

Institutional and Team Guidance for ACCJC Standard I.B.6

ACCJC Standard I. B. 6. reads (in part), “The institution disaggregates and analyzes learning outcomes and achievement for subpopulations of students.”

When institutions are preparing their Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER), and when teams evaluate an institution’s compliance with this Standard, they should reference the following considerations:

1. The terms **learning outcomes** and **achievement** as used in this Standard should not be conflated as meaning the same thing or as being supported by the same evidence.
 - a. The concept of **learning outcomes** speaks to the actual learning resulting from a student’s active engagement with the curriculum. It describes the enhanced understandings, the acquisition of new knowledge and cognitive skills, as intended by the program faculty and as described in Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). As such, learning outcomes are as varied as the programs they define; they are often narrative-based, or expressed in non-numeric terms, and require individual assessment of student work by faculty before meaningful comparisons among student subpopulations can be made.
 - b. The concept of **achievement** in this context speaks to summative markers of accomplishments such as students earning a degree or certificate, transferring to the next level of education, or completing a course of study. As such, achievement can often be reported by numeric values and data sets that are largely common across institutions and can be compared among institutions and among subcategories of learners.
2. Institutions have been obtaining and reporting **achievement** data for some time, as with IPEDS reporting on graduation rates and in their annual reports to ACCJC and other agencies. In most cases, data sets are defined and agreed upon by all participants. The resulting information can be disaggregated and readily used for comparative purposes.
3. By contrast, acquiring, reporting, and using data on **learning outcomes** does not as readily lend itself to a singular definition of data sets or to a reporting template that is common among institutions or even among programs within a college. In reviewing Standard I.B.6 (as well as the reference to disaggregation of **learning outcomes** data in Standard I.B.5), teams should bring the following perspectives to their appraisal:
 - a. Documenting and disaggregating **learning outcomes** is recognized by the ACCJC as an area that emphasizes innovative approaches that best meet an institution’s needs. ACCJC member institutions have developed varied approaches that utilize their available data systems and that are adaptive to their distinctive programs and student populations. Institutions are disaggregating their data by a variety of sub-categories such as by levels of preparation, instructional modality (online/on-ground), demographics such as ethnicity and socio-economic status, and other categories that best serve their missions.

- b. In any case, no single model or approach should be deemed as the basis for making a recommendation. Institutions should, however, use any relevant indicators of differential achievement to prompt planning for closing these gaps.
 - c. Teams can foster innovative practices by bringing a receptive eye to promising ones that work on behalf of increased student learning and that may be worth sharing with the larger ACCJC learning community.
4. Teams should continue to encourage faculty to become more precise in their development of assessable learning outcomes at the course and program levels. Disaggregation of learning outcomes data at the program and institutional levels provides institutions relevant information as to where learning gaps may exist. Strategies such as the use of rubrics and inter-rater reliability exercises among faculty may generate more meaningful data and facilitate in making subpopulation comparisons of learning outcomes within their institutions and with external stakeholders to foster the improvement of learning.
 5. When making recommendations, teams may consider that institutional processes for disaggregation of SLO data are less likely to be sustainable if they are not linked to other key processes that are important to the institution, such as for its equity agenda or for program reviews. Teams should support meaningful analyses that contribute to institutional improvement.

The Commission recognizes that member institutions are still in varying stages of implementation with disaggregating learning outcomes. The Commission has determined, at the present time, it will not give compliance recommendations on this aspect of the standard requiring disaggregation of student learning outcomes.