Common Ground:
A Reference of Assessment Related Terminology and Resources

Prepared for the Assessment Commons, January 23, 2019

For your reference, this handout has three parts:
1. **A glossary of common assessment related terms**
2. **A glossary of UWL assessment related acronyms and terminology**
3. **References for UWL assessment resources and two national assessment initiatives and the resources they provide**

ASSESSMENT TERMS GLOSSARY

Assessment of student learning A procedure for systematically collecting, analyzing and using information about student learning in order to inform decisions about how to improve student learning. It entails: 1) establishing learning outcomes 2) measuring student achievement of the outcomes, 3) analyzing the information collected, and 4) using the information to inform decisions about how to improve student learning.

Program assessment (contrast with program evaluation) A systematic procedure for collecting, analyzing and using information about student learning with respect to program-level learning outcomes. Results are used to inform decisions about how to improve student learning in the program.

Program evaluation (aka program review) A systematic procedure for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about the extent to which a program is achieving its goals. Typically, it focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of a program. Assessment of student learning outcomes in the program may be included as one source of information to evaluate the program.

Learning outcome, learning goal, learning objective Used interchangeably, these are statements about what students are expected to learn, acquire or develop in a course or program.

1. Learning outcome (aka student learning outcome, SLO, program outcome, student outcome, outcome). An *intended* learning outcome is a statement about what knowledge, skills, habits of mind students *should* acquire as a result of their experience in a course or program. An *actual* learning outcome consists of the knowledge, skills, habits of mind students acquired as revealed through assessment activities.
2. Learning goal (aka goal, course goal, program goal). An expression of intended learning in broad, general terms, e.g., clear communication, effective problem solving, ethical awareness.
3. Learning objectives (aka objectives, course objectives, program objectives, instructional objectives). Objectives tend to express intended results of learning in more precise terms.

Teaching goal A statement that describes what instructors intend to impart to students, e.g., *teach students to solve problems effectively*. Teaching goals are not suitable for assessing student learning because they focus on what instructors do and not on what students actually learn.

Assessment method, measure, task, strategy, technique Used interchangeably, these terms refer to an instrument used to measure student learning such as tests, interviews, surveys, portfolios, class assignments, internship evaluations, projects, focus groups, presentations, etc.

Direct measure of learning Direct measures of learning require students to demonstrate their knowledge or skills as they respond to an assessment task. Direct measures include objective tests, essays, presentations, classroom assignments, standardized tests, licensure tests, comprehensive senior projects, exhibitions and performances in the arts, observations of students' performance during internships, portfolio assessment of student work.

Indirect measure of learning Indirect measures of learning ask the student (or other respondents) for their opinions, perceptions, estimates, or reflections about student learning or performance. These are proxies for learning, not measurements of learning itself. Indirect measures include surveys of students, alumni, employers; exit interviews; focus groups; graduation rates; job placement rates.

Course-embedded program assessment (aka course-embedded assessment) A systematic procedure in which a task that measures program learning outcomes is used in the context of a course. The same task may also be used to assess student learning in the course.

Formative vs. summative assessment Teachers assess students for two basic reasons: 1) to monitor student learning and make necessary adjustments in instruction, both for individual students and for entire classes, and 2) to assign grades to students after some period of instruction. The former type of assessment is called formative because its primary function is to help "form" learning while there is still time and opportunity for students to improve. The latter type is called summative because its primary function is to "sum up" student learning at the end of some period of time (Scriven, 1967).

> Anderson, L. & Krathwohl, D. Eds. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*, pp. 245-246.

> **Formative assessment** (aka assessment for learning; classroom-based assessment; classroom assessment techniques; CATS) A procedure to gather information about learning as learning is taking place so that instructional modification may be made to improve the quality and amount of learning. Usually it takes place during class sessions and provides immediate feedback about how and what students are learning. Using that feedback, instructors then can modify teaching to improve learning.

> **Summative assessment** involves collecting, analyzing and using information about student learning for purposes of grading or documenting what students have learned in a unit, course or program. The purpose of summative assessment in the classroom is to grade student performance. The purpose for summative assessment in the program is to document student achievement with respect to program outcomes.

