

Common Language for Assessment

Assessment - The systematic collection, review, and use of information about student learning, educational programs, student support programs, and college services undertaken to improve teaching/learning process and institutional effectiveness.

Assessment Plan - A document which outlines how and when selected outcomes will be assessed.

Assessment Report - An annual document based on the Assessment Plan that presents and explains assessment results and shows how assessment results are being used to improve the program.

Assessment Method - A process employed to gather assessment information. **Synonym:** *Strategy*

Formative Assessments – Assessments that occur throughout the learning process that aim to understand and, therefore, improve learning.

Summative Assessments – Assessments that occur at the completion of a learning experience, used to measure goal achievement.

Course-embedded Assessments – Direct methods to assess student-learning that are well integrated into and organic to the educational experience.

Direct Methods – Measures used to document student performance. Examples of direct measures include exams and rubrics for capstone projects, portfolios, papers, and performances.

Indirect Methods – Measures used to assess students' perceptions of their learning and educational experiences. Examples of indirect measures include surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

Curriculum Map - A matrix representing a program's learning goals and indicating where they are developed in a program and to what extent.

Mission Statement - A concise statement outlining the purpose of a program.

Outcomes – The desired goals of the educational experience. **Synonym:** *Goals*

Objective – A specific, measureable and/or identifiable aim that defines the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes students will evidence at the close of the learning experience.

Program Outcomes - Other program outcomes not directly related to student learning, such as student/faculty ratio or program completion rate. **Synonym:** *Program goals*

Institutional Learning Goals – The student learning goals that are realized in the complete educational experience, both curricular and co-curricular. **Synonym: “Goals of general education”**

Core competencies – The skills, abilities, values and attitudes that are developed throughout the educational experience, curricular and co-curricular. Core competencies define what it means to be an educated person in a specific discipline. **Synonym: Intellectual and practical skills**

Target - A benchmark or value that indicates whether or not a goal has been achieved. **Synonym: Benchmark**

Findings - Results (evidence, data and/or information) gathered for assessment measures.

Artifacts – The work produced by students while engaged in a learning experience.

Analysis of Findings - Examination of the data gathered during the assessment cycle, including reflective consideration about what actions, if any, should be taken.

Action Plans - Actions taken to improve the program or assessment process based on the analysis of results. **Synonym: “Closing the loop”**

Rubric - Specific sets of criteria that clearly define for both student and teacher what a range of acceptable and unacceptable performance looks like. Criteria define descriptors of ability at each level of performance and assign values to each level.

Value added – Evidence that shows the effects educational providers have had on students during their programs of study beyond what would have occurred through natural maturation. A comparison of the knowledge and skills students bring to the educational process with the knowledge and skills they demonstrate upon completion of the educational process.

General education – The curricular and co-curricular opportunities made available to students that develop the institutional learning goals and core competencies established by the faculty. General education includes those courses that award “General Education” credit as well as courses in the major, high impact and co-curricular experiences.

Validity - The extent to which an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure and the extent to which inferences and actions made on the basis of test scores are appropriate and accurate.

http://www.lmu.edu/about/services/academicplanning/assessment/Assessment_Resources/Glossary_of_Assessment_Terms.htm

<http://www.sabes.org/assessment/glossary.htm>

<http://assessment.truman.edu/glossary.asp>

<http://people.jmu.edu/yangsx/>