

INTEGRATIVE LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Pacific Lutheran University's Integrative Learning Objectives are designed to provide a common understanding of how learning at PLU is targeted. These objectives offer a unifying framework for understanding how our community defines the general skills or abilities that should be exhibited by an individual who is granted a PLU bachelor's degree. Therefore, they are integrative in nature.

University policy, adopted by the Deans' and President's Councils in the summer of 1998, lodges responsibility for the singularly academic components of assessment directly with academic departments, schools, and cross-disciplinary programs and their administrators. The Integrative Learning Objectives (ILOs) are intended to provide these units with a conceptual reference in their efforts to build on and reinforce the goals of the General University Requirements in their own particular curricula, as well as to assist the university in such assessment related activities as general student and alumni surveys. Academic units may refer to the ILOs in their annual assessment reports. Not all ILOs are expected to be dealt with equally by every program, much less by every course. (Any change in the current university policy that lodges primary responsibility for academic assessment with academic units and programs will include consultation with the faculty through its standing governing structure.)

The ILOs do not represent, by themselves, all of our understanding of education. Rather, they are a part of a more complex web of education. One can conceptualize the outcomes of a PLU education in three general categories: knowledge, skills or abilities, and values and attitudes. These outcomes occur simultaneously at the individual course, program or major, and institutional levels. Work to develop and measure or evaluate the learning outcomes of students is connected to and informed by the learning outcomes set by groups of faculty in departments, schools, and programs. Likewise, these activities are guided by the outcomes established by the whole faculty for all PLU graduates. Students' perceptions of the educational process should provide useful feedback at all three levels.

The ILOs, which relate primarily to the skills/abilities domain at the whole institutional level, range from the ability to critically analyze and resolve complex issues and problems to being able to work in and understand constantly changing environments, cultures, and times. They transcend disciplines and specialized knowledge, but are not meant to replace or change the contextualized knowledge base of disciplines and fields. They are meant to serve as a useful framework that unifies education throughout Pacific Lutheran University while disciplinary study provides students with the knowledge and understanding of a field that will allow them to function effectively in their chosen area. With respect to this base of knowledge, these global statements can be made:

- The PLU graduate is expected to have a broad knowledge of the basic liberal arts and sciences.
- The PLU graduate should have an understanding of the interconnections among these basic liberal arts and sciences that provide the broad framework for living with the complexities of life.

- The PLU graduate is expected to develop an in-depth knowledge of a specified area of knowledge designated as a major within the university.
- The PLU graduate should have an understanding of the interconnections among the basic liberal arts and sciences and the in-depth knowledge of her/his specified major area.

The Integrative Learning Objectives

In addition to the knowledge base described above, and an awareness of how different disciplinary methodologies are used, every student at Pacific Lutheran University is expected to develop the following abilities:

A. Critical Reflection

1. Select sources of information using appropriate research methods, including those employing technology, and make use of that information carefully and critically.
2. Consider issues from multiple perspectives.
3. Evaluate assumptions and consequences of different perspectives in assessing possible solutions to problems.
4. Understand and explain divergent viewpoints on complex issues, critically assess the support available for each, and defend one's own judgments.

B. Expression

1. Communicate clearly and effectively in both written and oral forms.
2. Adapt message to various audiences using appropriate media, convention, or styles.
3. Create symbols or meanings in a variety of expressive media, both verbal and nonverbal.

C. Interaction with Others

1. Work creatively to identify and clarify the issues of concern.
2. Acknowledge and respond to conflicting ideas, principles, and traditions, identifying common interests where possible.
3. Develop and promote effective strategies and interpersonal relationships for implementing cooperative actions.

D. Valuing

1. Articulate and critically assess one's own values, with an awareness of the communities and traditions that have helped to shape them.
2. Recognize how others have arrived at values different from one's own, and consider their view charitably and with an appreciation for the context in which they emerged.
3. Develop a habit of caring for oneself, for others, and for the environment.
4. Approach moral, spiritual, and intellectual development as a life-long process of making informed choices in one's commitments.

5. Approach one's commitments with a high level of personal responsibility and professional accountability.

E. Multiple Frameworks

1. Recognize and understand how cultures profoundly shape different assumptions and behaviors.
2. Identify issues and problems facing people in every culture (including one's own), seeking constructive strategies for addressing them.
3. Cultivate respect for diverse cultures, practices, and traditions.

(Note: even though these objectives are listed here as discrete elements, they are highly interconnected.)