

Glossary – Learning Assessment Data Definitions

Here we offer definitions related to student success at the college developed in May of 2015. These terms are followed by the longer glossary developed prior to 2013 by the Learning Assessment Committee (LAC.)

In addition there is a data dictionary maintained by Institutional Research (IR) which offers definitions for several commonly used variables and related vocabulary (<http://valenciacollege.edu/academic-affairs/institutional-effectiveness-planning/institutional-research/Glossary.cfm>).

Another dictionary is maintained online specific to the OIT's Data Warehouse [this may be limited to on campus access only] (<https://ban-apex-prod.valenciacollege.edu:8070/apex/f?p=118%3A2%3A>).

The New Student Experience as Valencia's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) led to a standard definition of Personal Connection at the college: The deliberate investment of time and engagement with students and colleagues to ensure a sense of Valencia community.

Eight Data Definitions Related to Student Success – Valencia College June 2015

Below are eight definitions that are important to the college given the impact of recent senate bills and our own work focused on improving the new student experience while we strengthen student success across all programs. The term and its definition are provided first. Each is followed by a comment or summary drawn from a survey of faculty and administrators at the college who were asked to share their own working definitions of the terms (13 responded.)

1. **College Ready:** Valencia's operational definition prior to fall 2014 included language about students testing into "1 prep", "2 prep", "mandated students", etc... As a result of Florida Senate Bill 1720, there is no clear operational or narrative definition at this time. Some discussion around new ways to measure college-readiness includes looking for indicators like HS GPA, SAT scores to benchmark against prior developmental students and use as a new variable going forward. Survey responses included qualifications of the disparate definitions caused by the legislation. One survey respondent wrote, "State definition: graduated from Florida high school. My definition: ready to be successful academically and personally in college." This reflects the care that colleagues have at the college for all aspects of students' lives. Other survey respondents mention mixed feelings about this term - a struggle to keep it real: "depends on paper a student may look college ready but in theory they are not." "College ready is probably a more useful term for data definitions than it is for providing a true picture of who are students are."
2. **Course Success:** At Valencia students are considered successful in a course by earning a grades of A, B, C or D, but for the purposes of Valencia's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and some other initiatives at the college, success in certain course sets is measured only by earning an A, B or C. Most responding referred to a "C" or higher and one person referred to a "B" or higher. Another mentioned passing high school. There seemed to be the most consensus about this term.

3. **Credit Hours:** Valencia has definitions for “Valencia hours attempted,” “Valencia hours earned,” and “Cumulative Transfer Hours earned.” Respondents saw this as a unit established by the college / time spent by students / “credit load of both student and instructor” / time allotted for course / measure developed to award degrees. So for each of these summarized the agency lies with a different actor for a different purpose.
4. **Gateway Courses:** At Valencia, these are the first college-level courses in Math or Composition. Not to be confused with “Front Door” courses – there are only 4 Gateway Courses. The definitions provided in the survey ranged from entry-level / first term / developmental education courses. Another stated: “Communications, Humanities, College Algebra.” This is a newly defined term.
5. **New Student at Valencia College:** Starting in fall 2015, Valencia will define new students as “First Time in College (FTIC) and/or First Time at Valencia (FTAV) degree- seeking students with fewer than 18 college-level credits.” Faculty and staff surveyed typically focused on the word “new” and did not mention that the student could have earned credits elsewhere. Only 4 out of 13 responding referred to credit hours and when they did they referred to “15 credit hours.”
6. **[Senate Bill] 1720 Students:** A new definition created for state colleges by language in Florida Senate Bill 1720 passed in 2013, “A student who entered 9th grade in a Florida public school in the 2003-2004 school year, or any year thereafter, and earned a Florida standard high school diploma or a student who is serving as an active duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Services shall not be required to take the common placement test and shall not be required to enroll in developmental education instruction in a Florida College System institution.” Most responses shared a focus on exemption from testing and specifically mentioned PERT. Most worrisome because it captures assumptions held at the state-level that impact related policy: “Students considered college ready.”
7. **“Start Right” Courses:** Prior to fall 2014, a list of “Front Door High Enrollment” courses were used to measure and make statements about student success early in their pathways. Starting in fall 2015, students will be directed to choose courses only from the list of courses called “Start Right Courses.” The list was developed collaboratively for over a year and includes items specific to A.A. and A.S. programs. Most often faculty and staff who responded to the survey said these courses are linked to success / foundations / popularity / guidance. One said these courses are defined by the faculty who “make them so.” Another most candidly stated: “I have no idea what this means. There is a start right policy of beginning learning in class on day one.”
8. **Transfer-ready:** Successful completion of the coursework necessary to enter a program of study at the junior-level. Valencia’s A.A. program outcome is the closest college-wide articulation of this definition. Those surveyed defined this as: 50 credits / certain GPA / Gen Ed completed / final semester before graduation. Another said “Completed AA degree with the correct prerequisites for their major prepared for social integration as a Junior” spanning both areas of academic affairs and student affairs.

