

## Assessment & Curriculum Glossary

**Assessment:** The process of measuring a performance, a work project, or learning skills. This process is based on specific standards and criteria, giving feedback to an individual or team, which documents growth and provides directives to improve future performance. Standards and criteria are established and communicated prior to all work performance.

**Assessment Conditions:** specifies the assessment technique or strategy used to measure a learner's performance or a learner's product. Examples are: written exam, skill performance, building a portfolio.

**Assessment Criteria:** are the measurable specifications stated and used to evaluate whether the learner's results of a product or process demonstrated or met the expected competency. Examples are: completed the process in 15 minutes, adheres to guidelines, receives a grade of "B" or higher.

**Assessment Tools:** The instruments used to gather data about student learning. Tools can be both quantitative and qualitative. Examples of these tools are: pretests, group problem solving, performances and demonstrations, portfolios, peer observations.

**Authentic Assessment:** A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.

**CATs- Classroom Assessment Techniques-** Classroom assessment is a formative assessment that can be done anonymously. CATs are used to collect information on "how students are doing or feeling about" specific areas such as:

- Course related knowledge & skills
- Learners attitude, values, & self-awareness
- Learners reactions to instruction
- Learners reactions to class activities, assignments, & materials

Information gathered from the Cats is used by the instructor to adjust and improve instruction and provide feedback to both instructor and student.

**Competency/Course Outcome:** A major skill a student will learn and demonstrate in a course. A competency must be measurable and observable. What a student should be able to do upon completion of the course.

**Continuous Improvement:** Continuous improvement processes are on-going, data-supported, research-driven processes carried out by a team for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of work systems and their results.

**Core Abilities:** are eight key life and success skills that are taught and assessed in classes, labs, and field experiences at MATC. The core abilities are transferable skills that go beyond the context of a specific course and are essential, regardless of an individual's personal, occupational or community roles. They are broad general education outcomes.

**Criteria:** Statements applied to desired skills, attitudes, or knowledge that a student should learn to demonstrate competence. Criteria should be given to the student before an assessment or evaluation is performed.

**Curriculum:** For MATC purposes, the Outline of Instruction and supporting information represents "official" curriculum. However, this term is meant to encompass any teaching and learning materials or content connected to a specific course.

**Evaluation:** A process of measuring the quality of a work performance, work product, or use of a process against a set of standards and criteria to make a judgment or determination if, or to what level, the standards have been met and students are achieving the instructional objectives.

**External Standards:** The credentialing requirements established by an external organization. Standards may specify inputs (e.g., faculty credentials, laboratory or equipment specifications, class size, admission prerequisites) and/or outputs (e.g., performance standards, assessment results, documentation of learner achievement). Examples of programs with external standards would include Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Automotive, Law Enforcement, and Veterinary Technician.

**Formative Assessment (classroom assessment):** Informal feedback processes used by instructors to guide students in improving their performance prior to summative assessment. Examples are: quizzes, self-assessment, informal verbal or written feedback, games, practice problems with feedback.

**Learning Activities:** designed to help learners' master specific learning objectives and competencies.

**Learning Objectives:** represent "chunks" of the larger competency/course outcome. They are supporting skills, knowledge, or attitudes that contribute to the mastery of the competency, often defined as sub-skills, or smaller skills, knowledge or attitude that contribute to mastery of the "Big Skill" or competency.

**Outlines of Instruction:** The official course documentation at MATC. They provide specific information on the learning outcomes of each course and ensure consistency in courses taught by many instructors.

**Portfolio:** a systematic and organized collection of a student's work products that demonstrates a student's efforts, achievements, and progress over a period of time. Portfolios may include papers, projects, videos, web pages, CD-ROMS, journals, etc.

**Program Outcomes:** states what a graduate needs to be able to do with the essential knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors acquired in a specific MATC program. These outcome statements are developed with input from all relevant stakeholders: faculty, advisory committee members, employers, college administrators, graduates, and students.

**Rubric:** A rubric is an assessment tool that uses a scale or scoring guide with assessment criteria, provides feedback to the student, and objectively displays grading criteria for the student for a specific assignment, project or activity.

**Real Time Assessment:** An assessment that occurs at the time an event or performance is happening.

**Self-Assessment:** A process in which a person engages in systematic review of his or her own performance or learning. This assessment is based on established criteria and is for the purpose of future improvement.

**Standards:** A description of the expected quality of a level of student performance as described by criteria. The instructor develops the standards to describe the proficiency level that must be attained by each student. Standards are established and communicated ahead of time. Each student's work is compared to the standard rather than to the work of other students.

**Summative Assessment:** is the process of gathering of data on student learning, based on specific assessment criteria, at the conclusion of a course, unit, field experience, or program. This data is the basis for judging the quality of student knowledge and skills and can be used for evaluative purposes (**grades**) and provide feedback for future improvement. Examples are: registry or licensure exams, portfolios, clinicals, internships, major final projects.

**WIDS (World-wide Instruction Design System):** A learning and assessment design tool that offers a framework to organize course and program design. This software allows the creation of course outlines and syllabi among other things.