

## **DEGREE PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS**

In accordance with Northern Arizona University's [Curriculum Design and Assessment](#) policy, and in support of seven-year academic program review or discipline-specific accreditation efforts, for all Academic Programs offered at the University, all Academic Units shall achieve and maintain compliance with the Degree Program Expectations adopted by the Faculty Senate, as outlined below.<sup>1</sup> Minors or certificates shall at minimum have written Program Purpose Statements and Program Student Learning Outcomes.

1. **Degree Program Purpose Statement** identifies the program's overarching goals or aims as collectively understood by its faculty. Each statement should describe a) the program's scope in terms of content studied, skills developed, and the learning experiences provided; b) the future opportunities for which the program is designed to prepare its students; and c) how the program differentiates itself from all other degree programs at NAU. Academic Programs with emphases should also summarize the content and skills unique to each area of emphasis. Graduate degree program statements should also describe the student population best suited for the area of study.
2. **Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes** define the scope (breadth and depth) of what students will know and be able to do or accomplish upon completion of the program. Student learning outcomes are a) explicit; b) learning-centered, meaning they focus on what students learn rather than what faculty teach; c) aligned with the degree program's purpose and scope; and d) appropriate for the level of degree offered (e.g., master's degree outcomes are more rigorous and comprehensive relative to bachelor's degree outcomes). For Academic Programs with emphases, learning outcomes describe both the degree's common and unique content and skills associated with curricular requirements.
3. **Coherent Curriculum Design reflected in a Degree Program Curriculum Matrix** that visually demonstrates the courses and their sequence for each degree program student learning outcome. The matrix should a) make apparent the curriculum's design rationale for both students and faculty and reflect the principle that curriculum design shall have coherent course sequencing and structure thoughtfully designed to achieve intended student learning outcomes, and b) should include a written description of how the courses and their sequencing relate to student achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
4. **Systematic Assessment of Intended Student Learning Outcomes** requires that student learning information be regularly collected and analyzed by program faculty to determine achievement of stated degree program student learning outcomes. At least once between Academic Program reviews, at a minimum all broad learning outcome are evaluated using direct methods of assessment toward the conclusion of the student's program of study.
5. **Continual Improvement** entails an Academic Program's faculty and leaders systematically capitalizing on ongoing assessment findings to inform high quality programmatic decision-making. Based on the assessment findings, their interpretation and related discussion, curriculum design or assessment improvements or dissemination of student learning strengths should occur and be documented for each broad learning outcome.
6. **Strategic Course Design** requirements consist of a) syllabi that comply with the [Syllabus Requirements](#) policy and standard syllabus template; b) class section syllabi align with the syllabus of record; and c) courses with Liberal Studies and/or Diversity Designations align with course design designation requirements. In addition, each syllabus provides learning opportunities and assignments designed to achieve the course's stated purpose and learning outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Capitalization denotes special terms defined in the *Curriculum Design and Assessment* policy. For example, Academic Programs are programs of study whose successful completion results in the award of a degree, minor, or certificate.