

**Presentation of the
New Proposed TAP Framework30 Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
February 2022**

FIRC is pleased to present the New Proposed TAP Framework30 Student Learning Outcomes for your approval.¹ The SLOs can be found on pages 5-6 of this document.

What is TAP?

The Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP) was implemented in response to the passage of [Public Act No. 12-31](#) on May 14, 2012, which, among other things, requires a common General Education core.

In Summer 2012, a system-wide Core Competencies Steering Committee with one representative from each of the 17 ConnSCU institutions convened with the charge of identifying the competencies to be addressed in the 30-credit common Gen Ed core (Framework30) and formulating initial recommendations regarding learning outcomes for each competency. The competencies were chosen from the eight specified areas in the [Board of Regents TAP policy](#).

During the same time frame, eight “Core Competency Subcommittees” of this group worked on the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the individual competency areas and defined the competency levels appropriate for a rising junior. Each inter-disciplinary subcommittee consisted of four faculty members from the CSUs, three faculty members from the CCs, and one representative from Charter Oak College. The Steering Committee and core competency subcommittees were disbanded upon completion of their work (between Summer 2012 and Spring 2013).

At the time, there was concern from some participants that the SLOs were overly ambitious and would be difficult to assess.

Beginning in Fall 2012, system-wide TAP Pathways Committees for each university major convened with the charge to develop the various pre-major pathways, including 30 credits of program-specific courses (Pathway30), which, together with the Framework30, comprises the 60-credit Associate degree. Each of the major pathway committees reserved a spot for a faculty representative from each campus, and these groups continue to meet yearly to review the pathways.

¹ The “new proposed SLOs” came about through an extensive revision process, and are sometimes referred to as the “revised SLOs.”

The Framework30 competencies and related SLOs were distributed to the faculty at the 17 CSCU institutions for endorsement in Fall 2013. The endorsement process was completed by February 15, 2013. Fifteen of the 17 institutions voted to endorse. Each individual community college was responsible for the vetting of their courses to the Framework30 competencies; this work began in AY 2014-2015, and continues through today with the vetting of any new courses.

What is FIRC?

Established in April 2014 to oversee the ongoing implementation of the Transfer and Articulation Policy, [the charge of the TAP Framework Implementation and Review Committee \(FIRC\)](#) includes:

- reviewing Pathway templates generated by Work Groups for consistency with TAP Framework30
- reviewing learning outcomes assessment data about general education outcomes provided by campuses
- facilitating periodic review of the Framework30 learning outcomes
- suggesting ongoing quality improvement of Framework30 assessment rubrics

The FIRC membership consists of 17 voting, teaching-faculty members, with one representative from each CSCU institution, elected on each campus in keeping with the typical procedure followed on the campus for elections to faculty committees, and two non-voting, non-teaching faculty with expertise and experience in transfer and articulation, one from a community college and one from CSU/COSC.² The committee [meets monthly](#).

What is the Framework30?

The [Framework30](#) is the 30-credit General Education core that comprises half of each CSCU Transfer degree. One of FIRC's charges is facilitating periodic review of the Framework30 learning outcomes.

Why is FIRC revising the Framework30 SLOs now?

Following implementation of the CSCU Transfer degrees (2014 - 2016), CSCU institutions assessed the Framework30 SLOs and reported their data, both quantitative and qualitative, to FIRC over a period of several years (2017-2019).

² The positions for FIRC representatives from Norwalk CC and Northwestern Connecticut CC are currently vacant, and the FIRC representative from Quinebaug Valley CC is on sabbatical for Spring 2022.

In 2018-19, FIRC officially began the review part of the implementation → assessment → review/revision cycle by analyzing and reviewing the assessment data, and asking the faculty involved in TAP assessment at each college for feedback. An Executive Summary of the feedback and result of the review for each area was published in Spring 2019. The [Executive Summary document](#) has served as both the launch pad and the guiding principles for the revision process that FIRC undertook from 2020-2022.

In other words, the final draft SLOs presented in this document are the result of 3-4 years of faculty work (2018-2022), and two years (2020-2022) of an iterative process of faculty collaboration, including collectively reworking the SLOs, soliciting feedback, and revising the drafts again, in some cases after several rounds of feedback and revision.

