Assessment Team Meeting
Friday, November 4
Presentation Outline

- Learning Outcomes
- Assessment v. Research
- Primary Types of Assessment
- The Assessment Process
- Group Activity
- Questions
Learning Outcomes

- Team members will understand the difference between assessment and research
- Team members will be able to differentiate and define the primary types of assessment
- Team members will be able to articulate the steps in designing an assessment plan
Why Assessment?

- Survival
- Quality
- Affordability
- Strategic Planning
- Policy Development and Decision Making
- Politics
- Accreditation
**Assessment v. Research**

**Key Terms**

- **Assessment**: Any effort to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence which describes institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness (Upcraft & Schuh, p. 18)
- **Evaluation**: Any effort to use assessment evidence to improve institutional, departmental, divisional, or agency effectiveness (Upcraft & Schuh, p. 19)
- **Research**: A systematic process by which we know more about something than we did before engaging in the process (Merriam)
Assessment guides good practice, while research guides theory and conceptual foundations.

Assessment typically has implications for a single institution, while research typically has broader implications for student affairs and higher education.
QUIZ – Assessment v. Research

- Study on male identity development for fraternity members at large public research institutions
  - RESEARCH

- Study on Awesome College Greek men and their perceptions of the campus climate for Greeks
  - ASSESSMENT
QUIZ – Assessment v. Research

- Analyzing usage data by a population of 18-22 year old users of campus the recreation center
  - ASSESSMENT

- Analyzing usage data by a population of 18-22 year old users of campus recreation centers throughout the southeast to identify connections between BMI and GPA
  - RESEARCH
Primary Types of Assessment

- Needs assessment
- Program evaluation
- Learning outcomes
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

What do students need in order to be successful?
“Assessing student needs is the process of determining the presence or absence of the factors and conditions, resources, services, and learning opportunities that students need in order to meet their educational goals and objectives within the context of an institution’s mission” (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996, p. 128).

Internally – helps to make decisions about policies, programs, and services
Externally – provide justifications for initiating programs, eliminating them, or for defending policies and activities to relevant constituencies
Primary Types of Assessment

**PROGRAM EVALUATION**

- How well did the program/activity/service meet its intended purpose? How can we improve?
- Encompasses student satisfaction, programmatic outcomes, program review
- Use results to improve a program, service, or activity
LEARNING OUTCOMES

• What are our students learning from the programs, services, and activities we provide?
• In some respects, the most important type . . .
• Some areas of student affairs are NOT best served by assessing learning outcomes
Are students regularly attending the lunch-time fitness program?

- PROGRAM EVALUATION

Are students using skills they develop in co-curricular activities as part of their job search process?

- LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student Government wants to keep the student union open longer during finals.

- NEEDS ASSESSMENT
The Assessment Process

- What’s the problem?
- What’s the purpose of the assessment?
- Who should be studied?
- What’s the best assessment method?
- What ethical issues are involved?
- How do we decide whom to study?
- How should the data be collected?
- What instrument should we use?
- Who should collect the data?
- How do we analyze the data?
- How do we report the results?
- How do we use the results?
STEP #1 – What’s the Problem?

- Why are you doing this assessment?
- What specific circumstances or situations are driving the need for assessment?
- What internal/external conditions inform this assessment effort?
STEP #2 – What’s the Purpose of the Assessment?

- What information do we need to help solve the identified problems?
- Is the purpose a) student learning, b) students’ needs, or c) program evaluation?
STEP #3 – Who Should Be Studied?

- What students hold the information needed to fulfill the purpose of this assessment project?
- Are previous institutional /departmental reports, findings, or datasets available?
- Is benchmarking data available on peer institutions?
STEP #4 – What’s the Best Assessment Method?

- What is the best way to get the information you need?
- Quantitative, Qualitative, or Mixed?
STEP #5 – What Ethical Issues are Involved?

- What steps can you take to protect your students and uphold key values throughout the assessment process?
- Consider any institutional policies relevant to the project. For example, is IRB needed?
STEP #6 – How Do We Decide Whom to Study?

• What is the best way to select participants for the study?
• What characteristics/are you looking for to answer your questions?
STEP #7 – How Should the Data Be Collected?

- What is the best strategy for collecting data?
  - Focus Groups
  - Interviews
  - Questionnaires – Paper or Online
  - Rubric
  - Document analysis
- When is the best time to collect data?
STEP #8 – What Instrument Should We Use?

- Given your chosen data collection method, what is the best instrument to use?
- Does an instrument already exist that is appropriate to your purpose?
STEP #9 – Who Should Collect the Data?

- Who are the individuals best suited to collect the data for this project?
- Consider individuals who are trained and qualified.
- Role of bias in collecting the data
STEP #10 – How Will We Analyze the Data?

- Quantitative
  - depends on the purpose of the study
  - Were the respondents representative of the population

- Qualitative
  - Themes developed, for example, using constant comparative method
STEP #11 – How Do We Report the Results?

- To whom should the reports be reported?
- In what form?
- What should be included in any report?
- Distribution and format are often more important than the results
STEP #12 – How Do We Use the Results?

- What are the implications of the study?
- How can we use these results to improve practice?
1. What is the problem?
2. We do NOT need to assess every program and service every year . . . It leads to survey fatigue from students.
3. How can we rotate our assessments?
4. How will we use our results?
5. Remember our resources
Scenario:

- Group decides on a problem that we would like to look at for the remainder of assessment team meetings.


*Special Thanks to:*
Assessment 101 by Jan Hilsman
Designing an Assessment Plan by Kyle Tschepikow
Primary Types of Assessment in Student Affairs by Robert W. Aaron
Next Meeting
Friday, December 2; 2-4pm; KH 1203
Topic: Qualitative Methods