

PSLO Review Reference Guide

PSLO Review Checklist

| Criterion | Meaning |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Output-Focused | Targets <i>student behavior</i> , not instruction received or program activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observable | Describes measurable behavior using <i>action verbs</i> (see Bloom's Taxonomy) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distinct | Isolates a <i>single skill</i> (individual goal for student behavior, competency, or ability) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discipline-Specific | Articulates <i>disciplinary values</i> using the language of the field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant | Reflects program faculty's own values and <i>clearly aligns</i> with institution values (ISLOs) |

Examples of Weak PSLOs, Stronger Revisions, and Explanations of Improvements Made

| Checklist | Example | Students will... | Explanation |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| <u>Output-Focused</u> |  | ...gain experience in providing patient care services under the supervision and direction of a licensed practitioner. | The primary focus is on what the program provides (supervision of an expert), not student learning and performance. |
| |  | ...provide optimal patient care using established and accepted dental hygiene techniques and procedures. | Attention is refocused on what behavior or skill students will demonstrate. |
| <u>Observable</u> |  | ...demonstrate knowledge of dental hygiene rules and regulations established by state licensing agencies. | It is impossible to record evidence of what goes on inside a student's head (e.g. "demonstrate knowledge" or "understand"). |
| |  | ...recognize and explain dental hygiene rules and regulations established by state licensing agencies. | Uses clear action verbs to describe observable behaviors that can provide measurable evidence of student understanding. |
| <u>Distinct</u> |  | ...collect, analyze, and interpret data utilizing critical thinking to determine a comprehensive periodontal treatment plan and deliver a professional standard of care. | Many different skills are lumped together, including <i>collecting</i> data, <i>analyzing</i> data, <i>interpreting</i> data and <i>applying</i> that data in <i>designing</i> and <i>implementing</i> a treatment plan. |
| |  | ...collect and record relevant patient data. ...analyze patient data to identify oral health needs. ...formulate a comprehensive oral care treatment plan that meets the patient's needs. ...deliver a professional standard of oral health care. | Separates out the individual skills (behaviors, competencies, and abilities) and isolates a single goal for student learning for each outcome; when directed toward a shared content area or overarching goal, it is often useful to divide a PSLO into "sub-outcomes" (e.g. PSLO 2a and 2b). |
| <u>Discipline-Specific</u> |  | ...communicate effectively with peers and instructors to formulate a clear and precise point of view | It is not clear what exactly effective communication looks like for the dental hygiene profession in particular. |
| |  | ...provide clear and appropriate patient education and instruction on oral health conditions and practices. | Specifies communication activities within discipline (patient education) and the qualities that make them effective (clear, appropriate) |
| <u>Relevant</u> |  | ...perform at or above the national average on the National Board Dental Hygiene Exam (NBDHE) | Scores on a professional licensing exam are not as important as the specific skills needed to pass it, nor do exam results directly reflect our own learning goals for students in the program. |
| |  | ...accurately identify dental hygiene practices and their scientific basis, process of care services, and community health/research principles. ...accurately identify essential functions of a dental hygienist and applications for a variety of patient cases. | Prioritizes the skills themselves—the content areas and competences that the licensing exam is designed to assess—instead of test scores alone and articulates them according to internal program values as opposed to those imposed by an outside licensing/accrediting body. |