

**Student Outcomes Assessment (SOA) Glossary**  
**UNI College of Humanities and Fine Arts**

<p><b>Assessment Plan</b></p>	<p>A faculty plan to monitor and improve student learning. The plan addresses faculty efforts to develop explicit statements of what students should learn, identify ways they will verify that the program offers students opportunities to learn, establish methods and intervals for collecting empirical data that indicate student attainment, review and evaluate data, and record changes faculty have made in the program that enhance student learning.</p>
<p><b>Authentic Assessment</b></p>	<p>Measures students' ability to perform "real world" tasks in the way that professionals in the field would perform it.</p> <p>Examples: Senior Organizational Communication majors conduct a communication audit of a local business and present their written report/recommendations to the business. Public Relations majors conduct a PR campaign for a company or political candidate. Senior Art majors display their work at a gallery exhibition. Senior Music majors perform at a public recital.</p>
<p><b>Embedded Assessment</b></p>	<p>Assessment that occurs simultaneously with learning such as essays, exams, projects, portfolios. Occurs in the classroom setting. Tasks or tests are developed from the curriculum or instructional materials and may previously have been graded. For use in assessment, embedded items typically are analyzed with assessment rubrics by persons other than the course instructor.</p>
<p><b>Goals</b></p>	<p>Broad, general statements concerning knowledge, skills, or values faculty expect graduating students to achieve. Goals emerge when we ask, "After students have completed this (e.g., Humanities I, Major in ...), they will .... (e.g., know, understand).</p> <p>Examples: Graduating Art majors will understand some of the historical traditions in the visual arts and will meaningfully relate works of art within those traditions. Graduating majors in the Study of Religion have knowledge of the major theories and methods in the study of religion.</p>
<p><b>Measures (Direct and Indirect)</b></p>	<p><i>Direct:</i> These instruments collective objective data about students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Examples include end-of-program tests, embedded test items, portfolios, video/audio of performances, senior exhibitions, and capstone or senior projects.</p> <p><i>Indirect:</i> These instruments enable faculty to ask students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it. Examples include: exit surveys, interviews with graduating seniors, alumni surveys, focus groups.</p>

<p><b>Outcomes</b> (sometimes called objectives)</p>	<p>Statements of what students are expected to learn and actually develop. Specific accomplishments in knowledge, skills, or attitudes to be achieved by students. Learning outcomes are typically stated with action verbs (e.g., students cite, define, arrange, classify, apply, construct, analyze compare, design, estimate). Outcomes are specific enough to suggest assignments, exercises, and experiences from which the students can learn the knowledge, skills, or attitudes related to the outcome. Outcomes are measurable. Measurement of multiple outcomes enables faculty to determine the extent to which students in program have achieved or failed to satisfy a Goal.</p> <p>Examples: Graduating Art majors will identify and name works of art, demonstrate knowledge of basic historic data, use appropriate terminology, and comprehend historic continuities. Graduating majors in the Study of Religion can explain in writing the historical and conceptual relationships between Hinduism and Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity, and Taoism and Confucianism.</p>
<p><b>Program Review</b></p>	<p>Academic programs (typically majors) are reviewed every seven years by the Office of the Provost. Results are reported to the Board of Regents. Central to the review process is an SOA report that draws on yearly data compiled and evaluated since the previous report. In the SOA report, faculty state how, over the past seven years, they have used and continue to use outcomes results to make changes in the curriculum and how these changes have resulted in improved student learning.</p>
<p><b>Rubrics</b></p>	<p>A rubric is a scoring guide. A rubric can be an explicit description of performance characteristics corresponding to a point on a rating scale. A scoring rubric makes explicit expected qualities of performance on a rating scale or the definition of a single scoring point on a scale. Rubrics are a valuable tool in assessment and are especially helpful in enabling faculty to create markers for higher-order learning outcomes such as critical thinking skills.</p>
<p><b>Varieties of Assessment</b> (Formative/ Summative)</p>	<p><i>Formative:</i> Consists of making observations that allow one to a) determine the degree to which students know or are able to do a given learning task, and b) identify the part of the task that the student does not know or is unable to do. Formative assessment is diagnostic. It provides feedback to improve what is being assessed. Faculty draw on results to make changes in a program that will improve student learning. <i>SOA in CHFA emphasizes formative assessment.</i> Assessment efforts in CHFA focus not on <i>summing</i> up the quality of our programs but on <i>using assessment as a tool</i> to improve the quality of student learning in our programs.</p> <p><i>Summative:</i> Generally takes place after a period of instruction and focuses on making an evaluative judgment about learning that has occurred (by grading or scoring a test or paper). Is important as a basis for reporting grades to students. The primary task of reporting on “end product” differs from that of formative assessment, which is to monitor learning in order to improve it.</p>

Sources: Mary J. Allen, *Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education* ( Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing, 2004); <http://muweb.millersville.edu/%7Eassessmt/glossary.html?menu=Glossary>;  
[http://www.niu.edu/assessment/\\_resourc/gloss.shtml#Assessment%20plan](http://www.niu.edu/assessment/_resourc/gloss.shtml#Assessment%20plan) <http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=8&n=9>