

Writing Performance Indicators for Program Outcomes

Loma Linda University • Office of Assessment and Institutional Learning

Performance Indicator

An indispensable management tool for making performance-based decisions about program-specific strategies and activities.

USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation

Value of Performance Indicators and Collected Data

1. To focus and motivate students, faculty, staff, administration toward achieving results
2. To communicate achievements to university and community stakeholders, and prospective students

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Performance Indicators

Performance indicators describe how an outcome will be measured.

Two Essential Parts of Performance Indicators

1. *Content reference*: Subject content that is the focus of instruction (e.g., steps of the design process, chemical reaction, scientific method.)
2. *Action verb*: Direct students to a specific performance (e.g., “list,” “analyze,” “apply”)

Outcome 1: Students understand and apply the University philosophy of wholeness into their personal and professional lives.

1. Demonstrate knowledge of LLU’s philosophy of wholeness.
2. Plan a strategy for wholeness, including implementation of your wholeness strategies.

Types of Measures

1. **Direct measures** provide for the direct examination or observation of student knowledge or skills against measurable learning objectives.
2. **Indirect measures** are those that ascertain the opinion or self-report of the extent or value of learning experiences.

Goal

There should be at least one direct measure for each outcome.

Examples of Direct Measures

- Exit and other interviews
- Standardized exams
- Locally developed exams
- Portfolios
- Simulations
- Performance appraisal
- External examiner
- Oral exams
- Behavioral observations

Examples of Indirect Measures

- Written surveys and questionnaires
- Exit and other interviews (yes, they can also be direct measures!)
- Archival records
- Focus groups

Steps to Writing Program Indicators

1. Analyze a program outcome to determine how it is currently being assessed or how it could be assessed.
2. Develop a statement that indicates the method of assessment along with the specific characteristics students should exhibit to show achievement.
3. Name the expected performance using an observable action verb to define the expected learning.

Level of Learning to Define Success

All students will demonstrate the capacity to use a core set of instruments. 30% will be certified by the faculty as expert users.

Office of Assessment and Institutional Learning

- Phone: extension 15042
- Email: assessment@llu.edu
- URL: <http://www.llu.edu/assessment/>