

Definitions

Accountability – Being responsible to stakeholders--such as students and their families, legislators, and accrediting bodies --on the organization's performance in meeting its goals and commitments. Accountability is usually required of institutions by funding and governing bodies for resources used and for goods and services produced.

Angelina College Critical Thinking Rubric/Critical Thinking Grid - The Critical Thinking Rubric and the Critical Thinking Grid (developed by the Foundation for Critical Thinking) are instruments designed to enable instructors to gather data that measures an identified critical thinking learning outcome.

Assessment: It is the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of information, which provides continuous feedback about the success in reaching the stated objectives, goals, and learning outcomes. Assessment is aimed at improving the teaching/learning process. Everyone is involved in the assessment process.

"Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance." (Tom Angelo, 1995)

Artifacts: Learning artifacts are tangible samples of student work: for example a paper, class project, performance (speech, music, art, etc.), or competency sheet. Artifacts are used for assessment as direct evidence of student learning.

Basic Intellectual Competencies/Core Competencies: These include knowledge and skills in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and computer literacy.

CCEC : Core Curriculum Evaluation Committee now know as the Assessment Committee.

California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST-2000) - The CCTST is a 34-item multiple choice test that targets core CT skills of analysis, interpretation, inference, evaluation, and explanation.

CIR : Coordinator of Institutional Research.

Core Curriculum: The curriculum in the liberal arts, humanities, sciences and political, social, and cultural history that all undergraduate students of an institution of higher education are required to complete before receiving an academic undergraduate degree.

Criterion-Based Assessments: Evaluate or score using a set of criteria to appraise or evaluate work. Criterion-referenced evaluation is based on proficiency, not subjective measures such as improvement.

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) - The CCSSE provides information on student engagement which is a key indicator of learning. The survey asks questions that assess institutional practices and student behaviors that are correlated highly with student learning and student retention. The CCSSE contains questions that refer to students' perceptions of their ability to think critically.

Curriculum Mapping: Linking goals/objectives to the curriculum. Curriculum Mapping makes it possible to identify where within the current curriculum learning objectives are addressed. A matrix is helpful to identify the links between intended outcomes and curricular processes.

DIV DIR : Division Director.

Educational Objectives: These include the knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions students are expected to acquire as a result of completing an academic program. Objectives are sometimes treated as synonymous with outcomes, though outcomes are usually more detailed, behavioral in nature, and stated in precise operational terms.

Embedded Assessment: An assessment process that involves using the regular work that students produce in their classes as the material that is assessed or evaluated. The student work may be a final research paper, a set of questions embedded in a final exam, a lab project, or anything that the professor would regularly use to evaluate the students in the class. One of the advantages of this type of assessment is that the students do not know that their efforts are being used for assessment and therefore do not have any additional pressure or effort required of them. The work they produce is more indicative of their normal work rather than being something produced just for assessment purposes.

Embedded Questions to Assignments: Questions related to program learning outcomes that are embedded within course exams. For example, all sections of “research methods” could include a question or set of questions relating to your program learning outcomes. Faculty score and grade the exams as usual and then copy exam questions that are linked to the program learning outcomes for analysis. The findings are reported in the aggregate.

Evaluation: The judgment of a student's work to determine the learning achieved, the grade earned, and/or the graduation requirements satisfied.

FAC : Faculty.

Faculty Member: A person who is employed full-time by an institution of higher education as a member of the faculty whose primary duties include teaching, research, academic service, or administration. However, the term does not include a person holding faculty rank who spends a majority of the person's time for the institution engaged in managerial or supervisory activities, including a chancellor, vice chancellor, president, vice president, provost, associate or assistant provost, or dean.

Faculty Learning Community (FLC) - involves a group of faculty members from various disciplines engaging in an active, collaborative, yearlong program with a curriculum that focuses on enhancing teaching and student learning.

Faculty Learning Community (FLC) Student Learning Survey – The FLC Student Learning Survey is an instrument that measures student learning outcomes as perceived by the instructor.

Field of Study Curriculum: Set of courses that will satisfy the lower division requirements for a degree in a specific academic area at a general academic teaching institution.

General Syllabus: A master document which specifies the required components of a course. The general syllabus should serve as the foundational document for any instructor preparing an instructional syllabus.

Goals: Global and broad measurable statements that clearly focus on the philosophy and purpose of the college, programs, and services. They are aimed at facilitating teaching and learning within the college system.

Goals (Second Definition): General aims or purposes of a program and its curriculum. Effective goals are broadly stated, meaningful, achievable and assessable. Goals provide a framework for determining the more specific educational objectives of a program, and should be consistent with program and institutional mission.

Instructional Syllabus: The syllabus individualized by the instructor and given to the student. It must incorporate all the components of the General Syllabus.

International Critical Thinking Basic Concepts & Understanding Online Test - is a three part, 100 item test (developed by Dr. Linda Elder, Dr. Richard Paul, and Rush Cosgrove) that focuses on the five essential dimensions of critical thinking: Analysis of Thought, Assessment of Thought, Dispositions of Thought, The Skills and Abilities of Thought, and Barriers to Critical Thought.

