

Developing Program Level Learning Outcomes*

The mission statement for your program/discipline is at its most basic a description of your overall purpose.

It should:

- Clearly define purpose
- Focus on strengthening your program/discipline
- Be measurable and definable
- Contain action statements
- Have emotional appeal
- BE EASILY UNDERSTOOD

The process of writing a mission statement that leads to program/discipline level outcomes can range from being very analytical and rational to very creative and divergent. Use the style that best fits the culture of your program/discipline. One possible way is described below.

Think of students in your program/discipline and ask yourself, “What do we want him or her to be able to know, do, feel and value after completing the program or set of courses offered by a discipline.”

In other words, you program outcomes may be stated in the following format:

Upon successful/satisfactory completion of this program, students will:

1. **(KNOW)**
2. **(DO)**
3. **(FEEL)**
4. **(VALUE)**

Characteristics of Well Written Program Level Learning Outcomes

1. **The outcome clearly states what students are to achieve.**
2. **The outcome refers to achievement that is meaningful and represents learning that is essential for program/discipline graduates.**
3. **The achievement stated in the outcome is something that is taught or developed in the students by the faculty.**
4. **The outcome is measurable (qualitatively or quantitatively).**

* The assessment literature differentiates program level “learning outcomes” from “program outcomes” and from “developmental outcomes.” Here the focus is on student learning, not a program itself. In addition, we are not differentiating between “learning” and “developmental” outcomes.