



## Achievement-Centered Education

UNL's General Education Program  
Office of Undergraduate Studies

These additional certification guidelines have been agreed upon by the Interim ACE Committee:

- 1) The committee agrees to look at question #1 (*Describe opportunities students should have to learn the outcome. How is the learning objective embedded in the course?*) and question #2 (*Describe student work that will be used to assess student achievement of the outcome and explain how the students demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the outcome.*) together. Merely listing items such as tests, quizzes, and lectures in #2 does not address how the students will demonstrate they are achieving the outcome.
- 2) The proposal must be able to 'stand on its own', although the committee might use the syllabus to clarify items, it should not substitute for the information required on the proposal.
- 3) Question #3 should include both strategies for 'collecting' as well as 'doing' with the evaluation products used for assessment to meet the outcome. (Question #3 is: *As part of the ACE certification process, the department/unit agrees to collect and assess a reasonable sample of students' work and provide reflections on students' achievement of the Learning Outcomes for its respective ACE-certified courses. Please comment on your plans to develop a process to collect and evaluate student work over time for the purpose of assessing student success for this ACE outcome.*)

Overall, the committee members are not making judgments regarding courses, course content, academic disciplines, instructors, units, etc.; rather, they are solely evaluating the effectiveness with which the proposal demonstrates that students have the opportunity to gain and demonstrate the knowledge and/or skills specified in the outcome; and that the unit has indicated a reasonable strategy for assessment including 'collecting' and 'doing'.

Visit the ACE web site at <http://www.unl.edu/ous/ace/resources.shtml> to see examples of certified courses.

Also:

- a) The proposals need to be written in language that will be understood by those reading them who are from outside the courses' disciplines.
- b) According to the ACE document (#4) the syllabus submitted for an ACE course should include the following so that students understand what they are supposed to learn:
  - ❖ The Learning Outcome(s) that would be satisfied by the course.
  - ❖ A brief description of the opportunities this course would provide for students to acquire the knowledge or skills necessary to achieve the Learning Outcome(s)
  - ❖ A brief description of the graded assignments that the instructor(s) will use to assess the students' achievement of the Outcome(s).
- c) Assessment strategies for awarding the grade for the course do not necessarily address assessment of student achievement of the outcome. There certainly could be some courses where they might be the same strategies, but for many courses assessment of student achievement of the outcome is only one component of the final course grade. If the proposals are prepared with that focus, it would have the IACE committee having to do less decision making on what is sometimes 'simple assurance' expressed in the proposals.