Terms Related to Learning Assessment – developed by the Learning Assessment Committee prior to 2013

Academic Compact: Agreements made between universities/colleges and the State addressing assessment of general education core student learning outcomes. Often used to mean a listing of desired/expected outcomes for a program or degree offered by an educational institution.

Academic Honesty: Refers to required statement in the course syllabus. The statement must clearly state that cheating or plagiarism is not tolerated by the college and that the professor may take disciplinary action against students proven to be academically dishonest. See definition and description of the course syllabus.

Action/Classroom Research: Ongoing and cumulative intellectual inquiry by classroom teachers into the nature of teaching and learning in their classrooms.

Advisory Committee: Advisory committees are composed of representatives from business, industry, and/or other educational institutions. Advisory committees may assist with course and/or program development and review.

Artifacts: An object produced to indicate mastery of a skill or component of knowledge. It is often stored for future use.

Assessment: Valencia has developed several definitions that relate to the purpose of assessment, its focus, and tools:

Assessment for Accountability: Assessment of some unit (department, program, or entire institution) to satisfy external (external to the unit, not the institutional necessarily) stakeholders. Results are sometimes compared across units (maybe similar departments on different campuses) and are always summative.

Assessment of/for learning: Processes and tools/instruments that measure learning outcomes; student demonstration of new/expanded abilities (results of learning); documentation of the alignment or dissonance between the intended learning (as stated in the outcomes) and the actual learning (as demonstrated by the student); intended to inform, improve and or prove (Thomas A. Angelo): a vehicle for internal knowledge, insight and improvement and for external evidence of achievement.

Assessment for Improvement: Assessment that feeds directly, and often immediately, back into revising the course, program, or institution to improve student learning results. Results are often kept internal to the unit and can be formative or summative.

Assessment of Individuals: Uses the individual student and his/her learning as the level of analysis. Can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value-added and/or used for improvement. (This type of assessment would need to be aggregated if used for accountability purposes.) Examples include improvement in student knowledge of a subject during a single course or improvement of the ability of a student to build cogent arguments over the course of an undergraduate career.

Assessment of Programs: Uses the department or program as the level of analysis. Can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value-added and used for improvement and/or accountability. Ideally program goals and objectives would serve as a basis for the assessment. Example: improved critical reading skills for students completing the prep reading program.

Assessment of Institutions: Uses the institution as the level of analysis. Can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value-added and/or used for improvement or accountability. Ideally institution-wide goals and objectives would serve as a basis for the assessment.

Assessment Tool: Instrument used to measure the characteristic or outcome of interest. It is the tool used to implement part of a larger assessment plan. Example: assessment tools for learning include classroom assessment techniques (minute paper, muddiest point, etc.), capstone projects, examinations, portfolio entries, or student performances.

Associate in Arts: The A.A. Degree is designed for the student who plans to transfer to a Florida public university as a junior to complete a bachelor's degree. Through the A.A. Degree, Valencia offers lower division preparation for almost all of the approximately 200 majors in the Florida State University System.

A.A. Associate in Arts: (With Transfer Plan Options) This degree prepares students to transfer to a Florida public university to pursue a bachelor's degree. A.A. transfer plans prepare the student for a specific area of study.

A.A. Associate in Arts: (Pre-Majors) This degree prepares students to transfer to a Florida public university to pursue a bachelor's degree, with the majority of prerequisites met within a specific major. Pre-majors that are "articulated" prepare students to transfer to a specific university.

Associate in Applied Science, Associate in Science: The A.A.S. and A.S. Degrees are designed to prepare students to enter careers upon completing a degree, with no further study required. Certain A.S. Degrees articulate with bachelor degree programs in the Florida State University System. These degrees, called Articulated A.S. to B.A./B.S. Career Path Degrees, are designed for students who seek immediate employment in the specified field and who decide to continue to a Florida public university as a junior to complete a bachelor's degree in the specified field. Valencia offers approximately 40 A.A.S. and A.S. Degrees ranging from Accounting to Theater and entertainment Technology. The A.A.S. and A.S. Degrees are described in full in the Career Programs section of the college catalog.

Authentic Assessment: An assessment approach that has been designed to provide a realistic task, simulation, or problem related to that attribute or performance being measured. It engages students in challenges that closely represent what they are likely to face as everyday workers and citizens. It could be in the form of a performance test, a set of observations, open-ended questions, an exhibition, or a portfolio.

