

Checklist for Writing PLOs (Program Learning Outcomes)	YES	NO	Example
<p>1A. Does the PLO start with an active verb?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All PLOs are inferred to begin with the phrase, "Upon successful completion of the program, students will demonstrate an ability to [Active Verb]..." 			<p>To fix this: "Apply knowledge of culinary arts and appropriate safety guidelines for food preparation."</p>
<p>1B. Does the active verb accurately describe the skill or ability you want?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two useful resources for choosing appropriate verbs are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bloom's Taxonomy Webb's Depth of Knowledge 			<p>Try these: "Manage a food and beverage outlet according to safety and sanitation guidelines." -- Food and Beverage Operations CoT</p>
<p>1C. Does the verb help describe a skill, ability or knowledge that is observable or evaluable?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following verbs should be avoided <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Understand," "Appreciate," and "Apply knowledge" - They are vague and difficult to assess. "Demonstrate" - It occurs in the beginning phrase of all outcomes. "Improve" - It does not imply a standard that students should attain. 			<p>"Prepare baked goods and dessert items that are marketable to the public and safe to consume." -- Baking and Pastry Arts CoT</p>
<p>2. Does the PLO contain language specific to the program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The language should clearly distinguish, for example, between related programs such as chemistry and physics, or, biology and physiology. The skills described should be broad enough to help describe the goals of the program, but specific enough to produce meaningful assessment. 			<p>To fix this: "Analyze, interpret, and communicate data."</p> <p>Try this: "Analyze, interpret, and communicate financial information." -- Accounting AS</p>
<p>3. Does the PLO address the major, overarching abilities, skills or knowledge inherent to the program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLOs should address high priorities, focus on the big picture, and emphasize widely applicable skills and abilities. Course SLOs can be clearly mapped to the PLO to show how the courses that comprise the program support the goals of the program. If one or more certificates leads to a degree, the PLOs of the certificates should be stackable or mappable to the degree. 			<p>To fix this: "Use a t-test to compare means."</p> <p>Try this: "Apply appropriate statistical tests to answer research questions."</p>

<p>4. Are there an appropriate number of PLOs necessary to address the major, overarching abilities, skills or knowledge inherent to the program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLOs should be broad but program specific and judicious in number. • Thoughtful assessment of a few, carefully crafted PLOs will be more meaningful to the program than too many or too few. 		<p>To fix this: Too many (narrow) PLOs OR Too few (broad) PLOs</p> <p>Try this: Collapse similar PLOs to reduce the overall number OR Split complex PLOs into multiple discrete, more assessable PLOs.</p>
<p>5. Are PLOs written in language understandable to students and non-discipline experts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All interested parties should understand the intended skills and abilities for students completing the program. • PLOs should represent the program's most significant and overarching skills relevant to interested students, transfer universities, and discipline stakeholders. 		<p>To fix this: "Use paleoseismicity and geomorphic expression to evaluate seismic hazard."</p> <p>Try this: "Estimate the probability of future earthquakes by evaluating earthquake history and evidence for recent faulting in the landscape."</p>

Some things to remember

- PLOs should be collaboratively developed in dialogue with others.
- Ultimately discipline-specific conversations best define competencies for students.
- As professionals, we are guided by the principles of academic freedom.
- Each discipline and program-of-study has unique factors.
- Disciplines have unique language and culture.
- Cross-disciplinary conversations are invaluable.
- Everyone is a learner when it comes to assessment.