

**Changes to Faculty Handbook.****10.8.3 Consistency of Student Learning Outcomes across Sections and Modalities of Instruction**

## Background:

In November 2015, Iowa State University went through an accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). As a part of that review process, the institution is reviewed for meeting both the Criteria for Accreditation and Federal Compliance items. One of the items reviewed as a part of Federal Compliance is a 'sampling' of syllabi across courses/sections. In that review, the team is looking for consistency of outcomes and student work expectations across sections and modalities of delivery. (For example, are the content of course material, course outcomes, and student work expectations similar for Section 1 of a course that is offered face to face as they are for Section 4 that is offered online?)

During the review, it was discovered that while Iowa State was substantially meeting those expectations, the institution did not have a policy on consistency of outcomes across sections and modalities to support the institutional practice. As a part of the continuous improvement process associated with HLC, and in preparation for an Assurance Review by HLC that will occur in February 2020, the language for Faculty Handbook 10.8.3 is being proposed to 'document' the existing institutional practice. The statement does not limit faculty academic freedom in how a course is taught or assessed. It also recognizes that faculty may choose to incorporate additional outcomes beyond the core outcomes. However, to maintain the integrity of the course and program curriculum, this handbook language clarifies that core course outcomes will be the same across sections and modalities.

This proposed language was reviewed, revised, and vetted over the past year and half by Faculty Senate and College Curriculum committees, with the final language being agreed upon by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee.

Version 5— Language Approved by Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee September 17, 2018

**10.8.3 Consistency of Student Learning Outcomes across Sections and Modalities of Instruction**

To ensure that completion of a given course consistently signifies acquisition of knowledge and abilities, core learning outcomes for all sections of a course should be similar, regardless of term of offering, instructor, or mode of course delivery. Within individual sections of a course, additional learning outcomes comports with broader program and/or general education curricular aims may be articulated, with the understanding that the core learning outcomes will be met. In courses with course directors, fully consistent outcomes across all sections may be required.

All sections of a course must validly assess the core student learning outcomes of the course, though methods of assessment may vary. (For example, appropriate assessment in a section using team-based pedagogy might differ from appropriate assessment in a large lecture-based section.)