Assessment in Student Affairs

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

To search for a term, type it in the find field at the top of the document in the toolbar or click on the corresponding letter below:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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Affective behaviors
Affective behaviors are related to feelings, emotions, values, attitudes, interests, and personality (Airasian, P., 1994).

Alignment
An alignment refers to a grouping of departments within the Division of Student Affairs. An alignment has a lead Senior Student Affairs Officer who reports directly to the Vice Provost and is responsible for setting initiatives.

Anonymity
Anonymity is guaranteed when neither the researcher nor the readers of the findings can identify a given response with a given respondents (Babbie, E., 2001).

Assessment
Assessment is any effort to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence which describes institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness, and has the purpose of improving student learning and development (Palomba, C.A. & Banta, T.W., 1999; Upcraft, M.L, & Schuh, J.H., 1996).

Attitudinal measures
Attitudinal measures seek to assess feelings or affect toward a topic of interest

Attrition
Attrition is the loss of students through means other than graduation

Authentic assessment
Authentic assessment is a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. Student performance on a task is typically scored on a rubric to determine how successfully the student has met specific standards (Mueller, J. Authentic Assessment Toolbox located at: http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/glossary.htm).
Benchmark
Benchmark is an internal or external standard used to compare assessment findings. The measurement of individual or group performance against an established standard.

Bias
Bias is when the measurement or sample is biased in such a way that conclusions from data may be flawed. See definitions for biased sample and measurement bias. (Weinbach, R., & Grinnell, R., 2001).

Biased sample
Biased sample means that a sample is selected in such a way that some members of the population are more likely than others to be picked for sample membership. (Weinbach, R., & Grinnell, R., 2001).
**Closed-ended**
Closed-ended questions are those that provide a fixed list of alternative responses and ask the respondent to select one or more of the alternatives as indicative of the best possible answer (Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A., 1997).

**Closing the loop**
Closing the loop in the cycle of assessment from defining mission and objectives to using assessment results for program change and improvement.

**Co-curricular**
Co-curricular means being outside but usually complimentary to normal curriculum (Merriam Webster online at http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary).

**Cognitive development**
Cognitive development is the construction of thought processes, including remembering, problem solving, and decision-making through the lifespan (Encyclopedia of Children's Health online at http://www.enotes.com/childrens-health-encyclopedia/cognitive-development).

**Cohort**
Cohort is a term used to designate one group among many in a study; for example, the first cohort may be the first group to have been through the training program being evaluated (Scriven, M., 1991).

**Comparison group**
A comparison group is a group of people participating in a study to whom no experimental treatment has been given and who resemble the experimental group in all other respects. Typically the control and the experimental groups are compared. (Babbie, E., 2001)

**Competency**
Competency means to demonstrate a level of ability on a specific task or achieve a level of performance.

**Confidentiality**
Confidentiality is guaranteed when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but promises not to do so publicly (Babbie, E., 2001).
Construct validity
Construct validation is involved whenever a test is to be interpreted as a measure of
some attribute or quality which is not "operationally defined." The problem faced by the
investigator is, "What constructs account for variance in test performance?" (Creswell,
J.W., 2002).

Constructed-response item
A constructed response item is to produce an answer to a question, rather than select
from answer choices.

Content validity
Content validity is the property of tests that after appropriate content analysis, appear to
meet all requirements for congruence between claimed and actual content (Scriven, M.,

Control group
Control group is a group of people participating in a study to whom no experimental
treatment has been given and who resemble the experimental group in all other
respects. Typically the control and the experimental groups are compared (Babbie, E.,
2001).

Criterion (criteria)
A criterion (variable) is whatever is to count as success; indicator of success or merit
(Scriven, M., 1991).

Criterion-referenced assessment
Criterion-referenced assessment is the comparison of outcomes to some pre-established
standard or independently defined criterion.

Cross-sectional
Cross sectional study is a study based on observations representing a single point in
time (Babbie, E., 2001).

Culture of assessment
Culture of assessment is an environment in which continuous improvement through
assessment is expected and valued.

Culture of evidence
Culture of evidence is an environment in which the use of research and/or assessment
results to guide policy decisions is expected and valued (O'Banion, T., 2000).

