A Framework for Learner-centered Education and OBE: A Narrative of Baliuag University’s Ongoing Initiative

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“Learning outcomes are important for recognition... The principal question asked of the student or the graduate will therefore no longer be “what did you do to obtain your degree?” but rather “what can you do now that you have obtained your degree?” This approach is of relevance to the labour market and is certainly more flexible when taking into account issues of lifelong learning, non-traditional learning, and other forms of non-formal educational experiences.” (Council of Europe, 2002)
International trends in education show a **shift** from the traditional ‘teacher-centered’ approach to a ‘**student-centered approach**’. This alternative model focuses on what the students are expected to be able to do at the end of the module or programme. Hence, this approach is commonly referred to as outcome-based approach. *(Kennedy, D. 2007)*
In recent decades, however, we have learned a great deal from cognitive science research about the nature of learning. Students construct knowledge; they do not take it in as it is disseminated, but rather they build on knowledge they have gained previously (Cross, 1998). They benefit from working together and they may learn best from teaching each other. Research also suggests that students learn best in the context of a compelling problem (Ewell, 1997); they learn through experience.
What is outcome-based education?

‘Outcome-Based Education means clearly focusing and organising everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organising the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens’ (Spady, 1994, p. 1)
“Statements called learning outcomes are used to express what the students are expected to achieve and how they are expected to demonstrate that achievement. Learning outcomes are defined as statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning.” (ECTS, 2005 in Kennedy, D. Writing and Using Learning Outcomes, 2007)
Outcomes are clear learning **results** that we want students to demonstrate at the end of significant learning experiences..and.. Are actions and **performances** that embody and reflect learner **competence** in using content, information, ideas, and tools successfully *(Spady, 1994)*
What the student is to learn must be clearly identified

The student’s progress is based on demonstrated achievement

Multiple instructional and assessment strategies need to be available to meet the needs of each student

Adequate time and assistance need to be provided so that each student can reach the maximum potential
Where Baliuag U Started (2009)

Learner-centered and Outcomes-based Education: Jump-off Concepts
Objectives of the Initial OBE Workshops

- To clarify the teaching philosophy and practices pervasive among BU college faculty
- To arrive at a common learner-centered instructional framework for the different colleges
- To identify intended learning outcomes for the different degree programs and to align these outcomes with industry/professional standards and the university’s objectives
- To finalize a common syllabus format that reflects a refined instructional paradigm
Where Baliuag U started

- Started by determining the knowledge, competencies and qualities we want students to be able to demonstrate when they finish school and face the challenges and opportunities of the adult world.
Defining competencies: Initial Workshop Findings

Industry Standards

GAPS

Perceived competencies by faculty
Defining competencies: Initial workshop Findings

University Objectives

GAPS

Perceived competencies by faculty

Industry standards
Framework for Instructional Improvement in Baliuag University

Institutional Program Outcomes
(Alignment and articulation)

Institutional Values
- Citizenship
- Service

Interventions and initiatives
- Professional development and faculty profile upgrading
- Research
- Benchmarking

Learning Environment
- Teaching philosophy
- Instructional paradigm
- Teacher competence
- Student characteristics
CORE VALUES

RESPONSIBILITY
We will be accountable and responsible for all our actions.

INTEGRITY
We will steadfastly and faithfully adhere to our code of moral values.

SERVICE
We will work to provide extraordinary service to each other, to our students, community and country.

EXCELLENCE
We will continually strive for excellence and quality in all of our endeavors by being pro-active, innovative and responsive.

RESPECT
We will uphold unity through respect and teamwork.

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## Baliuag U Graduate Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baliuag University graduates are ....</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionally competent for the emerging workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culturally-sensitive and responsive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical and creative thinkers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective communicators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service-oriented and socially engaged citizens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifelong learners</td>
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Moving from Outcomes to Curriculum and Assessment
Continuing the initiative
A Curriculum model for OBE
(Harden et al., 1999)

Figure 1. A model for the curriculum emphasising the importance of educational outcomes in curriculum planning.
What did we hope to accomplish during the OBE workshop? (2012)

1. Validate our institutional learning outcomes vis-à-vis Baliuag University’s Mission and Vision

2. Re-evaluate and finalize our degree program learning outcomes vis-à-vis institutional core values and industry competencies

