

Ben: Hey there, Foothill faculty! My name is Ben Kaupp and I am your College Curriculum Committee Faculty Chair,

Amber: and I'm Amber La Piana, one of the Faculty Supporting Faculty team.

Ben: We're here to talk about something super exciting—Student Learning Outcomes! Okay, maybe not 'super exciting,' but stick with me, because they're actually really important!

Those of you who know me know I am slightly obsessed with cars, so I can't resist a good car metaphor! Over the past two days, we've looked at ways regular and substantive interaction can *fuel* student learning, but you'll get more mileage from interaction if it is intentionally timed—added to the tank exactly when your students need it!

Amber: If RSI is the fuel that powers our student's cars, Learning Outcomes are the finish line that we are aiming for. Regular formative assessments throughout the race provide incremental milestones that guide our students to the finish line.

Data from those assessments allow us to check our students' learning, ensuring their engines are working well, but that data also helps us assess our teaching, sort of like ensuring both the car and the track are ready for the race!

Ben: Our students need regular interaction throughout the race, but the data we get from formative assessments designed to support learning can also help us detect issues and proactively move to support students when they might hit a bump in the road.

So, SLOs and RSI are both part of a cycle of continuous growth—for us, and for our students!

Amber: That's right, Ben! And like a race track, the SLO process is iterative. Each term we go around the track again, looking to better and better the learning experience for our students.

Voltaire: Hi, everyone. It's Voltaire, your Academic Senate president. You might be wondering, 'Why are we talking about this now?' Well, as part of our accreditation process, our review team pointed out something we already kinda knew—our SLO

process could use some TLC. That's right, folks! According to the Core Inquiry Report, we need to step up our game when it comes to regularly assessing and improving our SLOs.

Ben or Voltaire?: The good news is, none of us will be doing this alone. Writing, assessing, and revising learning outcomes should be a group process. That means it's not just one person trying to figure out what works—like the pit crew in a big race, it's a team effort!

We'll start this fall by looking closely at our learning outcomes. They absolutely need to be clear, equitable, and measurable. Why? Because when we assess our students and gather the data, we need to have a real discussion with one another based on our students' experiences. Is what we're doing in the classroom working? If it's not, do we need to tweak our instructional strategies, or rethink the outcome itself? It's all about using that data to decide if we're on the right track or if we need to switch gears.

Voltaire: Now, I know this sounds like a lot, but the key here is, we're taking it slow. Revising all of our course outcomes will be a long process—like, five years long! We'll tackle SLO revisions in chunks, with the end goals of making sure we've got solid, measurable outcomes in place for all of our classes.

By the end of December, each department should have a priority list, with courses evenly divided into five tiers. Every year, one tier of courses will get their SLO updates done, and by year five—voila! All updates completed! Even better, this can help those departments who get hit with massive batches of Title 5 updates - use this time to even things out for the future as well.

Amber: And don't forget, student learning outcomes are key to the all-important RSI! Whether you're teaching in person or online, having strong learning outcomes helps ensure that our students are really learning and engaging with the material.

Ben: Plus, we've got some exciting news! It looks like the state might ask us to integrate SLOs and our Course Learning Outcomes in the COR. By doing this work now, we get a head start on that process. This makes everything more streamlined and aligned with what our students need to succeed!

So, to recap: Our SLOs need some work—but we’re tackling this together, one step at a time. Updating all the SLOs will be a five-year process, and it all starts with getting those measurable outcomes in place. The result? Better student outcomes, better courses, and a stronger Foothill community. Let’s do this!

We'll see you on the track!

When we approach our SLOs together, we can share ideas, tackle challenges, and make sure we’re setting measurable goals that make sense for all of our courses.