

Glossary of Assessment-Related Terms

Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC)	A college-wide group composed of two-thirds faculty and one-third administrators charged with decision-making in all matters related to academic affairs, including curriculum development and academic standards.
Accreditation	A process by which our college is evaluated by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. The goal of accreditation is to assure quality and to promote institutional and program improvement.
Assessment Coordinator	A faculty member who is given partial or complete reassignment to help faculty with assessment of student learning. Jim Biederman is serving as Assessment Coordinator for the 2005-06 academic year.
Assessment of Student Learning	A comprehensive plan to assess student learning with respect to program goals. The objective of assessment of student learning is to make improvements to programs that enhance student learning.
Capstone Course	A course toward the end of a program in which students engage in a culminating learning experience. Capstone courses are valuable for assessment because many, if not all, of the program goals are embodied within the course.
Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)	A resource for promoting professional development for faculty. It exists at the campus level as the local Faculty Development Committees and at the MnSCU level as the Center for Teaching and Learning.
Certificate Program	A non-degree program that is intended to prepare students for work. Courses within a certificate program may transfer, but the program is not primarily intended for transfer.
Common Course Outline (CCO)	A document that defines the content, outcomes, and assessment plans for all approved college courses. The document is developed through divisions and approved by the AASC. All faculty members teaching a course should follow the approved CCO.
Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE)	A national survey in which faculty are asked to report on their teaching and professional activities and to rate the learning activities of their students. The acronym is pronounced "Sefessie."
Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)	A national survey in which students are asked to report on their learning, the learning environment, and factors that affect their learning. The acronym is pronounced "Sessie."
Competencies	See <i>Student Competencies</i>
Competency Map	A matrix that cross-lists program goals and competencies against courses that fulfill that goal. It is used to determine where assessment data can be collected to measure goals within a program.
Degree Program	A program of courses that leads to the award of an Associate degree. Anoka Ramsey has programs that lead to these degrees: Associate in Arts, Associate in Fine Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Applied Science.
Direct Measures	A way of assessing student learning by measuring student performance directly (e.g., papers, projects, exams, demonstration of practical skills).

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eLumen	A web-based system for collecting data on student learning outcomes. Once goals, competencies, and assessment methods have been determined, eLumen is used to enter student data and to produce program-specific or institution-wide reports that can be used to enhance student learning.
Emphasis Area	One of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. These are the goals of the General Education program.
E-Portfolio	A portfolio of student work that is collected electronically, usually on a webpage. The portfolio can serve as a source of assessment data and can also be used by the student as a demonstration of competencies and skills.
General Education	A program of study that focuses on imparting common knowledge and developing skills that students need to function as educated and informed citizens. General education is a component of every degree and is a major component of transfer degrees, defined at ARCC through the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.
Guiding Principles	Four college-wide goals for student learning that should be used for curriculum development, including developing course and program goals. The four principles are clear thinking, effective communication, accepting diversity, and ethical decision making.
Higher Learning Commission (HLC)	The body within the North Central Association that has the legal authority to accredit higher education institutions in the north central region of the US.
Indirect Measures	A way of measuring student learning by asking students or others to report on perceived learning (e.g., student surveys, employer surveys, faculty surveys, focus groups).
Learner Outcome	A student learning objective for a particular course, which is documented in the Common Course Outline. The Learner Outcomes should demonstrate how a particular course helps to achieve program goals.
Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC)	Developed as a result of legislative mandate, the MnTC is a curriculum of general education organized around 10 learning goals. The learning goals are called Emphasis Areas and are delineated by 4 to 7 outcomes called Student Competencies. The coursework within the MnTC is guaranteed to transfer to other state colleges and universities.
Mission	A statement that describes the overall goals of the college. Programs and program goals should support the college mission and assessment of student learning should provide the evidence that the college is achieving its stated mission.
MnTC Goal	One of ten broad goal areas for general education. Each goal is further defined through four to seven student competencies.
North Central Association (NCA)	One of six regional agencies in the United States that provide institutional accreditation on a geographical basis. The North Central Association is responsible for 19 states in the middle of the country, from Ohio to Arizona. The Higher Learning Commission is the body within the NCA with the legal authority to confer accreditation upon member institutions.
Portfolio	A collection of student work to reflect competencies and skills in a course, over several courses, or within a program of study. A portfolio can be used to assess competencies within and across courses and over an entire program. It can also be used by the student as an illustration of acquired skills and competencies.

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Program	A cohesive course of study leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate. Programs must have well-defined goals and student outcomes, which are assessed on a regular basis to ensure quality and to guide program improvements.
Program Review	A comprehensive review of the effectiveness of a program that is conducted on a regular cycle. Assessment of student learning is one important component of Program Review, but the focus of Program Review is broader, including review of enrollment data, job placement or transfer success, and facilities.
Reliability	The consistency or repeatability of an assessment result. For evaluation of student work, it can be measured by comparing the ratings of two or more independent raters using the same scoring metric on the same group of student work (inter-rater reliability).
Rubric	A tool used for measuring a particular student competency or learning goal. Rubrics are usually rating scales that define varying levels of student competency with descriptions to facilitate objective scoring by different raters.
Student Competencies	Specific learning outcomes that are subsumed within a program's goals. Four to seven student competencies are defined for each goal of the General Education Program.
Validity	The extent to which an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure so that the assessment results are meaningful for the intended use.