Authentic Learning: Learning embedded in relevant, useful, "real-world" contexts and applications. This is also called "deep learning" (beyond information intake). In terms of Bloom's Taxonomy, authentic learning refers to understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating.

Basic Skills Exit Test: The state-mandated exit test required for students who do not achieve college level scores on entry testing at Valencia and who must pass the appropriate college-preparatory course(s) in English, mathematics and reading, as well as the corresponding Basic Skills Exit Test. (Florida Law, Section 1008.30, F.S.)

Benchmarking Assessment: An assessment model that compares outcomes to other programs or institutions that have similar inputs and environments.

Board of Trustees: The Valencia District Board of Trustees is the governing body of the college. The board members are appointed by the Governor of the State of Florida and are responsible for approving the college curriculum. The President of the college reports directly to the Board of Trustees.

Certificates:

Technical Certificate Program

The Technical Certificate programs prepare students for immediate entry into a career in the workforce. Technical Certificate programs require prescribed technical courses, and may require general education courses, for a minimum of 12 college credits. For students who meet degree-seeking requirements college credit hours earned in a Technical Certificate program are applicable towards a related Associate in Applied Science or an Associate in Science degree; for example, the course in the Human Resources Management Technical Certificate can be applied towards the Business Administration Associate in Applied Science degree. Students who complete the course work prescribed for a Technical Certificate automatically will receive the certificate. Also, students may request a Technical Certificate from the academic department.

Vocational Credit Certificate Program

The Vocational Credit Certificate programs prepare students for careers directly in the workforce. The programs require prescribed vocational credit courses and basic skills proficiency achieved through college-preparatory courses. Students will receive a certificate upon completion of the Vocational Certificate program.

Advanced Technical Certificate Program

The Advanced Technical Certificate, an extension of a specific A.S. degree program, consists of at least nine (9) but less than 45 credit hours of college level course work. Students who have already received an A.S. degree and are seeking a specialized program of study to supplement their associate degree may seek the Advanced Technical Certificate. Students will receive a certificate upon completion of the program.

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs): Tools that involve students and teachers in the continuous monitoring of students' learning. It provides faculty with feedback about their effectiveness as teachers and gives students a measure of their progress as learners. Examples include the minute paper, the muddiest point, double entry journals, and classroom opinion polls.

Co-Curricular: Program offerings, activities and services developed collaboratively to enhance, support and contribute to the student learning outcomes of the College.

College Planning Council: The governing council charged with designing and carrying out a collaborative strategic planning process.

College Planning Committee – a college-wide committee appointed by the President and charged with developing the content of the strategic plan, based on a collaborative, college-wide conversation and decision-making process.

College Preparatory Courses: College-preparatory courses are those courses designed to bring students' skills to college level. College-prep courses all have a course number beginning with "00" and do not carry college credit, i.e., college-prep courses do not satisfy any degree requirements. Students are required to take specific college-prep courses in the general areas of reading, English language skills, and math based on entry assessment scores. These college-preparatory courses must be completed in a prescribed manner.

Common Course Numbering System: The common course numbering system is operated by the Florida Department of Education and includes all postsecondary courses taught in state community colleges and universities. The system defines each college-level course by a number consisting of a three-letter discipline designator and a four-number course designator.

For example ENC 1101 is the course number of freshman composition with the ENC referring to English and 1101 to the specific English course defined by the content taught in freshman composition. Since all state colleges and universities use the same system, transfer of credit is greatly facilitated among Florida public institutions. Course numbers are assigned by the Department of Education. (See the college catalog for a more specific definition.)

Competency: see Core Competencies, below.

Consequential Validity: An evidentiary standard for determining whether an assessment tool produces positive learning results for all students.

Core Competencies: Statements of intended results of student learning experiences across courses, programs, and degrees. Core competencies describe critical, measurable life abilities (deep learning) and provide unifying, overarching purpose for a broad spectrum of individual learning experiences. For example, Valencia's Student Competencies are Think, Value, Communicate, and Act (TVCA). For further explanation of TVCA see: <http://valencia.cc.fl.us/competencies/default.asp>

Co-requisite: A co-requisite is a course that must be taken simultaneously with a particular course. The course description for a course requiring a co-requisite must clearly indicate the co-requisite course by number.

Course Description: The course description is a basic statement of the course content that is printed in the college catalog. The course description should include any co- or prerequisites, departmental approval (if required), a general list of the discipline-related topics to be covered, and whether or not the course includes a Gordon Rule writing component.

Course Outline: Valencia Community College requires that each credit course be described in terms of major learning outcomes, specific Valencia student core competencies, shared assessments and major discipline-related topics. CLAST competencies are specified for Gordon Rule courses and courses required for education courses. The course outline is unique for each course; only one course outline exists for a given course at the college. Course outlines are fully defined and described in the Valencia Curriculum Manual. Copies of course outlines are on file in the Office of the Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

Course Outline Builder: is an online authoring tool designed to facilitate the authoring, adopting, and approval processes for a common course outline.

