

## **Glossary of Assessment Terms**

Academic Program – any undergraduate or graduate program (including certificate programs and unique minors). For the purposes of assessment, each program level (undergraduate, graduate and/or certificate) is considered its own academic program and may have its own set of student learning outcomes.

Academic Program Assessment Committee – committee of Morehead State University faculty responsible for reviewing academic program assessment plans and providing constructive feedback to programs for improvement.

Action plan – documented steps a unit will take to make improvements. Action plans are required for all assessment plans.

Administrative/Educational Support Unit – any unit on campus that does not offer an academic program (degree or certificate) but provides support, services, and/or programs to students, faculty, staff and administrators.

Administrative & Educational Support Unit Assessment committee – committee of Morehead State University employees responsible for reviewing administrative and educational support unit assessment documentation and providing constructive feedback to units for improvement.

Assessment – the annual process of critical self-examination with the aim of program/unit improvement. The assessment process involves gathering evidence about a selected outcome/objective, 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 Oversight Committee – committee of MSU employees made up of members of both the Academic Program Assessment Committee and the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Assessment Committee that oversee and provide guidance for the University assessment process.

Assessment plan – a program/unit's declaration of what it will assess for the current cycle. The plan includes: goals, outcomes/objectives, measures and targets. The program/unit's goals and outcomes should be directly connected to the University's mission and goals found in the University's strategic plan.

Bloom's Taxonomy – a set of three hierarchical models used to classify educational learning objectives into levels of complexity and specificity.

Closing the loop – reviewing data to determine needed changes to a program/unit followed by reassessment to determine that the change positively influenced the program/unit.

Curriculum map – a table that demonstrates where in a curriculum a program’s student learning outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and mastered.

Direct measure – a performance-based indicator of success. Direct measures include exams/tests, course-embedded assessments, portfolios, capstone projects, performances, presentations, exhibits, internship evaluations, and clinical evaluations.

Findings – results of assessment

Goal – a broad statement anchored in the unit/program mission, that frames the functions of the unit by bridging the mission and objectives/outcomes.

Indirect measure – a non-performance based indicator of success. Indirect measures include results from surveys, focus groups, interviews, retention and graduation rates, involvement records, and graduate school and job placement rates.

Institutional Effectiveness – the on-going, comprehensive process at Morehead State University that integrates strategic planning, assessment, periodic unit comprehensive review, annual reporting, and resource allocations for the purpose of improvement.

Measure – the methodology/instrument used to conduct assessment. *See direct measure and indirect measure.*

Mission statement – broad statement of a unit’s purpose.

Objective/Outcome – a unit’s statement of the end results to be obtained in pursuing a particular unit goal. Whereas a goal identifies a desired end over a period of time, an objective/outcome identifies what is desired in the short-term, as within an assessment cycle.

Reporting unit – the organizational level at which assessment happens. Units include all organizational entities that provide educational and administrative programs or services; includes colleges, departments, schools, programs, centers, and administrative units.

Rubric – a scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work, or what counts (i.e. purpose, organization, details, voice, and mechanics are often what count in a piece of writing); it also articulates gradations of quality for each criterion, from excellent to poor.

SACS-COC – The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC) is the regional body for accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states, including Morehead State University.

Standards – A set level of accomplishments all students are expected to meet or exceed.

Strategic Plan – the University’s process of identifying priorities, defining strategies, and making decisions on allocating resources to pursue those strategies. Strategic planning is inherently tied to program/unit assessment in that the University’s Strategic Plan should be used in determining unit/program mission, goals and outcomes. Morehead State University’s current strategic plan, SOAR (2018-2022) is available here

<http://www.moreheadstate.edu/MSU/media/President/10275-PRES-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

Student Learning Outcome – a concise, measurable statement about what students will be able to do as a result of participating in a program. All academic programs at Morehead State University are required to maintain an updated list of student learning outcomes, which are shared publicly.

Target – an aim for a criterion level that enhances your unit’s performance.