

Assessment Language Glossary for Academic Programs

Actions

This refers to the specific measures and strategies a program should consider and implement to enhance student learning, streamline program operations, and potentially improve the assessment process. Focus on one or two action items each year and decide when the action will be implemented and who will be responsible for follow-up. After implementing the action, reassess the outcome to determine the effectiveness of the action.

Analysis of Results

Analyzing or interpreting results means looking closely at the information gathered during assessments. This step-by-step process helps find important insights, spot patterns, trends, and connections, and then come to clear conclusions.

Artifact

Something produced by a student to indicate mastery of a skill or component of knowledge associated with the SLO. It is often used as the associated evidence of the assessment method. This includes student-produced essays, presentations, exams, and more.

Assessment Cycle

The sequence in which assessment is performed (in an ongoing loop):

1. Plan and identify outcomes
2. Collect data
3. Analyze data
4. Share results
5. Identify & implement changes
6. Assess the impact of change
7. Repeat

Assessment Method

They should reflect the skill or knowledge identified in the SLO to assess the extent to which students achieve the SLO. They are appropriate to the nature of the discipline and are often consistent over time in order to enable USA to evaluate cohorts of

students. They should be methods that provide information that can be directly controlled by the department or program.

Compliance

The assessment report is compliant if it is in line with the Principles of Accreditation put forth by SACSCOC (standard 8.2.a). The purpose of determining compliance is to ensure educational quality, improve the effectiveness of USA, and to fulfill requirements for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Criterion

Criteria are established targets of success for each assessment method. These are standards that provide evidence of student achievement of the expected learning outcome. The criterion must be appropriate for the SLO, assessment method, and overall program or course that it pertains to.

Criterion Met/Not Met

This indication reports whether or not the students achieved the SLO as defined by your established criteria. It should inform your results and use of results statements.

Direct Assessment

Evidence that demonstrates learning based on student performance (e.g., research papers, exams, etc.).

Indirect Assessment

Reflection about learning or secondary evidence of the existence of learning (e.g., surveys of student perceptions of instruction)

Outcome Year(s)

The outcome year of an SLO is the academic year(s) in which the SLO was assessed.

Results

Your results should describe how your findings compare to the established criterion for each assessment method. If applicable, your results should also describe any trends over time that you have noticed with the data as well as any relevant subscale data. The date of your results should be in accordance with the date during which you analyzed and drew conclusions about your data.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)

SLOs specify the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes students are expected to attain in courses or in a program. They address what a student will be able to do, think, or know. They are appropriate for, representative of, and relevant to the program and include active verbs (i.e. define, describe, list, apply, display, develop, etc.). Equally important, SLOs must be measurable through an assessment method.

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Audience</i>
<i>Upon completion of the program,</i>	<i>clinical mental health students</i>
<i>Behavior</i>	
<i>will create a professional identity based on the philosophies, history, and roles of the clinical mental health counseling profession.</i>	

Supplemental Documentation

This can be included in the assessment methods or results sections of your report and provides a clearer picture of your methods and/or findings. Most commonly, documentation will include rubrics, deidentified data, a copy of a survey, visualizations of data, and more.

Use of Results

The use of results section of the report can be summarized with one question: how can you use the data about student learning in your program or course? To use your results, make decisions about how to respond to data and how to implement changes in practice. The changes do not need to be large; they can be as small as altering a rubric or changing the prompt of an essay assignment. Document the nature of the changes made as well as your plans for tracking changes in student learning. Your use of results is the most critical part of your report because it details the manner in which you are seeking continuous improvement for student learning in your program. The date of your use of results should be in accordance with the date during which you established that you are monitoring or action planning.