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**The UMass Dartmouth
Statement of Integrated
Student Learning Outcomes
(ISLO)**

What is ISLO?

The Statement of Integrated Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO) was constructed during 2008-2009 by an ad hoc committee of faculty, staff, administration and students invited by the Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The impetus for the creation of the committee was the call in the newly revised Strategic Plan for the development of a statement of integrated student learning outcomes.

The Charge of the ISLO Committee

- 1) Conduct a broad campus-wide discussion in order to determine a definition of what we, at UMass Dartmouth, consider “the educated person” to be and be able to do, and how we prepare our students for the world in which they live; and how we integrate student learning over the years of their undergraduate experience.
- 2) Articulate general, over-arching education outcomes for this definition, that integrate didactic and experiential learning goals for UMass Dartmouth students.

- 3) Through a period for comment and suggestions, verify the definition of integrated student educational outcomes that is arrived at, and then present them in a report to the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

Membership of the ISLO Committee

The ISLO Committee was co-chaired by Richard Panofksy, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and David Milstone, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. In addition to the chairs, the Committee comprised seven faculty members from all of the Colleges, four individuals from the Department of Student Affairs and three students.

Developing the ISLO Statement

Stage 1 – Discussion

Initially, the group engaged in some readings and very thoughtful discussion about what a proper definition of an educated person would look like. At the same time, the group was concerned that its product be viewed as a legitimate expression of the entire university community and not just those who were serving on the Committee. The group therefore agreed to conduct a survey.

Stage 2 – Survey

During the Fall, 2008, a web survey was administered to both faculty and students. The Committee was interested in hearing people's ideas in their own words, so the survey questions were wholly open-ended. Faculty were asked: "What broad, overarching goals or aspirations do we, as an educational community, have for our undergraduate students? What do we want their experience at UMass Dartmouth to give them?" Students were asked: "Ideally, upon completion of their UMass Dartmouth experience, graduates should be able to/should know/should understand _____?" In total, 162 responses were received, equally divided between faculty and students.

Stage 3 – Survey Analysis

Each Committee member was given a set of open-ended responses to code, and ultimately the data consisted of 33 variables representing whether each respondent mentioned various themes in his or her response.

Next, principal-components analysis was used to uncover underlying factors around which many of the themes tended to cohere. This analysis revealed 13 clear and sensible factors, or frames.

Some frames, such as Civic Engagement and Academic Skills, were mentioned much more frequently than others. The group decided to incorporate those frames that were most often mentioned into the ISLO statement.

Stage 4 – Drafting

Early on, after reviewing similar kinds of statements at other institutions, the Committee decided their version should consist of a single, integrated paragraph of text. To craft this paragraph, an online wiki website was used. An initial draft was put up and Committee members each had opportunities to go to the site and edit the draft. As this process progressed, the group had face-to-face meetings at which it discussed the direction of the editing and the shape of the statement.

Stage 5 – Feedback and Legitimation

The draft was presented to the university community at meetings of the Student Senate and Faculty Senate and at an open public forum. Feedback was also collected via email. There were several recurring criticisms and these were incorporated into revised drafts.

State 6 – Adoption

The final draft was ultimately ratified by the Student Senate and Faculty Senate. The final ISLO statement was then presented to the Chancellor and became an official statement of learning outcomes at UMass Dartmouth.

The Statement of Integrated Student Learning Outcomes

A University of Massachusetts Dartmouth education is a foundation from which graduates continually engage and impact their community, both locally and globally. In all aspects of their lives, UMass Dartmouth graduates skillfully locate, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and can communicate their knowledge effectively and creatively. They have depth in a field of study and

broad knowledge across many areas of inquiry, and they continue after graduation to explore and to acquire understanding within and beyond their field of study. UMass Dartmouth graduates think critically and possess the confidence to integrate and apply their learning to solving complex problems. They have excellent interpersonal skills and a sense of purpose. Guided by empathy and integrity, UMass Dartmouth graduates respond constructively to changing personal, professional, and societal challenges in a diverse world.