What We’ve Done and What’s Ahead
Jennifer Brezina, Ph.D., Daylene M. Meuschke, Ed.D., and Barry C. Gribbons, Ph.D.

History/Background:
• In 2002, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) released accreditation standards that ask colleges to identify student learning outcomes (SLOs) for courses, certificates, and programs, and to evaluate students’ progress towards achieving those SLOs. Colleges were also asked to use the assessment results to improve the education taking place in courses, certificates, and programs across campus.
• In 2003, College of the Canyons formed a steering committee to provide leadership and training to faculty and staff regarding SLOs, and the first of many SLO-related FLEX workshops was held in 2004. SLOs have been included as part of the official course outline since 2004, and the college uses the Program Review process to document SLO assessments and action plans based on those assessments. In 2008 a 50% reassigned time position was created for a faculty SLO coordinator.
• In 2007, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) announced expectations for progress in implementing SLOs through its Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness. All colleges are expected to reach the Proficiency stage of the Student Learning Outcomes rubric no later than fall 2012. Part of being considered Proficient includes that all courses, certificates, degrees, and programs have completed at least one full cycle of SLO assessment (including dialogue and action planning based on the assessment results) and that the results of SLO assessments inform decision-making and plans for improvement.
• In 2008, the college’s accreditation was reaffirmed. The visiting team noted that while the college met the current expectations for implementing SLOs, it also recommended that a detailed plan for achieving Proficiency by fall 2012 and for involving more adjunct faculty in the SLO process would be beneficial to the college.
• Most recently, the Statewide Academic Senate has prepared a glossary of commonly-used SLO-related terms. This glossary will assist faculty when communicating with their colleagues both within campuses and across the community college system.

New developments at College of the Canyons:
• A series of workshops was held in Fall 2009 to assist departments in setting up SLO assessment plans and schedules.
  o 27 departments attended workshops throughout the fall semester, including approximately 80 full-time and 35 part-time faculty members. Five additional department chairs met one-on-one with the SLO coordinator to discuss their department plans.
  o The workshops included a shift in emphasis towards scheduled cycles of assessment in order to allow for more meaningful reflection on results and action planning.
  o Departments were encouraged to use course-embedded assessments, building on assignments that were already taking place in the courses in order to make assessment a routine part of instruction.
  o Departments were provided with inventories of their courses and scheduling worksheets to help them create plans that will enable them to have all courses and programs complete an assessment cycle prior to the fall 2012 WASC/ACCJC deadline.
  o Departments were also encouraged to consider archiving courses that are not currently being regularly offered.
• Additional opportunities for training were developed, including the ability for faculty to receive FLEX credit for one-on-one training sessions on SLO-related topics of their choice and a self-paced online SLOTutorial.
• The Student Learning Outcomes committee has increased participation and now has representatives from most divisions. Current members include: Leslie Bretall (Learning Resources), Jennifer Brezina (Humanities), Jia-Yi Cheng-Levine (Humanities), Vincent Devlahovich (Math/Science), Necia Gelker (Fine and Performing Arts), Audrey Green (Academic Affairs), Barry Gribbons (Institutional Research), Rhonda Hyatt (Physical Education), Michael Joslin (Student Services), Kevin Kistler (Academic Affairs), Melanie Lipman (Social Science/Business), Ann Lowe (Allied Health), Daylene Meuschke (Institutional Research) Nicole Lucy (Social Science/Business and CTE), Anne Marenco (Social Science/Business), Rebecca Shepherd (Social Science/Business), Matt Teachout (Math/Science).
• The SLO Committee is now a regular subcommittee of the Academic Senate. This will ensure that the effort to institutionalize Student Learning Outcomes has a clear place in the organizational and decision-making structure of the college.

• The SLO committee has begun a revision of the existing SLO manuals. The new SLO Manual will include updated material from the previous Faculty Manual for Creating an Effective Student Learning Outcomes Loop for Courses and Programs (Davis and Templer, 2005) and Constructing and Embedding Student Learning Outcomes in Non-Instructional Student Service Units at College of the Canyons (Alonso and Maple, 2005) as well as material from trainings presented in 2009-2010.

• SLO information for courses can now be extracted directly from WebCMS, which will allow for increased ability for faculty to organize the information and analyze where revisions are needed. This will also assist the college as it moves towards a common software-based solution for organizing SLO assessment data.

• Program SLOs are now being recorded in WebCMS for degrees and certificates. As was done with course SLOs, this will be phased in – as degrees and certificates are revised, faculty will be asked to provide one or more program SLOs. These program SLOs will be approved by the curriculum committee and will be recorded in the program outline in WebCMS.

**What’s ahead?:**

• The SLO Committee is considering various software solutions to organizing SLO assessment data. A software system such as those being considered will make it easier for faculty to aggregate data across multiple sections and to map course level assessments to program SLOs. All of this will allow for more meaningful dialogue and action planning based on results.

• The faculty will revisit the GE and CTE Program SLOs that were drafted in 2008 and will make revisions as needed, aligning GE SLOs with our associate degree GE categories rather than CSUGE/IGETC requirements. SLOs for the Basic Skills program will also be considered. Assessment of these large, interdisciplinary program-level SLOs will begin in 2010-2011.

• The SLO Committee will be drafting a Strategic Plan for Student Learning Outcomes to help the college meet the fall 2012 WASC/ACCJC deadline for Proficiency. This Strategic Plan will be presented to the Academic Senate and other constituent groups for discussion and approval.

• In addition to the continuation of the one-on-one training by appointment and the self-paced online training, planned sessions for Fall 2010 FLEX include:
  o The Course Outline: SLOs, Objectives, and Course Content
  o SLO Assessment Issues
  o Avoiding SLO Anxiety
  o Closing the Loop

• The college’s SLO website will be redesigned in 2010 in an effort to provide faculty and staff with greater access to SLO-related resources.

• As faculty have grown more comfortable with writing SLOs and designing and scheduling assessments, the professional development emphasis in 2010-2011 will shift to facilitating dialogue and developing specific action plans.

**Resources**

• ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness:  

• Statewide Academic Senate SLO Glossary:  

• Training materials
  o Online SLO Tutorial: http://www.canyons.edu/Faculty/martinj/slo_site/tutorial_slo/welcome.htm
  o Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 Workshop Materials:  
    https://intranet.canyons.edu/Directories/Committee/CommitteeDetails.asp?CID={2565E272-040B-4E2B-8BCD-AD85BC003E22}

*For more detailed information on this student learning outcomes brief, stop by the Institutional Development and Technology office located in LIBR-212, or contact Daylene Meuschke, Director, Institutional Research at 661.362.5329 or Jennifer Brezina, English faculty, and Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator at 661.362.5919.*