SERVICE AREA OUTCOME (SAO) ASSESSMENT

Our essential focus at TBCC is student learning. Faculty ensure learning by engaging in outcomes assessment by establishing learning outcomes for each course and then evaluating whether students are meeting these outcomes. Faculty are consistently evaluating how to improve student outcomes using these data. Are there courses where fewer students are achieving? Are there particular types of students who are not meeting the outcomes? These reflections are then used to improve instructional practices in courses. This ongoing assessment process leads to improved instruction and greater learning.

For those of us who don't teach, our focus is on student learning as well, by providing the services and supports needed for students to achieve. This may involve supporting students directly, like student success coaches do, or indirectly by supporting staff and faculty who work directly with students. IT is a great example – they support students directly through the laptop loaner program and they also support students indirectly by providing technology to classrooms used by instructors. SAO assessment is the process of evaluating whether service areas are effectively supporting student learning.

Service Area – non-instructional teams or areas at the College, including:

Administration:
    Facilities/Safety
    HR
    IT
    Advancement
    Business Office
    Marketing

Instruction & Student Services:
    Student Services
    College Prep
    Library
    Community Education
    General Education
    CTE
    High School Connections

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SAO: a statement about the impact that the team will have

- A statement about what a client will experience, receive or know as a result of the work of that team.

- Clients can be students, faculty, staff, or community members

SAO's can focus on either:

- **A process-** which focuses on services being provided efficiently, accurately and equitably

  - *Employees will be able to efficiently reserve campus rooms.*

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- **Client experience** – which focuses on the client's experience of the service

  - *Students will feel safe while on campus to optimize learning.*

Step 1: Define Your Outcome

To write an SAO, it's important to keep in mind that SAO's are user-centered statements, a statement of what others will be able to do as a result of a service, or how they will benefit from it.

Examples:

Goal	SAO
The IT department **will provide** the necessary services and technology to support a successful college	Faculty and staff will **readily have access to** the technology and services provided by the Information Technology department to support a successful college environment.
Campus Safety **will promote** peace, order, and safety on campus by deterring and preventing criminal activity.	Students, staff, and community members will indicate that they feel safe while on campus.
Facilities and Maintenance will provide safe, clean, maintained, and visually attractive buildings and grounds to be enjoyed by students, faculty, and staff	Faculty, staff, and students will report they are satisfied with the safety, cleanliness, maintenance and visual attractiveness of the campus buildings and grounds they visit.

One approach to writing SAO's is to follow this pattern:

Users of the services	Will(do something)	To (do something else)
Describe the users of your team's services	Describe what they will do with your services	Describe how that will improve student learning and success

Now you can take this information and put it into one sentence, to keep it simple.

Service Area Outcome	Assessment Method	Threshold	Results
A statement about the intended impact of the service provided			

Step 2: Identify your Assessment Method

When assessing Service Area Outcomes, the key is to keep the focus on the clients' needs and satisfaction and on the effects for clients. Once again, "clients" may refer to students, faculty, staff, and/or the public. Using data already collected, such as the types and frequencies of services offered, is recommended.

First you must decide on your assessment tool. What method will you use to do your assessment? Is there data already being collected which you could use to assess your outcome? Common data sources include:

- Jenzabar – student data, business process data,
- Canvas
- Employee or Student Climate Surveys
- PowerFAids

Ideally your outcome can be assessed using data that is already collected in an existing system. If you can avoid creating a new data collection process, you'll save time and effort. When will you assess? How frequently are these data collected? Can you assess every term or every year?

When you've answered both these questions, describe the Assessment Method in the second column of the Assessment Plan Form.

Examples:

Service Area Outcome	Assessment Method	Threshold	Results
Student Services: Prospective students can easily complete the application to registration process.	Percentage of prospective students completing the application that register for classes. Measured every term		

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IT: Employees will experience timely and responsive support for technical issues.	Average response time (in hours) for service requests Measured annually		
High School Connections: Students will have the supports necessary to enroll in dual credit classes, sparking their college progress.	The number of high school students who enroll in dual credit courses each term. Measured every term		

Step 3: What's the Baseline?

Before you can set expectations or thresholds for performance, it's helpful to know something about how the service is performing currently. If you're using an existing data source, then look at your performance for the last few quarters, or year. If you've developed a new data collection method, it may be helpful to look at other measures that are similar. For example, if you decide to add a question to the Employee Climate Survey, there may be other questions that are similar. How do employees typically respond? What percentage indicate they are satisfied? This might be a good estimate for your baseline.

Step 4: Set your Thresholds

This step involves establishing the criteria against which you are going to measure your assessment results. What is the minimum expectation for success? The criteria that answers this question might be 75 percent of clients surveyed will respond positively.

- Green (Achieved) – this level indicates strong, positive performance
- Yellow (Minimally Achieved) – This level indicates adequate performance
- Red (Not Achieved) – This level indicates poor or low performance, needing improvement.

When setting your criteria keep these things in mind:

1. Minimum expectation for success. This can be expressed as a %, a fraction, or an actual number.
2. Your first assessment may be used to establish a baseline by which future assessment results will be compared.
3. What is the achievement standard (satisfactory, numeric score, a rubric score or Likert scale score, a narrative indicator)
4. Which students/clients count in data (all queried, those identified within a date range, a random sample, those with a certain number of credits completed)?

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Enter your criteria in Column three of the SAO Form in the Threshold column.

Examples:

Service Area Outcome	Assessment Method	Threshold	Results
Student Services: Prospective students can easily complete the application to registration process.	Percentage of prospective students completing the application that register for classes.	Baseline: 50% Green: >60% Yellow: 50%-60% Red: <50%	
IT: Employees will experience timely and responsive support for technical issues.	Average response time (in hours) for service requests	Baseline: 12 hours Green: < 12hours Yellow: 12-20 hours Red: > 20 hours	
High School Connections: Students will have the supports necessary to enroll in dual credit classes, sparking their college progress.	The number of high school students who enroll in dual credit courses each term.	Baseline: Fall 2021-2022 Green: Yellow: Red:	

SAO Assessment Process:

Setting SAO's is only the beginning of the process. At TBCC we use SAO's annually to evaluate our progress in meeting our outcomes. As illustrated in the diagram below, assessment follows this process:

Fall: Communicate and Implement - This is time for review and reflection and for planning the priorities for the year. Each service area reviews their performance on SAO's and sets projects for the coming year. What projects or activities will occur to help you to improve?

Winter: Progress and Planning - In January each team should pause and evaluate their progress. The team should identify the actions taken, and identify any barriers encountered. This should also include an evaluation of how resources (people, money, space, technology and equipment) are being used to meet their objectives or goals. This is the beginning of budget preparation and planning for the coming year and so teams should consider their needs. It may be that projects require multiple years to complete or require additional resources. Requests for resources should be made to leadership.

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Spring: Measure and Wrap-up

The focus of this term is in closing out projects/activities and measuring their impact. There is an established assessment method and metric for each SAO and this assessment typically occurs in late spring. This can include collecting survey results as a part of the college climate surveys, extracting student and course data from Jenzabar and/or Canvas, or other methods. When data are gathered, each team determines whether the threshold is met and documents the result.

Summer: Evaluate and Integrate

In July, the focus of this work becomes evaluating our progress and setting plans for the coming year. Each SAO is reviewed to determine whether the green threshold was met and the team will plan projects/actions for the coming year for those SAO's in the red/yellow.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS CYCLE

Summer: Evaluate and Integrate

Mission Fulfillment

Spring: Measure and Wrap-up

Fall: Communicate and Implement

Winter: Progress and Planning

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