Cut score
Cut score involves using an established score to determine the minimum-level
performance needed to pass a test or performance.
**Department**
A department reports to a Senior Student Affairs Officer, has a professional staff coordinator or director, an established mission. The department may decide to articulate programs or services.

**Dependent variable**
Just like an independent variable, a dependent variable is exactly what it sounds like. It is something that depends on other factors. For example, a test score could be a dependent variable because it could change depending on several factors such as how much you studied, how much sleep you got the night before you took the test, or even how hungry you were when you took it. Usually when you are looking for a relationship between two things you are trying to find out what makes the dependent variable change the way it does (http://nces.ed.gov).

**Descriptive statistics**
Descriptive statistics are measures of central tendency (mean, medium, and mode) and dispersion (spread or variation around the central tendency).

**Development**
Development is the progression of an individual through various phases of life (Komives, S.R., & Woodard, D.B., Jr., 1996).

**Direct assessment**
In direct assessment students display knowledge or skills as the result of an assessment measure (presentation, test, etc). Direct measures of student leaning require students to display their knowledge and skills as they respond to the instrument itself. Objective tests, essays, presentations, and classroom assignments all meet this criterion. (Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W., 1999)

**Dropout**
Dropout is a student who does not complete a program of study after a specified period of time.
Educational goal
Educational goals should have a corresponding learning outcome, as these goals highlight what is expected for students to learn as a result of participating in a program.

Educational success
Educational success can be defined as increasing student learning and/or development; meeting competency; obtaining credit or credential (National Educational Goals Report, 1996).

Effect size
Effect size is the difference between mean of the experimental and the mean of the control groups in standard deviation units (Glass, G.V., & Hopkins, K.D., 1984).

Evaluation
Evaluation is a component of the assessment process where data is analyzed and results are gathered. “[A]ny effort to use assessment evidence to improve institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness” involves using assessment evidence in formative and summative decision making (Upcraft, M.L, & Schuh, J.H., 1996, p. 19).

Exit level
Exit level pertains to information obtained about students on completion of their study to assess the changes in learning as a result of their program of study (Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W., 1999).

Experimental design
In the design of experiments, the experimenter is often interested in the effect of some process or intervention (the “treatment”) on some objects (the “experimental units”), which may be people, parts of people, groups of people, plants, animals, materials, etc. Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design_of_experiments).

External validity
External validity deals with the relationship of test scores to other measures & criteria: provides evidence about impact, utility and trait theory (Lissitz, R.W., & Samuelsen, K., 2007).
Face validity
Face validity is the first check to determine if an instrument appears to measure what it purports to measure. Face validity is established by having content/subject area experts review an instrument to determine if the items actually measure the domain or construct of interest.

Feedback
Feedback is information that provides the performer with direct, stable insights into current performance, based on tangible differences between current performance and hoped-for performance (Wiggins, G.P., 1993).

Focus group
Focus group is a semi-structured discussion among individuals who are deemed to have some knowledge of, or interest in, the issue associate with the study (Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A., 1997).

Forced choice
Forced choice is a specific type of measure in which respondents compare two or more desirable options and pick the one which is most preferred. This is contrasted with measures that use Likert-type scales, in which respondents choose the score (e.g., 1 to 5) which best represents the degree to which they agree with a given statement.

Formative evaluation/assessment
Formative assessment or evaluation is done during a program or service to provide information useful in improving learning or teaching while it is still occurring. An assessment which is used for improvement (individual or program level) rather than for making final decisions or for accountability (Worthen, B.R., Sanders, J.R., & Fitzpatrick, J.L., 1997). Examples of formative assessment include conferences, observations, review of work or proposed goals, strategic plans; they don't generate formal grades.
**General population**
General population is the theoretical population to which one wishes to generalize the study findings (Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A., 1997).

