

SLOA Glossary

Achievement Targets: is the minimum standard to meet a specific learning outcome and/or Institutional Effectiveness (I.E.) outcome.

Assessment: "Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development." (Palomba & Banta, 1999)

"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)

Course-specific Learning Outcomes: are specific statements of what a student can do, what a student knows and/or how a student behaves as a result of an educational experience within a course. South Texas College utilizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEOs) as statements for the Core Curriculum courses.

Direct measures: Students demonstrate expected learning outcomes.

Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEOs): are outcomes for student learning that provide both guidance for instruction and a profile of students as they complete each component of a core curriculum.

Goals: are broad statements about the desired ends to which a unit or program aspires. Goals are usually too general to actually guide assessment practice, but they can provide a bridge between the mission/purpose statement and the outcomes/objectives that specify the most important work of the unit or program.

Findings: are assessment results based on the achievement targets.

Formative Assessment: designed to provide feedback to improve what is being assessed.

Indirect Measures: students or other report their perceptions of how well a learning outcome has been achieved.

Measures: are the assessment methods for one or more learning outcomes and/or Institutional Effectiveness (I.E.) outcomes.

Mission/Purpose: A mission statement articulates the purpose of a unit or program. The mission statement declares what the unit or program does and what it intends to achieve. Often a mission statement carries an implicit statement of the values the program espouses, as well as the relationship the unit or program has to the institution as a whole.

An academic program mission/purpose statement should identify what the program will help students and others learn and do within a particular context and state how the program contributes to its wider communities. An administrative unit mission/purpose statement should focus on the reason the unit exists within the institution, the people it serves, and the value its work brings to the institution.

A mission/purpose statement should be specific, identifying the important things a unit or program does that separates it from others. Consider how each of the following general statements defines the program or unit and gives direction to its work.

Program Learning Outcomes: are specific statements of what a student can do, what a student knows and/or how a student behaves as a result of an educational experience within a program. Program Learning Outcomes can be viewed as the essential elements faculty expect to see in those students who finish the program.

Student Learning Outcomes: are specific statements of what a student can do, what a student knows and/or how a student behaves as the result of an educational experience.

Summative Assessment: designed to provide an evaluative summary.

Triangulation: is the collection of data via multiple methods to determine if the results show a consistent outcome.