GLOSSARY OF ASSESSMENT TERMS	
TERM	**DEFINITION**
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SUPPORT UNITS	Support (non-academic) units whose functions provide direct support to faculty and students as related to their educational programs, indirect support for student learning, or a specific co-curricular mission that supports the college experience.
ACTION PLANS/ USE OF RESULTS	Descriptions of what actions will be taken in response to the findings identified through the assessment of student learning outcomes or goals, including how the assessment results will be used to seek improvements.
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT UNITS	Support (non-academic) units whose functions are non-instructional and involve no direct interaction with students.
AGGREGATED DATA	Data that have been combined to show averages or other representations of groups of students, rather than individual results.
ALIGNMENT	The coordination between learning outcomes, action strategies, program goals, institutional mission and/or other objectives so that successful achievement of lower-level objectives will lead to the fulfillment of higher-level ones.
ASSESSMENT	The annual process of critical self-examination with the aim of improvement. The assessment process involves gathering evidence about a selected outcome, making meaning of the gathered evidence, determining if results are satisfactory, implementing any necessary action plans, and reassessing an outcome to determine if changes were effective
ASSESSMENT METHOD	The evidence, or measure, a unit uses to determine whether an outcome has been met. The assessment method describes generally how the information/data will be collected, from whom the information will be collected, and at what points in time collection will occur. See the document, Assessment Types, for definitions of common assessment methods.
ASSESSMENT PLAN (IE PLAN)	A unit's plan of what it will assess for the current cycle, including goals or outcomes, assessment methods, and a numeric standard of success.

Revised May 2020

ASSESSMENT RESULTS (IE RESULTS)	A unit's report on assessment results and any action plans describing how results will be used to seek improvements in future performance.
BENCHMARK	A criterion-referenced objective performance data point that can be used for the purposes of internal or external comparison. A program can use its own data as a baseline benchmark against which to compare future performance. It can also use data from another program as a benchmark.
CLOSING THE LOOP	When a unit makes a change in response to assessment results revealing that a standard of success has not been met, re-assesses to measure the effect of those changes, and determines that the unit has now achieved the expected standard.
CONSTITUENTS	The people who participate in or benefit from a unit's offered services. Can include, but not limited to: students, faculty, staff, community members, and/or external stakeholders.
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	The ongoing improvement of programs, services, or processes through incremental and breakthrough improvements.
CURRICULUM MAPPING	A visual representation of a guided learning pathway. Typically utilizes a matrix format to visually represent the alignment between program student learning outcomes and required courses or learning experiences.
DIRECT ASSESSMENT	Direct Assessment of Learning is when measures of learning are based on student performance or a demonstration of the learning itself. Direct measures include exams/tests, course-embedded assessments, portfolios, capstone projects, performances, presentations, exhibits, internship evaluations, and clinical evaluations. Direct Assessment of Goals is when measures directly tally or provide evidence of unit processes, services or experiences
DISAGGREGATED DATA	Assessment data that has been broken down by detailed sub-categories, for example, by performance level, by gender, or by delivery mode. Disaggregated data can reveal trends or inequities not

	fully reflected in aggregated data and which can suggest action plans for continuous improvement.
EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT	A means of gathering information about student learning that is built into and a natural part of the teaching-learning process. Often uses for assessment purposes classroom assignments that are evaluated to assign students a grade.
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT	Assessments developed by external sources. Often standardized and norm-referenced, such as a state licensing examination, SAT Subject Tests, or VALUE Rubrics (see below).
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	The gathering of information about student learning during the progression of a course or program, and usually repeatedly, to improve the learning of those students.
GOAL	A goal is considered an observable and measurable outcome that assesses a particular process, service, or experience. It represents an impact or quality improvement the unit would like to see as a result of its actions (outcome).
INDIRECT ASSESSMENT	Indirect Assessments of Learning use perceptions, reflections or secondary evidence to make inferences about student learning. Examples include surveys of employers, students' self-assessments, and number of admissions to graduate schools. Indirect Assessments of Goals look at attitudes, perceptions, or opinions about support unit processes, services, and experiences. Examples include surveys, focus groups, and self-assessments.
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	The systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution.
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (IE) AUTHOR	The individual designated to represent an academic program or support unit and responsible for documenting annual Assessment (IE) Plans and Results.
LOCAL ASSESSMENT	An assessment method that is developed in-house by university faculty or staff such as a faculty-developed comprehensive exam or rubric.
MISSION STATEMENT	Statement of a unit's purpose and how it supports the Institutional Mission.

OUTCOME	A level of performance or achievement that describes the impact or quality of a unit's processes, services, or experiences. A statement of what a student should understand and be able to do as a result of what he or she has learned in a course or program.
OUTPUT	Represents products or services produced by a unit's processes.
PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT	The ability to apply knowledge in a real-life setting. Assessment of the performance is done using a rubric, or analytic scoring guide, to aid in objectivity.
PROCESS / SERVICE / EXPERIENCE	The normal activities of a support unit, including business processes engaged in, services offered, or experiences facilitated for constituents.
PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT	Goals and assessments are broader than those of individual courses but are comprised or built by the courses in which the program encompasses.
QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT	Assessment for which the collected data cannot be fully quantified mathematically, but rather involves subjective analysis of descriptive information based on traits and characteristics.
QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT	Assessment for which the collected data can be fully quantified, allowing for objective, mathematical analysis using descriptive statistics, such as the mean, standard deviation, and range.
RELIABILITY	How consistently a measure of the same phenomenon leads to the same result after multiple administrations or across multiple scorers/raters.
RUBRIC	A rubric is an evaluative tool that explicitly represents the performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. A rubric divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of the characteristics of the work associated with each component, at varying levels of mastery.
STANDARD OF SUCCESS	Standards set a level of accomplishment that performance is expected to meet or exceed. The standard of success should be neither out of reach nor below an acceptable level of performance to achieve the unit's purpose.

STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT	An objective test that is given and scored in a uniform manner. Standardized tests are carefully constructed and items are selected after trials for appropriateness and difficulty. Tests are issued with a manual giving complete guidelines for administration and scoring. Scores are often are often norm-referenced.
STRATEGIC PLANNING	Long-term (i.e., often 3-5 year) planning at the level of the whole institution or unit that focuses on adaptation to the organization's external environment and the future. Guided by a vision of the organization in the future, strategic planning attempts to position the organization favorably with respect to needed resources to achieve continuous quality improvement.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOS) (PROGRAM OR COURSE):	A concise, measurable statement defining what students are able to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon completion of an educational program or course.
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	Refers to assessment that is carried out at the end of a course or program and is used to provide evidence of students' final mastery levels.
TRIANGULATION	The collection of data via multiple methods in order to determine if the results show a consistent outcome.
VALIDITY	The extent to which an assessment measures what it is intended to measure.
VALUE RUBRIC	Nationally-developed rubrics that articulate fundamental criteria for 15 learning outcomes, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. Intended for institutional-level use in evaluating student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can by shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

References:
Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research Tyler Junior College. (n.d.) Glossary of Assessment Terms. Retrieved from https://www.tjc.edu/downloads/file/86/glossary_of_assessment_terms
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA). (n.d.) Assessment Glossary. Retrieved from https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NILOA-Glossary.pdf
Office of Academic Assessment and Effectiveness. College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. Assessment Dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.csbsju.edu/academic-affairs/oaae/assessment-dictionary
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (2018). Resource Manual for the 2018 Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement. Retrieved from https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018-POA-Resource-Manual.pdf

Institutional
Effectiveness and Research
A&M-COMMERCE