



Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) Assessment at Palo Alto College: A Quick Look...

WHAT?

- The six core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), and adopted by PAC as our Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), include: 1) Communication, 2) Critical Thinking, 3) Empirical & Quantitative Skills, 4) Personal Responsibility, 5) Social Responsibility, and 6) Teamwork.
- The THECB outlined which foundational component areas of the core curriculum are responsible for teaching and assessing these outcomes. In addition, PAC determined that *all* courses will teach and assess Communication and Critical Thinking.
- Each academic year, PAC assesses three of the Institutional Learning Outcomes using rubrics developed by a PAC committee of faculty, deans, and administrators.

HOW?

- The Coordinator of Measurement & Evaluation (CME) coordinates the ILO Assessment processes through direct communication with the faculty, Chairs, Directors, Deans and the VP of Academic Success.
- Faculty embed a “key assignment” that aligns with all criteria of the relevant ILO rubric(s) in their courses every semester. All students in relevant courses complete the key assignments. Rubrics can be found on the assessment web site: <https://www.alamo.edu/pac/about-pac/compliance/assessment/>
- The PAC Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness randomly selects students for assessment based on the following criteria: 1) 45 or more college-level semester credit hours; 2) PAC student previous semester; 3) currently enrolled in a relevant course; and 4) PAC home student. The CME informs faculty of the students in the sample.
- Student work resulting from the key assignment becomes the student “artifacts” for assessment. The CME collects artifacts electronically from faculty.
- The student artifacts are rated by faculty assessors using the appropriate ILO rubric. Prior to rating, assessors take part in a rubric norming session. Assessors are both voluntary and appointed on a rotating schedule.
- The CME records results and reports them to PAC stakeholders. Reflective discussions result in actionable changes to curriculum, pedagogy, programming and/or assessment processes aimed at improving student learning.

WHEN?

- PAC collects student work for three ILOs each fall semester. The work is then rated by faculty in the early spring.

WHY?

- Palo Alto College is committed to continual improvement and consistent attempts at attaining its vision of best in the nation in student success and performance excellence.
- The THECB also requires assessment of the Texas Core Curriculum, or Texas Common Core (TCC), in order for “institutions to discover, document and seek to improve student attainment of the TCC's six core objectives.”
- Our accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), requires that PAC, 1) identify expected student learning outcomes, 2) assess the extent to which we achieve the outcomes, and 3) provide evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of results.