

Assessment Terms

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Assessment Workshop, 22 June 2007

Bloom's Taxonomy—A classification system developed by Benjamin Bloom (1956) organizing learning into three domains: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. The cognitive domain, the most often cited, further defines learning into six hierarchical levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. (*Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*; pp. 201-207; B. S. Bloom (Ed.) Susan Fauer Company, Inc. 1956.)

Closing the Loop—Using collected assessment information to make decisions about a program and to report to interested parties nature and rationale of those decisions.

Course Portfolio—A collection of materials (goals and outcomes, syllabus, notes, assignments, samples of student work) assembled for a single course. May include reflective statements from the instructor regarding the success of individual activities/assignments and planned changes for upcoming course offerings.

Curriculum Outcomes—Expected results for a program taking an overarching or holistic view of the curriculum (i.e. a curriculum map, consistency within a series of courses, communication among faculty teaching a series of courses, feedback on relevancy or redundancy of curriculum content).

Data—Information collected to document achievement of learning, process, or curriculum outcomes.

IRB (Institutional Review Board)—This board, a division of the Texas A&M Office of Research Compliance, reviews and approves research involving human subjects. Typically, assessment of educational programs does NOT require IRB review and approval. However, if you wish to publish student data collected through assessment activities, review and approval may be required. If you wish to publish assessment data, please contact the Office of Research Compliance (researchcompliance.tamu.edu) for additional information.

Iterative— Repetitive; used in connection with assessment to acknowledge that results are not achieved in one giant leap, but in a series of smaller steps. The entire process “what are we trying to accomplish, what information do we need to look at to tell us whether we've accomplished our goal, what does that information tell us, what do we do next” is repeated as needed and as appropriate.

OIA (Office of Institutional Assessment) — A University-level office providing support and assistance for assessment efforts across the university, particularly those dealing with university-wide assessment and accreditation. (assessment.tamu.edu).

On-going—A continuous process that is regularly implemented and reviewed. See iterative.

Process Outcome—Expected results related to internal procedures or policies. For example, a department may wish to ensure that all first year students see their advisor X number or times per year, or that the number of students in a major is increased.

Rubric—A scoring system used to evaluate student work.

Student Portfolio—A collection of select work completed by a single student.

Student Work—Any product or process completed by a student: papers, examinations, projects, oral reports, laboratory techniques, etc.

Systematic—Incorporated into existing and regularly-implemented program activities. For example, grading is systematic in that we plan ahead when the exams will be, how much they will be weighted, what papers students will write, etc. Thus, with grading, we have a timeline and a purpose for each piece of information we collect about student learning within a course. This same kind of “system” applies to program level assessment.