Guidelines for module curriculum assessment

Q: What modules require the development of learning outcomes?

A: For the purposes of IQAP, with the exception of minors, each module in an undergraduate program will have module-level learning outcomes.

Example A

Citizenship Studies: 3 modules
1. Honors Specialization in Citizenship Studies
2. Major in Citizenship Studies
3. Minor in Citizenship Studies

In Example A, the fictional program, Citizenship Studies would have two modules that would require module-level learning outcomes: the Honors Specialization & the Major.

If there is an equivalency of names between a program’s modules, alignment between module learning outcomes can be expected. As a result, the equivalent modules can be grouped together in a “program block” for the purposes of cyclical review. In Example A, the Honors Specialization and Major in Citizenship Studies would be two modules that make up one program block.

Q: How do the learning outcomes of one module in a block relate to another module?

A: Because Honors specializations represents the most sophisticated depth of knowledge in a program, the Honors specialization would be expected to have more module-level learning outcomes, and / or more sophisticated (in expected student achievement) module-level learning outcomes. Block Specializations or Majors would typically share some of the module-level learning outcomes of the Honors specialization (see example B, below).

Example B

Citizenship Studies — Module Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Honors Specialization in Citizenship Studies</th>
<th>Major in Citizenship Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome A</td>
<td>Learning outcome A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome B</td>
<td>Learning outcome B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome C</td>
<td>No equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome D</td>
<td>Learning outcome D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome E</td>
<td>Learning outcome E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome F</td>
<td>No equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcome G</td>
<td>No equivalent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the example above, the two modules share common learning outcomes (e.g. LOs A,B,D & E). Further differentiating modules is the level of sophistication expected for similar Learning Outcomes. In example C, below, the achievement of Learning Outcome A at the Honors specialization level is more sophisticated (requiring student to apply principles through a capstone project) than at the Major level.

**Example C**

**Learning Outcome A, Major in Citizenship Studies**

Students will be able to describe the principles of ethical leadership and collaborative engagement to identify and explain how others have used these principles to advance and sustain local and global communities.

**Learning Outcome A, Honors specialization in Citizenship Studies**

Students will be able to apply the principles of ethical leadership and collaborative engagement to advance and sustain local and global communities through the completion of a capstone project.

**Q:** How many self-studies do I need to submit for a program’s cyclical review?

**A:** Undergraduate programs undergoing review can submit an “omnibus report”; the self-study will require a description of the common attributes of all program modules as well as the distinctive attributes of each discrete module. For more information on what is to be included in the self-study, refer to section 4.2.2 in Western’s *Institutional Quality Assurance Process*.

In summary, for cyclical review:

- With the exception of minors, each module in a program requires module-level learning outcomes (example A);
- In program blocks (modules with the same name at different levels [e.g. major, specialization]), alignment between learning outcomes is to be expected (example B);
- While there can be common learning outcomes across modules in program blocks, learning outcomes can also be expected to demonstrate a clear difference in expected student outcomes (example C); and
- Undergraduate programs can submit an “omnibus report” where the self-study clearly outlines the common attributes of all modules as well as the distinctive attributes of each program block and the included modules.

**In application...**

Western has developed a (fictional) program in Forestry with a series of Honors Specializations, Majors, Specializations and a Minor.
**Forestry program modules**

Honors Specialization in Forestry (BA)
Honors Specialization in Forestry (BSc)
Honors Specialization in Forest Conservation Arts (BA)
Honors Specialization in Forest Conservation Science (BSc)
Honors Specialization in Forestry Business Management
Major in Forestry
Major in Forest Conservation Science
Major in Forest Biomaterials Science
Major in Forestry Business Management
Major in Forest Operations
Specialization in Forestry
Minor in Forestry

The Forestry program is up for cyclical review. How would these modules be organized for the self-study?

**Module alignment table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modules</th>
<th>Program Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forestry (BA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors specialization</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialization</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this case:

- The Minor in Forestry does not require module-level learning outcomes (and is not represented in the alignment table).
- There are seven program blocks (the columns) made up of eleven distinct modules (the checkmarks) up for review within the program.
- The Honors specialization Forestry BA and BSc would have separate module-level learning outcomes but the Forestry Specialization and Forestry Major would share module-level learning outcomes with the Honors specializations.
- Both the Forest Conservation Science BSc and Forest Business Management would have Honors specialization-level learning outcomes as well as aligned learning outcomes (for both modules) at the major level.