Course Syllabus: Valencia requires that each professor prepare and distribute to all students a course syllabus defined and described fully in the curriculum manual and in the faculty handbook. The syllabus is a professor's basic contract with her/his students and must include the learning outcomes and assessment components specified in the course outline.

Credit: Credit or college credit refers to those courses which contribute toward satisfaction of a particular degree or certificate program. Credit courses are those which have been approved by the college and State of Florida and assigned a common course number of 1000 or greater. Generally, one hour of college credit requires 15 contact hours of instruction. Laboratory credit generally requires two-to-three instructional hours per hour of college-level credit.

Criterion/Criteria: A standard or standards for judging how well or to what degree something has been learned.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment: An assessment model where the "expected" or "acceptable" level is predetermined. The measurement is typically taken at a single point in time and is usually marked as pass/fail.

Curriculum Committee: The college curriculum committee is the body whose primary responsibility is to provide an oversight function for the college curriculum. A specific description and list of members is located in the curriculum manual.

Data Team: Building on the lessons learned about data collection and processing from our Achieving the Dream efforts, the College Data Team is charged with the responsibility of institutionalizing our capacity to make data-supported decisions concerning student learning / success / engagement. Along with other data related activities, the Data Team helps faculty and student affairs professionals collect, process, and report data associated with the College's Program Learning Outcomes Assessment efforts.

Department Action Plan: (Student Affairs) To comply with SACS *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1, each Student Affairs department designs and implements an annual plan to improve student services and success. In Student Affairs these plan are called Department Unit Action Plans.

Descriptive Assessment Model: Assessment model that seeks to describe the current state of certain variables or phenomena.

DACUM: DACUM stands for “develop a curriculum” and represents a process whereby appropriate individuals develop and put in priority components of a course or program and is most often used to identify the duties and tasks for occupations to determine the program content. A version of the DACUM process is utilized as part of the program review process described in the curriculum manual.

Direct Assessment: Gathers evidence, based on student performance, which demonstrates the learning itself. Can be value-added, related to standards, qualitative or quantitative, embedded or not, and can use local or external criteria. Examples include class tests, research papers, student performances, etc.

Disclaimer: The disclaimer statement must be included in a professor’s course syllabus. A disclaimer essentially states that the professor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus upon written notification to the student. Typically, the professor distributes a revised syllabus or schedule. A disclaimer statement is also included at the beginning of the college catalog.

Division Action Plan: (Academic Affairs) To comply with SACS *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1, each academic division designs and implements an annual plan to assess student learning outcomes. In Academic Affairs these plan are called Division Action Plans.

Educational Materials: Educational materials are textbooks, lab manuals, computer software, audiovisual or other materials that are utilized by the student during a course. The professor’s syllabus must list those educational materials which the student is required to purchase and any others of which the student should be aware during the course.

Embedded Assessment: A means of gathering information about student learning that is built into and a natural part of the teaching-learning process. Often used, for assessment purposes are classroom assignments that are evaluated to assign students a grade. Can assess individual student performance or aggregate the information to provide information about the course or program; can be formative or summative, quantitative or qualitative. Example: as part of a course, expecting each student to complete a research paper that is graded for content and style, but the paper is also assessed for advanced ability to locate and evaluate web-based information as part of a college wide outcome to demonstrate information literacy.

Entry Assessment: All first-time-in-college students are required to take an entry assessment examination to determine whether they are ready to begin college-level work. The State of Florida allows for several specific assessment instruments. For those students who have not already taken an entry assessment, Valencia provides the Computerized Placement Tests (CPT) and evaluation. Depending on the test scores a student may be required to take college-preparatory courses (see College-Preparatory).

Entry Testing: An evaluation of basic skills to determine initial placement in reading, mathematics and English courses. Initial placement may include college-preparatory and/or college-level courses.

Evaluation: In the context of learning, evaluation is a summative appraisal of learning intended to provide a final judgment of the quality of learning. Evaluation is the culmination of the formative assessment process. In the context of the strategic planning process, evaluation is an appraisal of progress toward the goals and objectives in the plan taking place annually and at the end of the strategic planning period.

External Assessment: Use of criteria or assessment instrument developed by an individual or organization external to the one being assessed. Usually summative, quantitative, and often high- stakes. Example: standardized tests.

Exploratory Assessment: Assessment model that explores unknown phenomenon and seeks to answer “why?” questions. Typically uses focus groups or other qualitative assessment methodologies.

Formative Assessment: In progress assessment; feedback loops between teacher and students intended to improve teaching and learning along the way, and thereby also improving the quality of the end outcome. This includes student and teacher self-assessment.

