

**HANDBOOK FOR
FACULTY PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**



Oklahoma City Community College

2004-2005

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SECTION I

The History of Assessment At Oklahoma City Community College

Oklahoma City Community College from its beginnings in 1972 has valued assessment as a critical part of ensuring the success of students in classes and programs. Students have always been assessed upon entry into the college for class placement, in classes to determine learning, and for many programs at the completion of the program. Each program at the College is founded on a set of terminal competencies, which provide information on expected program outcomes. Course objectives can be found in the course syllabi and program competencies can be found in program review documents.

In the late 1980's there was a renewed emphasis on academic assessment activities from both The Higher Learning Commission and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. With this renewed emphasis on assessment, the College developed a process of evaluation that responded to questions concerning how successfully the College Mission was being met. A portion of this assessment included measurement of the success of students and graduates.

In the fall of 1990 an Institutional Outcomes Assessment Committee was formed. This committee's initial charge was to identify all current assessment activities in both the academic area and the support services areas and combine them into one coordinated effort. The committee was also asked to recommend additions to existing systems when a gap in the assessment processes was identified.

The Institutional Outcomes Assessment Steering Committee had three sub-committees: the Student Assessment Committee, the Instructional Program Review Committee, and the Support Services Program Review Committee. The Institutional Outcomes Assessment Steering Committee and the sub-committees met regularly from the fall of 1990 through the spring of 1994. During this time the committees designed structures to enable the College to assess outcomes across all areas of the College. The assessment results were used as one of the three inputs into the planning. The results of the previous year's plan and an environmental analysis were the other two pieces of input used to develop the Master Action Plan each year.

In addition to the review of activities and the monitoring of the use of outcomes assessment information in the institutional planning process, the Institutional Outcomes Assessment Committee provided input into the College self-study that was being developed in 1990 and 1991. The outcomes assessment plan that was developed by the committee became a part of the self-study and was reviewed by consultant/evaluators in the 1991 NCA site visit.

In the spring of 1991 the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education published its “Policy Statement on the Assessment of Students for Purposes of Instructional Improvement and State System Accountability.” This policy required that each institution submit an assessment plan and report annually. The first plan developed with significant input from the Student Assessment Committee was submitted in December of 1991.

The College began in 1994 to look at the institutional planning process and the role of outcomes assessment in that process and in other areas of the institution. In the fall of 1995 the existing Institutional Outcomes Assessment Committee and the three sub-committees were disbanded and replaced by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. This change allowed the scope of the committee to encompass all aspects of the measurement of institutional effectiveness.

During this same time period the focus of academic assessment moved from a general evaluation using indirect measures of student success and the implementation of the College Mission to a more specific assessment of student learning. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education developed its Annual Assessment Report which included information on the effectiveness of entry level assessment, mid-level assessment (General Education), program outcome assessment and student satisfaction. The Higher Learning Commission also became more focused on assessing student learning through the use of direct measures such as licensure exams, capstone courses and nationally developed assessment instruments.

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee was formed to respond to the increased need for assessment information. The Committee developed a system to measure on an ongoing basis the degree to which students met the competencies faculty identified for their program. They also developed a system to be used by support service areas that would be an assessment of how well the area was accomplishing its objectives. With these two systems in place, it became evident that the Institutional Effectiveness Committee needed to be split: one committee that would work on academic assessment and one for support service assessment. Therefore, in 1998 the Institutional Effectiveness Committee split into two subgroups which became free standing committees in 2000.

The Institutional Effectiveness Academic Committee put the following system in place to allow faculty to measure program outcomes:

- program competencies as they were presented in the five year program review formed the base for the annual outcomes assessment process.
- program faculty identify the 3 to 5 competencies they would be evaluating during the particular academic year. Over a five year period all program competencies listed in the program review document would be evaluated.
- the results of the measurement of each program competency was then summarized during the program review process (once every 5 years) at which time changes in program competencies could be made.

The Institutional Effectiveness Academic Committee reviewed each plan and report submitted, and helped department faculty to improve their assessment activities.

