

## Definition of Student Learning Outcomes

**Learning outcomes** or **learning goals** are goals that describe how students will be different because of a learning experience. More specifically, learning outcomes are the *knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind* that students take with them from a learning experience. (Suskie, 2018, p. 41)

## Broad, Nebulous Terms to Avoid in SLOs

- Acknowledge
- Appreciate
- Aware of
- Believe
- Capable of
- Comprehend
- Conscious of
- Enjoy
- Experience
- Experience
- Familiar with
- Know/have knowledge of
- Learn
- Memorize
- Understand

# STEPS of SLO ASSESSMENT

Identify goals and objectives/outcomes for learning.

(PLAN)

Identify where in the “curriculum” the goals are addressed.

(TEACH)

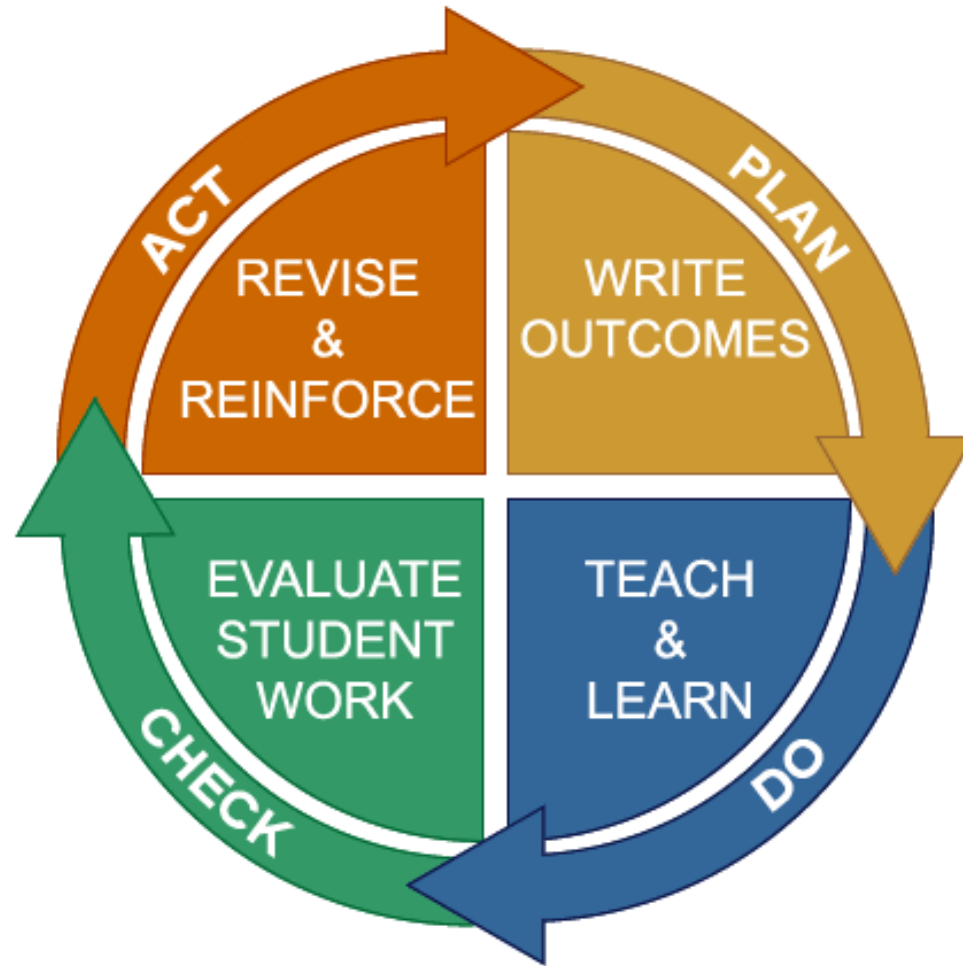
Gather information about how well students are achieving those goals.

(CHECK)

Discuss, and use the information to improve learning.

(ACT)

# Cycle of Ongoing SLO Assessment



# Measuring Student Learning

## Direct Measures

- Artifacts produced by students to demonstrate their learning or skills
- Expert assesses to determine if student is demonstrating SLO

## Indirect Measures

- Signs that students are probably learning, often based on reports of perceived student learning

# Examples of Direct Measures

## Student Work

- Written work, performances, or presentations, scored using a rubric
- Research projects, case studies, presentations, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, exhibitions, and performances, scored using a rubric
- Portfolios
- Tests such as final exams in key courses, qualifying examinations, comprehensive exams
- Pre-post tests

## Ratings of Student Skills

- Field experience supervisors or employers rate students on student skills using a rubric

## Standardized Tests

- Achievement Tests in a Particular Field of Study (e.g. ETS Major Field Tests, ACAT Area Concentration Achievement Tests, GMAT, GRE Subject Tests)
- Licensure or Certification Exams
- Instruments to Measure Specific Skills (e.g. California Critical Thinking Skills Test)

# Examples of Indirect Measures

## Student Response

- Student Survey: Students' perceptions of their educational experiences and the institution's impact on their learning.
  - *List SLOs and ask, how well did you achieve each goal? What aspects of your education in the department helped you with your learning? What might the department do differently to help you learn more effectively?*
- Student Focus Groups: held with representative students to probe a specific issue that might have been identified
- For Freshmen and Seniors: National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

## Alumni, Employer, or Faculty-Staff Surveys

- Perceptions of student learning and the institutions' impact on their learning
- Alumni: ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey

## Admission Rates into Graduate Programs

- What are our students' acceptance rates?

