



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

Writing Effective Outcomes and Objectives for Administrative Units

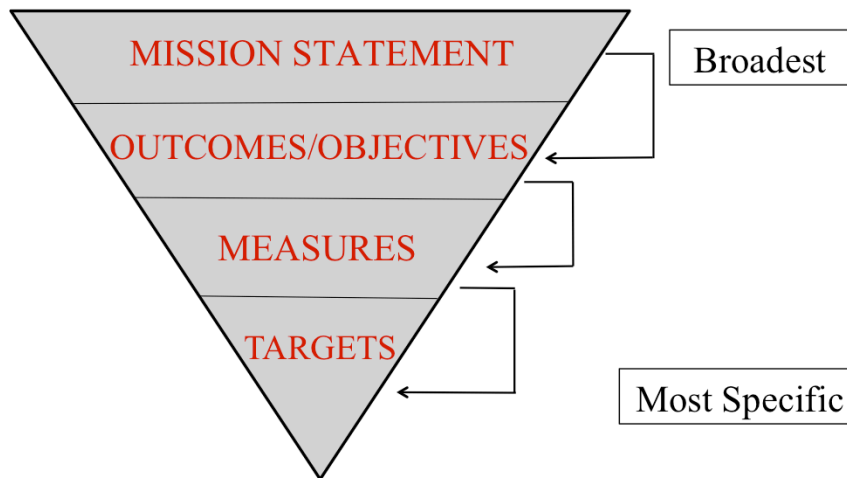
Leslie S. Collins, J.D.
Senior Director for Institutional Planning
Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment

Hello everyone! My name is Leslie Collins, and I am the Senior Director for Institutional Planning in the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment here at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. This presentation is one in a series of Weave training sessions posted on OIPA's website. You can find that link on the last slide of this presentation.

This particular training session is designed to assist TTUHSC faculty and staff in developing effective Outcomes and Objectives for their Administrative Weave plans. This presentation will specifically cover Outcomes and Objectives for Administrative Units. If you are looking for help with developing Student Learning Outcomes for an Academic Program, there is another training module developed by Dr. Kari Dickson that is posted on the OIPA website. Her presentation is specifically tailored to walk through the steps of developing SLOs. I encourage you to take a look at that presentation if you are responsible for an Academic Program Weave plan.

So, let's go ahead and get started!

STRUCTURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT PLANNING



Your program or department's assessment plan should be structured like an upside-down pyramid. What I mean by that, is that you should begin with broadest section – the Mission Statement. A mission statement is a brief statement of the general values and principles which guide the program or department goals. After the Mission Statement is constructed, Outcomes/Objectives can be developed to expound upon those values and goals to turn broad, long-range concepts into usable statements of desired outcomes. In other words, Outcomes/Objectives are more specific statements that reflect the broader goals.

Then after Outcomes/Objectives are established, even more specific Measures and Targets should be developed to align with each Outcome/Objective, so that you end up with an upside-down pyramid scheme that is all aligned and cohesive.

SPECIFICS FOR YOUR WEAVE PLAN



- Your Outcomes/Objectives should align with your Mission Statement.
- We suggest you have 3 to 5 Outcomes/Objectives.
- Outcomes/Objectives should be measurable.
- Each Outcome/Objective should be linked to appropriate elements of the TTUHSC strategic plan, which have already been entered into Weave.



Here are some specific items that you should remember when you are developing your Outcomes/Objectives for your Weave plan.

1. First, your Outcomes/Objectives should align with your Mission Statement. Remember, Outcomes/Objectives are more specific statements of that overall mission. It is important to include an Outcome/Objective for each part of your mission statement. For instance, if your mission states that research is a large component of your overall departmental goals, there should be an Outcome/Objective related to research as well. On the other hand, you should avoid developing an Outcome/Objective that does not, in some way, support your mission statement.

2. Secondly, our office suggests that you have approximately 3 to 5 Outcomes/Objectives, especially if your assessment plan is brand new. Fewer indicate that your objectives may be too broad, and too many suggests that your objectives may be too specific. Please note, that if you have more than 5 Outcomes/Objectives – that's okay! Just make sure each one fits the criteria that we will discuss to make sure it is an effective and useful statement.

3. Keep in mind that developing Measures is the next step in your assessment plan

PROCESS OBJECTIVE v. CUSTOMER LEARNING OUTCOME



A Process Objective is an anticipated action, which will move one toward accomplishment of the department's mission.

A Customer Learning Outcome is a statement that reflects your department's expected results for the intended customer.

As an Administrative Unit, you have two types of statements that can serve as Outcomes/Objectives in your assessment plan. The first, we call a Process Objective. A Process Objective is an anticipated action, which will move one toward accomplishment of the department's mission. The second type of statement you can develop is called a Customer Learning Outcome. This is a statement that reflects your department's expected results for the intended customer.

In other words, a Process Objective focuses on what YOU will do as a department or unit. However, a Customer Learning Outcome focuses on what results you expect for your intended customer. As we walk through a few examples, the differences will become more clear.

You should always strive to develop a Customer Learning Outcome over a Process Objective, if possible. However, for the purposes of your assessment plan, either type of statement will satisfy the Outcome/Objective component. Much of the time, a Customer Learning Outcome can be constructed from an already-developed Process Objective fairly easily. Let's walk through a few examples to see how this can work.

