

LEARNING IN THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Purpose

The Division of Student Affairs is committed to learning and to fostering learning in Student Affairs faculty and staff, as well as in our various constituencies. The learning goals described in this document are designed to help align and enhance the many educational efforts that occur in our Division and to enable us to articulate our contributions to learning.

How departments operationalize these learning goals will vary from unit to unit. Yet, after departments have collected data, analyzed, and reported upon this information in the annual assessment plan documents, the reports will be used to provide evidence of our involvement in learning. As a division this information will be used to examine those areas in which we are successful as well as those areas where our learning efforts may be improved.



Context

The importance of the learning agenda for our division is embedded in our Mission and Values, is inherent in the Mission and Values of Oregon State University, and clearly supports student success initiatives.

As members of a university community, Student Affairs professionals are responsible for continuing to learn as well as being responsible for fostering learning in those with whom we interact. The underlying belief in the value of education and learning is embedded in all our services and programs. Education can lift the spirit, provide hope, foster creativity, and improve us all.

Learning is a complex process that occurs over the lifespan of every individual.

Thus, as members of an educa-

tional community, our challenge is to become increasingly intentional in the delivery of services and programs that foster learning in those areas crucial for success in a global and ever-changing world.

The effective creation and application of knowledge, respect and value for self and others, ability to lead, and acquisition of skills that contribute to life long development are essential for our own success as well as the success of our students.

Division-wide learning goals provide a unifying language and common areas for learning outcomes assessment across the division. The particular learning outcomes that units will emphasize may vary from department-to-department as they become operationally defined within each department or program. As we work toward reaching these learning goals, we will gather evidence of our

strengths and areas for improvement. This information will enable us to tell a more coherent story regarding the learning-centered focus of the Division of Student Affairs.

The following key areas for learning in our division were derived from the work and learning of the Student Affairs Assessment Council.



Learning Goals

Effective Communication

Effective communication embodies the ability to receive information, exchange ideas, present information, and convey messages in ways that are effective and appropriate to the situation and audience. This includes using suitable information sources, presentation formats, and technologies.

Healthy Living

Making informed decisions and acting on those decisions that enhance both personal and community health defines healthy living. Further it includes promoting changes that create and support an environment that sustains and encourages healthy lifestyles.



Active Citizenship and Responsibility

Active citizenship and responsibility embodies effectively contributing in a variety of societal contexts at the macro and micro levels. It includes seizing opportunities to use knowledge, skill, and education to improve the well-being of self and others.

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Competence

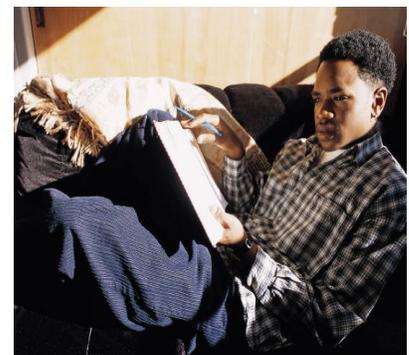
Interpersonal and intrapersonal competence involve both the effective management of personal/professional affairs and future development as well as the ability to collaborate, to develop and sustain meaningful relationships, to engage effectively in multicultural teams, and to live a satisfying life. It includes the myriad of skills, abilities, and knowledge necessary to flourish in a changing world.

Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills

Critical thinking and analytical skills refer to the ability to use resources and prior learning to independently and accurately evaluate information and data from multiple perspectives. It also includes applying appropriate methods of inquiry, assessment of the quality of evidence, integrity, and the effective use of knowledge to solve problems and/or to create plans that promote success.

Attitude of Inquiry

A life-long interest in learning, embracing possibilities, and being open to new ideas defines an attitude of inquiry. Practices such as asking questions and seeking information and making connections expands knowledge and skills that challenge perspectives, broaden horizons and foster the development of new questions and new learning.



“It is essential for any organization, academic or not, to assess the extent to which individual work contributes to collective needs and priorities. No organization can function effectively as a collection of autonomous individuals in which everyone pursues personal priorities and the overall achievements consist, in essence, of a casual, non-optimal aggregate of activities. If universities are to have the resilience and adaptability they will need in the decades to come, they must find better ways to make individual faculty member’s work contribute to common organizational needs, priorities, and goals.” Ernest Lynton, 1998 (cited in Maki, 2004)

Learning Outcomes Process

In order to provide an explanation to departments and programs about how they can contribute to this learning effort, the following steps are provided:

1. Departments discuss and articulate learning outcomes for specific programs or areas within the department. This process is likely already happening as part of the departmental assessment planning process.
2. Again, as part of the assessment planning process, complete the **Student Affairs Learning Goals and Outcomes Grid** (provided at the end of this document). The department should determine which learning goals their learning outcomes relate to most and indicate that on the Grid.
3. These departmental grids will be compiled in order to tell the Division of Student Affairs learning story.
4. After departments have collected data, analyzed, and reported upon this information in the annual assessment plan documents, the reports will be used to provide evidence of our involvement in learning. It will also allow us, as a division, to examine those areas in which we are successful and those areas in which we could improve.

Departmental Learning Outcomes Mapped on the Grid

Student Affairs Learning Goals

A. Effective Communication

B. Healthy Living

C. Active Citizenship and Responsibility

D. Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Competence

E. Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills

F. Attitude of Inquiry

Outcome (<u>Examples</u>)	Learning Goals					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Registrar's Office						
1. Students will utilize the on-line Student Information System to access available courses and build their own schedule.				X	X	
Career Services						
1. Students will effectively organize and document their qualifications in their resumes submitted to employers.	X					
Student Health Services						
1. Peer Health Advocates will demonstrate effective presentation skills in one area of health.	X					
Student Involvement						
1. Students in student organizations will interact successfully with others who differ from them.	X		X			
2. Student government leaders will generate solutions to problems based upon assessment of issues, information, and dialogue with multiple constituents.					X	
3. After training, Greek leaders will articulate the issues and problems faced by resident assistants and ways to intervene with membership.	X		X			
SOAR						
1. After completing START, students will be able to identify offices and resources that can assist them in being academically successful.				X		
Services for Students with Disabilities						
1. Faculty will report increased knowledge of Universal Design and Universal Design for Instruction principles as a result of workshops.	X		X			

Learning in Student Affairs

Learning Goals and Outcomes Grid

Department Name:	Learning Goals					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Outcomes						
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
(Will be able to add more rows if needed)						

Assessment Council Statement

Learning goals for the Division of Student Affairs resulted from the collaborative work of the Assessment Council during the summer of 2005. Our work was informed by our learning and the synergistic energy of committed and thoughtful people with a vision to create the kind of learning environment that we desire for ourselves and our students. We hope that our work will help to align and enhance the many educational efforts that occur in our Division.

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