Accreditation

Professional system evaluating higher institution and programs. It is the recognition that an institution or programs meet the standards and requirements of a particular agency.

Action Verb

An active verb such as apply, evaluate that describes an observable (and measurable) performance in learning.

Aggregation

A process of grouping distinct or varied data together and considering them as a whole.

Alignment Matrix

A matrix (table) that shows connection or relationship between two set of categories, such as connection between the courses in a curriculum and the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), or the connection between assessment methods and learning outcomes.

Analytic Rubric

A type of rubric that produces separate, holistic scoring of specified characteristics of a product or behavior.

Assessment

Systematic collection, review, and use of evidence to make decision about students, curricula, program, process, and/or policy.

Assessment Cycle

A sequence of step or phases of an assessment process that is repeated once the sequence is finished.

Assessment Method

A tool that is used to collect evidence of student learning, such as assignments, activities, artifacts. There is "direct assessment method" and "indirect assessment method.

Assessment Plan

A document that outlines and describes in advance what will be assessed, when it will be assessed, how it will be assessed, and how the results of the assessment will be used for improvement.

Assessment Process

A document that outlines and describes assessment activities, including defining program goals, driving program outcomes, determining expected performance level, checking for alignment, selecting or designing appropriate assessment methods, implementing assessment methods, collecting data or evidence on how well student have achieved the expected learning outcomes, using assessment results to develop actions that will improve student learning, and finally reviewing the goals and learning outcomes for the program.

Attitude

A person's feeling toward particular objects, situations, or ideas.

Authentic assessment

Type of performance assessment in which students are required to use their knowledge to do meaningful tasks which involve actively generating a response to a question; performance assessment that require student to do "real world" activities; For example assessing critical thinking skills by asking students to analyze news, or for example, assessing ability of social work students to integrate what they learn in the class by giving them real word problem and asking them to suggest or propose solution that take into account social context.

Benchmark

A point of reference for measurement; a standard of performance or achievement against which assessment results can be judged.

Bloom's Taxonomy

A particular classification system used to define and distinguish different levels of human cognition. Educators have typically used Bloom's taxonomy to inform or guide the development of assessments, curriculum, and instructional methods such as questioning strategies.

Capstone Project

A culminating project or experience, in which students are required to review, synthesis, and apply what they have learned over the course of their college experience. Capstone projects generally take place in the student's final year of study.

Checklist

Type of survey format that provide a list of options that participant can select

Closing the Loop

The process of using assessment results of courses and programs to improve student learning— by developing appropriate remedial actions to address discovered deficiencies.

Course Assessment

Assessment to determine the extent to which a specific course is achieving its learning outcomes.

Criterion-referenced

A form of assessment in which student performance is compared to pre-determined performance criteria or standards.

Curriculum Alignment

A visual representation that shows how required courses are aligned with learning outcomes.

Direct Assessments

Assessments that involve examination of products produced by students (e.g. papers, projects, presentations, capstones, e-portfolios, exit exams, embedded questions, standardized tests, thesis, dissertations).

Embedded Assessments

Program assessments that are embedded or built into regular course activities; Also, assessments activities that involve collecting data/evidence on program learning outcomes by extracting course assignments. Embedded assessments use some or all student work that is graded to test achievement of program learning outcomes.

Embedded Exams or Quizzes

Collecting data/evidence on learning outcomes by using specific questions that are embedded in exams. These questions are analyzed and used for program assessment purposes.

Evaluation

Process of making judgments about the quality of a program or student learning based on assessment results.

Evidence

Student work, other direct and Indirect evidence that demonstrates what students have learned.

Expected Achievement Level

Specific target or minimum performance standard to describe the extent to which outcomes has been met; the minimum requirements for a program to declare itself successful. Example: 70% of students score 3 or higher on a lab skills assessment.

Focus Groups

Planned, structured discussion among homogenous groups of 6-10 people who are guided through discussion of a series of open-ended questions about their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences.

Formative Assessment

Assessment that takes place during the learning process. It is intended to provide feedback on to improve what is being assessed. Students may receive feedback on their progress during the learning process, and hence faculty might modify assignments or classroom activities.

