

ASSESSMENT GLOSSARY

Annual Data Review: Starting Fall 2017, academic units will review various data sets typically including FTE trends, student demographics, course completion rates, certificate or program completion, course capacity, and cost per FTE. The data can be used to guide the program review process.

AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Process): one of three pathways to accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission. This is the pathway that RRCC is on.

Assessment: The process of observing learning; describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about courses/programs/services undertaken for the purpose of improving the institution, services, programs, and student learning and development.

Student Learning Assessment:

Assessment cycle: a series of recurring steps in which information is gathered and actions are taken in order to improve outcomes; at the most basic level, this cycle can be described as plan-do-check-act

Continuous Quality Improvement:

Baseline data: data collected to provide an information base against which to monitor and assess an activity's progress and effectiveness during implementation and after the activity is completed

Cohort: a group of people who move through a process or series of activities together; in ILEARN this refers to the group of people beginning the process at the same time (Cohort 1 – Fall 2017, Cohort 2 – Fall 2018)

Common Learning Competencies: the Common Learning Competencies are the broad learning goals RRCC shares as an institution; they were developed by a committee of faculty with staff representation, and have been adopted as those skills that all RRCC graduates should share regardless of degree program (i.e. our *General Education*); the Common Learning Competencies are taught both through classroom instruction and co-curricular programming and include: critical thinking, technological literacy, effective communication, global awareness and respect for diversity, ethical and professional behavior, and quantitative reasoning. While the Common Learning Competencies are broad statements about learning, they are measured through specific [AAC&U LEAP learning outcomes and the associated VALUE rubrics](#).

Common Learning Outcomes: Common Learning Outcomes are the AAC&U LEAP learning outcomes which align with the RRCC Common Learning Competencies. ([link to outcomes and scoring rubrics](#))

Comparative data: data collected after an activity or intervention which is compared to baseline data in order to assess the success of the improvement strategy

Evaluation: The use of qualitative and quantitative descriptions to judge individual, course, program and institutional effectiveness. Depending on the level, evaluation information is used for making decisions about individual performance review, student grades and course, program and institutional changes for improvement.

Evidence: The evidence an institution provides to demonstrate that it complies with HLC's Criteria should do the following: Substantiate the facts and arguments presented in its institutional narrative; Respond to the prior peer review team's concerns and recommendations; Explain any nuances specific to the institution; Strengthen the institution's overall record of compliance with HLC's requirements; Affirm the institution's overall academic quality and financial sustainability and integrity. More information on evidence, including samples, can be found in the publication "[Providing Evidence for the Criteria for Accreditation](#)"

Formative Assessment: An assessment used during the course of instruction to provide feedback to the teacher and learner about the learner's progress toward desired educational outcomes; the results of formative assessments are often used in planning subsequent instruction.

General Education Learning Outcomes: see *Common Learning Competencies*

Goal: an end result written in broad terms; goals need not be measurable on their own, but the associated objectives would be

Higher Learning Commission: an independent corporation that was founded in 1895 as one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region, which includes 19 states

Objective: a specific step intended to assist in the achievement of a goal

Outcome: the result of an action or intended action; outcomes are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely

Program Learning Outcomes:

Program Review: a process that provides the opportunity for operational units to reflect on their work to re-align with the college's mission and strategic plan, engage in dialogue to determine strengths, areas of improvement, aspirations, current research, and budgetary needs, and to establish a continuous improvement plan. Program reviews should be completed every four years and focus on both operational and student learning assessment. ILEARN is RRCC's take on program review.

Student Learning Outcomes: Measurable statements that describe specific student behaviors that provide of evidence acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, or attitudes; learning outcomes are most often attached to specific activities, assignments, or courses

Summative Assessment: Outcome-based use of assessments, often for decisions such as grading, program evaluation, tracking, or accountability

Test development: Process of creating a test; steps of test development (Hughes, 2003): (1) State the goals of the test, (2) Write test specifications, (3) Write and revise items, (4) Try items with native speakers and accept/reject items, (5) Pilot with non-native speakers with similar backgrounds as the intended test-takers, (6) Analyze the trials and make necessary revisions, (7) Calibrate scales, (8) Validate, (9) Write test administrator handbook, test materials, (10) Train staff as appropriate.