

~A~

Accountability - Using the results of assessment to demonstrate the quality of educational programs to stakeholders (Suskie, 2009).

Assessment - Assessment is the systematic collection of information about student learning, using the time, knowledge, expertise and resources available, in order to inform decisions that affect student learning (Walvoord, 2010).

Assessment Committee (YCCC) - "The Assessment Committee has been established to develop and monitor a comprehensive process to assess student learning outcomes. Through student outcomes assessment, we measure and document the degree to which students attain specific learning outcomes valued and defined by faculty" (Assessment Committee By-Laws).

Assessment Methods – Techniques that are used to assess student learning. These techniques can be formative or summative. Examples of formative techniques are written reflections, knowledge probes, ungraded quizzes or polls. Examples of summative techniques are graded exams, quizzes, papers and presentations.

Assessment Plan - A document that outlines the student learning outcomes, the direct and indirect assessment methods used to demonstrate the attainment of each outcome, the timeframe for collecting and reviewing the data, and the individual(s) responsible for the collection/review of data (SUNY Orange).

~B~

Benchmark – A standard or reference point used for measuring student performance and/or comparing that performance with internal or external groups (State Fair Community College, 2011).

Benchmarking – The process of identifying and learning from institutions that are recognized for their outstanding practices (Palomba & Banta, 1999).

Bloom's Taxonomy – a framework that describes six levels of knowledge and intellectual skills within the cognitive domain of learning. The six levels are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Stassen, Doherty & Poe, 2001; Suskie, 2008).

~C~

Classroom Assessment Technique (CAT) - Classroom assessment is an approach designed to help teachers find out what students are learning in the classroom and how well they are learning it (Angelo and Cross, 1993).

Closing the Loop – The use of assessment results to improve student learning (Walvoord, 2010).

Culture of Assessment - An environment where the predominant attitudes and behaviors of the institution support the assessment of student learning outcomes (Weiner, 2009).

~D~

Direct Measures of Learning - Direct evidence of student learning is tangible, visible, self-explanatory, and compelling evidence of exactly what students have and have not learned (Suskie, 2009). Examples are written assignments, classroom assignments, presentations, test results, projects, logs, portfolios, and direct observations (Leskes, 2002).

~E~

Embedded Assessment - Program, general education, or institutional assessments that are embedded into course work. They provide information about student progress in achieving program or institutional goals (Suskie, 2009).

~F~

Focus Group – A group discussion organized around a small number of open-ended questions designed to explore an issue and collect in-depth information (Salt Lake Community College, 2011).

Formative Assessment – The gathering of information about student learning during the progression of a course or program to improve the learning of those students (Leskes, 2002).

~G~

Goals – Goals describe what students should know or be able to do by the end of a course or program expressed in general terms (Stassen, Doherty & Poe, 2001). *Related Term: outcome*

Grading - Grading is the process of marking an assessment instrument for the purpose of assigning a student a grade for the course (Cartwright, Weiner, & Streamer-Veneruso, 2009). *Related term: scoring*

~I~

Indirect Measures of Student Learning – Indirect evidence consists of signs that students are *probably* learning. Examples include grades, retention and graduation rates, student ratings of their knowledge at the end of a course or program, and acceptance rates into four-year programs (Suskie, 2009). *Related Term: direct measure of student learning*

Institutional Effectiveness – an institution’s capacity to achieve its mission and related goals (Maki, 2002).

Institutional Learning Outcomes – Overarching learning goals for all students, regardless of major (Suskie, 2008). Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) at YCCC are:

- *Communication* – Communicate effectively in a clear, well-organized manner to convey ideas with an intended audience in a variety of academic and professional settings.
- *Quantitative Competence* – Identify, analyze and solve problems that are quantitative in nature.
- *Global Awareness, Diversity and Tolerance* – Respectfully engage with others and analyze issues from a multicultural and global perspective.

- *Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving* – Demonstrate and apply critical and creative thinking and problem solving skills.
- *Information Literacy* – Apply research skills to retrieve and evaluate Information and to use it ethically.
- *Technological Competence* – Demonstrate competence in the use of technology to meet personal, academic and professional needs.

~M~

Measurements – Design of strategies, techniques and instruments for collecting feedback data from students that demonstrate desired behavior (*Glossary of Assessment Terms*, n.d.).