IPEC : Institutional Planning and Evaluation Council

Learning: The particular levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities that a student has attained at the end of engagement in a particular set of collegiate experiences.

Learning Outcomes - Statements of how and what knowledge, skills, and behaviors students are expected to demonstrate at the module, course, or program level. Outcomes are what program and service providers hope recipients achieve once they complete a program or receive services.

Likert Scale: Assigns a numerical value to responses in order to quantify subjective data. The responses are usually along a continuum such as - responses of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree- and are assigned values of such as 1-5. This allows easy manipulation of data but attention must be given to the validity and reliability of the tool.

Matrices: Used to summarize the relationship between program objectives and courses, course assignments, or course syllabus objectives to examine congruence and to ensure that all objectives have been sufficiently structured into the curriculum.

Methods of Measuring Learning Outcomes:

Indirect Measures of Student Learning: Indirect measures of student learning may be used to supplement direct measures, but should not be the focus of a student outcomes assessment program. These tools ask students or others for opinions relating to the students' learning.

Examples of indirect measures include, but are not limited to:

- Exit interviews
- Focus Groups (Alumni, employer, and student surveys)
- Graduate follow-up studies
- Graduation, retention, and transfer studies
- Job satisfaction surveys
- Satisfaction surveys
- Self-reported data

Direct Measures of Student Learning: Direct measures of student learning measure the cognitive (knowledge acquisition) and the behavioral (skill acquisition) learning outcomes of the college. Such measures should demonstrate what students know and/or are able to do, not what they have been exposed to, what the students' perceive they have learned, or what grades the students received. Additionally, such measures should directly correspond to and measure one or more pre-defined student learning outcomes.

Examples of such direct measures include, but are not limited to:

- Capstone courses/experiences
- Portfolio assessments
- Standardized tests (Major Field Achievement Test, Academic Profile, etc.)
- Licensure exams and certifications
- Local common exams
- Written/oral comprehensive exams
- Juried reviews of projects, exhibitions, performances
- Assessment rubrics

Objectives: Specific incremental steps that clearly work toward the accomplishment of the goals and student learning outcomes. Objectives are measurable and short-term in nature.

Portfolio - A pre-planned collection of work over a course, internship, or program that is the basis of evaluation.

Pre- and post-assessment - The use of the same or similar instrument at different times in a module, course, or program to measure change in students' knowledge, skills, and/or behaviors.

SACS: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Scoring Rubrics: Can be used to holistically score any product or performance such as essays, portfolios, recitals, oral exams, research reports, etc. A detailed scoring rubric that delineates criteria used to discriminate among levels is developed and used for scoring. Generally two raters are used to review each product and a third rater is employed to resolve discrepancies.

Levels of Performance-

Rating = 3 Exemplary	Rating =2 Developing	Rating =1 Beginning/Introduced
<i>Describe identifiable performance characteristics reflecting <u>mastery</u> of performance.</i>	<i>Describe identifiable performance characteristics reflecting <u>development</u> of competent performance.</i>	<i>Describe identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a <u>beginning level</u> of performance.</i>

Scoring Rubrics (Second Definition): A set of standard rules and procedures used to assign scores to students' responses to short answer, essay questions, and performance tasks.

Strategic Plan – an institutional plan that integrates planning and evaluation by including objectives and outcome measures for each institutional goal. The strategic plan is used to help the institution fulfill its mission.

Student Learning Outcomes: Global and broad measurable statements that clearly state the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes a student has attained upon completion of a course or program and upon receiving student services. Learning outcomes:

- Focus on what the student can do
- Demonstrate the student is competent
- Include a measurable expectation
- Use active verbs

Student Learning Outcomes (Second Definition): Operational statements describing specific student behaviors that evidence the acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions. Learning outcomes can be usefully thought of as behavioral criteria for determining whether students are achieving the educational objectives of a program, and, ultimately, whether overall program goals are being successfully met. Outcomes are sometimes treated as synonymous with objectives, though objectives are usually more general statements of what students are expected to achieve in an academic program.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) - The SLOA provides a structure for faculty to specify in written format the learning outcome to be measured, how it will be measured, and the actual results of the analysis.

Student Perception of Critical Thinking in Instruction- An instrument developed by the Foundation for Critical Thinking that measures critical thinking instruction as perceived by the student.

THECB: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Transfer Program: A transfer program at a community college prepares learners to enter an upper-division college as a junior.

Unit – in terms of planning and evaluation, any area with an independent budget.

Unit Planning – a unit level process that is designed to facilitate a system of planning and evaluation at all levels of an institution. At the beginning of each academic year, each unit develops objectives that correlate to the institution’s strategic plan. Strategies to achieve the objective and expected outcomes are also developed at this time. At the end of the academic year, the results are reviewed. Subsequently, the results are used to develop the new unit plan for the next academic year.

WEAVEonline - a central repository for assessment information. Faculty and staff can learn about and document assessment and quality improvement processes, procedures, and evidence. The software can both lead and record assessment practices in academic, administrative, and educational support areas. This system is also helpful for tracking assessment information for accrediting groups (such as SACS) and annual reports. In addition, data entered in it can be linked to General Education/Core Curriculum outcomes and other strategic plans and goals.