A review of the academic outcomes assessment system was made in December of 2001. The purpose of this review was to determine appropriate changes to the system to address both institutional concerns and those concerns expressed by the Higher Learning Commission visiting team during their November 2001 site visit. Subsequently, in 2002, the Institutional Effectiveness Academic Committee was renamed to the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC).

The system that was developed for implementation with the FY 2004 cycle is explained in the rest of this handbook.

SECTION II

DEFINITION OF ASSESSMENT AT OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Student assessment at Oklahoma City Community College begins when a student seeks to enroll for the first time. Entry level assessment is critical to the student being placed in the class that will allow optimal learning and success for the student. Once a student is attending classes, learning is assessed within and at the end of classes. Classroom assessment includes those activities that a teacher uses to evaluate individual students and the learning that they achieve within that one course. Examples of classroom assessment include tests or quizzes, homework, written work such as essays, performances such as speeches, lab experiments, etc. End of course assessment includes any sort of final evaluation of the student's learning, such as a final examination, a capstone project, or final essay. Student learning is assessed again as they complete their program. In this case the assessment process uses both direct and indirect measures in the assessment of student learning outcomes and program outputs. (See the Glossary for the definition of these terms) This process of program assessment is what is referred to in the definition of assessment that has been adopted by the College. The College definition follows:

Assessment at Oklahoma City Community College is the continuous improvement of and commitment to student learning through clear statements of student learning outcomes, explicit measures of these outcomes, established criteria for success, and defined methods of how the program will use the results.

SECTION III

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT AT OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A review of the academic outcomes assessment system was made in December of 2001 and determined that some changes to our system of assessment were needed to address both institutional concerns and those concerns expressed by the Higher Learning Commission. The system that was developed for implementation with the FY 2004 cycle is explained in the rest of this handbook. The following principles of assessment explain the basis upon which the process has been developed:

- Assessment is faculty driven. Faculty members identify the outcomes, specify the means of assessment, and decide what to do with the results.
- Assessment is an ongoing process. Instructors in departments and programs, as well as college service personnel are to do assessment as a regular and annual event.
- Assessment shows outsiders that we do what we say we do in words they can understand.
- Assessment focuses institutional attention on quality.
- Assessment is used to improve learning; therefore, it continues after and apart from visits by accrediting agencies.
- Faculty members at Oklahoma City Community College have the primary responsibility of instruction. Secondary responsibilities include, but are not limited to, supporting the integrity of curricula, encouraging student success, and participating in the assessment of student learning outcomes for the program and/or department.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT ASSESSMENT

Since assessment is the result of a change in the conventional wisdom about the education process and involves applying new approaches to traditional activities, numerous questions are raised as it is implemented. The following section attempts to provide answers to specific questions as a means to further understanding of the whole process.

Q. Isn't it the bottom line that assessment results could be used against me, the classroom teacher?

A. The emphasis on student learning means that assessment is concerned about the content of a course or program not the delivery method. Faculty members in an academic department or program, interpreting the results of an assessment measure, might collectively decide to give more attention to a certain skill, competency, or knowledge area, and might even recommend changes in pedagogy, but they cannot compel the behavior of a given instructor.

Q. Why isn't the grade I give a student sufficient assessment?

A. Outcomes assessment expands the scope of inquiry from the individual student (who will continue to be individually assessed in courses) to a program level. Therefore, it is the aggregate performance of students as a group (even if in a sample) which provides information on whether the program is achieving its advertised ends.

Q. Why don't the assessment professionals just do this and produce a report?

A. First of all, that would be too much like grading . . . and the goal of assessment is to produce results that will enable professional instructors to improve student learning, not a report on past performance. Only the faculty who guide the learning process can identify the intended outcomes of that process, what it is they expect to happen to/for the student. While the assessment professionals can and will give helpful advice in constructing and administering the means of assessment, it is only the faculty who teach in that program who can decide what the results mean and suggest improvements.

Q. How can you assess attitudes and understandings which are simply not quantifiable?

A. It seems a common misunderstanding that assessment requires that everything be reduced to statistical measures. The thrust of assessment is objective results such that anyone will know that the learning goals are being met; but this need not be quantifiable. If the faculty identify as an important result that which is not quantifiable, the process simply asks them to specify some objective means to demonstrate that the results are happening as intended.

