

Understanding the Difference Between Relating and Assigning Assessments to Measure Student Learning Outcomes

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Information

When assessing student learning outcomes, it is crucial to understand the difference between assigning and relating outcomes.

Assigning and relating are complementary processes in the assessment of student learning outcomes. Assigning designates responsibility and focuses measurement efforts, while relating aggregates results to provide a comprehensive evaluation. Together, these processes ensure accurate and meaningful assessment of student learning.

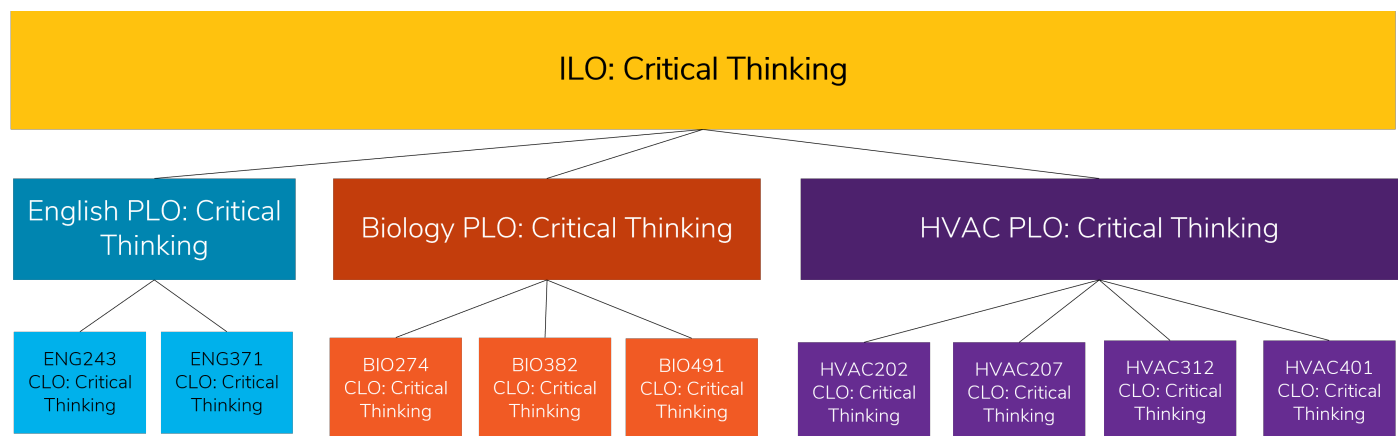
Assigning Outcomes



Definition: Assigning outcomes involves designating specific units (e.g., courses or programs) to measure and report on a particular learning outcome.

Example:

Program-Level Assignment: Suppose a program aims to enhance students' Critical Thinking skills. Multiple courses within this program, such as Biology 274, Biology 382, and Biology 491, are each assigned the responsibility of measuring Critical Thinking within their specific contexts. Each course will then decide on the methods and tools to assess this skill and report their findings to the program level.

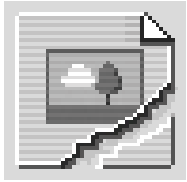


Key Points:

- 1:1 Outcome Connection (e.g., Critical Thinking Outcome to Critical Thinking Outcomes)
- Responsibility: The unit assigned with the outcome is responsible for determining how to measure it.

- Reporting: The assigned unit collects and reports data related to the outcome, which is then aggregated at a higher level (e.g., program or institutional level).

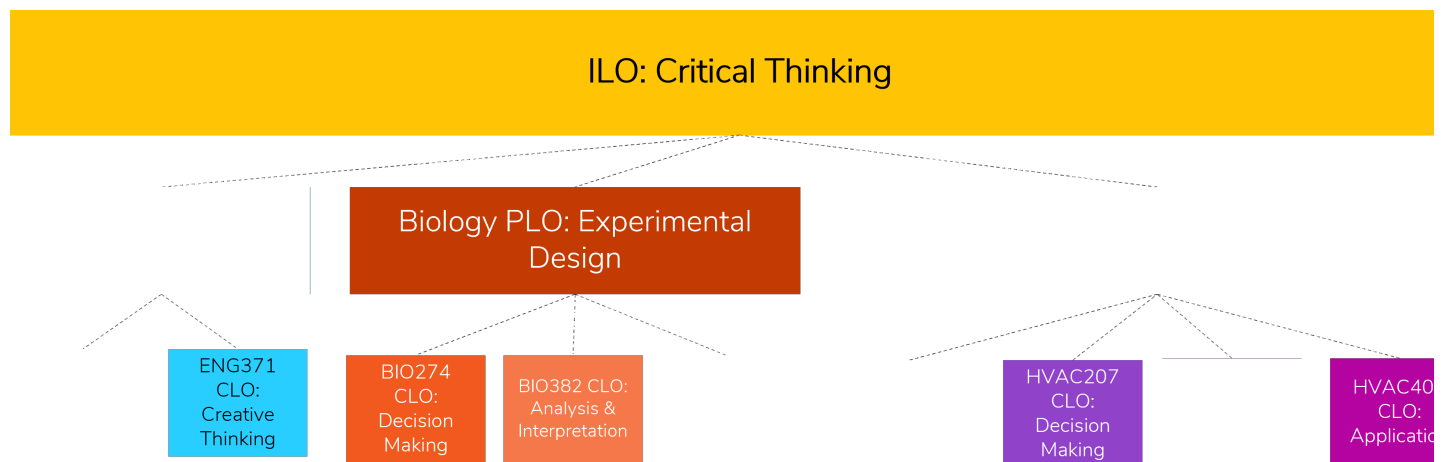
Relating Outcomes



Definition: Relating outcomes involves linking multiple, specific learning outcomes to a broader, overarching outcome. This process pulls together results from various related outcomes to form a comprehensive measure of the higher-level outcome.

