**Glossary of Terms for Academic Program Assessment**

**Learning Outcome**

A statement in specific and measurable terms that describes what students will know or do. Effective outcomes are consistent with the larger goals, clearly stated, clearly measurable, realistic & doable, appropriate for what you are trying to measure, and worthy/important. An ideal outcome has a measurable verb. An outcome does NOT include how you will measure something or the target/benchmark that you are trying to reach. See Writing effective outcomes handout for more information.

**Means of Assessment (Assessment Method)**

Assessment is how the learning outcomes are measured. The “means of assessment” is how the relevant information will be gathered. The specific assessment can be any one of the various Assessment Types (defined below). The assessment needs to have a direct relationship to the outcome being measured and should be somewhat discreet and focused. In many cases multiple Specific Assessments should be used per outcome.

**Assessment Types**

1. Capstone Project/Thesis- A culminating product that incorporates the entirety of a course or program of study.
2. Course Assignment – A project or task in one class.
3. Course Performance- Observing and judging a student’s skill in carrying out a physical activity or producing a product from a particular course.
4. Exam – A formal, systematic procedure for obtaining a sample of students’ knowledge.
5. Field placement/internship - Any period of time during which a beginner acquires experience in an occupation, profession, or pursuit.
6. In class activity –A task done during class.
7. Oral Communication- Expressing information or ideas through human language.
8. Performance task - Observing while they are performing skills or examining the products created during the process. Then, an evaluation of the level of proficiency demonstrated. It is the process that is important.
9. Portfolio- A well-defined collection of student artifacts or performances that show achievement of particular skills over time.
10. Process Analysis - Internal step-by-step analysis of procedures to identify efficiencies and inefficiencies.
11. Research Paper- A substantial piece of academic writing, usually done as a requirement for a class, in which the author does independent research into a topic and writes a description of the findings of that research.
12. Standardized Test- An assessment that is administered, scored, and interpreted the same for all students taking the test, no matter when and where it is used.
13. Survey - Questions usually about feelings or opinions in either a format that has a few response options to select from or in an open-ended format that solicits brief or extended written responses.
14. Training/Professional Development – Opportunity given to staff within the program to further their education/knowledge of pertinent issues related to the operations of the program.

**Rubric**

An assessment tool that consists of defining the criteria to be evaluated within a task or skill and assigning levels of achievement or fulfillment for each criteria.

**Related Theme**

Predefined university wide themes have been identified and are tied to both the university mission and accreditation requirements. An individual outcome may be related to multiple themes; however, it’s unrealistic that a single outcome can relate to all the defined themes. If so, it may be that the outcome needs to be rewritten to address more discrete entities.

**Target/Benchmark**

A desired result or value identified for a specific assessment.

**Result**

The recorded measurement that is related to either a specific assessment or can be related to the outcome generally.

**Actions Taken**

An identified response and/or steps taken for a particular result and which explicate how the program might consider adjusting, if necessary, either the outcome, the specific assessment, and/or the target.

**Personnel**

The users and their respective access rights, that can see and interact with the program.

**Related Document**

Data or evidence to support a particular assessment result or a specific assessment.