Formative Evaluation – As used in planning context, a formative evaluation takes place at agreed upon intervals during the execution of a plan to determine progress toward goals and objectives and to assist in making mid-point corrections or changes that will enhance achievement of the goals and objectives. This is also referred to as “process evaluation.”

General Education: General Education refers to the basic core curriculum that a student must complete to receive a degree. General education courses are clearly described in the college catalog. The purpose of general education is to ensure that all students have some college-level course work in communications, math, natural science, social science, and humanities. Foreign language course work is required for A.A. degree-seeking student who have not satisfied the college’s foreign language proficiency requirement. For A.A. students, the general education requirement is from 36 to 45 credit hours, depending on the student’s level of foreign language skills. For A.S. students, the general education requirement is a minimum of 15 to 18 credit hours.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes- The general education program at Valencia is an integral part of the A.A. Degree program and is designed to contribute to the student's educational growth by providing a basic liberal arts education. A student who completes the general education program should have achieved the following outcomes:

Cultural and Historical Understanding: Demonstrate understanding of the diverse traditions of the world, and an individual's place in it.

Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning: Use processes, procedures, data, or evidence to solve problems and make effective decisions.

Communication Skills: Engage in effective interpersonal, oral, and written communication.

Ethical Responsibility: Demonstrate awareness of personal responsibility in one's civic, social, and academic life.

Information Literacy: Locate, evaluate, and effectively use information from diverse sources.

Critical Thinking: Effectively analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and apply information and ideas from diverse sources and disciplines.

Gordon Rule: Gordon Rule (6A-10.030) is the common name for the Florida higher education requirement which specifies that all students must complete with grades of C or better 12 credit hours in designated courses in which the student is required to demonstrate college-level writing skills through multiple assignments and 6 credit hours of math at the level of college algebra or higher. These courses must be completed successfully (grades of C or better) prior to the receipt of an A.A. Degree and prior to entry into the upper division of a Florida public university.

Governing Councils: The Governance structure of Valencia Community College is based on a shared governance model. As practiced at Valencia, shared governance is a set of processes and procedures through which college faculty, staff, and administrators collaborate in making significant decisions about the College's strategic direction, goals, and related implementation plans. There are four governing councils at Valencia: College Learning Council, College Operations Council, College Planning Council, and the Faculty Council. The four governing councils are responsible to the college community and the District Board of Trustees.

College Learning Council (CLC)

- Oversee curriculum approval (receives recommendations from Collegewide Curriculum Committee), program approval and review, credit and non-credit schedules, and Catalog
- Oversee faculty/professional development, faculty orientation, induction, tenure, and review in collaboration with the Faculty Council
- Oversee College assessment programs, distance learning, learning support, learning resources, libraries, and learning technology, school and university partnerships and articulation
- Coordinate fundraising plans, endowed chairs, scholarships, grants, and awards with Valencia Foundation
- Coordinate learning-related grants (Perkins, Title III, Title V, etc.)
- Coordinate enrollment plans

College Operations Council (COC)

- Oversee development and management of operational systems
- Perform triage and address management issues beyond the scope of campus leadership or a single division
- Oversee facility master planning
- Oversee technology master planning
- Approve minor staffing and budget adjustments, calendar, commencement, and campus- to-campus coordination issues
- Oversee the Strategic Equipment Process

College Planning Council (CPC)

- Coordinate the development and revision of the Strategic Learning Plan
- Coordinate the development of the annual budget
- Recommend multi-year budget and staffing plans
- Oversee the measurement of institutional effectiveness
- Function as Steering Committee for institutional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
- Oversee the College's Diversity Plan

Faculty Council/Faculty Association (FC/FA)

- Acts as the official voice of the faculty in matters of college governance, faculty rights, privileges, responsibilities, curriculum, and teaching/learning matters.
- Appoints faculty representatives to other Councils and college-wide standing committees.
- Represents the Faculty Association, which comprises all full-time faculty (though the Association votes on policy-level issues concerning compensation and workload benefits and other matters of special faculty concern).
- Provides meaningful input on formal policy decisions prior to presentation to the District Board of Trustees.
- In collaboration with the Learning Council, participates in planning and decision making related to faculty/professional development, faculty orientation, induction, tenure, and review.

High Stakes Assessment: The decision to use the results of assessment to set a hurdle that needs to be cleared for completing a program of study, receiving certification, or moving to the next level. Most often high stakes assessment is externally developed, based on set standards, carried out in a secure testing situation, and administered at a single point in time. Examples: exit tests, competency tests.

I-E-O Assessment Model: Assessment model designed by Alexander Astin that looks for relationships between inputs, environment, and outcomes.