Q. Do we all have to use standardized tests?

A. Of course not. Tests from outside organizations have the edge in objectivity but they are only one of many means of assessment. More importantly, they may not be valid in the judgment of the faculty who are identifying outcomes and means . . . and it is their judgment that counts. It may well be that an exam created by the department would be a better tool. The assessment professionals on campus stand ready to help with a wide variety of assessment means . . . and tests are only one possibility.

Q. Why is the Higher Learning Commission making us do assessment?

A. Right now, higher education is concerned with two national issues: the learning college and accountability. Assessment, actually, is not a new concept at all and addresses both these issues. Most teachers have been engaged in some types of assessment throughout their teaching careers and have found it to be a tool for understanding what their students are learning. Assessment also acts as a means of documenting that we, as faculty, are doing what we say we're doing.

Q. What is the connection among the various levels of assessment?

A. Let's remember that the focus of assessment is student learning. The most significant educational interaction happens between students and instructors in the classroom.

The individual class section is part of a course, and courses are parts of programs. These levels reflect different, yet interrelated, facets of the student's education.

Q. How will assessment help improve learning?

A. Assessment is merely a tool; however, it is a tool by which we can communicate with our students about learning. Assessment does not accomplish learning ... but it provides information to the instructor who may use it to improve learning.

Q. Are adjunct faculty involved?

A. You bet! All faculty--full and part-time--are involved in student learning. We have many creative and dedicated adjunct faculty at OKCCC, and the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee will be planning several workshops at various times and locations to ensure everyone has an opportunity to learn about assessment.

SECTION IV

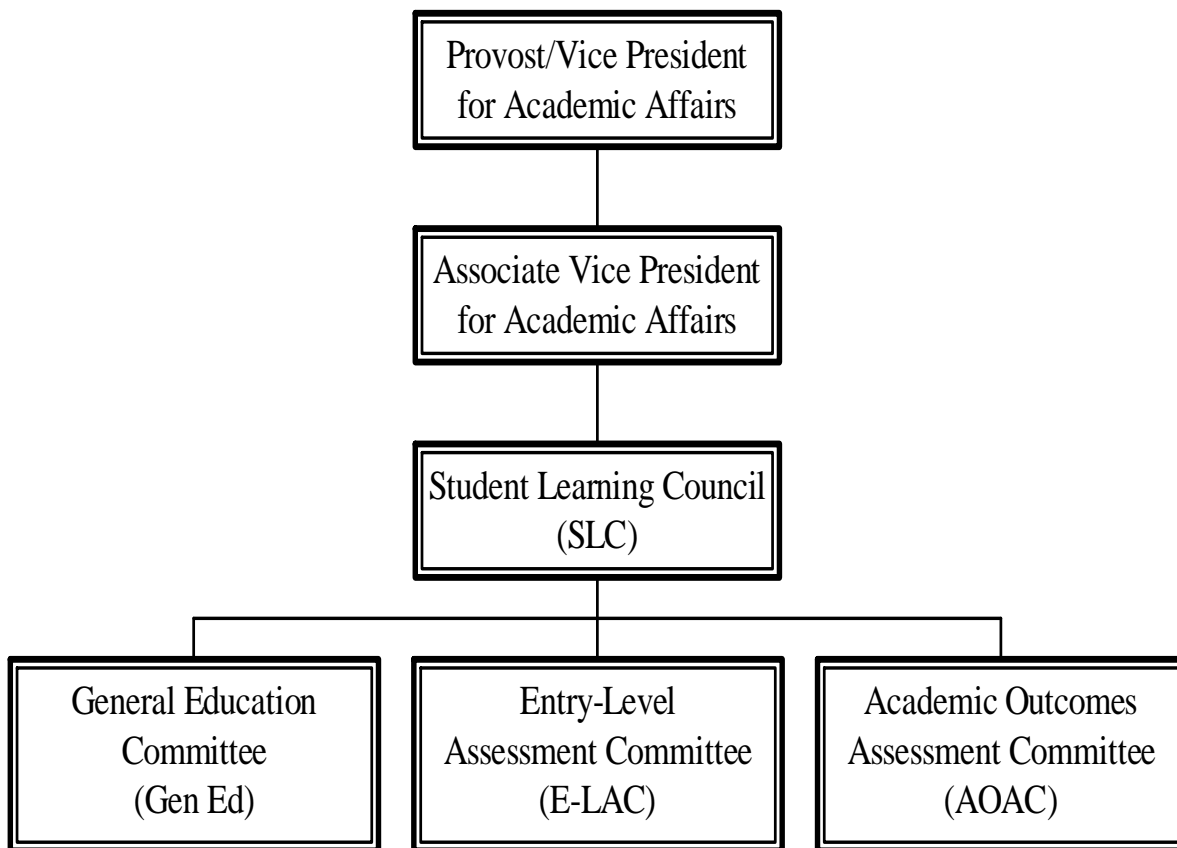
STRUCTURE OF ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AT OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Philosophical Base:

