

# Using Canvas Outcomes to Assess Student Learning Outcomes

## Detailed Guide

All steps below have written instructions and a how-to video. You can also view the entire [playlist of how-to videos](#) on YouTube and the [one-page quick guide](#) for assessing SLOs using Canvas Outcomes.

**Questions?** Contact [Rachel Polakoski](#), Outcomes Assessment Co-Coordinator, or [Amber Toland Perry](#), Instructional Design Technology Specialist.

## Interactive Table of Contents

Click any link below to jump to your area of interest.

[Getting Started](#)

[Step 1: Add Outcomes to your Canvas course.](#)

[Step 2: Enable the Learning Mastery Gradebook & How To View It](#)

[Step 3: Aligning SLOs to Assessments](#)

[Step 3a: Using Rubrics to Assess SLOs](#)

[Step 3b: Using “Classic Quizzes” to Assess SLOs](#)

[Step 3c: Using “New Quizzes” to Assess SLOs](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

[Canvas Outcomes Resources](#)

[Canvas General Resources](#)

## Getting Started

1. **Be sure you are using up-to-date SLOs.** Look up the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) on the [Course Outline of Record](#) for your course. These are the official SLOs that need to be assessed. These SLOs should be listed in your course syllabus. If you want to change the course SLOs, please contact your department chair.
2. **Identify/create assessments for each SLOs.**
  - a. Here are some [different ways to assess learning outcomes](#). Do you already have assessments that fit the SLOs? Great! Identify which assessments align with each SLO.
  - b. We want to make sure we assess all SLOs for a given course, so make sure that each SLO is covered by at least one assessment.

- c. Equity-minded assessment tip: Give students multiple opportunities to show that they've accomplished the SLO. Many faculty tend to put SLO questions on a final assessment. Instead, or in addition to this strategy, plan for ways to assess the SLOs throughout the course at multiple points.
3. **Add your assessments to Canvas** (if not already there). If you are new to using Canvas, get started in the [CC Faculty Resources Canvas shell](#) in the Module: Canvas Basics. [Amber Toland Perry](#), our Instructional Design Technology Specialist, can help with any Canvas questions.
  - a. Create a quiz
    - i. [Canvas Quizzes Overview](#)
  - b. Create an assignment and an assignment rubric.
    - i. [Canvas Assignment Overview](#)
    - ii. [Byte sized Canvas: How Rubrics Can Inspire Your Students' Best Work](#)
    - iii. [Grading Rubric Strategies](#)
    - iv. [Five Steps for Creating a Rubric](#)
    - v. [How to add a rubric to an assignment in Canvas](#)
4. **Attach SLOs to the assignments in Canvas.** Follow the steps below!

## Step 1: Add Outcomes to your Canvas course.

- [Video Instructions for Adding Outcomes to Your Course](#)
- On the Canvas course navigation menu, click *Outcomes*
- Click *Find*
- Click *Account Standards*
- Then click on your department.
- IMPORTANT: Select the most recent year file to ensure you use the most up-to-date outcomes.
- Click “+Add” next to each outcome you want to add to your course. Then click *Done*.

## Step 2: Enable the Learning Mastery Gradebook & How To View It

- [Video Instructions for Enabling the Learning Mastery Gradebook](#)
- On the course navigation menu, click *Settings*
- Using the tabs along the top, click *Feature Previews*
- Next to the *Learning Mastery Gradebook* click on the red “x” to turn it into a green checkmark.
  - This allows the instructor to track student progress on learning outcomes. Students cannot see this gradebook. If you want to enable students to

see their progress on learning outcomes, next to *Student Learning Mastery Gradebook*, click on the red “x” to turn it into a green checkmark.

- To view the *Learning Mastery Gradebook*, go to *Grades* in the course navigation menu. Click the dropdown menu arrow next to *Gradebook*. Select *Learning Mastery...*
- To switch back to the *Gradebook* view, click on the dropdown menu arrow next to *Learning Mastery*. Select *Gradebook*

## Step 3: Aligning SLOs to Assessments

Once you have imported Outcomes to your course (Step 1 above), you can attach them to any assessment either through a rubric or quiz in your course. Here's how:

### Step 3a: Using Rubrics to Assess SLOs

- [Video Instructions for Adding SLOs to Rubrics](#)
- **Option One: Create Rubric from a specific assignment page**
  - Open Assignment
  - Select “Add Rubric”--for assignments, this is toward the bottom of the page. For discussion boards and quizzes, you will need to click the *Options* icon (three dots on the top right, next to the *Edit* button) and select either the *Add Rubric* or *Show Rubric* link.
  - To find an existing rubric, click the *Find a Rubric* link and select an existing rubric. Select *Use this rubric*.
  - To edit an unused rubric or to select rubric settings, click the *Edit* icon.
  - Click the *Find Outcome* link.
  - Locate and select the outcome you want to align.
    - Note: We suggest you uncheck the box for *Use this criterion for scoring*. This will allow you to create a rubric that fits your particular teaching style since outcomes uploaded at the Program Level can't be edited or modified at the Course Level.
      - Unchecking this checkbox means the point value will not be factored into the rubric. The criterion point value will not be displayed after the rubric is updated.
      - If you want to use the criterion for scoring, click the *Use this criterion for scoring* checkbox. Selecting this checkbox displays the point value of the criterion directly in the rubric and contributes to the overall rubric point value.
  - Click the *Import* button
  - Click the *OK* button.

