

How do SLOs fit with grades?

(adopted from Cosumnes River College)

Course Outcome Assessment:

When we teach, we are helping out students achieve the outcomes of the course. When we give a graded assignment or test, we are measuring student learning and their success at reaching course outcomes. When we assign a grade to a student, we are really providing a single-time summary of how well he or she has achieved the course outcomes. In other words, we look at the performance of a given student across the entire course outcomes to arrive at his or her grade.

Assessing outcomes, however, occurs when we look at the performance of all of the students in a class relative to a given outcome. For example, if a test includes a set of items pertaining to a course outcome, an item analysis of this set of items can tell us how our students as a whole are doing with respect to that outcome. Similarly, if a rubric for an assignment has one or more areas that correspond to a course outcome, analyzing the overall scores of students in these areas can tell us how our students as whole are doing with respect to that outcome. The diagram below illustrates this for a course that has four outcomes and assesses student learning with homework, three tests, a presentation , a course project, direct observation of students during group activities, and a student self-assessment.

	<i>Outcome 1</i>	<i>Outcome 2</i>	<i>Outcome 3</i>	<i>Outcome 4</i>	
	Course Project and Items from tests #1 and #2	Presentation and items from tests #2 and #3	Items from test #2, student self-assessment, and course project	Direct observations, presentations, and homework	
					Grade
<i>Student 1</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	A
<i>Student 2</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	D
<i>Student 3</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	B
<i>Student 4</i>	↓	↓	↓	↓	C
Outcome assessment	High success	Low success	Moderate success	High success	
<i>Results of outcomes assessment</i>	<i>Hurray! – consider using the same methods for other outcomes.</i>	<i>Revise teaching methods for this outcome.</i>	<i>Keep what worked, but consider changes to increase success</i>	<i>Hurray! – consider using the same methods for other outcomes.</i>	