDC that a small number of outcomes allows for an assessment plan that is manageable and more useful to faculty teaching than an assessment plan that is needlessly complex. This new design will provide useful data for the faculty and the administration in determining what is best for our students and what is informative in delivering our curricula.

Although specific definitions and details will follow the approval of these new outcomes, it is also recommended that we develop future assessment tools that allow for multiple functions where possible. For example, Critical Thinking is assessed in the Inquiry ARC program. Any LAC course, which is also an Inquiry ARC course, provides a possibility for combining assessments. Also, assessment tools should be embedded classroom activities whenever possible. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness will provide consultation to faculty related to the development of these assessment tools.