Rubric
"A rubric is a scoring tool that explicitly represents the instructor's performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. A rubric divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of different levels of quality associated with each component. Rubrics can be used for a wide array of assignments: papers, projects, oral presentations, artistic performances, group projects, and so on. Rubrics can be used as scoring or grading guides, and to provide formative feedback to support and guide ongoing learning efforts."

> Ambrose, S., Bridges, M., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M., & Norman, M. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. p. 231.

UWL ASSESSMENT TERMINOLOGY

APR - Academic Program Review - Refers to peer review of an academic program that occurs typically every 7 years with Faculty Senate APR Committee review.

CATL - Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning - Unit within Academic Affairs that supports improvement of teaching and student learning at UWL.

CLA - Collegiate Learning Assessment, an assessment tool in which first year and senior students respond to written prompts as a direct measure of their writing and thinking abilities.

GEAC - General Education Assessment Committee - Assessment of the General Education Program is executed by the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) under the direction of the General Education Committee (GEC).

GEC - General Education Committee

GCC - Graduate Curriculum Committee

HLC - Higher Learning Commission - HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region, including UWL.

IRAP - Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning - Unit within Academic Affairs that empowers the UWL community to make data informed decisions driving improvement and change for students, faculty, and staff.

NSSE - National Survey of Student Engagement, a survey sent to all First Year and Senior students every third spring term that collects data on student academic activities, satisfaction with campus life, and provides comparative data with national and regional peers.

TaskStream - The assessment software package used for general education assessment, program level assessment, and student teacher candidate certification for UWL students.

AMS (Accountability Management System): The component of Taskstream that captures assessment processes and results for General Education and Program Level assessment.

LAT (Learning Achievement Tools): The component of Taskstream in which students create ePortfolios for review. Reports on portfolios can be run in LAT and ported into AMS. School of Education uses this for teacher candidate review and certification.

AQUA: A new tool that facilitates the review of student work with rubrics. No student accounts are needed as projects are coordinated and evaluated by faculty. This has been piloted in fall 2016 by the College of Business Administration.

UCC - Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

UPAC - University Program Assessment Committee is an ad hoc Faculty Senate committee established in Fall 2016 whose main responsibilities are to 1) review all program assessment plans and reports and provide feedback to enable continued improvement in the undertaking of quality assessment, 2) work with the program review process to continue to integrate aspects of program assessment into the APR self-study, and 3) be a resource for programs or departments as related to program assessment. Committee members are faculty with significant and meaningful past involvement in assessment activities from across campus.

UWL ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

UWL Assessment Resources - Found on the web page for Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP), a set of assessment resources address University-wide assessment, General Education assessment, and Program and Course assessment. https://www.uwlax.edu/institutional-research/assessment-transparency-framework/assessment-resources/

NATIONAL RESOURCES

AAC&U: Association of American Colleges and Universities https://www.aacu.org/
Two of AAC&U's major related initiatives are LEAP and VALUE.

LEAP (Liberal Education and America's Promise). The LEAP initiative defines the Essential Learning Outcomes, High Impact Practices (HIPS), Principles of Excellence and Authentic Assessments. https://www.aacu.org/leap

VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education). Through the VALUE initiative sixteen rubrics have been developed for the Essential Learning Outcomes.   These rubrics have been developed by teams of educational professionals and are now widely referenced as **The VALUE Rubrics**.   The VALUE rubrics include I*nquiry and Analysis, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Written Communication, Oral Communication, Quantitative Literacy, Information Literacy, Reading, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Civic Knowledge and Engagement – Local and Global, Intercultural Knowledge and Competence, Ethical Reasoning and Action, Global Learning, Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning, and Integrative Learning*. All of the rubrics are downloadable for free at https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics

NILOA: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/ NILOA's mission is to "discover and disseminate ways that academic programs and institutions can productively use assessment data internally to inform and strengthen undergraduate education, and externally to communicate with policy makers, families and other stakeholders." One of their major initiatives is the DQP (Degree Qualifications Profile) which is an effort to align degrees with specific learning outcomes. NILOA produces a free monthly newsletter: http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/NILOAnewsletters.html.

NILOA maintains an extensive Resource Library:
http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/publications.html
NILOA maintains a searchable library of peer reviewed assignments
http://www.assignmentlibrary.org/search.