Example:

Course-Level Relation: Within a course, multiple Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) such as " Decision Making," "Analysis & Interpretation," and " Reflection" can all be related to the broader Program Learning Outcome (PLO) of Experimental Design or Intuitional Learning Outcome (ILO) of Critical Thinking. Each of these CLOs is assessed individually, and their results are aggregated to provide an overall measure of students' Critical Thinking abilities.



Key Points:

- 1:Many Outcome Connections (e.g., Critical Thinking Outcome to Interpretation, Experimental Designs, and Designed Solutions)
- Aggregation: Results from related outcomes are combined to assess the broader outcome.
- Linking: Specific, detailed outcomes are linked to a general, overarching outcome, providing a more comprehensive evaluation.

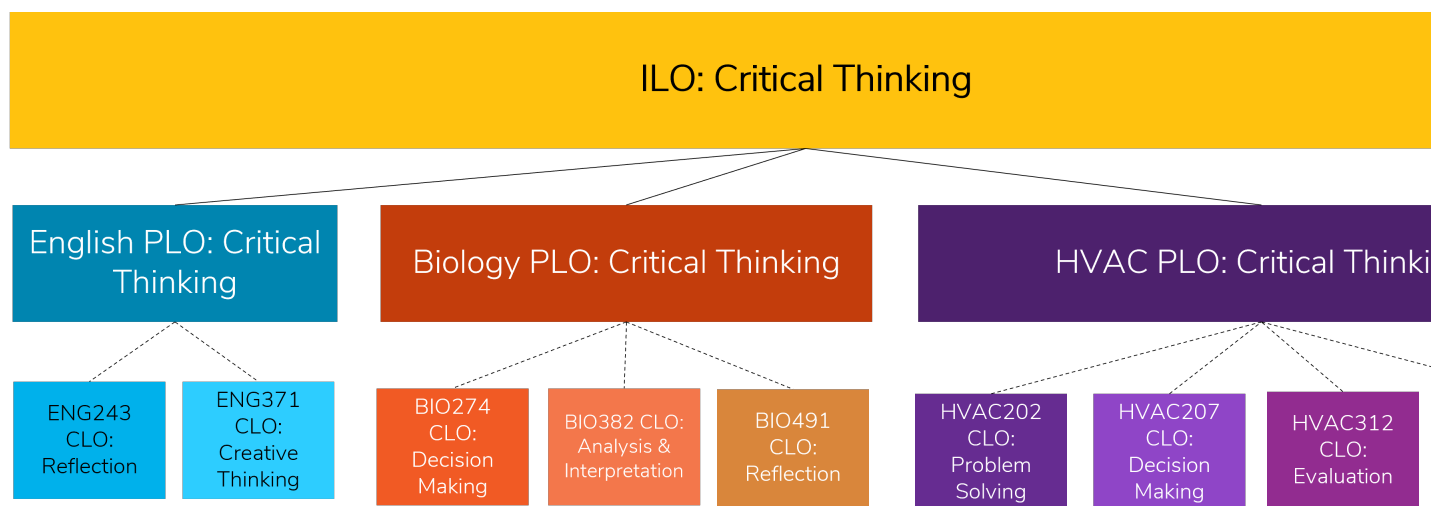
Combining Assigning and Relating

Process:

1. Assigning: Higher-level outcomes are assigned to specific units responsible for measuring them.
2. Measurement and Reporting: Each unit measures the outcome using chosen methods and reports the results.
3. Relating: Within each unit, specific, detailed outcomes are related to the broader outcome, and their results are aggregated.

Example:

At the institutional level, Critical Thinking is assigned to various programs (English, Biology, and HVAC). Each program assesses Critical Thinking and reports the results. Within each program, specific CLOs related to Critical Thinking (e.g., Analysis & Interpretation) are linked to the broader Critical Thinking outcome, and their results are aggregated to provide a comprehensive assessment of Critical Thinking skills across the program.



Theoretical Approach: Relating Without Assigning

While it is theoretically possible to skip assigning and directly relate all outcomes from various units to a higher-level outcome, this approach may be less effective. Assigning ensures that each unit is clearly responsible for specific outcomes and allows for more targeted and systematic measurement. Once assigned, units can then relate their detailed outcomes to the broader outcome, providing a structured and comprehensive evaluation process.

Learn more about Learning Outcome Connections: [Support Articles](#)

KB Product

Outcomes

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