

## Student Affairs Assessment Common Language

### 60x30 TX

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's new 15-year initiative. Its goal is to have 60 percent of young adults in Texas holding a post-secondary credential by 2030. It also proposes that these graduates will have marketable skills regardless of major and that, statewide, students will not graduate with debt exceeding 60 percent of their first-year wages.

### Administrative Outcomes (AO)

Describe the effectiveness of unit actions/activities. Each AO must be singular and measurable.

### Artifact

An object produced to indicate mastery of a skill or component of knowledge. It is often stored for future use.

### Assessment

Assessment is the systematic and on-going gathering of information for the purposes of accountability, program improvement, and the enhancement of student learning.

UNT defines assessment as the systematic and on-going process of collecting, analyzing and acting upon data related to the goals that support the mission of the institution. Its focus is upon quality improvement through evidence-based decision-making. By comparing actual performance to stated purposes through the assessment process, we hold ourselves accountable for engaging successfully in continuous quality improvement. Assessment also enables us to clarify future direction, establish priorities, share decision-making, improve organizational performance, plan for change and create unity of purpose.

### Assessment Method

Refers to how the outcome or goal is assessed. The assessment method describes generally how the information/data will be collected, which may involve either direct or indirect measurement. Additionally the method specifies from whom the data will be collected and at what time points. Example assessment methods include but are not limited to evaluation of student academic work, observation, and self-report methods.

### Assessment Tool

Instrument used to measure the characteristic or outcome of interest. It is the tool used to implement part of a larger assessment plan. Example: assessment tools for learning include classroom assessment techniques (minute paper, muddiest point, etc.), capstone projects, examinations, portfolio entries, or student performances

### Assessment Plan

The structured documentation of the activities the unit will perform to measure its effectiveness. The plan includes a department's mission, vision, goals for the year, a number of assessment 'activities' to accomplish throughout the year, results, and next steps based on results.

### Bloom's Taxonomy

A widely used system for determining the level of cognitive performance. The system was first proposed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956 and has since been modified by others. There are six levels in the taxonomy. From lowest to highest they are:

- Knowledge / Remembering
- Comprehension / Understanding
- Application / Applying
- Analysis / Analyzing
- Synthesis / Evaluating
- Evaluation/Creation

**Calendar Year**

The traditional span of a year, which runs from January 1 to December 31.

**Criterion**

Criterion is your performance target. It indicates what performance level is acceptable for each method of measuring an SLO/AO. You should be able to explain why the criterion is set at a particular level. Criterion should be stated as 1) a specified percentage of participants attaining a given outcome, 2) knowledge and skills assessment scores, or 3) some other specific obtained value.

**Direct Assessment**

Measures that require the student to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in response to the instrument.

**Fiscal Year**

A fiscal year at the university. Defined as September 1 – August 31.

**Formative Assessment**

Refers to assessment that is carried out throughout the course, project, or time-frame to provide feedback regarding whether the objective is being met. Formative assessment may be conducted for the following reasons: program improvement; to provide feedback to improve teaching, learning, and curricula; to identify students' strengths/weaknesses and to assist in placing students based on their needs. - SFA

**Goal**

Broad long-term aims for desired accomplishments.

**Indirect Assessment**

Measures that ask students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it.

**Institutional Effectiveness (IE)**

IE is the systematic and ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data for implementing data-driven decisions as related to goals and outcomes in support of the University of North Texas Strategic Plan. In general UNT focuses on two major categories of expected outcomes: Student Learning Outcomes and Administrative Outcomes.

**Learning Goals**

Learning goals are aspirational statements about what we want students to learn. They are broader and can be more general than learning outcomes.

**Mapping**

The process of connecting annual department goals to DSA strategic initiatives.

**Measure**

To collect quantitative and/or qualitative data to be analyzed.

**Mission**

A concise inspiring statement of purpose that defines the organization's prime functions.

**Outcome**

Identifiable, measurable actions or knowledge students should be able to demonstrate at the end of a course/program. Outcomes are specifically what you desire as the result of your efforts.

### **Program Review**

A Program Review is a rigorous, systematic, objective, impartial, expert-based examination, evaluation and self-evaluation of how effectively a program (department) is working, as part of the ongoing pursuit of higher levels of achievement and quality in the university, and in the service of program improvement.

### **Portfolio**

Compilation of evidence demonstrating a level of development of essential competencies and the achievement of specific learning outcomes. The portfolio serves as a tool for both formative and summative assessment. A portfolio is a repository of professional and/or academic work.

### **Qualitative Assessment**

Collects data that does not usually yield results that can be reduced to numbers nor do the data lend itself to quantitative methods but rather to interpretive criteria. Example, interviews, focus groups, anecdotal evidence. Qualitative data often explores why and how of phenomenon.

### **Quantitative Assessment**

Collects data that can be analyzed using objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical or numerical analysis of data. Usually quantitative data is limited to telling us what is happening.

### **Rubric**

An evaluation tool that is used to measure a program, department, or performance to a particular standard. A rubric can communicate expectations of quality around a task. In many cases, scoring rubrics are used to delineate consistent criteria for evaluation, which can be complex and subjective.

### **Student Affairs Assessment Team**

The Student Affairs Assessment Team provides leadership for and conducts assessment that complement department assessment efforts and measures identified division outcomes. In addition, the council facilitates the sharing of assessment strategies and ways to improve student learning in departments and programs within the Division of Student Affairs.

### **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

Describe the abilities, skills, and knowledge that you want students in your program to acquire. Each SLO must be singular and measurable.

### **Student Success**

A variety of factors contribute to student success and can be measured with your assessment plan. Some examples are extracurricular involvement, connectedness to campus, financial support, awareness of campus resources etc.

### **Summative Assessment**

Assessment that is carried out at the end of a course, project, or time-frame to evaluate whether the objective was achieved (i.e., the overall performance). Summative assessment may be conducted for the following reasons: evaluation and accountability; decision-making regarding fund allocation; to aid in program level decision-making; to respond to demands accrediting bodies, state, and federal agencies.

### **TracDac**

Software program that serves as the repository for Institutional Effectiveness. DSA departments are expected to identify 3 measurers per academic year to be tracked and improved upon.

**Values**

Traits or characteristics considered intrinsic or necessary for the optimal functioning of an institution or culture.

**Vision**

A vivid purpose statement of aspiration for the future derived from the organization's values and mission.

*Sources/Adapted from*

- *Clark College Assessment Glossary*
- *Auburn University Division of Student Affairs, Strategic Planning Common Language*
- *Stephen F. Austin State University Institutional Accreditation Office Glossary of Terms*
- *University of Houston Division of Student Affairs, Assessment 101 handbook*
- *University of North Texas, (2018). Guidelines for Institutional Effectiveness Compliance presentation*