Oklahoma City Community College is committed to the assessment of student learning. This is the vehicle through which the faculty demonstrate and document student learning and tie it to the overall College Mission. Assessment improves effectiveness and establishes the need for resources and development.

Organizational Chart

To implement the assessment philosophy stated above the following structure has been developed.



Over the next few pages of this Assessment Handbook you will find a description of the Student Learning Council and the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee. These are the two main groups directly related to the assessment of student learning in academic programs.

STUDENT LEARNING COUNCIL (SLC)

Purpose:

To provide a structure and process that will ensure involvement by the entire Academic Affairs Unit in the assessment of student learning.

Responsibilities:

- Members communicate to their constituency relevant assessment information.
- Keep SLC Website current

Membership:

- Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC)
- Entry Level Assessment Committee (E-LAC)
- General Education Committee (Gen Ed)
- Deans' Council

Meetings:

The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs will chair the semiannual SLC meetings. At the first meeting of the year, the chairpersons of the AOAC, ELAC, and Gen Ed Committee will report on findings from the previous year and plans for the current year. At the second meeting of the year, the chairpersons of those committees will provide an update, and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) Assessment Report will be presented.

THE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (AOAC)

Purpose:

To provide guidance to faculty and oversight for the Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs in the following areas:

- developing and implementing Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans (SLOAPs)
- analyzing and interpreting assessment results
- developing appropriate reports
- disseminating assessment results to the College community

Responsibilities:

- Address issues regarding assessment of student learning
- Review and make recommendations regarding Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the appropriate academic dean and program faculty
- Review accreditation reports and address issues regarding student learning
- Keep the *Handbook for Faculty Program Assessment* current

The AOAC will consider issues related to outcomes assessment at the request of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Committee may also seek the consent of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs to consider relevant issues. Once granted, the Committee will accept, seek out, and carefully examine information related to the issue. The Committee will develop and submit recommendations regarding the issue to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Membership:

Voting Members:

- Two faculty members from each Academic Division, appointed by the Academic Dean
- One Academic Dean, appointed by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Two students, appointed by the Director of Student Life

If a voting member cannot attend an AOAC meeting, a designated substitute may attend. However, the substitute may not vote on matters before the Committee. No proxy votes are allowed.

Resource Members:

- Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
- One representative from the Entry Level Assessment Committee
- One representative from the General Education Committee
- Dean of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
- Dean of Division of Learning Resources
- Nonvoting Academic Deans
- Director of Center for Learning and Teaching
- One representative from Student Services appointed by the Vice President for Student Services
- Others as needed

Organization and General Operation:

- a. Members will be appointed no later than the end of the spring semester. The term of office for all voting members will be three years and will begin with the Fall Semester. One third of the membership will be appointed every year. In general, members should not serve consecutive terms. In the event that a Committee member is unable to fulfill his or her Committee obligations, including attendance, a replacement member will be chosen to complete that term of office in the same manner as his or her predecessor.
- b. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will appoint the Chair and the Vice Chair of the AOAC for a three-year term. The Chair and the Vice Chair of the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee will be committed to assessment and knowledgeable of assessment processes. The Chair will confer with the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs to determine reassignment time.
- c. The Chair, with administrative assistance from the office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, has the following responsibilities:

