

## Guide for Developing an ACE Course for Certification

*Adapted from materials of  
The Peer Review of Teaching Project  
&  
Developing Outcomes-Based Assessment for Learner-Center Education (2007)  
Amy Driscoll and Swarup Wood*

The purpose of this guide is to assist departments in identifying appropriate ACE Learning Outcomes for a course and develop information needed to certify that course for the ACE program. The first page outlines prompts from The Peer Review Teaching Project that guide the development of a course portfolio (view how course portfolio models have documented student learning at <http://www.courseportfolio.org>). These prompts were adapted to fit the unique purpose of the ACE program. The remaining document outlines a series of steps and a worksheet that could be used to address these prompts. The worksheet is adapted from Driscoll & Wood's (2007) book on outcomes-based assessment.

### Opportunity to Learn

What teaching methods and materials are you using during your contact time with students?

Which of those methods and materials facilitate students' achievement of the ACE learning outcome?

How do those methods and materials facilitate students' achievement of the ACE learning outcome?

### Opportunity to Demonstrate

What measures are you using to assess student learning in your course? What standards or criteria are applied when examining student work on these measures?

Which measures allow students to demonstrate their achievement of the ACE Learning Outcome? Which standards or criteria used to examine student work on those measures provide evidence of the ACE learning outcome?

How do those measures and standards/criteria provide evidence of students' achievement of the ACE learning outcome?

### Collecting evidence for assessment

How could you aggregate, record, and describe evidence from the standards/criteria of ACE-aligned measures to summarize students' achievement on the ACE Learning Outcome?

How many examples of student work should be sampled and from whom should work be sampled to provide a reasonable and valid representation of number of students enrolled in the course, types of students enrolled in the course(e.g. class level, college enrolled), and how students performed collectively on the measure?

## Instructions for Completing Course Alignment Matrix for ACE (Existing Courses)

**Step 1:** Identify course that will be proposed for certification and review syllabi for that course. Identify and list 1-3 **key learning goals** for the course (PART A).

**Step 2:** Make a preliminary decision about which 1 or 2 ACE Learning Outcomes the course learning goals address (PART A). Consider the ACE Certification guidelines (<http://www.unl.edu/ous/ace/ACEguidelines.shtml>) and the following question:

Is a primary intent of this course to provide students the key knowledge, skills, and habits of mind needed to achieve the ACE learning outcome? If yes, enter an "X" in the appropriate column.

**Step 3:** Make a preliminary decision about which ACE skills are reinforced by the course (PART A). Consider the following question:

Is a secondary intent of the course to provide students the opportunity to further practice or develop their understanding and use of the ACE skills? If yes, enter an "X" in the appropriate column.

**Step 4:** List the **learning measures** (e.g. assignments, project, papers, and exams) used in the course and consider the standards/criteria used to examine student work (PART B). Review the language of the targeted ACE Learning Outcomes and address the following question for each Learning Measure listed:

Does the learning measure and the standards and criteria used to examine the measure provide students' opportunity to demonstrate the targeted ACE Learning Outcome and provide evidence of their achievement on the targeted ACE Learning Outcome? If yes, enter an "X" in the appropriate column.

**Step 5:** List the **learning methods and materials** (e.g. readings, lectures, and labs) used in the course to prepare students for the learning measures listed in step 4 (PART C). Be sure to list common as well as distinctive methods and materials. Review the language of the targeted ACE Learning Outcomes and address the following question for each learning method or material listed:

Does the learning method or material facilitate students' achievement of the ACE Learning Outcome? If yes, enter an "X" in the appropriate column.

**Step 6:** Review the results of the alignment and determine whether the initial decision about ACE Learning Outcomes and reinforced skills is supported by learning methods/materials and learning measures that address that ACE Learning Outcome.

**If YES**, describe for an individual not familiar with your course (PART D):

- How do learning methods/materials provide students opportunity to learn skills, knowledge, and habits of mind needed to achieve the ACE Learning Outcome?
- How do learning measures and standards/criteria applied provide students opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the ACE Learning Outcome?