Mission - The goal of assessment of student learning is to improve student learning and thus help the College fulfill its educational mission and vision (State Fair Community College, n.d.). The mission of YCCC is stated as follows: YCCC provides academic, career, and transfer programs while serving to advance cultural, economic, and workforce development in York County and the state of Maine. *Related Term: vision*

~N~

NEASC – The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (**NEASC**) is the primary higher education accrediting body in New England.

Norming – The process by which assessment readers learn to apply rubric criteria consistently to student work products and align their scoring. The process by which assessment readers learn to apply rubric criteria consistently to student work products and align their scoring (Maki, 2004).

~O~

Objectives – Course objectives are more specific than learning outcomes and describe what students are supposed to do in order to achieve the end result of the learning experience. Objectives are more task-oriented and describe the process that students will take to achieve the outcomes (Stassen, Doherty & Poe, 2001; Suskie, 2008).

Outcomes – Statements of the skills, knowledge, attitudes, that students have and take with them at the end of a course or program (Suskie, 2008). *Related Terms: Objectives, Program Learning Outcomes*

Outcomes Assessment – The measurement of student learning at the end of a program of study (Suskie, 2008).

~p~

Program Assessment - Program assessment focuses on assessing student learning and experience to determine whether students have acquired the skills, knowledge, and competencies associated with their program of study (Stassen, Doherty & Poe, 2001).

Program Learning Outcomes – The specific skills, values, and attitudes students should demonstrate at the end of a program of study (Stassen, Doherty & Poe, 2001). *Related Terms: Objectives, Outcomes*

~Q~

Qualitative Assessment – Qualitative assessment deals with methods that rely on descriptions rather than numbers. For example in-depth, open-ended interviews, and observations of activities (Palomba & Banta, 1999).

Quantitative Assessment – Quantitative assessment deals with methods relying on numerical scores or rating with an emphasis on numbers and measurement (Palomba & Banta, 1999).

~R~

Reliability - Reliability is the measure of consistency for an assessment instrument. The instrument should yield similar results over time with similar populations in similar circumstances ("Glossary of Assessment Terms," n.d.).

Rubric - A rubric is an established set of criteria for scoring or rating students' performance on tests, portfolios, writing samples, or other performance tasks ("Assessment Glossary," 2014).

~S~

Sampling - A way to obtain information about a large group by examining a smaller, randomly chosen selection (the sample) of group members (State Univ. of New York, n.d.)

Scoring - Scoring refers to the process of marking an assessment instrument to get data about how well the course has done at achieving its outcomes (Cartwright, Weiner, & Streamer-Veneruso, 2009).

Related term: grading

Stakeholders (Community College) - An individual or a group of people who have an interest in the outcome of a process or a project (State Fair Community College, n.d.).

YCCC's stakeholders inside the institution include:

- Students
- Administrators
- Faculty
- Staff
- MCCS Board of Trustees

Stakeholders outside the institution include:

- NEASC – accreditation (New England Association of Schools and Colleges)
- Parents
- Community
- Businesses

Summative Assessment - Summative assessment is a sum-total or final-product assessment of achievement at the end of a course of study ("Assessment: Assessment Glossary," 2014).



Triangulation - The building of multiple sources of information or ideas to support a central finding or theme ("Dictionary of Student Outcome," 2003). An example of triangulation would be an assessment that incorporated surveys, interviews, and research papers.



Validity - Validity refers to the ability of an assessment to measure the construct or knowledge, skills, or abilities it purports to measure...Validity requires that the measurement is aligned with learning outcomes (*An Assessment Framework for the Community*, 2004).

VALUE Rubrics - Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education. As part of AAC&U's Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative, the VALUE rubrics contribute to the national dialogue on assessment of college student learning. VALUE provides needed tools to assess students' own authentic work, produced across their diverse learning pathways and institutions, to determine whether and how well they are progressing toward graduation-level achievement in learning outcomes that both employers and faculty consider essential (Value rubric, 2009).

Vision - The goal of assessment of student learning is to improve student learning and thus help the College fulfill its educational mission and vision (State Fair Community College, n.d.). The vision of YCCC is stated as follows: YCCC will be a leader in educational excellence, providing a variety of programs that promote personal enrichment, academic growth and career development. We will support our region in meeting the challenges of a changing world by creating an innovative and active learning environment.
Related Term: mission

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