

# Essential Learning Outcomes

Stockton University

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## *ELO Pilot, Round Two*

The second ELO pilot is currently underway. Eight programs signed on to participate in this pilot: Communication Studies; First-Year Seminars; FRST Writing; Holocaust and Genocide Studies; Nursing; Physics; Special Education; and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Thank you to all of the faculty, adjuncts, professional staff, and students who volunteered to participate.

In preparation for this pilot, those teaching in the piloting programs had the opportunity to learn about ELOs, create electronic portfolios, familiarize themselves with the Association of American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) rubrics for formative assessment of essential learning outcomes, and to align course and program goals to ELOs during the ELO Summer Institute. The Office of the Provost provided generous funding for 45 faculty members, adjuncts, and professional staff members to attend the day and a half intensive institute.

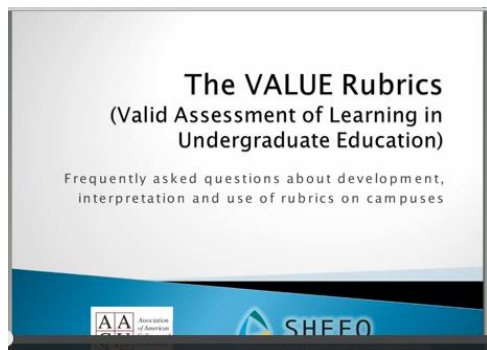
After the semester ends, piloting teachers will have the opportunity to attend an open forum to discuss the pilot and to share advice, suggestions for the future, and critical reflection. Please be on the lookout for highlights from that forum.

### New ELO Website

Stockton's ELO initiative has a new website. When you have a chance, check it out at <http://www.stockton.edu/elos> and share your thoughts. In addition, if you have any ELO-related research or resources that you would like posted to the website, please contact Carra Hood at [carra.hood@stockton.edu](mailto:carra.hood@stockton.edu).

### What's a VALUE Rubric?

AAC&U initiated essential learning outcomes in the early 2000's in an effort to identify the foundational characteristics of a liberal arts education. Initially, AAC&U did not design an assessment plan. The first steps in that direction resulted in rubrics for formative assessment, i.e. ongoing feedback and evaluation of students' work. Those instruments, [VALUE rubrics](#), have been widely used to help teachers facilitate learning and students succeed in manageable increments. Click on the image below to learn about ways to use the VALUE rubrics to improve teaching and learning.



You may want to use the VALUE rubrics to guide development of your own ELO rubrics. If you do, you can download the VALUE rubrics from [Stockton's ELO website](#).



**NEXT ISSUE:** Some data from the second ELO pilot and helpful tips for incorporating ELOs into courses, programs, and co-curricular learning experiences.

*Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) will help all Stockton students focus on the intellectual and marketable talents needed to prepare for personal and professional success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

# Collaborations between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs Include Focus on ELOs

By Kim McCabe – Director, Student Affairs Communications

Dr. Carra Hood, Assistant Provost for Programs and Planning and Tenured Associate Professor of Writing, and Dr. Gerald Martin, Assistant Dean of Students, represented Stockton University at the *2015 ADP/TDC/NASPA Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference* held in New Orleans, LA, June 4 - June 6, 2015. Their role was a part of a larger presentation on how academic affairs and student affairs can work together on student learning.

Their presentation, “Mission Possible: Academic and Student Affairs Partnerships Lead to Transformative Learning,” centered on the Asset-based Community Framework (ABCD), which addresses community development based on four types of assets: people/individuals, associations, physical resources and connections. They described how this type of community development is key to building successful cross-campus partnerships and advancing a culture of understanding. In finding ways to understand the culture of Student Affairs, Academic Affairs and institutional domains—by realizing the assets of each domain—a community can achieve the “High Impact Practice Zone.” Overcoming the *divide* is possible through liaisons at the executive leadership level, divisional collaborations, and finding creative ways to actively make connections.

