**Assessment Dictionary**

**Academic Program** – Major or program of study.

**Actionable Results** – Consistent feedback that provide concrete feedback.

**Alignment** – Refers to matching with established outcomes. This can be in the context of an assignment having alignment, a syllabus having alignment, or a rubric having alignment with identified outcomes.

**Analytic rubric** – Used for making a series of judgements, each assessing a characteristic of the product being evaluated.

**Assessment** – The process of documenting knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs. Measuring evidence against a goal, standard, or desired outcome. Use to improve a product or process.

**Assessment Plan** – Identifying what, when, and how a goal, standard, or desired outcome is being measured. Also called curriculum map.

**Assessment Tools** - An instrument that allows an instructor to measure how well students have performed on a specific task. This can be a scale rating, a rubric, check list etc that can be used to provide meaningful feedback to a student.

**Authentic Assessment** – Uses real world activities. Connection of learning with practical experience.

**Benchmark** – Comparing results with an external standard or factors.

**Bloom’s Taxonomy** – Common reference for *Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives*. Originated by Benjamin Bloom in the 1950’s. Describes several categories of learning that build depending on the difficulty of what is being demonstrated.

**Close the Loop** – Comparison of assessment data with expectations. An examination of set goals and outcomes, assessment results, including recommendations for changes and implementation.

**Competencies** - Attitude or behavior. The consistent demonstration of knowledge or skills in multiple context. Also called Dispositions.

**Course-level Assessment** – Assessments within a specific course to validate or provide feedback to improve learning.

**Criteria (Scoring Criteria)** - The components of rubrics used to evaluate skill development, specifically the instruments that collect data about the skills described in the outcome.

**Curriculum Map** – Used to demonstrate the assessment plan for a particular area of study. An overview of all of the courses and the outcomes. Identifies the intersection of the course skills with the outcomes.
**Direct Assessment or measurement** – Provide evidence of a student's knowledge and abilities over a period of time through the student's actual work demonstrating the proficiency. It is a display of knowledge and skills in response to some form of an assignment.

**Dispositions** – Attitude or behavior. The **consistent** demonstration of knowledge or skills in multiple context. Also called competencies.

**Distribution** - Related to a statistical data set. A listing or function showing the intervals of the data and how often.

**Embedded Assessment** – Completed as part of course work. Generally graded work. All or some parts can be used to assess program learning outcomes.

**Engagement** – Active involvement in the process.

**First-year experience programs** – Designed to help retain students through focusing on development of engagement, academic skills, and awareness of campus support services.

**Formative Assessment** – Refers to the gathering of information about student learning throughout the course or program of study. An assessment to provide feedback to improve what is being assessed. Checking work along the way, not final.

**Gateway Course** – A course that blocks the progress of a student until they are able to successfully demonstrate an understanding of the material. Pre-requisite knowledge for later learning.

**General Education** – The courses that are required by all students at an institution.

**Goal(s)** - An overarching principle that guides decision making. A general statement about knowledge, skills or experiences expected of those that complete a particular program of study. Broad.

**Grading** – The sum total of experience on an assignment or course.

**Holistic** – One global judgement. Overall.

**ILG’s** – Institutional Learning Goals for Wilson College. Competencies that are woven throughout the Gen Ed Curriculum.

The Institutional Learning Goals articulate seven essential learning goals for students at Wilson College and reflect the values in the college’s mission. A specific set of learning outcomes follows each essential goal in order to help students, faculty, and staff develop a fuller, shared vocabulary for learning. Faculty may use or adapt any of the goals, outcomes, or competencies as they find them applicable to their courses and disciplines. W1 and W2 address skills that students should use throughout their four years in a variety of courses. W3-W5 apply to specific liberal studies requirements and to courses in multiple academic departments. W6 and W7 apply to culminating or senior level experiences in the major.

