Glossary of Assessment Terms

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Terms

Accountability Paradigm: "reflects external impetus from state governments and accreditation agencies for institutions to demonstrate compliance with standards of performance and expectations for return on investments by documenting student learning through standardized measures and comparisons across intuitions" (Jonson, et al. 2016:34).

Applied Assessment: "used as a follow up to course or university experiences, measures the application of student learning in a specific context, such as the workplace" (Pedersen and White 2011:139).

Assessment Audit: "systematic review to determine whether and to what degree (1) student learning outcomes have been established; (2) appropriate instruments have been created to measure the outcomes; (3) the measures are used to gather assessment data; and (4) improvements have been made as a result of the assessment data" (Loughman and Thomson 2006:44).

Assessment Feedback: This is an umbrella concept that is used to "capture the diversity of definitions and types of feedback" given to students (Evans 2013:71). It includes all feedback exchanges. This may vary for different professors. For some, it is seen as "an end product, as a consequence of performance" and for others it is seen as "an integral part of learning" (Evans 2013:21).

Assessment for Learning: This is an approach to teaching and learning which "creates feedback which is then used to improve students' performance" (Cambridge Assessment International Education).

Assessment Movement/Learning Outcomes Assessment Movement (LOA): Involves teachers and administrators at colleges and universities articulating the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the educational process at every level; a contentious movement (Bennett and Brady 2012).

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Evaluability Assessment (EA): evolved from pre-evaluation activity used to determine program readiness for outcome evaluation to a decision-orientated evaluation approach, with varying EA models all including four elements: involving program stakeholders, developing a program theory, gathering feedback on program theory, and using the EA (Walser 2015:61). Used for program-level assessment activity.

Faculty Culture: This encompasses the shared "beliefs, values, understandings, and underlying assumptions" of faculty members (Cox et al. 2011:809).

Fair Assessment: "'Fair assessment' can be seen in terms of the two main concepts used to describe measurements in social science – namely, reliability and validity – with the implication that the grades awarded in assessment should be consistent, irrespective of the marker and the conditions under which the assessment has taken place, and that they should validly reflect what they are intended to assess" (Hailikari 2014:100).

Formative Assessment: A form of assessment with the goal to **"**monitor student progress and to help students adjust and correct during the learning process" (Boud 2017:121). Boud explains that the metaphor that helps explain this is the chef tasting the soup (see also "Summative Assessment"). Also defined as "assessment of changes in student skills and knowledge" (Clark and Filinson 2011:131).

Fully Informative Grading: With this type of grading, evaluators perfectly observe graduate ability. This may result from an institutions' commitment to "strong grading standards, or from rules imposed by university accreditation agencies. It could also be a consequence of requiring university exit exams, graduate school admissions exams or industry licensing exams given to all graduates applying for a position" (Boleslavysky and Cotton 2015:261).

General (or liberal learning) Outcomes: one of two general categories noted by Weisler. Include student learning outcomes that "typically include critical thinking and problem-solving," as opposed to more content-based outcomes such as facts and methodological knowledge pertaining to a discipline (Weisler 2015:124).

Grading Rubrics: An assessment tool that "tells the professor how well a student has accomplished a specific skill" (Jackson 2018).

Improvement Paradigm: "internal impetus to foster engagement and a culture of evidence by establishing multiple feedback loops for the continuous use of assessment findings to improve teaching and learning" (Jonson et al. 2016:34).

Indirect Assessment: This type of assessment does not gather information about student performance/learning through looking at actual samples of student work, rather, other methods are employed such as surveys or interviews (Pedersen & White 2011:138). Given this, indirect assessment relies on students' self-reports of their strengths, limitations, and levels of engagement with the materials (AASCU 2006). See also "Direct Assessment".

Institutional Effectiveness Activities: "interchangeable with a number of monikers for continuous improvement processes, such as 'quality assurance' and 'quality enhancement' The specific initiatives included under these rubrics typically encompass activities such as student outcomes assessment, academic program review, strategic planning, performance scorecards, benchmarking, and quality measurement" (Welsh and Metcalf 2003b:446).

Institutional Structures: Institutional structures include procedures, data usage, and accountability (Holzweiss, et al. 2016). In a survey of U.S. higher education administrators, analysis revealed institutional structures as a meta-theme after analyzing the administrator's responses to questions regarding the primary reasons they conducted on campus as well as how they would characterize their campus assessment cultures.

Institutional Student Assessment Efforts: This is a "self- reported measure of how often faculty engage in institution-wide committees, policy setting, program and curricular evaluations, institutional workshops, and departmental activities related to student assessment" (Grunwald & Peterson 2003:183).

Learning Outcomes Assessment/Student Learning Outcome Assessment: A type of assessment that helps faculty understand if students are achieving the intended learning outcome goals. Evaluating what students know by the end of a course or program; constitutes an intersection between individual faculty prerogative and institutional interest (Katz 2010:19).

Learning Paradigm: "In the learning paradigm, faculty focus less on transferring factual knowledge to students and more on creating a learning environment that empowers students to construct knowledge for themselves. The learning paradigm positions the learner, rather than the instructor, at the center of undergraduate education" (Webber 2012:202).

Meritocratic Grading Rules: When evaluators "distribute grades based on academic

Program Assessment: "used synonymously with the phrase 'program review' to indicate a process through which institutions evaluate and take stock of the overall health and effectiveness of individual academic programs... variation on '

References

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