***At Stockton, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs have found ways to collaborate in meaningful ways to help at-risk students, support career planning, facilitate internships, and more. In part, at Stockton, movement toward the high impact practice zone is due to application of its ten Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) to both curricular and co-curricular learning experiences.***

Stockton University’s Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO) model is derived from the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ (AAC&U) 2005 Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative. The complete list and descriptions of ELOs can be found at [www.stockton.edu/ELO](http://www.stockton.edu/ELO). Examples of how ELOs are being implemented through student affairs /faculty collaboration include supportive undertakings such as:

- the development an early alert system to proactively gauge academic performance;
- application of ELOs to the residential curriculum to help ensure that students are learning the skills they need to be well-rounded and successful adults; and,
- the recent opening of Stockton’s Women, Gender and Sexuality Center, a newly created Center designed to provide a safe, welcoming space to enhance the overall quality of campus life.

Each of these examples incorporates ELOs from Adapting to Change and Critical Thinking to Program Competence and Teamwork & Collaboration. The Division of Student Affairs will provide more detailed information about these efforts in future ELO articles.

During the conference presentation, Dr. Hood and Dr. Martin also introduced a recent collaborative work-in-progress, the Center for Experiential Learning. This Center is being created at Stockton to bring together the work of the Career Center, academic programs, service learning and community engagement, and Student Affairs and Academic Affairs administration. Each of these interrelated efforts provides a bridge that enables divisional partnerships and leads to transformative student learning.

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## HEADS UP: ELOs as Preparation for Work

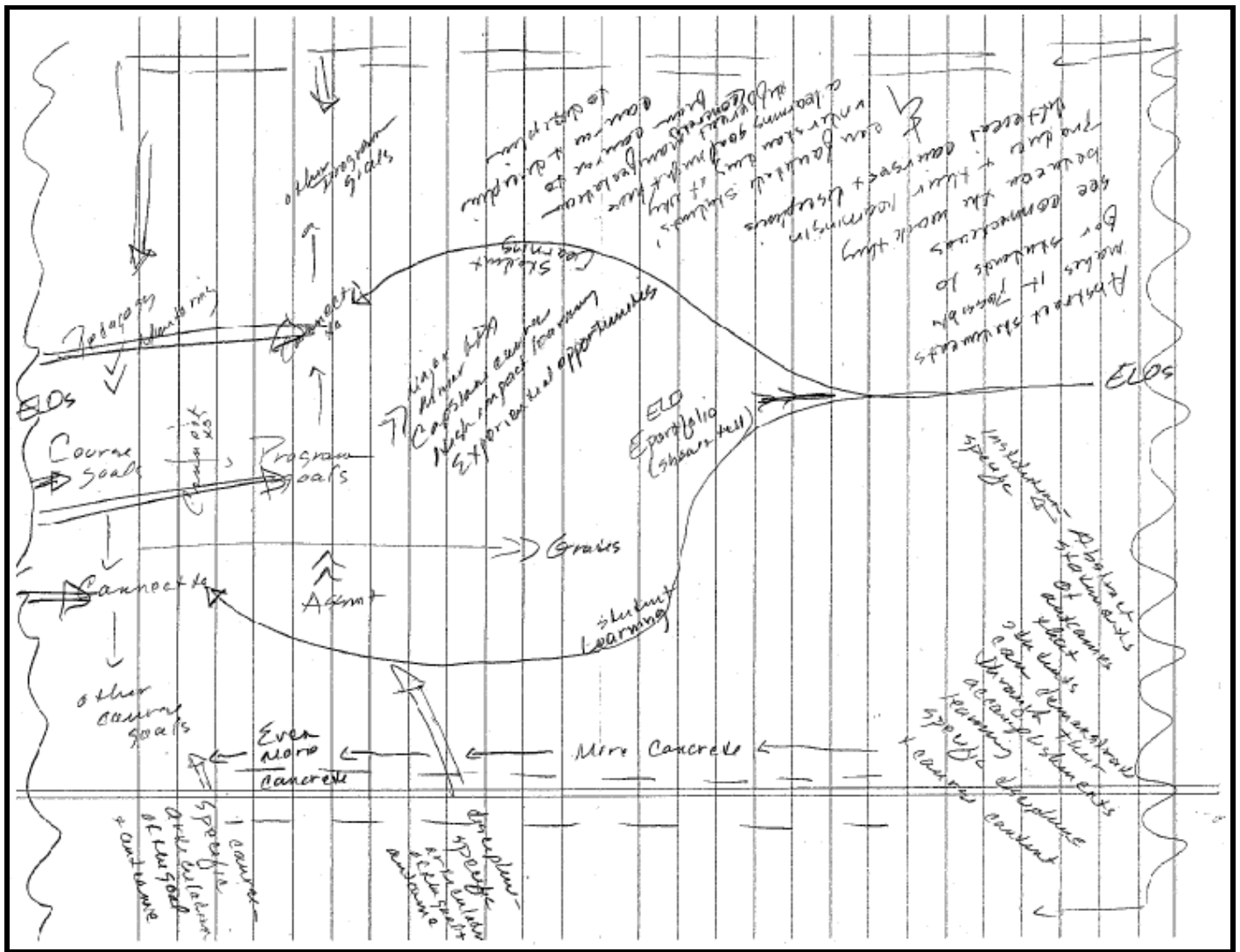
One goal of Stockton’s ELO initiative is to provide a structured way for students to connect their learning across academic and co-curricular experiences. In addition, though, ELOs can offer students meaningful preparation for interviewing and for performing in their workplaces. O\*Net Online (<http://www.onetonline.org>), a website sponsored by the United States Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, contains information about a wide array of jobs and, for each, a detailed report that includes knowledge, skills, and abilities required by job seekers and those already employed, working in the field. Stockton’s ELOs feature prominently in O\*Net reports. As an illustration, below are summaries of O\*Net reports for accounting and graphic design.