**If NO**, determine what learning methods/materials or learning measures could be revised or added to provide students' opportunity to learn and demonstrate the ACE Learning Outcome.

**Step 7:** Determine how assessment evidence will be collected and reported. Consider the following two questions (PART E):

- Based on the standards/criteria used to examine the ACE Learning Outcome, how and when will results from the Learning Measures be aggregated, recorded, and described to summarize students' achievement of the ACE Learning Outcome?
- Based on the type of students enrolled in the course (e.g. class level, major) and how students in the course performed on the measure, how many examples of student work will be sampled and from whom will samples come to provide a reasonable and valid representation of student achievement?



## Institutional Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes for ACE

Develop intellectual and practical **skills**, including proficiency in written, oral, and visual communication; inquiry techniques; critical and creative thinking; quantitative applications; information assessment; teamwork; and problem-solving.

1. Write texts, in various forms, with an identified purpose, that respond to specific audience needs, incorporate research or existing knowledge, and use applicable documentation and appropriate conventions of format and structure.
2. Demonstrate communication competence in one or more of the following ways: (a) by making oral presentations with supporting materials, (b) by leading and participating in problem-solving teams, (c) by employing a repertoire of communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relationships, or (d) by creating and interpreting visual information.
3. Use mathematical, computational, statistical, or formal reasoning (including reasoning based on principles of logic) to solve problems, draw inferences, and determine reasonableness.

Build **knowledge** of diverse peoples and cultures and of the natural and physical world through the study of mathematics, sciences and technologies, histories, humanities, arts, social sciences, and human diversity.

4. Use scientific methods and knowledge of the natural and physical world to address problems through inquiry, interpretation, analysis, and the making of inferences from data, to determine whether conclusions or solutions are reasonable.
5. Use knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and the standards of evidence appropriate to the humanities to address problems and issues.
6. Use knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior.
7. Use knowledge, theories, or methods appropriate to the arts to understand their context and significance.

Exercise individual and social **responsibilities** through the study of ethical principles and reasoning, application of civic knowledge, interaction with diverse cultures, and engagement with global issues.

8. Explain ethical principles, civics, and stewardship, and their importance to society.

9. Exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue.

**Integrate** these abilities and capacities, adapting them to new settings, questions, and responsibilities.

10. Generate a creative or scholarly product that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.

ACE Course Alignment Matrix

	ACE Learning Outcomes										ACE Reinforcements														
	SLO1	SLO2	SLO3	SLO4	SLO5	SLO6	SLO7	SLO8	SLO9	SLO10	Writing	Oral Comm	Visual Lit	Historical	Perspec	Math/Stats	Critical Thinking	Teamwork	Problem Solving	Ethics	Civics	Social Responsibility	Global Awareness	Human Diversity	
<b>PART A - Course Focus</b>																									
Course Learning Goal(s)																									
<b>PART B - Learning Measures</b>																									
Assignments																									
Projects																									
Tests																									
Papers																									
Other																									

	ACE Learning Outcomes										ACE Reinforcements															
	SLO1	SLO2	SLO3	SLO4	SLO5	SLO6	SLO7	SLO8	SLO9	SLO10	Writing	Oral Comm	Visual Lit	Historical	Perspec	Math/Stats	Critical Thinking	Teamwork	Problem Solving	Ethics	Civics	Social Responsibility	Global Awareness	Human Diversity		
<b>PART C - Learning Methods/Materials</b>																										
Readings/Resources																										
Lectures/Discussions/Presentations/Demonstrations																										
Labs/Field Work/Guest Speakers																										
Other																										

**PART D - Descriptions for Certification**

Based on alignments identified, how do learning methods/materials provide students opportunity to learn ACE Learning Outcome?

Based on alignments identified, how do learning measures and standards/criteria applied provide students opportunity to demonstrate ACE Learning Outcome?

**PART E - Description of Assessment Collection/Reporting**

How will student work be sampled? How will assessment evidence for the course be summarized?