



Associated Students Incorporated **Student Leader Learning Outcomes** Assessment Report

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Choose One: Learning Outcome Assessment

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Purpose of Assessment

The Student Leader Learning Outcomes Assessment project was started in 2008 and has been slowly revised and developed further every year. The purpose of the assessment is to gauge how the ASI student leaders, which includes the Student Government as well as the Bronco Events and Activities Team (BEAT), felt they grew personally and professionally while engaged in their campus leadership roles. ASI believes in and supports the learn-by-doing philosophy embraced by Cal Poly Pomona. Furthermore, ASI is a strong partner in that mission and believes one of the most valuable learning laboratories on campus is provided through student involvement the rich co-curricular activities. The Student Leader Learning Outcomes Assessment has been developed to help ASI determine the level of student learning and to identify what skills and abilities students feel they have gained through their involvement.

Targeted Learning Outcome

ASI developed six learning outcomes based on direct feedback from the students. The intended learning outcomes are:

Leadership Development

Students will demonstrate the ability to plan ahead and respond to unexpected challenges in the process of guiding others toward a set of desired results or outcomes that are based on organizational needs rather than individual interests.

Effective Communication

Students will apply verbal, written, visual and listening skills to communicate persuasively and coherently to diverse audiences.

Interpersonal Relationships

Through their work in a team-centered environment, students will uphold trust and respect as core values in a multicultural working community, while recognizing the personal similarities and differences that create an effective team.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

When faced with challenges in their position in ASI, students will analyze information to develop a well-researched position and construct convincing arguments or strategies.

Organizational Planning

Students will be able to develop a statement of purpose and identify criteria that include the effective use of resources such as time, people and finances in order to systematically proceed on a path to successfully accomplish team goals.

Social Responsibility

Students will demonstrate an appreciation for the privileges and the responsibilities that accompany the role of the student leader and be able to prioritize goals and the use of resources.

Assessment Methodology

The methodology was a pre-test / post-test that included 46 multiple-choice questions and 6 open-ended questions that asked students to self-reflect on their level of confidence and ability. The open-ended questions were different for the pre-test and post-test, however, the multiple-choice questions remained the same to determine whether students felt they changed in their self-assessment from the start of the year to the end.

Results

ASI reviewed the results after the pre-test and developed a presentation for the Stories of Successful Learning. 35 of the 39 student leaders responded to the survey that was sent as a link in an email to the StudentVoice on-line survey tool. The assessment tool measured each student's sense of comfort with the skill or ability by asking them to rank their competency using a Likert scale. In comparing all 35 of the respondents, the student leaders as a whole reported they were most competent in the Social Responsibility learning outcome. As a group they reported being the least competent in the Leadership Development learning outcome. The remaining data gathered from the pre-test addressed the open-ended questions that were asked of the students. The final question of the survey asked students to define "social responsibility." While this was the area the student leaders responded feeling the most confident, their actual definitions indicated only a partial understanding of the concept of social responsibility and how it related to their leadership role.

The post-test occurred at the end of the spring quarter. The results will be compared with the pre-test in a custom benchmarking analysis to determine if the students perceived they grew as a result of their leadership experiences. The comparative data has yet to be reviewed and summarized.

Conclusion

The learning outcomes survey is designed to provide the ASI advisors with both personal insight into the developmental stage of each of the student leaders, as well as a broader understanding of the level of skill and ability at which student leaders in general enter their position. In the pre-test where student leaders identified the least degree of confidence in the Leadership Development learning outcome, the results were somewhat expected, as the students were asked to gauge their abilities prior to the start of the academic year. As such, the measure of preparedness for their leadership responsibilities were based on their previous experiences only; and therefore, none of the student leaders were well-versed in University or ASI policies and procedures. Similarly, it is understandable that the students, who just finished their campaigning for their position, felt a strong calling to serve the student body and identified with the Social Responsibility learning outcome. However, the student leaders' definitions of social responsibility (asked in the open-ended section of the survey) indicated that while the students felt they were competent in this area, their understanding of social responsibility was incomplete and elementary.

The students provided, through the pre-test survey, personal leadership experiences in presenting and communicating to groups, planning events, dealing with team conflict, and a description of their personal leadership style. This information was designed to provide the Student Government and BEAT advisors with information about the group of students and their previous leadership experiences. Their answers helped to guide the advisors in planning training sessions and retreats throughout the year to meet the students where they were in their level of leadership development and challenge them to grow in their positions.

Implications for Practice

The primary flaw in the learning outcomes tool is that it relies entirely on students self-reporting their developmental level and trying to gauge a degree of change through their leadership experience with ASI. The survey is also conducted anonymously and therefore the personal stories and background cannot be connected to an individual and therefore, it is impossible to create an individualized developmental plan for each student leader, even though the open-ended questions provide valuable insight in this area.

The pre-test and post-test benchmarking is anticipated to provide a better understanding of students' growth and appreciation for their responsibilities and skills as campus leaders. Once the comparative analysis has been completed, the results will be analyzed to determine in what areas students naturally felt they grew and in what areas they report less growth through their leadership experience. The training retreats scheduled for the student leaders throughout the year will be tailored to help students develop higher levels of competence and skill. In this way, ASI intends to create an intentional leadership development program that complements the experiences inherent in student leadership positions, and foster growth in the six areas of intended learning outcomes.