

University Learning Outcome (ULO) Creation/Update Process 2017-2019

This document describes the high-level process and timeline NLU undertook to move from their five University Learning Outcomes (ULOs), which were established in 2014, to the six ULOs which were the five [DQP themes](#) and an added sixth NLU-created theme (finalized in 2019).

Spring 2017

- ULO assessment brought to light issues:
 - Programs had trouble identifying assignments aligned to the ULOs
 - Programs and assessors did not always like the ULO rubrics
 - Some programs thought ULOs did not apply to their program level (e.g., just UG thing)
- ULO assessment approach needed to change

Summer 2017

- Assessment area recognized a few big problems
 - Realized many programs did not have curriculum mapping to ULOs
 - Programs had issues mapping to ULOs due to alignment/appropriateness concerns
 - General education had its own outcomes/goals separate from ULOs and GenEd courses
- Small workgroup drafted mapping of DQP themes to programs
 - Assessment, Teaching and Learning, UGC/Pathways, IR, Provost Office

Fall 2017

- Institutional momentum
 - Pathway approach expanding for emerging UGC – pushing DQP themes/competencies
 - Institutional need to address concerns with quality, alignment, appropriateness of ULOs, as well as figure out how General Education outcomes should connect (and what content should be)
- University Assessment Council (UAC) helped decide how to proceed with options of update existing ULOs, create new ULOs, or adopt DQP framework. Ultimately, UAC recommended adopting DQP framework as new ULOs for a variety of reasons, where it also serves as General Education outcomes at UG levels (September/October 2017 minutes).
- University Curriculum Council (UCC) reviewed the DQP framework proposed to replace ULOs and GenEd outcomes and recommended this go to the full Faculty Senate for a vote (November/December 2017 minutes).

Spring 2018

- UAC looked again at DQP content based on some discussion/concerns raised in UCC and beyond related to the 6th theme (February 2018 meeting).
- Faculty Senate voted to approve the DQP themes plus the 6th theme UGC/Pathways developed to become the new ULOs and to include General Education Outcomes (e.g., no more separate GenEd outcomes) – **this was presented at the March 21, 2018 meeting but approved in a special meeting on March 29, 2018**. There were two considerations/cautions:
 - Would the 6th ULO connect to bachelor, master, or doctorate levels given it was developed at the AA-level?
 - Assessment and Accreditation said they would suggest (not require) mapping to ULO 6 and see what happened with programs/areas.

- Would doctorate programs be able to connect to the other DQP themes given they don't have an articulated description at that level?
 - Assessment and Accreditation was not worried about this concern given programs had mapped to the previous ULOs without any differentiated definitions/levels.

Summer 2018

- Academic programs were led through exercises to map their program learning outcomes to the new ULOs.
- Student Affairs areas involved in assessment were also updating their learning outcome connections to the new ULOs.
- Assessment approach determined for the coming year is leveraging area outcome achievement (PLO and SA SLO) to roll up based on ULO connections. So, if there are 50 PLO/SLO connections to ULO 1, how many of those contributing outcomes met their targets? University goal was to see 75% of contributing targets met/achieved. For the coming year, target should be adjusted by degree level (e.g., UG at 75% and GR at 80%).

Fall 2018

- In the December 2018 UAC meeting, presented the results of ULO mapping across the university. Based on the mapping, there should be no concerns with the ULOs: more areas mapped to ULO 6 than mapped to ULO 5 (an NLU mainstay!) and all doctorate programs mapped to ULOs just fine/at equivalent level as master's programs.

Spring 2019

- Presented expanded definition of content for ULO 6 to UAC for approval, completing the bachelor and master's level articulations (April 2019 meeting).
- Presented expanded definition of content for ULO 6 to UCC for approval (May 2019 meeting).
- Presented on ULO mapping (to address concerns on ULO 6 and doctoral level connections) and presented expanded definition of content for ULO 6 to Faculty Senate to note it was approved by UAC and UCC (May 17, 2019 meeting).