What has been the revision process so far? (February 2020 - February 2022)

In early February 2020, FIRC representatives extended invitations to faculty at their institutions to participate in workgroups at an in-person meeting on February 28, 2020. More than 70 faculty attended the workshop. Participants were provided with a [set of Guiding Principles for writing the Framework30 SLOs](#) as well as a shortened version of the [Executive Summary of Framework30 Assessment Data](#). The Guiding Principles were designed by FIRC specifically to address the themes that emerged in the assessment of the existing Framework30 SLOs.

In March 2021, after a year of reviewing input from the February 2020 workshop group and the previous assessment data, representatives of FIRC distributed a complete draft of the revised Framework30 SLOs with a call for feedback. Detailed feedback was received from more than half of the institutions in the system, and was compiled and publicly distributed through a set of documents with the feedback for each set of SLOs.

FIRC reviewed the feedback during the Fall 2021 semester, incorporating it into the final draft of the SLOs where feasible, and providing an explanation when, for example, it was necessary to choose between conflicting sets of feedback. When necessary, FIRC reached out to various cross-campus faculty groups (for example, CCET, C3BIOS) for additional discipline-specific advice. On February 11, 2022, FIRC voted to accept the final draft of the Framework30 SLOs and forward them to the 17 CSCUs.

What are the Guiding Principles?

In drafting the SLOs, a set of Guiding Principles (dubbed the “MMM guidelines” — meaningful, manageable, and measurable SLOs) was distributed to faculty at the February 2020 workshops, and used by members of FIRC, both in drafting the SLOs and making adjustments to the SLOs in

response to the feedback.

The Guiding Principles were the product of feedback received from both general education assessment groups and individual faculty involved in assessment of the existing TAP Framework30 SLOs. One of the overwhelmingly clear messages received in the feedback was that the existing (2012) SLOs are far too cumbersome to assess. In short, FIRC designed the Guiding Principles in response to the feedback of those involved in assessment. The revision of the SLOs using these principles is the final step in closing the assessment loop.

The key points from the Guiding Principles “MMM” guidelines that should be considered when proposing any revisions and providing feedback on the draft SLOs are as follows:

- Each Framework30 category should have **three or fewer outcomes**.
- The group of outcomes for each category should be **assessable with a single artifact**.
- The group of outcomes for each category should be **covered within a single course**.
- The outcomes should be clear and focused; words such as ‘and’ should be avoided if they are used in ways that make the outcomes difficult to assess.
- Outcomes should use appropriate verbs from Bloom’s Taxonomy of Assessment, with an eye to the fact that they are being written for 100-level introductory courses and 200-level courses with no prerequisites. The SLOs represent the knowledge and skills all degree candidates are expected to acquire; they are not program objectives for majors in the discipline.
- As a group, the Framework30 outcomes should be written at a similar level of specificity; details such as the format of the artifact should be reserved for the rubric.

Please see [Guiding Principles for Writing SLOs](#) for the full set of guidelines.

Presentation of New Proposed TAP Framework30 SLOs

Written Communication

1. Craft a thesis-driven, supported, logically organized argument that applies conventions of English appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.
2. Interpret and evaluate credible sources and integrate ideas from those sources in an ethical manner with appropriate documentation.

Oral Communication

1. Create and express oral messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.
2. Employ Communication theories and strategies to convey an oral message.
3. Critically analyze messages.

Quantitative Reasoning

Given an authentic context or everyday life situation:

1. Convert relevant information into an appropriate mathematical form, such as an equation, graph, diagram, table, or words.
2. Use arithmetic, algebra, geometry, statistics, or logic to solve related problems.
3. Interpret the significance, reasonableness, or implications of calculated results.

Scientific Knowledge and Understanding

1. Communicate scientific knowledge using appropriate terminology, and representations, models, or analysis.
2. Describe how a scientific explanation or theory is refined or replaced.
3. Evaluate the quality of a scientific claim on the basis of its source, and the logic or methods used to generate it.

