A recipe for forming an ACTION PLAN for a PROGRAM in 6 easy steps

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Before you can enter an action plan using the “How to enter assessment results for a program? Click HERE” link on the WebSLOs summary page, you have to have something to say! That’s what this recipe is about.

The process is called "alignment and mapping" which has been in use at DVC since 2009. "Alignment" is the logical, structural part that assures that the required and elective courses for a degree or certificate do actually teach content that supports the program's learning outcomes. The “mapping” is the data analysis part, assuring that course assessments exist to show that our students are actually achieving the program’s expected learning outcomes.

Alignment and mapping is a "composite student" approach to assessment – it does not involve data collection on students having completed a degree or certificate. Here's the recipe:

Ingredients

1. The list of required and elective courses from the latest DVC catalog, like this:

   ![Certificate of achievement](image1)

2. Access to WebSLOs 3.0, signed in, like this:

   ![Student Learning Outcomes, WebSLOs 3.0](image2)

3. A notebook to start writing an assessment plan, because as you go through these steps, a plan will form.
4. Access to the official course outlines on the WCS, or on www.dvc.edu, but just note that the outlines on the public website are updated a couple of times per year, and may not be entirely current.
Step 1: Find your program in WebSLOs

Click "programs" and find your program in the menu, like this:

If you don't see it, you may not have access to its assessment results. *(Don't unclick "just mine" because that won't let you enter and edit assessment results for the program.)* If this is the case for you, you'll need someone who already has access to the discipline "owning" the program to grant access to you. There's instructions for that in the aforementioned "How to enter assessment results for a program".

Once you have access and are able to see the program in the menu, choose it – you'll see something like this:

Locate the PDF with previously reported assessment results. Locate the list of learning outcomes, and the matrix with the required and elective courses, that *should* match what’s in the catalog.
Step 2: Review and confirm your “Program learning outcomes”

Numbered outcomes are listed right below “Action plan for the program”. If you only have no numbered items in that list, then outcomes have not been entered into WebSLOs yet. In any case, the purpose if this step is to make sure the outcomes are there, complete, and are worded correctly. To edit any of them is a curriculum process.

![Program learning outcomes](image)

There’s nothing to write in your notebook at this point, unless part of your action plan is for the department to consider rewording, adding, or removing outcomes. Explain what, why, and when you expect that to be completed, and write that down. You’ll enter it later with your action plan.

Step 3: Review and confirm the “Alignment matrix”

The alignment matrix looks like this:

![Alignment matrix](image)

Compare the listed courses with the required and elective in the catalog. For degrees, this does not include the GE. If there are any additions or deletions, click the lock symbol to unlock the matrix, and then follow the on-screen instructions to edit. To remove a course, SHIFT-CLICK the course name -- you’ll be prompted to confirm. To switch a course between required and optional, click the course name to change between bold and normal text -- you’ll be prompted to confirm.

Once that’s done, align the courses with the outcomes. Hover your mouse pointer over any X and see the learning outcome highlighted (in green). An X indicates that the content of the course above the X supports the learning outcome:
By “content” we mean what’s stated in the official course outline of record (COR) as approved through the curriculum process. Confirm that each X belongs where it is, by referring to the COR. Place and remove X’s by clicking (with the matrix unlocked).

When you’re done, there should be at least one X in each row and each column. If that is not the case, make some notes for your action plan:

**For blank rows:** None of the required or elective courses addresses the outcome. Either (1) the outcome needs to be removed, or (2) one or more courses have to be added to the program in a non-substantial change, or (3) the COR for one or more courses needs revision in the next Title 5 rewrite to properly state the missing content.

**For blank columns:** The course does not address any of the program’s expected learning outcomes. Either (1) the course needs to be removed from the program in a non-substantial change, or (2) there’s a missing outcome, because this course really is needed, or (3) the COR needs revision in the next Title 5 rewrite to properly state the missing content.

### Step 4: Mapping

Now that there’s a confirmed relationship between courses and the outcomes they support, the course assessment results may be used to inform the degree to which the program outcomes are being achieved. Ideally, the one or more courses whose content support a specific outcome would all have assessment topics that address the program outcome, and have reported assessment results for those topics.

**No access.** But you’ll need access to the assessment results for the disciplines that “own” the courses, if you don’t already. For example, a business degree may include a math class. To gain access, it will have to be granted by someone who already has access to math. So we’re back to the afore mentioned "How to enter assessment results for a program" instructions, but this time you can request access from any listed person, and not just the bolded ones, because you just have to be able to see the assessment results – not edit them.

**No results.** If a course has no assessment results, part of your action plan may be to ask the owning department to assess the course sooner than later. If the course does have assessment results, but none of its assessment topics address the content related to your program outcome, part of your action plan may be to ask the owning department to add a topic for its next assessment, and do so sooner than later.
Step 5: Write action plans

Write action plans for each of these areas, based on the notes you took through the previous steps.

1. Program actions
   a. If there’s a previous program action plan, was that plan completed? Is it still in progress? Is it any longer relevant? Is there any follow-up that needs to be included in this new plan?
   b. If you reworded or added or deleted program outcome statements, what was the source of information?
   c. If you’ve committed to update the program outcome statements, what are the specific commitments (responsible persons and deadlines) for getting them done?
   d. Are there courses that should be added to the program as required or electives? If so, which outcome(s) do they address?
   e. Was this new plan reviewed and approved by discipline faculty? Will it be?

2. Course actions
   a. Did you review CORs? Are there any courses whose content does not support a program outcome?
   b. Are there Title 5 updates needed? What are the specific commitments (responsible persons and deadlines) for getting that done? If any are for courses outside your discipline, do you know whom to contact to get them done?

3. Alignment actions
   a. If courses were added to or removed from the program per the current catalog, did you use WebSLOs to set the alignment matrix current? If so, what is your source information – e.g. 2017 DVC Catalog page 100.
   b. Did you place or remove X’s in the matrix? If so, why – e.g. COR content does not address outcome.

4. Assessment actions
   a. Do you recommend changes to any course assessment schedules or topics?

5. For Program Review
   a. Is there any part of the plan relevant to Instructional Program Review? If so, should you make a note in the plan about how it will be used in the next program review cycle?

Now you’re ready to enter the plans into WebSLOs:

Step 6: Enter action plans into WebSLOs

Now, enter the action plans into WebSLOs. Use the “view assessment results” option:

Navigate to the right academic year. Since program assessments are usually done in spring, for example, spring 2016, choose its academic year – 2017/18:

Avoid copy/pasting from other sources, and avoid lengthy explanations. Be concise. If you need backup documentation, like meeting minutes or written proposals or emails, keep them separate from WebSLOs.
Enter and save, and you’re done.

What If A Program Is Not In The List OR A Retired Program Is Still Listed?

WebSLOs’ lists of courses and programs are supposed to match the current DVC Catalog. To make sure it’s current, WebSLOs updates its lists every summer by comparing to DataTel.

But sometimes DataTel’s lists don’t entirely match the catalog. For example, sometimes programs get deleted from the catalog, but nobody tells DataTel about it. If you ever notice that this has happened, contact SLOAC Administrative Support (listed on the “summary” page of WebSLOs).