

# UNIVERSITY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A Cal Poly education is the result of experiences taking place in the major and in general education, as well as in the curriculum and co-curriculum. The University Learning Objectives (ULOs) allow these experiences to be aligned to a common set of academic expectations.

The ULOs state that all students who complete an undergraduate or graduate program at Cal Poly should be able to:

1. Think critically and creatively.
2. Communicate effectively.
3. Demonstrate expertise in a scholarly discipline and understand that discipline in relation to the larger world of the arts, sciences, and technology.
4. Work productively as individuals and in groups.
5. Use their knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society.
6. Make reasoned decisions based on an understanding of ethics, a respect for diversity, and an awareness of issues related to sustainability.
7. Engage in lifelong learning.

Cal Poly shares some of these expectations with other universities (See ULO 1, 2 and 7). Others reflect Cal Poly's unique character as a comprehensive polytechnic characterized by a preponderance of professional degree programs (ULO 3-6).

ULO 6 states that all Cal Poly graduates should be able to make reasoned decisions based on a respect and appreciation for diversity and an awareness of issues related to sustainability. Because of the complexity of these objectives, the Academic Senate adopted the Diversity Learning Objectives (DLOs) in 2008 and the Sustainability Learning Objectives (SLOs) in 2009, both as addenda to the ULOs.

## Diversity Learning Objectives

The DLOs state that all Cal Poly graduates should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of relationships between diversity, inequality, and social, economic, and political power both in the United States and globally
2. Demonstrate understanding of contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups to our local, national, and global communities
3. Critically examine their own attitudes about diverse and/or underrepresented groups
4. Consider perspectives of diverse groups to inform reasonable decisions
5. Function as members of society and as professionals with people who have ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are different from their own

**Please see University Policies** (<http://catalog.calpoly.edu/universitypolicies>) **for the Statement on Diversity and Non-Discrimination Policy.**

## Sustainability Learning Objectives

Cal Poly defines sustainability as the ability of the natural and social systems to survive and thrive together to meet current and future needs. The SLOs state that all Cal Poly graduates should be able to:

1. Define and apply sustainability principles within their academic programs.
2. Explain how natural, economic, and social systems interact to foster or prevent sustainability.
3. Analyze and explain local, national, and global sustainability using a multidisciplinary approach.
4. Consider sustainability principles while developing personal and professional values.

**Please see Sustainability Practices** (<http://catalog.calpoly.edu/academicsupportandcampuslife/campuslife/sustainabilitypractices>) **for more campus sustainability information and the Sustainability Catalog (SUSCAT)** (<http://suscat.calpoly.edu>) **website for lists of sustainability courses.**

Both the DLOs and SLOs should be understood as operating at a level below the institutional level of the ULOs.

## Student Learning Assessment

To determine the effectiveness of various educational opportunities, Cal Poly asks students to participate in learning assessments at the course, program, and university levels. These assessments provide a measure of student achievement over the course of their academic careers of course, program, and university learning objectives/outcomes. They may include the direct assessment of student work (assignments, exams, projects, performances, and theses), perhaps using standardized rubrics, as well as surveys and other indirect methods of assessment.

While grades may measure individual student progress, course-, program-, and university-level assessments provide evidence of the effectiveness of educational opportunities for groups of students. This information is intended primarily as the basis for program improvement, although it may also be used for accountability purposes, e.g., documenting educational effectiveness to accreditation agencies.

Students at Cal Poly should expect that their academic work may be used for assessment purposes.