

# Student Learning Outcomes

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## Guiding Principles & Assessment Processes

### Guiding Principles

1. The university recognizes that the primary motive for academic assessment is to improve student learning.
2. The assessment of student learning should be meaningful to all stakeholders:
  - Students will be better positioned to take responsibility for their own learning if educational goals and objectives are clearly defined and measured.
  - The University of Northern Iowa is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. A primary component of achieving accreditation is evidence of an active program of assessment of student learning within all academic and co-curricular programs.
  - Assessment provides faculty and staff with a forum to discuss student learning.
3. Faculty/staff are expected to be active participants in assessment activities.
4. Programs will engage in the continuous direct assessment of student learning.
5. The process of assessment begins with the establishment of measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs).

### Assessment Processes

Program faculty will demonstrate student achievement by engaging in the following four step continuous assessment process:

1. Identify measurable student learning outcomes.
2. Intentionally and systematically measure the SLOs using direct assessment methods.
  - **Note:** *While indirect assessment (or indirect evidence) of student learning can provide a program with useful information, it cannot be the sole evidence used to student learning and does not meet HLC requirements.*
3. Analyze the assessment results pertaining to the outcome being measured.
4. Provide evidence that assessment results are being used to improve student learning.

Programs will ensure that each learning outcome is assessed at least once within academic program review or program accreditation cycles.

## UNI Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

### Critical Thinking

Graduates will demonstrate critical thinking through the ability to evaluate, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources in order to develop reasoned positions and solutions to problems.

### Communication

Graduates will display competence in oral, written, and visual communication, as appropriate for their discipline.

### Program Content Knowledge

Graduates will demonstrate discipline-specific knowledge and skills in their major fields of study.

Additionally, graduate and undergraduate programs have outcomes specific to their programs and degree offerings. We maintain that students are better positioned to take responsibility for their own learning if educational goals and objectives are clearly defined and measured. Program-specific student learning outcomes (SLOs) can be accessed via the department pages throughout this catalog.