**Generalizability**
Generalizability is the degree to which results from a particular study can be generalized to other participants or other situations. Generalizability is a process in testing and statistics theory that takes a score from a sample of behaviors and applies them to the entire possible set of observations. For example, generalizability is the process of testing 15 high school senior students on a standardized exam, calculating the average of those scores, and generalizing that the calculated average applies to all high school senior students with similar demographics. (Glossary of Education: http://www.education.com)

**Goals**
Goals are general statements about what we need to accomplish to meet our mission or to serve our purpose. We typically set goals for 1-year in advance but we can set them for a much longer term. For example in our annual reports we report on our progress on meeting our prior year's goals. While in strategic planning we set goals for up to five-years out. Within any year, we may elect to re-prioritize our goals and/or to re-prioritize our activities towards meeting a goal. The purpose for crafting a set of goals typically is to give a brief and broad picture of what we expect our students to know and do, and what our program/services will accomplish.
**Independent variable**
An independent variable is exactly what it sounds like. It is a variable that stands alone and isn't changed by the other variables you are trying to measure. For example, someone's age might be an independent variable. Other factors (such as what they eat, how much they go to school, how much television they watch) aren't going to change a person's age. In fact, when you are looking for some kind of relationship between variables you are trying to see if the independent variable causes some kind of change in the other variables, or dependent variables. (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at http://nces.ed.gov)

**Indirect assessment**
In indirect assessment learning is inferred instead of being supported by direct evidence (i.e., usage data, satisfaction surveys). Students reflect on learning rather than demonstrate it. (Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W., 1999)

**Informed consent**
Informed consent is typically a statement that participants sign before they participate in a study. The statement includes language that will guarantee participants certain rights.

**Inputs**
Inputs are the personal, background, and educational characteristics that students bring with them to postsecondary education that can influence educational outcomes (Astin, A., 1970).

**Internal validity**
Internal validity deals with analysis of a test and its items and provides evidence about what is measured (Lissitz, R.W. & Samuelsen, K., 2007).

**Inter-rater reliability**
Inter-rater reliability is when two or more raters observe an individual's behavior, record scores, and then the scores of the raters are compared to determine whether they are in agreement (Creswell, J., 2002).

**Interview**
Interview is a data collection procedure in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another (a respondent) (Babbie, E., 2001).
Journaling
Journaling is a practice of reflective writing where by the writer records his or her thoughts and feelings. Journaling can also be directed by guiding questions.
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Key Performance Indicators are ways to measure progress toward goals or outcomes. For instance, one key performance indicator of fall orientation could be fall course registration, meaning tracking the amount of students who register successfully for at least one fall term course.
Learning
Learning is "a complex, holistic, multicentric activity that occurs throughout and across the college experience" (Learning reconsidered, ACPA at http://www.myacpa.org/pub/documents/learningreconsidered.pdf).

Learning communities
Learning communities can be defined by "a variety of approaches that link or cluster classes, during a given term, often around an interdisciplinary theme, and enroll a common cohort of students (Smith, B.L., MacGregor, J., Matthews, R.S., & Gabelnick, F., 2004).

Learning gain
Learning gain is "a positive change in learning outcomes measured following instruction or educational experiences are often referred to as learning gains; difference between pretest and post test; longitudinal change" (Astin, A., 1970).

Learning outcomes
Learning outcomes are goals that describe how a student will be different because of a learning experience. More specifically, learning outcomes are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind that students take with them from a learning experience (Suskie, L., 2009).

Likert scale
Likert scale is an item type used on objective measures (e.g., surveys) allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a statement by marking their response on a five-point scale, usually ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. (Crocker, L.M., & Algina, J., 1986).

Longitudinal data/study
A longitudinal study design involves the collection of data at different points in time (Babbie, E., 2001).
Mean
An average computed by summing the values of several observations and dividing by the number of observation (Babbie, E., 2001).

Means to achieving goal
Means to achieving goal relates to action that will highlight the activities students can participate in to fulfill an educational goal or the steps they will take in order to achieve the program or educational goal.

Measure
Measure (verb) Measure (noun): A standard procedure for quantifying a sample of behavior from a larger domain; often used interchangeably with test and instrument (Crocker, L.M., & Algina, J., 1986).

Measurement
Measurement is the determination of the magnitude of a quantity (Scriven, M., 1991).

Measurement bias
Measurement bias is a systematic source of measurement distortion that can occur because of a wide variety of phenomenon. For example, measurement bias may occur if an interviewer unconsciously skews how they ask questions depending on the subject or if a survey is sent out during an atypical time of the year (Weinbach, R. & Grinnell, R., 2001).