- Chair meetings
 - Actively solicit assessment issues
 - Maintain continuous communication with faculty
 - Provide assistance with preparing the annual program plans and reports
 - Review of program plans and reports.
 - Review all accreditation reports and identify issues to be addressed by committee
 - Assist with development of Oklahoma State Regents Assessment Report
 - Report at SLC meeting
 - Visit with each department chair and program director at least once a year
 - Plan at least one assessment workshop per semester
 - Attend workshops per direction of Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - Attend division/department meetings as requested
 - Participate in department chair and program director meeting
 - Meet with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Vice Chair monthly
- d. The Vice Chair, with administrative assistance from the office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, has the following responsibilities:
- Execute functions at the direction of the Chair
 - Assumes responsibility in the absence of the Chair
 - Keep the *Handbook for Faculty Program Assessment* current
 - Keep information on the web site current
 - Ensure all meetings are ready – minutes, agenda, etc.
 - Assist faculty in the timely submission of program plans and reports
 - Visit with each department chair and program director at least once a year (as assigned by the Chair)
 - Maintain continuous communication with faculty
 - Attend workshops per direction of Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - Meet with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and the Chair monthly
- e. Subcommittees and/or ad hoc committees will be organized by and report to the full Committee for the purpose of expediting particular functions which cannot be performed as appropriately in meetings of the full committee. Any such subcommittee and/or ad hoc committees will provide minutes of their meetings and/or recommendations to the AOAC on a continuing basis so that the full membership is kept aware of their activities.
- f. Any member of the college community may attend AOAC meetings.
- g. AOAC actions require a quorum of one half of the voting members. A simple majority vote will determine a matter. Typically, an AOAC recommendation will reflect a consensus of the Committee, but each committee member will have the right to submit a dissenting opinion, which may include evidence and argument as well as additional proposals, concerns or other comments. A dissenting opinion shall be submitted to the Chair prior to the next Committee meeting.

The Chair will announce at the next meeting that a dissenting opinion has been received and will be forwarded to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- h. Evaluation of the AOAC should include its design, operation, membership, guidelines, and other relevant matters.

Committee Actions:

- Once initiated, a proposal will be considered by the AOAC. The Committee will respond to formal proposals within a reasonable period. Only the originator may withdraw a proposal from consideration.
- To be included on the Committee's agenda, any proposal or other item for consideration must be submitted to the chairperson in writing.
- The originator, at the request of the Committee, may agree to amend the proposal at any time.

The Committee will make its recommendation in a timely fashion.

SECTION V

PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT

Basically, the process, done annually, begins with writing a plan in the fall, followed by implementation in the spring, and completed with a report the next fall.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR FY 20__**

List program that is to be evaluated

(Program/Option/Emphasis)

*Identify whether it is a certificate, A.A.,
A.S., or A.A.S.*

*Date and submit to Dean on or before
November 1*

(Program Level)

(Date Submitted to Division Dean)

*Enter the name of the individual who was responsible for
submission of the plan to the Academic Division Dean.*

Submitted By: _____
(Departmental Chair or Faculty Assessment Representative)

Assisted By: *List ALL program faculty who assisted in the
preparation of the plan*

*Academic Division Dean signs, date, and submits the plan
to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Submitted By: _____
Dean Date

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT PLAN

PROGRAM

PLAN YEAR

INTRODUCTION

All programs at Oklahoma City Community College must provide a plan to assess student learning outcomes and program outputs. The outcomes/outputs for the (Name of Program) are listed below:

Student Learning Outcomes

- ◆ *(List*
- ◆ *Them)*

Program Outputs

- ◆ *(List*
- ◆ *Them)*

Completion of the annual assessment plan for each fiscal assessment period requires (1) identification and (2) measurement of either of the following:

- *at least two student learning outcomes; OR*
- *one student learning outcome and one program output.*

All of the outputs and outcomes should be measured over a five-year period.

