

Writing (or revising) PSLOs – a suggested process

A. With your department:

1. Review your department/program/service mission in the context of the college mission and core themes. Review the programs/cohorts identified in your blueprint. What *programs* do you have?

2. Identify the roles your students play after completing your program. For example, students who complete a xxx will go on into these types of employment (including being a teacher of xxx), or might go on to complete a 4-year degree in yyyy, or will use these courses as a foundation for zzz.

3. Based on the roles you've identified, in which roles do you expect students will demonstrate a difference based on having completed your program? In other words, when you imagine your successful completers in these roles, which ones do you think will behave differently as a result of your program? Place a star or check by these.

4. Based on your list of starred (or checked) roles, which stakeholders outside of your department can help you identify those intentional differences that will result from completion of your program? Examples of stakeholders: employers in the field your completers work in, someone who is a teacher in the field, graduates, a professor or two from a nearby university in a field into which your students transfer or even instructors of classes at CCC taken by students who complete your program.

5. Invite a selection of stakeholders to meet with the department members (ideally a total of between 6 and 15 people). A 2-hour meeting is generally sufficient. Snacks are always a good idea.

B. With the department representatives and stakeholders.

6. Review the roles that you believe completers will play that are impacted by successful completion of your program. Ask the participants if they see any roles missing from your list.

7. Ask each participant to consider the roles discussed and identify what the successful graduate of your program will be able to do in that role as a result of being in the program. Have them write their ideas on stickies and put them on a large white board or a wall or piece of a roll of poster paper.

- One behavior per sticky note
- Start each behavior with a verb
- There must be more than one word on the sticky

While they do not need to discuss with each other, and it helps if you ask them to just do their own stickies without discussion at first, it does help spark ideas if you either ask them to read the stickies from others as they put theirs up on the wall OR ask them to say aloud what is on their sticky as they put it on the wall.

Allow time for the slow development times and the ebb and flow of ideas. If they have a hard time getting started, throw out your own idea on a sticky or two. During a lull, read a few of the stickies and note similarities, differences, or and ask for clarification of meaning. Each of these activities can spark a new set of ideas. Generally 15 to 20 minutes is sufficient for this activity. Note, some people will list 'micro behaviors', other 'mega behaviors'. All are just fine for this exercise AND, if a bit is missing, that is not a problem. The list may not include everything, but the things you do come up with in this time will definitely provide you with what you need.

For a smaller group, you can ask them to stand up and read through the sticky notes. Then, working together, ask them to cluster the notes into groupings of behavior that make sense to them. After they've made their clusters, ask them to label the cluster of behaviors.

C. Back to department work

Now that the department has focused on the behaviors that successful completers of the program will exhibit, it is time to take these clusters and use them to craft PSLOs. You may need to modify or add to the cluster groupings as you work on writing your PSLOs.

Once you have a first draft of your PSLOs, ask for feedback on them from another department or from the CLC. It is very common for there to be lots of tweaking and rewriting to try to get your ideas into well-written PSLOs.