Median
The median score is an average representing the values of the "middle" case in a rank-ordered set of observations (ranked low to high) (Babbie, E., 2001).

Metacognition
Metacognition involves understanding the process of how one thinks. This process involves patterns of thinking: making distinctions, creating inter-relationships between and among ideas, thinking in systems by organizing parts and wholes, and taking different points of view and seeing new perspectives (Cabrera, D., & Colosi, L., 2009).

Method of assessment
Method of assessment highlights the way(s) in which the learning outcome or program goal will be measured. Multiple methods will yield richer data.
**Mission**
Mission is the central purpose that provides focus, direction and destination for our work. It describes the purpose of our organization, who we serve, and our hopes. “Big picture of what we currently do” Why we exist.

**Mixed methods**
Mixed methods are procedures for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study

**Mode**
Mode is an average representing the most frequently observed value or attribute (Babbie, E., 2001).

**Motivation**
Motivation is the disposition of an organism or institution to expend effort in a particular way or direction; best measured by the study of behavior (Scriven, M., 1991).

**Multiple measures**
Multiples measures involves using more than one tool or assessment method to gather evidence of effectiveness.
Norm-referenced assessment
A norm-referenced test is a standardized test that compares a student's test performance with that of a sample of similar students who have taken the same test (http://www.education.com).
Objectives
Objectives are concrete ways that we will meet our goals though our program processes and student learning and development. They may at times be very similar to goals or be more specific. They will describe what the program will do or what the student is to do. One can have both student learning objectives and program objectives.

Open-ended (responses and questions)
Open-ended question format allows respondents to form their responses to questions.

Outcome effectiveness
Outcome effectiveness means measuring effectiveness of meeting goals and objectives. What was achieved? (Schuh, J. H., 2009)

Outcomes
Outcomes essentially take an objective and bound it to a place, time, group of participants, and a level for performance. Outcomes are specifically about what you want the end result of your efforts to be, the changes you want to occur. Learning outcomes are changes in students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind that result from involvement in a program or activity. It describes what you want the student to know and do. Program outcomes, on the other hand, are the changes you want to see in programs and services. Outcomes are statements of what you will assess.
Peer assessment
Peer assessment is the evaluation of learning by one’s peers (Brew, A., 1999).

Percentile rank
Percentile rank is the percentage of examinees in the norm group who scored at or below the raw score for which the percentile rank was calculated (Crocker, L.M., & Algina, J., 1986).

Performance assessment (alternative assessment, authentic assessment, participatory assessment)
Some educators choose to distinguish between authentic assessment and performance assessment. For these educators, performance assessment meets the above definition except that the tasks do not reflect real-world (authentic) challenges. If we are going to ask students to construct knowledge on assessments, then virtually all such tasks should be authentic in nature or they lose some relevance to the students.

Performance measures
Performance measures are a set of measures on which postsecondary institutions, systems, states, or sectors evaluate and report their performance; often used to measure efficiency or effectiveness (Borden, V.M.H., & Banta, T.W., 1994).

Population
Population is a group of entities from which a sample is drawn or about which a conclusion is stated (Scriven, M., 1991).

Portfolio assessment
Portfolio assessment has students create portfolios by gathering a body of evidence of their own learning and competences (Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W., 1999).

Posttest
Post-test assessment is assessment of an individual’s command of knowledge or skill of which they just completed a learning experience. A pretest typically precedes this for comparison to determine if there was an acquisition of knowledge or skill.

Pretest
Pretest assessment is assessment of an individual's command of knowledge or skills of which they are about to enter a learning experience. A posttest typically follows for comparison to determine if there was an acquisition of knowledge or skill.
**Prior learning assessment**
Prior learning assessment techniques to assess student understanding and recall of material learned in previous, related courses, so that faculty can teach accordingly. Information helps faculty determine the most effective starting point for a given lesson and the most appropriate level at which to begin instruction (Angelo, T.A, & Cross, K.P., 1993).