Indicator of Progress: The strategic objectives in Valencia's Strategic Plan were selected to serve as indicators of progress toward the goals. These are not the only indicators of progress, nor do they represent all of the strategic work to be accomplished under each goal. A comprehensive view of the work for each goal will result as the various unit plans are completed and linked to the goals. The strategic indicators function as signals, much in the way that heart rate, blood pressure, and cholesterol are key indicators of our physical health. (Note, the word "key" was deleted in front of "indicator.")

Indirect Assessment: Gathers reflection about the learning or secondary evidence of its existence. Example: surveys of student perceptions about learning.

Institutional Effectiveness: According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Institutional Effectiveness requires that the institution identify expected outcomes, assess the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: educational programs, to include student learning outcomes; administrative support services; educational support services; research within its educational mission, if appropriate; and community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate. <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2008PrinciplesofAccreditation.pdf>

Instructional Affairs Council: The Instructional Affairs Council is comprised of the deans at Valencia Community College. The council is responsible for recommending and reviewing instructional policies and procedures for the college.

Learning: The acquisition of knowledge, skills, and/or abilities through instruction or experience.

Learning Assessment Committee: The college-wide Learning Assessment Committee was established by the College Learning Council and is charged with promoting the development and maintenance of a college-wide assessment plan that includes the following:

- Establishing standards for assessment practice and documentation
- Identifying indicators and creating tools for measuring learning (the current Learning Evidence Team)
- Developing process / mechanism for documenting assessment results and their application over time.

Learning Activities: The specific design and implementation of learning opportunities (inquiry, exploration, discovery, listening, observation, reading, writing, planning, discussion, practice, experimentation...) that lead to the desired learning outcomes.

Learning-centered: Quality of effort is measured or judged by its effect on learning. According to the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE): (1) formulating the right questions, that is, "a spirit of inquiry"; (2) assessment linked to those questions; and (3) systems that ensure that the answers result in improvements.

Learning Evidence Team: Established in 2004, The Learning Evidence Team (LET) helps faculty and student affairs professionals identify indicators, create tools, and assessment processes for measuring learning outcomes as articulated in TVCA, General Education and other program areas where needed.

Local Assessment: Means and methods that are developed by an institution's faculty, based on their teaching approaches, students, and learning goals.

Longitudinal Assessment: Assessment model that uses cohorts of students to track change or progress over time.

Major: An academic major is generally defined as the discipline area of concentration in which a degree is granted. At Valencia each A.S. degree represents a separate major.

Math Sequence: The mathematics courses required for students to achieve their educational goals. Depending on entry-level assessment and the educational goal of each student, the number of courses needed to complete the math sequence will vary.

Measure: To collect quantitative and/or qualitative data to be analyzed. Qualitative data are data that do not lend themselves to quantitative methods but rather to interpretive criteria, for example, interviews, focus groups, and anecdotal evidence.

Mission: The role the College will play in society, rooted in our statutory purpose as provided by the Florida Legislature. According to SACS, the mission statement must be current and comprehensive, accurately guide the institution's operations, be periodically reviewed and updated, approved by the governing board, and communicated to the institution's constituencies.

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2008PrinciplesofAccreditation.pdf>

Need: In the context of strategic planning, a need is a gap in results that have meaning to the individuals and society that we serve.

New Student Experience Committee: The New Student Experience Committee was established by the College Learning Council and is charged with organizing the development and maintenance of a coordinated new student experience starting with the recommendations of the Foundations of Excellence Taskforce.

Non-credit: Non-credit instruction consists of courses, workshops and seminars that do not result in the awarding of college credit hours upon completion. Non-credit courses are not supervised by the curriculum committee. Non-credit courses do result in the awarding of "CEU"s or "continuing education credits" which may be important to demonstrate that employees maintain current job skills.

Norm-Referenced Assessment: Assessment that compares an individual (student/group/program) to his/her/its placement relative to his/her/its peer's status on the same measure.

Objective (Learning Objective): Incremental learning steps students must take to reach a broader learning outcome. Students must normally learn several objectives for each course learning outcome.

Objective (Planning Objective) – For the purposes of guiding the College's strategic planning, the College Planning Council adopted the Organizational Elements Model, which includes a model for objectives that uses the acronym SMARTER. SMARTER objectives are those that: focus on a **Specific** result; contain a **Measurable** component; are **Audacious**, challenging the status quo; define **Results** to be achieved; have a target **Time** for completion; are **Encompassing**, aligned and supportive of each other; **Reviewed** and evaluated to check relevance and progress toward the results. (See Organizational Elements Model.)

