



## SLO "REWIND"

An Annotated Bibliography of  
Sources and Research Conclusions on  
the Use of Student Learning  
Outcomes Data to Improve Teaching  
and Learning

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the use of student learning outcomes data disaggregated by subpopulations to improve teaching and learning. This question is largely precipitated by the inclusion of accreditation standard I.B.6 in the standards of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (revised 2014). This study is a review of available research literature on the topic and findings based on a review of that literature. This document is not considered to be an exhaustive review of all literature, but a resource for community college faculty and staff having discussions on outcomes assessment.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In spring 2015, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) approved resolution S15 2.01<sup>1</sup> “Disaggregation of Learning Outcomes Data” which called for the ASCCC Executive Committee to facilitate a conversation in the field “regarding disaggregation of learning outcomes data, the extent to which such disaggregation is feasible to yield meaningful data and the means by which colleges can meet or exceed the requirements of accreditation Standard I.B.6 adopted by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in June of 2014.”<sup>2</sup> The task was delegated to the ASCCC Accreditation and Assessment Committee in fall 2015.

In spring 2015, the committee established a partnership with the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP) to conduct a review of available research on the topic. A group of faculty and administrators worked together to research and review existing research and to reach a consensus on findings based on that research. In addition to reviewing articles and sources, members of the workgroup reviewed nine self-evaluation reports submitted to ACCJC by member colleges in spring 2015.

The committee agreed upon three deliverables:

- an annotated bibliography
- a presentation at the RP’s “Strengthening Student Success” conference in October 2016
- a presentation at the ASCCC fall plenary in November 2016 (this date was later changed to the spring plenary to provide more time for research and analysis).

This document includes the annotated bibliography and a list of major conclusions.

As the workgroup began researching the topic, it agreed to expand the scope of the literature to include a review of available articles and resources which discuss the use of *aggregated* student learning outcomes assessment data for planning and improvement as well.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://asccc.org/resolutions/disaggregation-learning-outcomes-data>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Eligibility\\_Requirements\\_Adopted\\_June\\_2014.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Eligibility_Requirements_Adopted_June_2014.pdf)

## RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The following statements and findings are based on a review of literature, accreditation self-evaluation reports, and deliberations of the workgroup:

### Findings Related to Collecting and Using Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Data to Inform the Planning Process

- Recent literature promotes using student learning outcomes assessment data to make improvements in teaching and learning as a hypothesis. Evidence, such as case studies and exemplary programs, to support the claim that SLO data leads to program improvement is inconclusive.
- SLO assessment data, when reviewed at the individual level, is being considered as a basis to develop individualized approaches to a student's education.
- As studies have not been conducted of institutional –level SLO assessment we cannot say if the current practice is or is not meaningful.
- Professional development surrounding student learning outcomes assessment should be enhanced in key areas:
  - There is confusion over the terms “objectives”, “competencies”, and “outcomes” and other terms, which influence faculty involvement.
  - Faculty Learning Communities may be an effective way to develop shared goals and language around student learning outcomes and other issues.

### Findings Related to Using Disaggregated Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Data to Inform the Planning Process

- Only recently have researchers begun to collect data on the effectiveness of disaggregating student learning outcomes data to make program improvements. Longitudinal data is not yet available.
- Colleges are choosing a wide variety of ways to define subpopulations for the purpose of disaggregation as a means to provide useful data for program improvement.
- Student learning outcomes assessment data disaggregation is focused at the institutional learning outcomes level and is primarily focused on complying with accreditation standards.
- For student learning outcomes assessment data disaggregation to be meaningful, it must begin at the course/program level, for the following reasons:
  - Student learning outcomes assessment data disaggregation at the institutional level gives a vastly different data set than disaggregation at the course level due to variables and mapping.
  - Most institutional-level student learning outcomes disaggregation is focused on demographic data and has little impact on individual faculty actions.
- Colleges reviewed used institutional priorities to inform or guide course student learning outcomes rather than using course and program assessment outcomes and assessments to inform the institutional level priorities. Program improvement is guided more by institutional priorities and needs than course and program outcomes assessment data.

**Findings Based on a Review of Standard I.B.6 in Nine Accreditation Self Evaluation Reports from Spring 2015**

- Disaggregation of outcomes assessment data is inconsistent and rudimentary.
- Most colleges respond to the standard by focusing on student equity activities.
- Most college responses allude to being in a planning stage for disaggregating outcomes assessment data beyond the institutional-level if it is mentioned at all.
- It would be useful to look at the follow-up reports for these colleges to see implementation of plans or follow-ups to recommendations regarding outcomes assessment when they are available.
- It may be too early in the implementation of I.B.6 for colleges to have made any significant response.

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