3. Align our subject offerings with intended learning outcomes and student development outcomes

4. Identify and align classroom assessment with program and institutional learning outcomes
Dimensions of learning outcomes
(Driscoll & Wood, 2007)

- Knowledge outcomes
- Skills outcomes
- Attitudes and values outcomes
- Behavioral outcomes
The Outcome-based Design Sequence
(Spady, 1988)

- Exit outcomes
- Program outcomes
- Course outcomes
- Unit outcomes
- Lesson outcomes
Plan for Designing and Delivering Learning Outcomes
(Huba and Freed, 2000)

Design backward

Intended Learning Outcomes of the Lesson

Intended Learning Outcomes of the Unit

Intended Learning Outcomes of the Course

Intended Learning Outcomes of the Academic Program

Intended Learning Outcomes of the Institution

Deliver forward
Refining program learning outcomes (2012)

Baliuag U’s Mission and Vision

Industry competencies

Institutional Core Values as Development Outcomes

Institutional learning outcomes

Program Learning outcomes

Classroom assessment and terminal program assessment
Assessing Student Learning: Course, Program, and Institutional levels
(Driscoll & Wood, 2007)

Examine learning culture

- Design assessment: Articulate goals, develop clear outcomes, evidence, criteria and standards
- Make outcomes, evidence, criteria, and standards “public and visible” (syllabi, programs and brochures)
- Collect evidence of student achievement
- Review and analyze evidence
- Revise outcomes and criteria, pedagogy, curriculum, and programs
Program assessment

Program assessment focuses on assessing student learning and experience to determine whether students have acquired the skills, knowledge, and competencies associated with their program of study.

Course-based assessment

Course-based assessment refers to methods of assessing student learning within the classroom environment, using course goals, objectives and content to gauge the extent of the learning that is taking place.
Assessments can provide direct or indirect measures of student learning.

**Direct** measures require students to demonstrate their achievement and often involve quantitative measurement procedures.

**Indirect** assessment is based on opinions.
Baliuag University’s OBE-related Initiatives
An Ongoing Narrative
University Vision and Mission

University Core Values

Baliuag University Graduate Attributes

Learner-centered

Student Outcome-related variables

Instructional / Pedagogical framework

Alignment and planning of curriculum instruction, assessment

Faculty development programs and faculty evaluation

Internal

Program Review and Evaluation

Direct and Indirect measures of student learning outcomes

Accreditation

Quality Assurance

External

Working Conceptual Framework for Baliuag U’s OBE-related Initiatives
Baliuag University’s Center for Academic Development and Assessment (CADA)
As the University moves towards outcomes-based education, there is a need to create a unit that shall assess, monitor, and develop institutional interventions related to improving teaching and learning in the University.

Its primary task is to plan outcomes, monitor accomplishments, and support processes directly related to academic assessment and faculty development.
Baliuag U’s Center for Academic Development and Assessment: Core Functions

- Academic assessment
- Faculty development
CADA: Academic assessment initiatives

+ **Academic Program Review**
  1. Coordinates University-wide academic program reviews and provides technical support to academic units as they undertake curricular review of their programs
  2. Generates and compiles program review reports
  3. Provides technical data relevant for policy formulation related to academic programs

+ **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**
  1. Supports academic units in formulating program and learning outcomes
  2. Assesses and monitors accomplishment of student learning outcomes
CADA: Academic assessment initiatives

+ **Faculty Development Assessment**
  1. Support the VPAR in faculty evaluation by monitoring how current faculty development programs contribute to accomplishing institutional and student learning outcomes
1. **New Faculty Orientation**
   - Orients new faculty on policies, practices, and programs pertinent to faculty development and instruction

2. **Teaching-Learning Competency Workshops**
   - Develops and conducts needs-based faculty training on core teaching competencies related to curriculum planning, facilitating learning, developing learning materials, assessing learning outcomes, and integration of technology to teaching
Where do we go from here?

A roadmap for future OBE initiatives for Baliuag University
3. **Professional Learning Communities**
   + Trains faculty members and administrators to establish Professional Learning Communities within and across academic units to promote professional collaboration to improve instructional practices and promote scholarship of teaching and learning

4. **Special Events and Linkages**
   + Coordinates external programs and activities directly related to faculty development
The ideal approach for assessing quality of institutions (Campbell, 2011)
In closing...

“To cope with a challenging world, any entity must develop the capacity of shifting and changing - of developing new skills and attitudes; in short the capacity of learning.”