

# What is a simple explanation of criterion validity?

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Criterion validity is a measure of how well a particular test or assessment is able to accurately predict an individual's performance on a particular outcome or behavior. In simpler terms, it determines whether a test is able to effectively measure what it claims to measure. This type of validity is often used in education, employment, and research settings to ensure that the results of a test are reliable and meaningful. Essentially, criterion validity is a way to assess the usefulness and accuracy of a test.

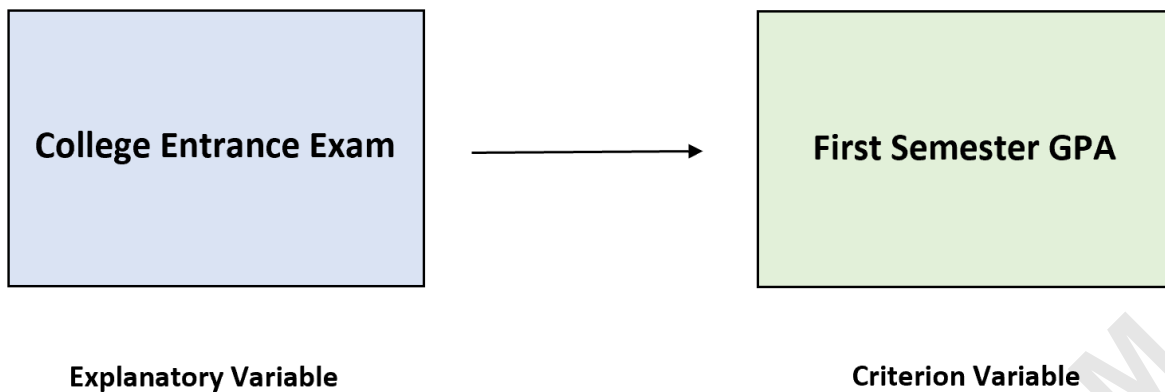
## **A Simple Explanation of Criterion Validity**

**Criterion validity refers to how well the measurement of one variable can predict the response of another variable.**

**One variable is referred to as the while the other variable is referred to as the .**

**For example, we might want to know how well some college entrance exam is able to predict the first semester grade point average of students.**

**The entrance exam would be the explanatory variable and the criterion variable would be the first semester GPA.**



We want to know if it's *valid* to use this particular explanatory variable as a way to predict the criterion variable.

#### How to Measure Criterion Validity

We typically measure criterion validity using a metric like the  $r$ , which takes on value between -1 and 1 where:

-1 indicates a perfectly negative linear correlation between two variables  
0 indicates no linear correlation between two variables  
1 indicates a perfectly positive linear correlation between two variables

The further away the correlation coefficient is from zero, the stronger the association between the two variables.

For example, if we collected data on entrance exam scores and first semester GPA for 1,000 students and

found that the correlation between the two variables was 0.843 then this would mean the two variables are highly correlated.

In other words, students who score high on the entrance exam also tend to earn high GPA's during their first semester. Conversely, students who score low on the entrance exam tend to earn low GPA's during their first semester.

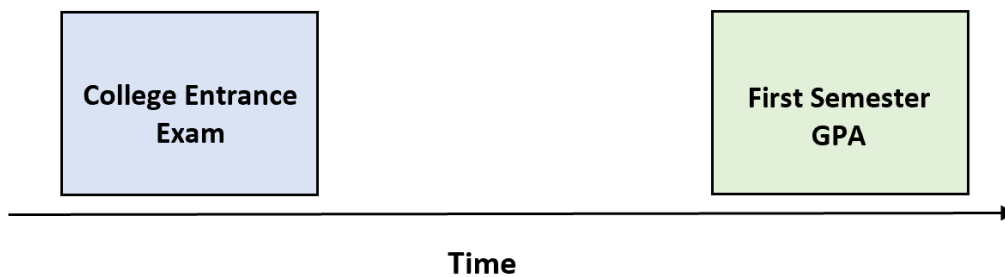
#### Types of Criterion Validity

There are two main types of criterion validity:

1.

The first type of criterion validity is known as predictive validity, which determines whether or not the measurement of one variable is able to accurately predict the measurement of some variable in the future.

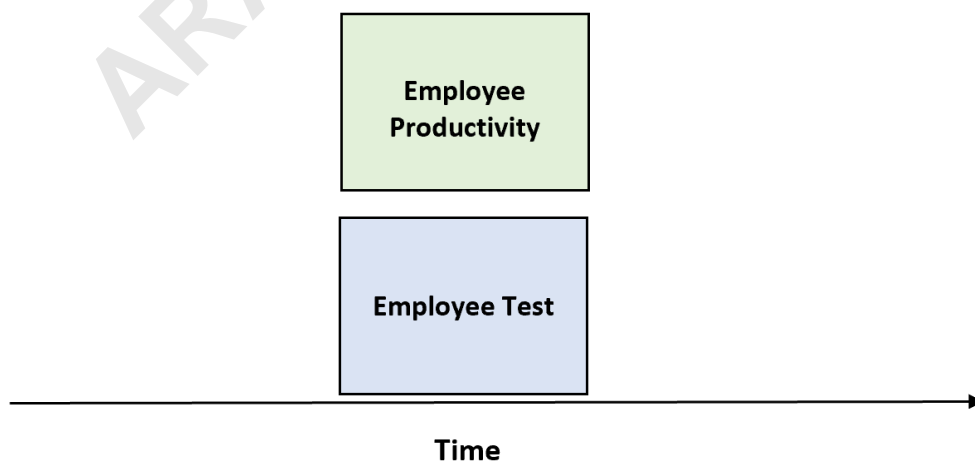
The previous example of measuring a student's college entrance exam score and their first semester GPA is an example of measuring predictive validity because we measure the two variables at different points in time.



## 2.

The second type of criterion validity is known as concurrent validity, which measures two variables *concurrently* (i.e. at the same time) to see if one variable is significantly associated with the other.

An example of this would be if a company administers some type of test to see if the scores on the test are correlated with employee productivity.



**The benefit of this approach is that we don't have to wait until some point in the future to take a measurement on the criterion variable we're interested in.**

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