

Guidance for Submitting Activities for Fulfillment of Institutional Competencies (ICs)

The Institutional Competencies Subcommittee offers the following guidance for activities submitted in APSEA for fulfillment of one or more IC(s):

- Consider that the activity Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and description will be presented in the Comprehensive Learner Record (CLR) for students and employers to view. This consideration should inform how this information is written.
 - As the CLR will only include the activity description and the SLOs, the IC Subcommittee only looks at this information when considering whether to approve an activity.
- The activity SLOs should include evidence of *how* the mapped ICs are attained and acquired, and how the activity promotes the ICs.
 - Using active verbs and words such as “by” or “through” can help show how students will acquire the mapped ICs through the activity.
- The activity SLOs should include activity-specific content and evidence that supports students in achieving the outcomes of the Institutional Competency.
- ICs mapped to an activity should be incorporated and achieved explicitly and directly through that activity. The activity SLOs should therefore focus on showing how the activity *actively* supports student attainment of the IC learning outcomes.
- The activity SLOs should be student-centered and incorporate language that focuses on the students.
 - For example, an SLO could begin with phrases such as “Students will analyze” or “Students will create.”
 - Additionally, avoid saying “Students *should*...” – instead, say “Students *will*...”
- The activity SLOs should detail:
 - What will make a student successful in their acquisition of the mapped ICs
 - Methods of assessment and feedback that will be incorporated, and any opportunities for improvement over time
 - Avoid use of less measurable terms like “understand”, “know”, and “gain an appreciation for”.
- The activity SLOs should incorporate specific language from the relevant ICs and IC Learning Outcomes without simply restating the ICs.
- The activity SLOs should be free of jargon, discipline-specific terms, and abbreviations that those not in the activity will not understand.
 - If these terms are necessary, further explanation and/or definitions should be provided.

The following guidance has also been provided by the IC Subcommittee for fulfillment of each individual Institutional Competency:

Critical Thinking:

- Activities submitted for the Critical Thinking IC should focus on and help develop the following skills for students:
 - Evaluating information to make reasoned judgments

- Questioning assumptions and considering different perspectives
- Assessing the validity of analytical findings

Analytical Thinking:

- Activities submitted for the Analytical Thinking IC should focus on and help develop the following skills for students:
 - Breaking down information into parts to understand its structure
 - Identifying patterns, drawing conclusions based on evidence, and solving problems by interpreting data
- Many Analytical Thinking activities will include a quantitative reasoning process (e.g., the Scientific Method).
- Some Analytical Thinking activities will include the application of methods or theory to problems in the discipline.

Communication:

- Activities submitted for the Communication IC should focus on achieving the competency through an iterative process, and include stated opportunities for feedback, corrections, and improvement over time.

Social Awareness and Responsibility:

- Activities submitted for the Social Awareness and Responsibility IC should demonstrate how they help students understand that the world does not revolve around them and give them an awareness of other people and how they, as individuals, are situated within and impact other people, communities, and environments.
- Activities that focus on demonstrating the effects of the environment on people will *not* typically be approved for Social Awareness and Responsibility, while those that demonstrate the effects of people on the environment may be approved.
- These activities should also be a contemporary application of the concepts, not simply a study of the history of the concepts.

Creativity and Innovation:

- Activities submitted for the Creativity and Innovation IC should demonstrate that creativity and innovation is a process, ending with a new or original project or product.
- For standard academic products like research papers, the weight of evidence for Creativity and Innovation is higher than for more original products.

Leadership and Collaboration:

- Activities submitted for the Leadership and Collaboration IC should focus both on learning about leadership and collaboration *and* allowing students the opportunity to actively lead and collaborate, improving these skills throughout the activity's completion through feedback.