

## **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (AAHE)**

### **PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT**

Descriptions of the process of assessment are proliferate. Allowing for variations, it is accurate to say that the process exhibits the following features.

- You decide what skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes a student will acquire as a result of a learning experience.
- You articulate or describe the performance indicators that will tell you if the student has, indeed, acquired the intended skills, knowledge, and/or attitude intended.
- You devise a means of measuring or detecting the performance indicators you identify as evidence of learning. (These “means” are often called assessment instruments or measures.)
- You apply or conduct your assessment measures or instruments.
- You analyze or otherwise consider the results of your assessment.
- You employ the results of your assessment to drive reflection upon and, perhaps, refinement of the design of the original educational experience. (AAHE)

## ASSESSMENT: INSTITUTIONAL DEFINITIONS

1. **Accreditation:** Certification that programs or institutions have appropriate infrastructure, policies, and services to support their operations and that they are accomplishing their mission. (Allen, 2006), (Angelo, 1995), (Olivia, 1997), (Palomba & Banta, 1999), (Tammone)
2. **Alignment:** How well two systems converge for a common purpose; for example, how well the curriculum corresponds with program learning outcomes. (Allen, 2006)
3. **Assessment:** An activity that considers the effectiveness of a lesson, goal, or curriculum. To this end, the result of the activity could drive changes for improvement or validate the activity as a working method for achieving goals and/or objectives. Assessment is done as an aggregate of the class.
  - **Classroom Assessment Techniques:** Assessment techniques used to improve the teaching of specific courses and/or segments of courses. (modified Allen, 2006)
  - **Course/Class-Level Assessment:** Conducting assessment within a specific course to monitor and improve learning in this course. (modified Allen, 2006)
  - **Formative Assessment:** Assessment designed to give feedback to improve what is being assessed, or assessment of students at an intermediate stage of learning.
  - **Program-Level Assessment:** The academic program goals are assessed within the program of study to monitor and improve student learning. (Allen, 2006)
  - **Summative Assessment:** Assessment designed to provide an evaluative summary, or assessment that occurs as students are about to complete the program being assessed. (Allen, 2006)
4. **Cohesive Curriculum:** A curriculum that systematically provides students with opportunities to synthesize, practice, and develop increasingly complex ideas, skills, and values. (Allen, 2006)
5. **Measures of Student Learning:** Students demonstrate that they have achieved a learning outcome. (Allen, 2006)

- **Direct Measures of Student Learning:** Direct measures of student learning include, but are not limited to standardized tests, locally-developed tests, papers, portfolios, juried reviews, and capstone courses. (Tammone)
  - **Indirect Measures of Student Learning:** Indirect measures of student learning include, but are not limited to alumni, employer, and student surveys; exit interviews and focus groups; graduate follow-up studies; transfer success studies; and job placement data. (Tammone)
6. **Evaluation:** Scoring assigned work according to a defined criteria or rubric. An evaluation reports success in terms of a grading scale and is reported for individual students.
  7. **Feedback Spiral:** Professionals discuss assessment results, reach conclusions about their meaning, determine implications for change, and implement changes. (modified Allen, 2006)
  8. **General Educational Assessment:** The process of measuring outcomes of activities as a means of monitoring student achievement of the general education goals.
  9. **General Educational Goals:** General statements about knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values expected in graduates. (Allen, 2006)
  10. **Goals:** An *instructional goal* is a statement of performance expected of each student in a class, program, or general education, phrased in general terms without criteria of achievement. It indicates the performance expected of the learner, but the performance is not stated in such a fashion that its attainment can be readily measured. (modified Olivia, 1997)
    - **Example of a course-level goal:** “The student will show an understanding of the stock market.” (Business)
    - **Example of a program-level goal:** “Practice personal, patient, and scene safety while in a field or clinical setting.” (EMS)
    - **Example of a general education goal:** “All graduates of this institution will demonstrate competency in written communication.”
  11. **Objectives:** An instructional objective is a statement of performance to be demonstrated by each student in the class, derived from an instructional goal and phrased in measurable and observable terms. Instructional objectives are also known as behavioral objectives, performance objectives, or competencies. (Olivia, 1997), (Tammone)

12. **Outcomes:** Goals and objectives for learning are established by the instructor. They are desired or intended outcomes. Outcomes are created by the students. They are actual results. Outcomes may or may not meet the instructor's goals and objectives. Learning Outcomes Assessment is an attempt to determine whether or not actual learning outcomes meet the instructor's goals and objectives. (Tammone)
13. **Portfolio:** A collection of artifacts that shows skill development over a period of time. (Tammone)
14. **Rubric:** A set of scoring guidelines that can be used by instructors and/or students to assess and/or evaluate work. (modified Tammone)
15. **Student Engagement:** Active, rather than passive involvement. (Allen, 2006)
16. **Validity:** How well a procedure assesses what it is supposed to be assessing. (Allen, 2006)

## SOURCES CITED

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