The O\*Net report for accounting shows the kinds of knowledge aspiring professional accountants need; in ELO language, this accumulated knowledge falls into the category of program competence, success achieving goals and outcomes in major courses. According to O\*Net, accountants’ skills and abilities include: critical thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, and teamwork. Accountants also characteristically practice a work style that involves ethical reasoning, creativity and innovation, and adaptability to change. On the job and as part of their work routine, accountant’s use eight of Stockton’s ten ELOs.

Graphic designers also employ the majority of Stockton’s ten ELOs. The graphic arts major prepares students with program competence and relevant content knowledge. According to O\*Net, in the context of performing their job, graphic designers regularly use critical thinking, global awareness, communication skills, creativity, teamwork, information literacy, ethical reasoning, and quantitative reasoning. Graphic designers, then, use nine of Stockton’s ten ELOs at work.

This resource offers useful information not only for students but also for teachers and professional staff who work with students on all aspects of their career preparation.

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## How ELOs Work

Looks complicated, right? Not surprising since we all know that teaching and learning is very complex business. However, the drawing's not as intricate as that. To make sense of it, start from the outside and move in.

ELOs serve as the frame; they offer guidance, a vocabulary, a container, a *geography* that indexes what goes in and what comes out. Like any geography, ELOs offer a structure for sharing and making values and meaning. At Stockton, ELOs provide the ten abstractions that connect more concrete course-specific and discipline-specific learning taking place across the curriculum and in co-curricular learning experiences. For instance, students may not be able to fully grasp critical thinking until they practice analyzing arguments in a philosophy course or synthesizing ideas from multiple perspectives in a research course.

At Stockton, too, ELOs are not new, but intrinsic to the institution's founding mission and spirit and, as a result, grow out of the kind of work we all have done and continue to do with students every day. Calling the geography for Stockton's teaching and learning enterprise "ELOs," however, is new. Using ELOs with intention to facilitate connections between courses, disciplines, and out-of-class learning is also new.

Starting from the outside and moving in suggests both the strength of ELOs as an outer limit and their porousness, contingency, and co-dependence on the complicated iterative, nonlinear, and multilayered activities at the core of teaching and learning.

So, yes, the drawing looks complicated because it represents one of the most undefinable processes: what goes on in a classroom, between a teacher and students, in the context of learning. -- Carra

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