Organizational Elements Model: A strategic planning model developed by Dr. Roger Kaufman that focuses on the value that the College adds to individuals and to society, based on an analysis of needs, or gaps in results, and a projection of activities and processes aimed at closing those gaps. (See *Strategic Planning for Success: Aligning People, Performance, and Payoffs*, by Roger Kaufman, Hugh Oakley-Browne, Ryan Watkins, and Doug Leigh. Published in 2003 by Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.)

Outcome (Learning Outcome): A learning outcome is defined by Valencia as a statement of what a student should understand and be able to do as a result of what he or she has learned in a course or learning program . . . in other words, "the essential and enduring knowledge, abilities, and attitudes or dispositions" that enable a student to practice and apply her learning in the real world. Synonyms: learning goal, competency, ability.

Outcome (Organizational Outcome): In the Organizational Elements Model used for strategic planning at Valencia, outcomes are the societal impact and value added to society by an organization. Example: active citizens and a higher standard of living in the community.

Performance-based Assessment: A type of student evaluation that requires a student to perform a task and be evaluated using indicators/criteria for performance (rather than traditional testing methods such as selecting an answer from an existing list.)

Planning by Valencia: is an online tool to promote institutional effectiveness and to demonstrate compliance with SACS Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement Core Requirement 2.5 and Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.

Planning/Operational Unit: Each subdivision of the College that is assigned a separate budget is considered to be a planning/operational unit and will be engaged in planning and documentation related to institutional effectiveness efforts.

Portfolio: Compilation of evidence demonstrating a level of development of essential competencies and the achievement of specific learning outcomes. The portfolio serves as a tool for both formative and summative assessment. A portfolio is a repository of professional and/or academic work.

Prerequisite: A prerequisite is a course that must be completed prior to enrollment in a given course. Courses which require prerequisites should clearly indicate the prerequisite by course number in the course description.

Program: In the context of the curriculum committee, the term “program” refers to a degree or certificate offered by the college.

Program Generator Form: A form designed for collaborative input from all divisions to determine how a new program or pre-major will affect other areas.

Qualitative Assessment: Collects data that does not lend itself to quantitative methods but rather to interpretive criteria. Example, interviews, focus groups, antidotal evidence.

Quantitative Assessment: Collects data that can be analyzed using quantitative methods.

Reliability: The “reproducibility” of a measure. A measurement procedure that when reproduced gives similar results.

Rubrics: Scoring guidelines/scales that enable reliable judgments about student work. Rubrics answer "What does mastery (and varying degrees of mastery) for a target achievement (outcomes) look like? What does the range in the quality of performance look like?, How do we determine validly, reliably, and fairly what score should be given and what the score means?, How should the different levels of quality be described and distinguished from one another?" (Pohl).

SACS: The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the organization through which Valencia is regionally accredited. <http://www.sacscoc.org/about.asp>

SCNS SCNS stands for the Statewide Course Numbering System. Created in the 1960's, it is a key component of Florida's K-20 seamless system of articulation. The system provides a database of post- secondary courses at public vocational technical centers, community colleges, universities, and participating nonpublic institutions. The assigned numbers describe course content to improve research, assist program planning, and facilitate the transfer of students. Check their website for institution course information, reports, and more about the SCNS and articulation in Florida. http://scns.fldoe.org/scns/public/pb_index.jsp

Situational/Needs Analysis: A process of arriving at a description of the current and projected situation of the College and the community we serve, with the gaps in results, or needs, that the College and the community wish to address.

Standards (generic term): A set level of accomplishment all students are expected to meet or exceed. (Standards are not always high quality as sometimes the level is the lowest common denominator. Standards also do not imply complete standardization in a program because common minimum standards can be achieved by multiple pathways and demonstrated in multiple ways.)

State University System: The State University System of Florida consists of the 11 public universities. The Articulation Law provides that all A.A. graduates of a Florida public community college must be accepted into the SUS upon request.

Strategic Goal: A strategic goal names results that we want to change in order to better meet our mission and help resolve strategic issues. A strategic goal addresses results, not the means of achieving the results.

Strategic Goal Team: A group of volunteers who reviewed all comments received regarding a specific goal as well as relevant data, and developed a set of measurable strategic objectives for the goal and a draft essay explaining the meaning of the goal.

Strategic Issue: An issue that must be resolved if the College is to meet its mission.

Strategic Learning Plan (SLP): In 2001, the College created a Strategic Learning Plan that focused specifically on improving learning results. The Strategic Plan for 2008-13 is more comprehensive, and replaces the SLP.

Strategic Plan: The College Planning Council defines the strategic plan as a comprehensive college-wide plan flowing from the College's mission that focuses our collective efforts on the value that the College intends to add to society and to students, and names the results that the College intends to deliver over a specific time period. These results include learning results as well as results related to the environment and conditions that support learning (for example, the expansion of campuses and enhanced community partnerships).

