University Assessment Committee
Outcomes Assessment Summary Form

This form is to be completed by a representative from each designated program/department. The information provided in this form will be used by the University of San Diego to inform stakeholder groups about USD's commitment to the intellectual, spiritual, and overall development of students. A Pdf version of this form will be posted on the University’s Student Outcomes Website in the Evidence of Student Learning section.

Program Information
Program Name (e.g. BA Computer Science, PhD Nursing)

Chemistry

College/School Name (e.g. CAS, KSPS, SB, SMSOE)

CAS

Assessment Overview
Briefly share how student learning outcomes assessment is conducted within your program/department (e.g. number of outcomes, examples of assignments used, and frequency of assessment). See example below.

We assess five learning outcomes on a three-year cycle for the Chemistry Program. We evaluate the overall quality of student work in areas including knowledge of fundamental chemistry concepts; use of the scientific method; and critical thinking, problem solving, laboratory, and communication skills. We assess results from embedded final exam questions, observe laboratory technique, and assess the quality of experimental results and written/oral reports.

Results and Actions Taken
Assessment Cycle

2016-2017

Briefly summarize your assessment results and how you are using these results to enhance student learning and improve program quality. See example below.

Learning outcome 1: "Identify and Explain Concepts" was assessed using an embedded final exam question on weak acid/base equilibria – a particularly challenging topic – in a 200-level course in the major. We found that student performance averaged at the "Accomplished" level in all three categories of our rubric. Furthermore, performance in each category was higher than in a similar, recent assessment of a 100-level course that is a pre-requisite for this 200-level course. We expected these results, and were pleased to see our expectations confirmed. In our departmental discussion of the results, we determined that different courses within the major use different wordings and methods for solving similar-type problems. Our next steps are to identify these differences, so that professors working with students in the higher-level courses can better help the students to make connections to what they have already learned in earlier courses.

Learning outcome 1 was also assessed for a 400-level course in the major using an embedded exam question in the area of "structure". Students, on average, performed at the "Accomplished" level, which we anticipated.