The goals and outcomes are stated broadly so that students, faculty, and staff may adapt them to a variety of learning contexts. Faculty may supplement the rubrics below by designing their own assessment tools or adapting them from professional organizations in their discipline.
Overall, the learning goals represent the common core skills and knowledge students will attain during their years at Wilson College.

**Indirect Assessment** – The instructor needs to make inferences about the student learning. Used to support direct measures of assessment. Generally surveys, program or event evaluations, or satisfaction surveys.

**Institutional Effectiveness** – How well an institution is performing against set goals or outcomes, mission or vision.

**Inter-rater Reliability** – How well two or more assessors agree when scoring subjective work against a tool like a rubric.

**Key Assignments** – Can also be called a Signature Assignment. This is an assignment that represents the best work from a course or a program of study. Generally an anchor paper or project embedded within course work or a capstone project for a program of study. This assignment is identified to be a good example of best work to demonstrate the identified outcomes for that course or program.

**Knowledge** – A body of facts and information. Not directly observable. Measurable when aligned to skills.

**Mean** - Average

**Median** - Middle value of the list of numbers.

**Mode** - The value in a set of numbers that occurs most often.

**Objective** – Specific, measurable steps taken to achieving a goal. Concrete. Also includes the steps that can be taken to meet the goal. Learning Outcomes and Objectives can sometimes be used interchangeably. Precise and tangible.

**Outcome** – The statement describing the knowledge, skills and dispositions students should be able to demonstrate at the end of their academic program. Learning Outcomes and Objectives can sometimes be used interchangeably.

**Performance Assessment** – Students demonstrate how well they have mastered an outcome by doing an activity, essay, project etc.

**Portfolio** – A compilation of student work. The work can be grouped by outcomes, program of study, or course requirements like writing intensive.

**Proficient (3)** – The student is performing as they are expected to do. Sufficiently meeting all of the criteria as established by the assignment.

**Program Goal** – State what the collective area wish to achieve. Generally used to refer to content specific areas but can refer to other groupings. These can be General Education Goals or Content specific goals. Institutions need to clarify their unique language.
Program Level Assessment – Outcomes or goals as they relate to an area of study. Usually relates to demonstrating proficiency for a major. Can also relate to similar core outcomes that are grouped.

Program specific – The courses that are required by a major of program of study.

Qualitative Assessment – Results are verbal descriptions and not numerical scores.

Qualitative Evidence - Verbal summary of findings

Quantitative Assessment – Assessment results reported with a number that indicates proficiency.

Quantitative Evidence – Scores that indicate proficiency.

Rubric – A device that classifies requirements or behaviors into categories that are steps along a continuum. A tool used to give students guidance on requirements and feedback for improvement.

Rubric Criteria – The components that are used to classify student work into categories.

Scaffolding – Organizing a course or curriculum to gradually build knowledge and skills.

Scoring Rubrics – Describe the components of the assignment and the expectations.

Showcase portfolio – A collection or demonstration of best work. Usually at the end of a program of study or in a capstone.

Skills – Ability to apply knowledge. Observable and measurable. Demonstration of developing expertise.

SMART Goals
  Specific
  Measurable
  Attainable
  Relevant
  Time-Bound

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) – Describes the expected learning and behavior that a student will be able to demonstrate. SLO’s are specific and written in measurable terms. By demonstrating meeting the SLO’s a student is demonstrating a component of proficiency for a program or general education goal. A direct measure of student ability. The Student Will Be Able To…. (SWBAT)

Summative Assessment – A final measure of ability at the end of a unit, program of study, or course. An overall assessment. Occurs when an assessor evaluates a final product. Emphasis is aimed at gathering evidence of learning that occurred over time and intended to demonstrate mastery.

Surface Learning – Based upon memorization of facts and figures with little understanding of the material.

Triangulation – Multiple evidence that demonstrate a conclusion.
**Validity** – How well a device is measuring what is supposed to assess. Can multiple individuals use this to make similar conclusions?

**Value-added Assessment** – Student learning is determined by how much students have gained through participation in a particular program or activity.