EXAMPLES OF PROCESS OBJECTIVES



These statements are good, but could be improved!

1. The Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment will educate faculty and staff on how to use Weave.
2. The Office of Faculty Development will offer quarterly training on the effective use of technology to enhance classroom instruction.



Here, both of these statements are good examples of Process Objectives.

They both state an anticipated action, which will move each department toward its mission. Both are clear and concise, and serve as an appropriate Outcome/Objective for an assessment plan. However, these statements can be improved. We can make them Customer Learning Outcomes by thinking of the expected results that we want for our customer. By doing so, we more clearly illustrate our expected outcomes and goals for the year.

EXAMPLES OF CUSTOMER OUTCOMES



These statements are what you should strive to develop!

1. Faculty and staff will be able to develop effective assessment plans for their respective areas.
2. Faculty will be able to use classroom technology effectively to enhance student learning experiences.



Here, you can see that these statements resemble the Process Objectives that we saw on the previous slide. However, they are now worded in a way that reflects the expected results for the intended customer.

In the first example, you can see that the customer is faculty and staff. The expected result is that they will be able to develop effective assessment plans. This is different than the Process Objective, where our office stated that we are going to educate faculty on how to use Weave. This Customer Outcome takes it a step further and explains what the customer should be able to do.

The second example illustrates the same thing. It shows what this particular office hopes their customer will be able to accomplish. Their customer here is faculty. The expected result is that they will be able to use classroom technology effectively.

You can see how these examples take Outcomes/Objectives one step farther. They dig a little deeper to reliably illustrate the goals of the department or program. Remember, though, that you can use either a Process Objective OR a Customer Outcome in your Weave plan.

STRUCTURE OF AN OUTCOME/OBJECTIVE



Outcomes/Objectives:

- Should be distinctive from each other.
- Should not be “bundled.”
 - Example: The Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment will facilitate the preparation for reaffirmation of accreditation by SACSCOC and work cooperatively to monitor progress of the TTUHSC strategic plan.
- Should describe the intended outcomes and not the actual outcomes.
- Should avoid directionality.
- Should not specify a quantifiable target.

When it comes to the structure of your Outcomes/Objectives, there are a few key elements to that will help guide you as you are writing.

1. First, each Outcome/Objectives should be distinctive from the next. They shouldn't overlap, but instead, should be clear and definitive statements.
2. Similarly, Outcome/Objectives should not be “bundled” to have two ideas in a single statement. You should avoid using compound sentences that may require two different methods of assessment. For instance, an Outcome/Objective statement that reads “(Read)” includes two separate ideas. SACSCOC reaffirmation is measured separately from progress of TTUHSC's strategic plan. These ideas should be two separate Outcome/Objectives statements.
3. Next, it is important to remember that Outcomes/Objectives should be written to describe the intended outcomes, and not the actual results. They should describe the expectations of the coming year, and not what has already taken place.
4. Next, if possible, you should avoid directionality in your wording. What I mean by directionality are words like “increase” or “decrease.” If you will remember the

MORE EXAMPLES



Avoid

The Office of Student Services will oversee implementation of Banner upgrades and will provide oversight of student organizations.

Better

(O1) The Office of Student Services will oversee implementation of Banner upgrades.

(O2) The Office of Student Services will provide oversight of student organizations.

Avoid

Customer satisfaction will increase by averaging at least a 4.5 level of satisfaction on all survey items.

Better

Students will provide ongoing and systematic feedback about Student Support Services across the institution.

Here are a couple more examples of how to apply some of those key elements.

The first is another example of how to avoid “bundling.” You can see here that overseeing implementation of Banner upgrades will be measured differently than providing oversight of student organizations. Therefore, this statement is better broken up into two separate Outcomes/Objectives that read, “1. The Office of Student Services will oversee implementation of Banner upgrades. AND. 2. The Office of Student Services will provide oversight of student organizations.”

The second example demonstrates how to avoid both using directionality and specifying quantifiable targets in an Outcome/Objective statement. The first statement, is more what a Target in your Weave plan should look like. It uses directional language (“increase”) and has a very specific target. Instead, it should be more broad. The second statement statement is better suited for an Outcome/Objective statement for your assessment plan.

CHECKLIST FOR OUTCOMES/ OBJECTIVES



- Do the Outcomes/Objectives align with the mission statement?
- Are they simply stated?
- Is it possible to collect accurate and reliable data for each?
- Do they avoid directionality and specific, quantifiable targets?
- Do they describe the intention, and not the actual outcomes?
- Are they written to avoid joining two elements in one single statement?
- Taken together, would the Outcomes/Objectives accurately reflect the key results of the operations or service offered by your department?

Once you have written drafts of your Outcomes/Objectives, this checklist is a good resource for you to look at to ensure you have all the elements that you need and avoid any potential confusion in your statements.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Visit www.ttuhsc.edu/oipa/weave for more Weave resources!

Leslie S. Collins, J.D.
Senior Director for Institutional Planning
Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment
leslie.collins@ttuhsc.edu
806.743.2918 Ex. 245



I want to thank you for watching! Please contact me any time if you have a question regarding how to develop your Outcomes/Objectives for your program or department. Again, additional Weave resources can be found on the OIPA website.

Thank you for joining!