## Placement Rates of Graduates into Appropriate Career Positions and Starting Salaries

- How do students fare after graduation?

## Goals vs. Objectives/Outcomes

### **Goal:**

Students will be critical thinkers

### **SLOs:**

Students will be able to:

- Interpret an essay in the discipline
- Compare and contrast two theories
- Argue a thesis about...



## Goals vs. Objectives/Outcomes

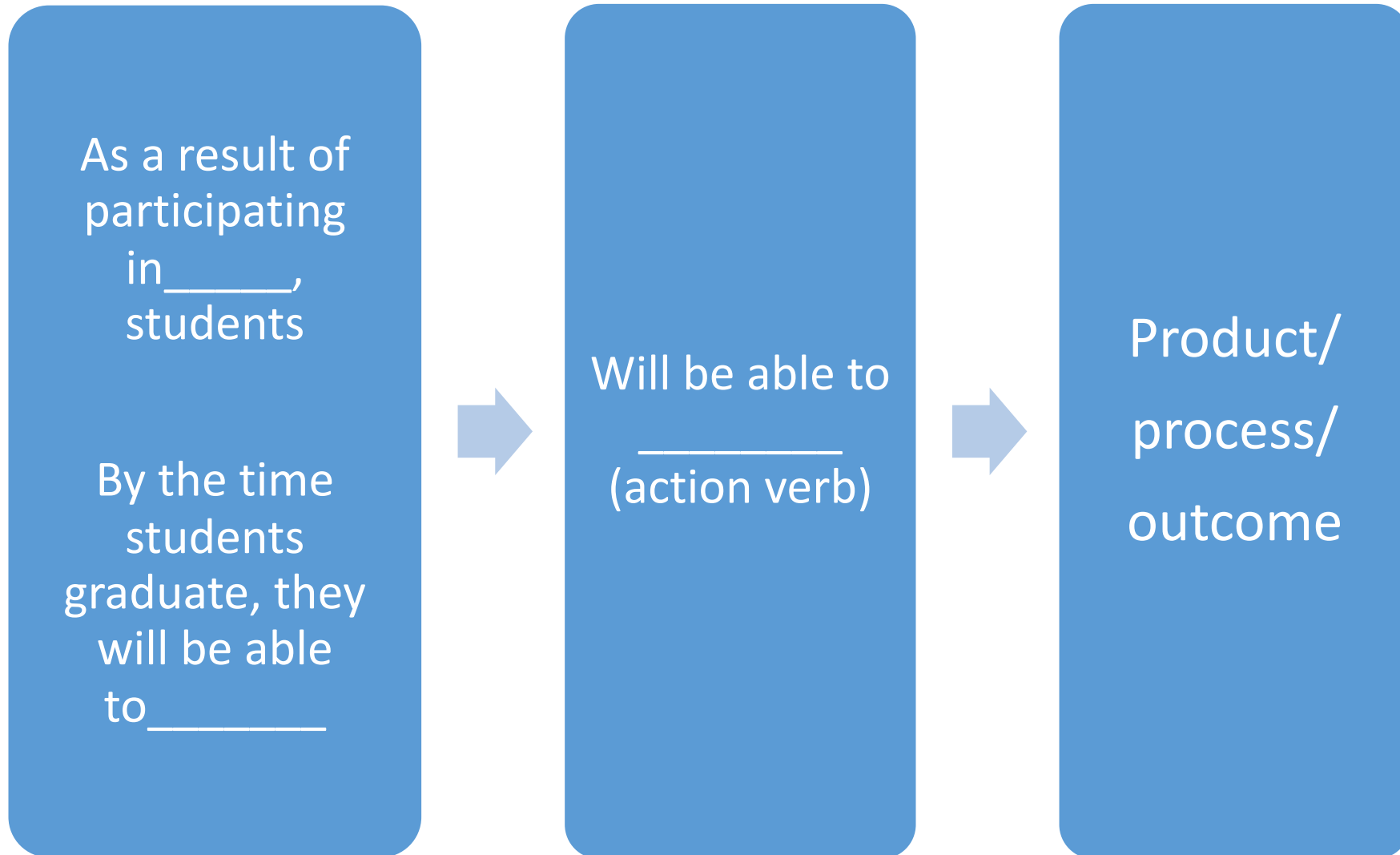
### **Goal:**

Students will be interculturally competent

### **SLOs:**

Students will be able to:

# Basic Formula for Program/Unit-Level Student Learning Outcomes



# Characteristics of Program/Unit-Level Student Learning Outcomes

Describes what students should be able to *demonstrate, represent, or produce* as a result of what and how they have learned in a program

Focuses on what you expect to see at the end (outcome) rather than what you plan to do or how it will be done

Focuses on the *most important* goals for students in your unit

Relies on an *action* verb that identify what students should be able to demonstrate, represent, or produce