Glossary of Terms

**Action** – An event or action taken to accomplish an outcome (i.e.: summer camp, workshop, and marketing).

**Activities** – Things you do-activities you plan to conduct in your program.

**Assessment Schedule** – The frequency with which assessment tools are used to measure progress toward an outcome (i.e.: Monthly, Semester, Annually).

**Assessment Plan** – A plan with clearly defined strategies or actions, outcomes, assessment tools, assessment schedules, and performance targets; outcomes must be aligned with the System and Campus objectives.

**Assessment Instrument** – The specific method selected to measure progress toward achievement of an outcome (CCSEE, Pre/Post Perceptions Survey, specific rubrics, specific portfolio assignments, etc.).

**Assessment Results** – The results of the outcomes measures (i.e.: Was the performance target met? How will you use the results in the Campus Planning process [Academic, Administrative, Budget, Facilities]?).

**Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)** – A management philosophy that addresses the progress of an institution systemically and systematically to improve the quality of its processes and outcomes. CQI stresses a strong culture of assessment-based evidence for decision making in a cooperative, cross-functional way throughout the institution.

**Department** – A department reports to a Dean within a Division unit (i.e.: CIT, Advising, Financial Aid).

**Division** – Second largest operational unit at the College (i.e.: Division 1, Division 2, and Student Services).

**Formative Evaluation** – Any evaluation that takes place before or during a project’s implementation with the aim of improving the project’s design and performance.

Formative evaluation complements summative evaluation and is essential for trying to understand why a project or a program works or doesn’t. Information or data gathered from the formative evaluation can be used to provide timely intervention so as to improve the effectiveness of a project or a program.

**Goal** – A broad statement that describes what is to be achieved to fulfill the program mission.
Institutional Effectiveness – refers to "the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution" (SACS/COC Resource Manual, 2012, p. 115). It is a continuous process of planning, assessing, and reviewing results, aimed at ongoing improvement.

Measure – A clearly definable performance level that can be measured.

Mission – A statement that describes who is served by the program, the philosophy of service, and what will be achieved; should be two to four sentences.

Needs Assessment – A systematic study of institutional problems that interfere with achieving goals and that require solutions.

Objective – Statements of aims or desired ends whose achievement can be assessed to demonstrate progress toward or achievement of their goals.

Outcome – End results an organization seeks to achieve as a consequence of customers receiving or experiencing the organization’s outputs, or changes in knowledge, skills, or behavior due to services or intervention programs provided.

Output - Deliverables from an organization’s key work processes experienced by customers, or products, services, and information designed to meet customers’ needs

Outcome Result - What happened? Was the achievement target accomplished?

Personnel – Individuals currently employed in the program; program leadership should be identified.

Person Responsible – One person who will be charged with facilitating the assessment cycle for the outcome listed.

Process Assessment – Production of information concerning how close actual processes are to desired processes.

Program/Committee – A program; the smallest operational unit within the college responsible for conducting periodic program reviews (i.e.: CISCO, Honors, and Scholarships).

Program Evaluation – Determination of the adequacy of the program in fulfilling its mission, goals, and objectives.

Qualitative Method – Qualitative method of assessment collects data that are narrative. Data are analyzed by looking for recurring themes. Examples of this method include interviews, observations, focus group study, etc.

Quantitative Method – Quantitative method of assessment collects data that can be summarized into meaningful numbers and can be analyzed statistically. Examples include test score comparison, analysis of survey ratings, and number of events comparison.
**Related Goal/Objective** – Lone Star College System Goal/Objective to which a program outcome must be aligned.

**Strategic Planning** – Long-term, often three-five year, planning at the level of the whole institution or unit that focuses specifically on adaptation to the organization’s external environment and the future. Guided by a vision of the organization in the future, strategic planning attempts to position the organization favorably with respect to needed resources.

**Strategy** – An event or action taken to accomplish an outcome (i.e.: summer camp, workshop, and marketing).

**Summative Evaluation** – Judgment at the end of an activity of its effectiveness according to standards.

**SWOT Analysis** – An activity that engages the stakeholders in brainstorming on the Strengths and Weaknesses within the organization, as well as the external factors that pose as Opportunities and Threats to the organization. Information gathered from this activity can be used for strategic planning or intervention design, etc.

**Unit** – Largest operational unit at the College (i.e.: Student Learning, Student Success, and Administrative Services).