Hagerstown Community College  
**Program Outcomes Guide (POG)**

**Program Title:** *The title should match that found in the course catalog.*

**Date:** *Semester report is written*

**Program Team:** *Program coordinator or lead faculty and faculty who teach in the program.*

**Expected Learning Outcomes:**

*Outcomes should reflect what the student should “be able to do” in the real world when he or she finishes the program. This may include knowledge/skills/attitudes. Outcomes should be clear, concise and measurable. One way to develop measurable outcomes is the use of simple, concrete action verbs. For example, “analyze” or “synthesize” are much easier to assess than “be exposed to” or “understand.” Do not use too many outcomes; three to five are enough. Program outcomes can be developed or modified with the help of an advisory committee. Some program outcomes are mandated by accrediting bodies. Other programs may have recommended outcomes from a professional organization. However, the main idea is that the program outcomes should be the most important concepts rather a laundry list of skills. One resource for developing outcomes is the Mapping Primer by Stiehl and Lewchuck.*

**Assessment: (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome?)**

*There are two approaches to measuring achievement of program level goals. A capstone approach is used at the end of a program. A capstone could be a comprehensive exam (such as the NCLEX) or a project (such as a portfolio of work, or an internship project). Embedded assignments can be used in various courses throughout the program to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes. Embedded assessment is especially useful if students are not taking courses in a cohort group or if there is no capstone course.*

**Validation: (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)**

*The purpose of validation is to demonstrate that the assessment tools are measuring what they are* *intended to measure. An assessment can be validated several different ways. If a nationally normed exam is used, it is typically validated by the testing company. However, many of the assessment methods used at the College are developed in-house, since not every program has a nationally normed tool. One way to validate in-house tools is to have faculty from outside the College review them to determine if they align with the program outcomes.* *Validation may be the most difficult part of assessment. The Division Director can be a resource.*

**Results: (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)**

*Results should be collected from all students completing the program. Results should be summarized in a table and evaluated to determine if the students met expectations. The tables in Appendix C provide an example for capstone assessment and embedded assessment.*

**Follow-up: (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)**

*This step is often referred to as “closing the loop”. The goal is to examine the data and determine if students are achieving the desired outcomes. If the students are not achieving the desired outcomes, why aren’t they? By analyzing changes and differences, faculty can start to identify which activities work best to meet objectives and achieve the learning outcomes.*

*Example: All sections of ECO 201 performed worse on Question #43 of the comprehensive final. Why? Were there any changes that took place in the classroom or in the curriculum that could have caused this? What activities can we add to improve learning?*

*Example: The online sections of ACC 102 consistently perform better on the comprehensive final exam. Why? What tools are being used in the online sections that might help the students in the face-to-face sections?*

*Remember: assessment is a continuous process.* *Using the results can lead faculty back to any of the previous steps.*

**Budget Justification: (What resources are necessary to improve student learning?)**

*Do you need any additional resources to improve instruction? These will also be included in unit planning documents. Examples of requested resources could include: software for the Learning Support Center, more tutors/staff for Learning Support Center, maps, models, library databases and so on.*