**Priorities**
Priorities are essentially a reordering of goals and/or a reordering of activities to reach a goal.

**Process outcomes**
Process outcomes require examining efficiency of implementation of programs and services to improve the process. Did it occur? How did it occur? When? Where? How much? (Schuh, J.H., 2009)

**Program**
A program is the general effort that moves staff and projects toward some defined and funded goals (Scriven, M., 1991).

**Program goal**
A program goal can also be referred to as an administrative or department goal. These goals will look at changes for the department as a whole (personnel, increase number of sessions offered) that will not directly impact student learning.
Qualitative
Qualitative assessment methodology involves “asking participants broad, general questions, collecting the detailed views of the participants in the form of words or images, and analyzing the information for descriptions and themes” (Creswell, J., 2007, p. 645).

Quantitative
Quantitative assessment method “uses structured, predetermined response options that can be summarized into meaningful numbers and analyzed statistically” (Suskie, L., 2004, p. 106). It is the assignment of numbers to objects, events or observations according to some rule (Upcraft, M.L., & Schuh, J.H., 1996).

Quasi-experimental design
Quasi-experimental design is a study that has all the elements of an experimental design but lacks random assignment.

Questionnaire
A questionnaire is a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis (Babbie, E., 2001).
Random sample
Random sample is a sampling method in which each element has an equal chance of selection independent of any other event in the selection process (Babbie, E., 2001).

Rank, rank-ordering
Ranking or rank-ordering is the process of placing individuals in an order on the basis of their relative performance on a test or measurement or observation (Scriven, M., 1991).

Raw scores
Raw scores are the actual scores on a measurement, before it is converted to percentiles, grade equivalents, and so on (Scriven, M., 1991).

Reflective practice
Reflective practice is the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning (Schön, D., 1983).

Reliability
Reliability is the consistency of measurement, or the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same condition with the same subjects. In short, it is the repeatability of a measurement. A measure is considered reliable if a person's score on the same test given twice is similar. It is important to remember that reliability is not measured; it is estimated (Colosi, L., 1997 at http://www.socialresearchmethods.net).

Replication
Replication is generally the duplication of an experiment to expose or reduce error (Babbie, E., 2001).

Representativeness
Representativeness is the quality of a sample having the same distribution of characteristics as the population from which it was selected (Babbie, E., 2001).

Research
Research “guides theory development and tests concepts” and has “broader implications for student affairs and higher education” (Upcraft & Schuh, 2001, p. 5). It informs assessment practice in design, instrumentation, analysis, and interpretation and has broader implications beyond immediate setting.

Response bias
Response bias is a type of cognitive bias which can affect the results of a statistical survey if respondents answer questions in the way they think the questioner wants them to answer rather than according to their true beliefs. This may occur if the questioner is obviously angling for a particular answer (as in push polling) or if the respondent wishes to please the questioner by answering what appears to be the "morally right" answer. (Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Response_bias)

**Response rate**
Response rate is the number of people participating in a survey divided by the number selected in the sample, in the form of a percentage (Babbie, E., 2001)

**Results of assessment**
Results of assessment include the overall findings of assessments. It is not necessary to include every finding of the assessment; instead, focus on findings related to program/service objectives.

**Rubrics**
A rubric is a scoring tool used to assess student learning after a lesson. Using a set of criteria and standards (directly tied to the stated learning objectives), educators can assess each student's performance on a wide variety of work, ranging from written essays to class projects. When a rubric is agreed-upon and communicated prior to the student's work being completed, the grading process is very clear and transparent to all involved. Often, it is helpful to have more than one evaluator grade each piece of work. Then the rubric scores can either be averaged or added together for a final score. (About.com @ http://k6educators.about.com/od/educationglossary/g/grubric.htm)
Sample
A sample is a subgroup of a population selected to participate in an activity, program or service. The assessment results from the sample are used to generalize to the larger population from which the sample was drawn. There are many different types of sampling methods; for example, simple random, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, to name a few.

Sampling error
Sample error describes the possible difference in findings and results if one were able to obtain valid responses from the entire population. The more people in the sample, the lower the sample error will be, up to about ten thousand cases, when the sample error is less than 1 percent (Suskie, L., 1992).

