

**Summary of Best Practices in Curriculum Mapping**

* Each of a program’s required courses needs at least one “major” course learning outcome (CLO).
  + A “major” course learning outcome is a CLO that every instructor for a given course teaches and assesses.
* Program faculty need to agree on what the major CLOs are and in which courses they will be taught.
* The major course learning outcomes are the building blocks of the PLOs.
* For every PLO, there should be at least one major CLO at the introductory level, at least one at the developmental level, and one (and only one) at the mastery level.
* The rung of a major CLO at the mastery level is identical to rung of a PLO. (The “hook” differs, with the former specifying the course name and the latter specifying the program name.)
* Ideally, all PLOs (i.e., major CLOs at the mastery level) are taught and assessed in the capstone course.
* CLOs should be unique.
  + When referring to a skill that is developed across courses in a curriculum that is graduated and sequential, the CLOs should specify the skill level expected. (“Students will demonstrate safe laboratory skills for simple chemistry experiments.” (“Students will demonstrate safe laboratory skills for complex chemistry experiments.”)
  + When referring to a skill that is developed across courses in a curriculum in which courses can be taken in any order, the CLO should describe the same skill but distinguish the context within which the skill will be applied (e.g., “Students will write competently about Romantic poetry.” “Students will write competently about Renaissance literature.”)
  + When students are required to choose one or more courses from a list, all of the courses in the list should have one or more major CLO should describe the same skill but distinguish the context within which the skill will be applied (e.g., “Students will deliver a professional quality solo performance in their major instrument.” “Students will deliver a professional quality ensemble performance in their major instrument.”)
* Department chairs (or program directors) should discuss the CLOs of any required course that is taught in outside departments or programs to ensure that the course will be teaching what is needed for students to develop the skills and knowledge for its program’s PLOs.
* If students don’t perform well on a particular PLO, the program faculty may want to review the assessment data of the major CLOs at the “I” and “D” levels that lead to that PLO in order to gain insight into where in the learning process students get stuck.
* Create a curriculum matrix that shows how the major CLOs in a program’s required courses align with the program learning outcomes.