Goals

Broad, general statement of what the program, course, or activity intends to accomplish. Goals describe what the university expects students to achieve, expressed in general terms. Goals should be consistent with (i.e. flow from) the mission of the program and the mission of the institution.

Holistic Rubric

A type of rubric that produce a global, holistic score for a product or performance.

Indirect Assessments

Assessments that involve examination of evidence of students' perceptions of how well they achieved learning (e.g., alumni, employer, and student surveys, interviews, exit interview of graduates, focus groups).

Instrument

An assessment tool used to collect data, such as a standardized test, exam, interview, or survey.

Learning Outcomes

Clear, specific, concise, and measurable statements that describe the significant and essential knowledge, skills, or attitudes that students are expected to be able to demonstrate by the time they finish a learning experience. There are three levels of learning outcomes: course learning outcome (CLO), program learning outcome (PLO), and institution learning outcome (ILO)..

Likert Scale

Type of survey format in which respondents are asked to indicate the degree of agreement. Responses generally ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Mission

A statement of the purpose of program, department, college, or institution. Its reason for existing. The mission statement guides the actions and decision-making process of the program, college etc.

Norm-referenced

Assessment in which student performances are compared to a larger group.

Objective

An objective is the narrowest statement describing what a student should know or be able to do at the end of a specific lesson plan. An objective must be observable and measurable.

Performance Assessment

Assessment that requires students to generate a response to a question rather than choose from a set of responses provided to them.

Portfolio

Collection of students work over time, in which students are often required to reflect on their growth and achievement with respect to defined learning outcomes and standards.

Portfolio Assessment

Assessment based on judgment made about the collection of work, usually drawn from students work over time. A portfolio becomes an assessment when: (1) the assessment purpose is clearly defined; (2) there are specific criteria for determining what is put in the portfolio by whom; and (3) there are defined criteria for assessing either the collection or individual pieces. These criteria are then used to make judgments about performance.

Qualifications Framework for the Emirates (QFE)

A unified framework for identifying key elements of qualifications offered by institutions in the UAE. All institutions providing higher education in the UAE are required to align their program learning outcomes with QF Emirates.

Qualitative Assessment

A type of assessment method that involves using non-numeric data such as, unstructured response options, conversation, text, audio, or video, and usually analyzed by looking for themes or patterns.

Quantitative Assessment

A type of assessment method that involves using numeric data such as structured, predetermined response options that can be summarized into meaningful numbers that can be displayed readily and analyzed statistically.

Rater

Individual who judges or evaluates student performance on an assessment against specific criteria

Reliability

The extent to which an assessment method or tool produces consistent results. Reliability is a precondition for validity.

Rubric

A set of scoring criteria used to evaluate the quality of students' performance on assigned tasks. The criteria are written so that students are able to learn what must be done to achieve a particular outcome and improve their performance.

Signature Assignment

A specific task, problem, case, project, test or assignment that provides direct evidence of the achievement of one or more learning outcomes at a particular level.

Standardized Test

A test for which procedure, administration, test masteries, and scoring rules are fixed so the assessment is same at different time and place.

Standards

A description of defined levels of quality/performance/achievement, or skills required in in student work.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are a written statement of specific observable or measurable achievement a participant will be able to demonstrate as a result of participation in a given learning activity.

Summative Assessment

A particular assessment design to determine whether or not the learning outcomes have been achieved at the end of a course or program. Students may not receive any feedback about their performance other than overall all score or grade.

Survey

A questionnaire (set of questions) that used to collect information about believes, attitudes, or experiences.

Triangulation

Using multiple lines of evidence to test a particular conclusion (direct and indirect). It refers to the collection and comparison of data from different sources to answer a question.

Validity

The extent to which an assessment method or tool measures what it claims to measure. A valid assessment instrument is required before valid inferences can be made.

Value-Added Assessment

Quantifying the improvement in students learning by determining how much students have gained through engagement in the learning activities. For example, a measure of how much improvement in student composition skills occurs as a result of writing assignments.