

# Assessment Terminology

- < **Assessment** the systematic collection of information about student learning, using the time, knowledge, expertise, and resources available, in order to inform decisions that affect student learning<sup>1</sup>
- < **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** <sup>1</sup> the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students take with them from a learning experience;<sup>2</sup> describe 1) who is expected to learn, 2) what learning is expected, 3) when/where is learning expected, and 4) why is learning expected<sup>3</sup>
  - o Example: Undergraduate students will be able to identify courses for their schedule to meet program requirements after meeting with an academic advisor at least once.<sup>3</sup>
- < **Program Objective** a SLO focused on student achievement such as enrollment and retention rates, graduation rate, job placement rate, licensing, and certification<sup>4</sup>
- < **Measure** the instrument used to determine if students are achieving the outcome/goal; includes explanation of how the method is used to evaluate student learning<sup>1</sup>
- < **Direct Measure** directly evaluate student work; includes portfolios, exams, papers, project, presentations, performances, standardized tests, licensure exams, comprehensives, and internship evaluations; preferable to indirect measures<sup>4</sup>
- < **Indirect Measure** indirectly evaluate student learning by having students reflect on their learning rather than demonstrate it; includes surveys and interviews<sup>4</sup>
- < **Target** the criteria for success<sup>4</sup>
- < **Assessment Plan** the Program Description, Student Learning Outcomes, Program Objectives, Measures, and Targets<sup>4</sup>
- < **Assessment Report** in addition to the assessment plan, includes the Findings, Action Plans, and Analysis<sup>4</sup>
- < **Closing-the-loop** the final step in assessment; examining whether implemented changes (such as action plans) were successful; examining whether action led to the improvement of student learning<sup>5</sup>
- < **Action Plan** an organized activity undertaken to promote achievement of the outcomes, or an activity developed by program faculty to improve and/or grow the program<sup>4</sup>

3. Levy, J. A Brief Guide to Creating Learning Outcomes. Modern Campus, 2018.
4. Lowery, K. 2018 Assessment Showcase. USM Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment.
5. The University of South Carolina. Closing the Assessment Loop. Assessment Toolbox.