Strategic Plan Goal 1. Build Pathways:

- A. Design effective and efficient pathways to learning and educational progress for students.
- B. Create opportunities for students to develop and achieve their personal aspirations.
- C. Develop program options for students that enable them to compete successfully in the Central Florida economy.

Strategic Plan Goal 2. Learning Assured:

- A. Implement optimal learning environments for students.
- B. Integrate individual student effort with the learning process.
- C. Establish learning and learning support systems and techniques designed to reduce achievement gaps among groups of learners from diverse backgrounds.

Strategic Plan Goal 3. Invest in Each Other:

- A. Establish operational systems based on collaboration and deep stewardship of our work.
- B. Demonstrate support for employee professional development, career growth and healthy living.

Strategic Plan Goal 4. Partner with the Community:

- A. Coordinate student needs and College goals with community partners.
- B. Actively respond to community needs and goals

Strategic Objectives: One or more measures that the College aims to improve that will indicate that we are meeting the needs named in a strategic goal. These serve as significant indicators of progress toward a goal and are not intended to represent comprehensively all of the work that must take place to realize a goal.

Strategies: The ways in which the College will achieve desired results. A strategy is a means of achieving our mission and the results we name in our goals. Strategies are the ways we will play our role. A strategy is a means to an end, a way to get results. It is tempting for any institution to focus first on strategies and activities that we believe will get better results, before we decide which results we want to change and why. The selection of strategies and activities is important, but that step comes after we decide what results we want to change.

Summative Assessment: Measures of performance at given "finish points" in a course, at course/program conclusions, at graduation, etc. Summative assessment may include student self- assessment. Tests and papers are kinds of summative assessment. Grades are reflections of individual teacher evaluations of student performance on series of tests and papers.

Summative Evaluation – As used in planning, a summative evaluation is conducted at the conclusion of the execution of a plan to determine to what extent the goals and objectives were met. This is sometimes referred to as a "product evaluation."

SUS: SUS stands for the State University System of Florida.

SWOT Analysis: A form of situational analysis that involves describing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the College and the community that we serve. Valencia's situational/needs analysis was used as the basis for a SWOT analysis. As the College examined strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats, we identified points where:

- our strengths match our opportunities. In this case, we have the opportunity to base strategies around taking advantage of these points of leverage.
- we have an internal weakness in an areas in which there is significant opportunity. In this case, we may choose to base strategies on changing the internal weakness that acts as a constraint.
- an external threat exists to an area of internal strength. In this case, we may choose to devise strategies to shore up vulnerable areas.
- an external threat exists in an area in which we are weak, presenting a problem. In this case, strategies may include taking on a partner who has the strength that we lack, building our internal strength, or eliminating the area of weakness.

Task Force: One of four volunteer groups that were charged with major component of the planning process, including the Situational/Needs Analysis; the Vision, Values, and Mission Statements; the Strategic Goals and Objectives; the Evaluation Plan; and various communications to the College regarding the plan to support the collaborative process.

Teaching Discipline: Teaching discipline generally refers to the broad areas in which universities offer bachelor's degrees such as, computer science, business administration, biology, history, etc. A second, much more specific definition of discipline is used by the common course numbering system to designate course numbers. The teaching discipline concept is important in determining faculty credentials relative to the teaching assignment.

Transformative Assessment: The use of assessment information as a tool to communicate the desired change of teaching and learning in a program or institution.

Triangulation: The use of three (or more) sources of information to derive and substantiate an assessment or conclusion.

Validity: The degree to which the results of a study are likely to be true, believable and free of bias. Example: the results of a descriptive study are valid if they truly describe the intended construct/concept.

Values: The shared commitments that will shape the College's work in carrying out its role and achieving its vision.

Value-Added Assessment: The increase in learning that occurs during a course, program, or undergraduate education. Can either focus on the individual student (how much better a single student can write at the end than at the beginning of a course) or on a cohort of students (how much better Composition II final papers are-in the aggregate-than beginning Composition I papers). Requires a baseline measurement for comparison.

Vision: A picture of what the College wishes to help create by carrying out its mission.

Vocational Credit: Vocational credits are credits that can be used for awarding of vocational credit certificates. Vocational credit certificates are awarded as part of programs approved by the state of Florida for Post-Secondary Adult Vocational (PSAV) education designed to prepare individuals for specific careers. While there is no college credit associated with these programs, most have established award of credit agreements with AS programs in the state college system. Vocational credits are based on specific course completion as determined by the Florida Department of Education.

Voter Eligibility List: List containing the names of each full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member who are credentialed in the discipline, dean, and director associated with the specified discipline or program for the current academic year. The list is used to vote on proposed curriculum changes. The Voter Eligibility List is maintained by the Curriculum Committee Assistant.

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