- Click the *Update Rubric* button
- **Option Two: Create from the “Rubric” page on the course navigation menu:**
  - Click *Rubrics* on the left-hand course navigation menu.
  - Click the name of a rubric if you are working with an existing rubric or select *Add Rubric* to create a new one.
  - For existing rubrics, click the *Edit Rubric* button.
  - Click the *Find Outcome* link.
  - Locate and select the outcome you want to align.
    - Note: We suggest you uncheck the box for *Use this criterion for scoring*. This will allow you to create a rubric that fits your particular teaching style since outcomes uploaded at the Program Level can’t be edited or modified at the Course Level.
      - Unchecking this checkbox means the point value will not be factored into the rubric. The criterion point value will not be displayed after the rubric is updated.
      - If you want to use the criterion for scoring, click the *Use this criterion for scoring* checkbox. Selecting this checkbox displays the point value of the criterion directly in the rubric and contributes to the overall rubric point value.
  - Click the *Import* button
  - Click the *OK* button.
  - Click the *Update Rubric* button

## Step 3b: Using “Classic Quizzes” to Assess SLOs

- [Video Instructions for Adding SLOs to Classic Quizzes](#)
- In Course Navigation, click the *Quizzes* link.
- Click the *Options* icon (3 vertical dot menu on the upper right-hand side) and click the *Manage Question Banks* link.
- Create a new question bank and/or click the title of the existing question bank to be aligned with the Outcome.
- Click the *Align Outcome* button on the right-hand side.
- Choose the Outcome from the listed Outcomes. Set the mastery level by typing in the percent field.
  - The mastery level is the percentage score that a student has to earn before you consider the student to have mastered the outcome. For example, a mastery score of 60 means that the student has to earn a 60% or higher on the aligned quiz questions. This score is only calculated using questions from the aligned question bank.
- Click the *Import* button to align the Outcome with the Question Bank

## Step 3c: Using “New Quizzes” to Assess SLOs

- [Video instructions for adding SLOs to New Quizzes](#)
- **WARNING! As of March 2025, the Nuventive and Canvas connection does not work for New Quizzes. Any outcomes assessed using New Quizzes will not be reflected in the Nuventive SLO Dashboard. Canvas has said this is something they plan to update and fix in the 2025 calendar year.**
- **Step A: How to change a classic quiz into a new quiz in Canvas**
  - Find a classic quiz (rocket ship outline not filled in) and click on the three-dot options menu.
  - Select *Migrate*. Canvas will create a copy of the classic quiz in the New Quiz format. Both will remain in your course.
- **Step B: Align Outcomes to a New Quiz**
  - In Course Navigation, click the *Quizzes* link.
    - Note: You can also access quizzes from the Assignments page.
  - To align an outcome to a quiz question, find the quiz you want to open
  - To open New Quizzes from an existing quiz, click the *Options* icon (3 vertical dots) and then click the *Build* link.
  - **i: Attach the SLO to a quiz question**
    - Find the question you want to align an SLO to and click the *Edit* icon (pencil). Note: You can also edit the question by clicking anywhere in the body of the question.
    - Below the question content, there is a drop-down menu titled *Align to Outcomes*. Expand it by clicking on the small arrow, then click anywhere in the *Align to Outcomes* section.
    - Click the checkbox next to the outcome you want to attach
    - Click the *Confirm Alignments* button
  - **ii: Attach the SLO to an entire quiz.**
    - Click the *Outcomes* button (target symbol in the upper right-hand corner).
    - Click anywhere in the *Align Institution outcomes to this Quiz* section
    - Click the checkbox next to the outcome you want to attach
    - Click the *Align Selected* button

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. After I migrate a Classic Quiz to a New Quiz in Canvas and link it to SLOs, do I need to unpublish the Classic Quiz?
  - a. Yes! Students need to engage with the New Quiz with SLOs attached. If students take the Classic Quiz, Canvas will not record SLO data. You should unpublish the Classic Quiz and publish and assign the New Quiz.

2. I use an external integration to Canvas to create my quizzes (My Open Math, Pearson MyLab, etc). How can I align SLOs to these quizzes?
  - a. Since the external integrations create assignments in Canvas, you would need to attach a rubric to it to assess SLOs. This would mean that after the student takes the quiz, the teacher would need to manually return to the quiz and open speed grader and click the SLO rubric for each student. Because of this very manual process, it is recommended that you use the Canvas Classic Quiz or New Quiz features to set up your quizzes that assess SLOs. All other non-SLO quizzes are fine to use through the external integration.
3. My students are doing something in class where I visually assess their mastery of the SLO (i.e. lab skill, athletic/music/theater performance). How can I use Canvas to track this?
  - a. [Response coming soon!]
4. My students have taken a Classic Quiz already. I realized that one (or more) of the questions on the quiz are appropriate for assessing and SLO. Can I assess the SLO after my students have already taken the classic quiz?
  - a. [Response coming soon]

## Canvas Outcomes Resources

- [How do I find an existing outcome to add to a course?](#)
- [How do I align an outcome with a question bank?](#)
- [How do I view all aligned items and artifacts within an outcome?](#)
- [How do I view the outcomes results report for an individual student in a course?](#)
- [How do I use the Learning Mastery Gradebook to view outcome results in a course?](#)
- [How do I view outcomes or student results individually in the Learning Mastery Gradebook?](#)

## Canvas General Resources

- [General guidance on using Rubrics](#)
- [General guidance on using Classic Quizzes](#)
- [General guidance on using New Quizzes](#)