The assessment plan will be updated each fiscal year for new program outputs, student learning outcomes and their measurement.

The assessment plan will also accumulate prior outputs, outcomes and their measures, and will serve as the source document to the 5 year plan submitted for the technical occupational review and program review.

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT PLAN

PROGRAM

PLAN YEAR

PART I – MEASURES AND CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

The identified student learning outcomes and program outputs for each program will be evaluated using the measures and criteria for success identified below:

A. STUDENT OUTCOMES/DIRECT MEASURES

Student Learning Outcomes

Outcome 1. *(Identify first student outcome)*
Measure and Criteria for Success –

- ◆ *(List*
- ◆ *the measures*
- ◆ *you plan to use along*
- ◆ *with the criteria for success)*

Outcome 2. *(Identify second student outcome)*
Measure and Criteria for Success –

- ◆ *(List*
- ◆ *the measures*
- ◆ *you plan to use along*
- ◆ *with the criteria for success)*

(List all outcomes, measures used, and the criteria for success)

B. PROGRAM OUTPUTS/INDIRECT MEASURES

Output 1. *(Identify the first program output)*
Measure and Criteria for Success –

- ◆ *(List*
- ◆ *the measures*
- ◆ *you plan to use along*
- ◆ *with the criteria for success)*

Output 2. *(Identify the second program output)*

Measure and Criteria for Success –

- ◆ *(List*
- ◆ *the measures*
- ◆ *you plan to use along*
- ◆ *with the criteria for success)*

(List all outputs, measures used, and the criteria for success)

PART II – EVALUATION AND RESULTS

(This section will be completed as part of your assessment report prepared by October of the following year. It contains comments/suggestions pertaining to the listed program outputs, student outcomes and their measures to ascertain whether said outputs, outcomes and measures satisfy the criteria established in defining outputs, outcomes, and measures)

PART III – RECOMMENDATIONS

(This section also will be completed as part of your assessment report prepared by October of the following year. It provides the program responders the opportunity to respond to part II and document any specific actions taken or implemented)

SECTION VI

GLOSSARY OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT TERMS

Accountability – The expectation of the community for the College to demonstrate that investments in education lead to measurable learning.

Assessment – Continuous improvement of and commitment to student learning through clear statements of student learning outcomes, explicit measures of these outcomes, established criteria for success, and defined methods of how the program will use the results.

Assessment Plan – A summary of assessments, including outcomes, measures, and criteria for success that will be implemented the following year.

Assessment Report – A summary assessment results and how these results will be used to modify programs and increase student learning.

Closing the Loop/Feedback Loop – The process by which assessment results are used in programmatic and campus-wide decisions to impact student learning.

Criteria for Success – Criteria indicate what is valued in students' responses, products or performances. They are the standard (guidelines, rules, characteristics, or dimensions) against which the measurement is compared.

Measurement – A systematic process providing meaningful, understandable, and dependable information.

Outcomes – Refer to Student Learning Outcomes.

Program – An organized group of courses that lead to the awarding of a Certificate or Associate Degree

Program Outputs—The demonstrable results of an academic program generally identified through indirect measures (e.g. transfer GPA or employer satisfaction).

Student Learning Outcomes – A body of knowledge and/or skills that a student is expected to know, think, demonstrate or apply upon program completion.

Types of Assessment

- 1. Competency-Based Assessment** – An assessment of a student’s performance as compared to a specific learning objective or performance standard.
- 2. Norm-Referenced Assessment** – An assessment of a student’s performance or performances as compared to a larger group. Usually the larger group or “norm group” is a national sample representing a wide and diverse cross-section of students.

Types of Measurement

- 1. Indirect Measurement** – A measurement of program outputs using student performance information. Examples of such measures include but are not limited to: number of students successfully transferring; graduation rates; placement data; advisory committee evaluation; and feedback from students, graduates, or employers.
- 2. Direct Measurement** – A measurement of student learning outcomes showing what they have learned. Examples of such measures include but are not limited to: licensure test results; capstone course portfolios; entry and exit test results.