

Utica College  
Assessment Definitions  
(Last updated 11/2012)

## Definitions

### General Terms

**Assessment** – The measure of the extent to which certain goals have been met. Different from **Evaluation** which assigns a value to the progress made towards meeting certain goals. For instance, it is an assessment that x% of students can perform y types of mathematical calculations; it is an evaluation when we determine that that level is or is not good enough.

**Course Syllabus** – A document that lays out the expectations, including the learning goals, for a single course.

**Curriculum map** – a document that lays out the program-level student learning goals and then identifies in which course each goal is met.

**Direct Measure** – clear, visible, convincing and specific evidence of learning. *Examples:* test, quiz, examinations, internship performance, capstone projects, exhibits, performances, pass rates on licensure or certification tests, employer rating of students' performance. What is being measured needs to be precisely and clearly defined and the measure used needs to give specific information about what is being measured.

**Indirect Measure** – used to support findings from direct measures. *Examples:* course evaluations, number of hours spent on intellectual activities related to the course, enrollment data, alumni surveys, student opinion surveys, graduation rates, course grades...

**Institutional Assessment Plan** – documented plan outlining the assessment and institutional effectiveness framework for the entire College.

### Specific Processes at Utica College

**Course Level Assessment** – two distinct assessment processes: student learning assessment and operational goal assessment.

**Course Student Learning Goals (CSLG)** – the measurable learning/knowledge expectations for all students completing an academic course; documented in the syllabi and program review documents. Direct measures are to be used; indirect measures/results will be used to support the direct measure findings. CSGL are identified by faculty, described in the course syllabus, and it is the faculty of each course who determine what to measure and the tool to use for this faculty-driven process.

**Course Operational Goals** – focus on the functioning of the course, rather than the learning achieved by the students. Examples include development of new courses, deletion of a course, edits to a course, and course mapping to program goals.

**Academic Program** – According to NYS Education Department, an academic program is organized around the set of educational requirements necessary to qualify for a registered degree. The curriculum or program includes general education or specialized study in depth in a particular field, or both (NYSED, 2012). At Utica College academic departments may contain more than one registered program. In some cases it may be operationally effective for the documented program review to focus on one department and all its academic programs. If a department would like to consolidate the program review process of more than one academic program under one academic department, it must first send in writing a request to the Academic Assessment Coordinating Committee (AACC) for approval.

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**Program Level Assessment** – assessment of the student learning or operational functioning at the program level.

**Program Student Learning Goals (PSLG)** – the measurable learning/knowledge expectations for all students graduating from a particular curriculum/major; documented in the catalog, web site, and program review documents. Minimum one PSLG is assessed by the program each year. Direct measures are to be used; indirect measures/results will be used to support the direct measure findings. Faculty of the program identify PSLG's and facilitate the process.

**Program Operational Goals** – Goals set for and by a program, usually during the five-year program review process. However operational goals may be set during a review for an external accreditor or in the interim between program reviews. Operational goals address the functioning of the program.

**Program Review** – required self-study process completed by each academic program. It is usually conducted on a five-year rotation, unless external program accreditation cycles require a different review time line.

**Syllabi Format and Submission** - faculty are required to follow the established course syllabi template adopted by the Curriculum Committee. All syllabi are submitted to the respective School and are reviewed to ensure course student learning goals are communicated and discernible.

**Division-Level Academic Assessment** – assessment of the division-level operational goals. These are developed by the Provost's cabinet during the annual retreat. Results are communicated annually to the Office of the President. This process also makes use of **Academic Affairs Data** – include the key performance indicators used for the Institution Dashboard Report, the Core Audit Report, the Program Quality Analysis, and the Academic Admissions Report.

**Institution-Level Assessment** – focuses on both the Institutional Priorities and Institution Level Student Learning Goals.

**Institutional Priorities** – based upon the divisional goals developed by members of the President's Cabinet in collaboration with their respective areas. In consultation with the Board of Trustees the college President identifies the College's institutional priorities for the year. All goals are linked directly to the College's Strategic Plan. The President reports annually to the College community on progress made towards meeting the previous year's institutional priorities.

**Institutional Student Learning Goals** – the measurable learning expectations for all students graduating from any academic program. The 10 General Education goals are Utica College's institutional student learning goals which are assessed using direct measures are to be used while indirect measures/results will be used to support the direct measure findings. These are established by the institution with input from the faculty and academic administration. The Academic Assessment Coordinating Committee coordinates the process which occurs whether or not assessment is identified as an institutional priority.