Tips for Writing Goals and Outcomes

Writing Goals

A well-written goal:

- Describes change, not activities
- Can be short or long-term
- Is S.M.A.R.T.

Follow the S.M.A.R.T. guidelines when writing goals:

**Specific**
- Straightforward and well-defined
- Clear to anyone who has a basic understanding of the program

**Measureable**
- What is the scale of goal? Is it truly measurable?
- Define markers to identify when you have achieved your goal

**Attainable**
- Define a goal where success is realistic within your time frame
- Think of long-term success incrementally. Individual goals may scaffold toward the “big picture”
- Consider your resources

**Relevant**
- All goals should support your mission
- Consider each goal within the context of all your activities, and the activities of your partners on campus

**Timely**
- Provide enough time to achieve the goal, but so much that it becomes lost
- Set both short- and long-term goals. What can you do this semester? Over the next five years?

**Example:**
As a result of completing the Pioneer Success Institute, PSI students will have a greater sense of belonging to the Lewis & Clark campus community.

**Remember:**
- Keep focus on supporting the mission
- Goals describe changes, not activities
- Goals should not include changes outside the scope of your specific mission, such as “improving retention” or “improving the public image of Lewis & Clark.” These result from a combination of many goals with associated activities.
Outcomes will tell you:
- When you’ve met your goals
- How you will reach your goals

All outcome statements describe:
- **Who** will change
- **What** will change
- **When** change will result
- **How much** the target population will change
- How change will be **measured**

*Outcomes can also follow the S.M.A.R.T. principles.*

Example outcome statement:

**During mid-year and annual evaluation sessions,** all **SLS staff** will define social justice; **80% of staff will report** their SLS staff experience to have affected their understanding of social justice.

**Remember:**
- Outcomes are specific and measureable
- Outcomes are connected to a goal
- Goals can (and often should!) be supported by multiple outcomes
- It is good practice to *re-evaluate and potentially adjust* outcomes once specific programs and strategies are defined