Satisfaction
Satisfaction: If one assumes that high-quality experiences should result in satisfied students, then a high level of satisfaction should result when students have high-quality experiences... The purpose of assessing student satisfaction, then, if one accepts this framework is to determine whether students have high-quality educational experiences that foster their learning & growth... It is important to point out that student satisfaction, or a lack of it, may not necessarily be equated with good educational practice (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996).

Saturation
Saturation is referred to in qualitative research when a researcher determines that more data will not provide any new information on the topic under study.

Selected response item
Selected response item is an item that has response options that a student chooses from, such as Likert items.

Selection bias
Selection bias is bias that occurs when the method of selecting study participants means that they come from a particular (skewed) social or economic group, and not from others. (Astin, A., 1970)

Self-esteem
Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth - encompasses beliefs and emotions (Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-esteem).
**Service**
To be of service and/or to provide a service.

**Standard**
Standard is the broadest of a family of terms referring to statements of expectations for student learning, including content standards, performance standards, and benchmarks. (Jaeger, R.M., 1996)

**Standard deviation**
Standard deviation is a measure of dispersion around the mean, calculated so that approximately 68% of the cases will lie within plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean, 95% will lie within plus or minus two standard deviations, and 99.9% will lie within three standard deviations (Babbie, E., 2001).

**Standard setting**
Standard setting is setting a level for performance. Can also be the process of participating in a standard setting procedure to determine a cut-score or acceptable level for proficiency.

**Standardized instrument**
Standardized instruments are ones with standardized instructions for administrations, use, scoring, analysis and interpretation, with standard forms and content, and often with standardized statistical properties, which have been validated on a large sample of a defined population (Scriven, M., 1991).

**Statistical significance**
Statistical significance is a general term referring to the unlikeliness that relationships observed in a sample could be attributed to sampling error alone. The statistical significance of a relationship that is observed in a set of sample data is always expressed in terms of probabilities. Significant at the .05 level simply means that the probability of a relationship as strong as the observed one being attributable to sample error alone is no more than 5 in 100 (Babbie, E., 1983).

**Stop out**
Stop out refers to when a student does not enroll in a program of study consecutive terms.

**Strategic planning**
Strategic planning refers to the process in which organizations engage in reviewing their mission statement and goals, and then designing and adopting action steps to achieve their goals (Schuh, J. H., 2003).

**Student development**
Student development includes certain developmental goals (such as psychosocial development, attitudes & values formation, moral development, and career choice &
development) that are related to, but somewhat apart from, academic goals (such as verbal, quantitative, and subject matter competence, and cognitive & intellectual growth) (Upcraft, M.L, & Schuh, J.H., 1996).

**Student learning outcome**
Student learning outcome is what students will demonstrate they know or are able to do upon being assessed, specific examples include how the student will demonstrate the “knowledge, skills, attitudes, or habits of mind” (Suskie, L., 2004, p. 75) that he or she has gained. This demonstration should be measurable.

**Summative assessment or evaluation**
Summative assessment or evaluation is conducted at the end of a program, service, or experience to make determinations of quality, worth, and meeting targeted outcomes. An example is a final grade at the end of a course.
**Transformative learning**
Transformative learning is a holistic process of learning that places the student at the center of the learning experience (Learning Reconsidered, 2004). “Informative learning changes what we know; transformative learning changes how we know” (Kegan, 2000, p. 50).

**Triangulation**
Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g., a principal and a student), types of data (e.g., observational field notes and interviews), or methods of data collections (e.g., documents and interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research (Creswell, J.W., 2002).
Unit (in regards to Student Affairs, not numbers)
Otherwise known as a Division of Student Affairs alignment.

Use of results
Use of results details how the results of assessment will be used to make improvements. This could involve editing the learning outcome, incorporating additional or changing current methods of assessment in the future, altering a program, etc.
Validity
Validity deals with the extent to which an instrument measures what it actually purports to measure. Validity is a unitary concept consisting of three types of evidence: construct-related, criterion-related, and content-related.

Value-added
Value added is the enhancement that students achieve (to knowledge, skills abilities and other attributes) as a result of their higher education experience.

Values
Values are those qualities and behaviors that are most highly regarded by members. It is our value/belief system.

Vision
Vision is the central themes that best describe the future direction of our work. Visionary themes are broader vision categories. It can be the case that a visionary theme might encompass more than one vision.