Scientific Reasoning

1. Apply scientific methods to investigate phenomena of the physical or natural world through prediction, observation or experimentation, data acquisition, and evaluation.
2. Represent and report scientific data symbolically, graphically, or numerically.
3. Interpret and evaluate scientific data in order to draw reasonable and logical conclusions.

Historical Knowledge and Understanding

1. Define and interpret primary and secondary historical sources.
2. Explain and evaluate the influence of historical agency (race, class, gender, region/location, or belief system) in the context of defined periods.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

1. Explain social, organizational, psychological, political, economic, historical, geographic, or cultural elements that influence and are influenced by individuals or groups.
2. Describe theories and concepts, or research methods used to investigate social or behavioral phenomena.
3. Identify and describe ethical issues pertaining to social contexts and phenomena.*

* Examples include but are not limited to: how economic policies affect social classes or marginalized groups; consumer behavior and governmental control over regulation; what counts as ethical or unethical research methods conducted with human subjects; codes of ethics used by specific disciplines in social & behavioral sciences; and issues pertaining to systemic inequality, structural oppression, and intersectional justice.

Arts and Humanities

1. Identify and describe key features of visual works, performances, texts, or other artifacts in relation to a context (such as historical, geographical, social, political, cultural, linguistic, or aesthetic).
2. Apply key concepts, terminology, techniques or methodologies in the analysis or creation of visual works, performances, texts, or other artifacts.

Continuing Learning/Information Literacy

1. Use current, relevant technologies to identify and solve problems, make informed decisions, communicate, or create information.
2. Evaluate the authority, relevance, and accuracy of various sources of information to address issues that arise in academic, professional, or personal contexts.
3. Identify ethical issues related to access or use of information, such as the impact on security, privacy, censorship, intellectual property, or the reliability of information.

How do these differ from the existing TAP Framework SLOs?

To see a side-by-side comparison of the existing SLOs, which were written in 2012, and the new proposed SLOs, please go to the [Comparison of Existing SLOs versus New Proposed SLOs](#)

document. This document also contains links to documents for each set of SLOs with the first (Spring 2021) draft of the revised SLOs — along with all of the feedback received from each institution on the first draft, and FIRC’s responses to the feedback.

Please note that the new proposed SLOs are the product of a multi-year process of actively engaging faculty and disciplinary groups from across the system, and that TAP FIRC is a body on which all 17 institutions in the CSCU system have an opportunity for representation, and in which voting members are all elected faculty. FIRC initiated the revision process in response to faculty feedback that the TAP Framework30 SLOs were difficult to assess — not just in the interest of closing the assessment loop, but also with the aim of being responsive to faculty feedback. In other words, the new proposed SLOs are written by and for the faculty of the CSCU system at the request of faculty from the CSCU system.

If a set of new proposed SLOs is not approved, no change will be made, and FIRC will go forward with the existing SLOs.

In the form of [a letter from Dr. Michael Rooke](#), sent while he was in his previous role as CSCC Interim Provost and VP for Academic Affairs, FIRC has received reassurances that this faculty-driven work will be honored moving forward. Dr. Rooke affirmed that FIRC will continue to have ownership of, and responsibility for, the Framework30 SLOs.

What is the next step?

FIRC is asking your institution to approve the new proposed TAP Framework30 SLOs as a package. A response from each institution will be solicited by, and should be funneled through, your elected [TAP FIRC representative](#).

As is customary with voting on TAP matters, if your institution votes no or abstains from voting, it should send to FIRC a written rationale for the no vote/abstention.

In a no vote, objections to *individual sets of* new proposed SLOs should be identified, with rationale for why the institution is objecting to the revisions to each particular set of SLOs. Any set of new proposed SLOs not mentioned and accompanied by a rationale will be considered to be approved.

FIRC members must report the outcome of their institution’s vote to FIRC no later than May 27, 2022. The votes will be tallied and sent back to FIRC representatives no later than May 31, 2022.

If you have any questions about the process, please email the TAP FIRC Co-Chairs: Prof. Sarah Selke (Three Rivers CC, sselke@trcc.commnet.edu) and Prof. Heidi Lockwood (Southern CT

State University, lockwoodh1@southernct.edu).