

Chapter 1 Definitions

Alignment: Refers to the extent to which what is assessed is a match with what is taught in the classroom.

Comprehensive and balanced assessment system: A program of assessments, practices, and guidelines, all founded on the learning goals of the system and designed to meet the information needs of all users of assessment results in order to both document and improve student learning.

Comprehensive assessment plan: A written description of the philosophy of and approach to student assessment in the organization, including purposes, stakeholders, and uses of results. It also describes the types of assessments used, provides information on scoring and educator training, and includes a list of assessments used.

Formative assessment: A collection of formal and informal processes that teachers and students use to gather and share evidence for the purpose of guiding next steps toward learning and for helping students become self-directed learners.

Learning goal: A statement of what students should know and/or be able to do after instruction. This book will use the term *learning goal* as a general term for intended learning outcomes at any level of specificity, from broad- to fine-grained, and of any temporal duration, from short-term to long-term.

Summative assessment: The use of assessment information to certify that students have met certain learning requirements, usually at the end of an instructional unit, a lesson, or some other fixed period of time, such as a course, semester, or year.