SARA Assessment Brown Bag Series Presents:

DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT PLAN

Presented by: Betty J. Harper
November 17, 2011
Why Create an Assessment Plan?

- You wouldn’t build a house without a blueprint, would you?
Start Small

- Create a multi-year plan, but break it into manageable parts
- Choose one or two outcomes to focus on per year
- Measure these
- Use the information to adjust your process
- Document and disseminate
Core Components of an Assessment Plan

- Mission
- Objectives
- Outcomes
- Evaluation methods

- Implementation
  - Who is responsible?
  - Timeline

- Results (when crafting your annual plan, briefly review findings and impacts from your previous efforts)

- Dissemination and action plan
Measurement Methods

- Direct methods require students to display their knowledge and skills
- Indirect methods ask students or someone else to reflect on the student learning rather than to demonstrate it
- In Student Affairs we commonly use indirect methods, but ideally we should strive for a mix of direct and indirect
Examples of Direct Evidence

- Student work samples (a written speech, a journal, an event)
- Portfolios
- Observations of student behavior (leadership, communication, etc.)
- Internal juried review of student projects
- Evaluations of performance
Examples of Indirect Evidence

- Student, alumni, and employer surveys
- Focus groups
- Exit interviews
- Percentage of students who go on to graduate school or job placement statistics
- Percentage of students who participate
Matrices Can Help You Lay Out a Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Spring 2012</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Spring 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1</td>
<td>Reflective writing evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td>One year follow-up interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Focus group follow-ups to survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External review of student projects</td>
<td>Peer evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Written evaluation from external collaborators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Student Satisfaction (SP12)</td>
<td>NSSE (FA12)</td>
<td>Pulse Survey (SP13)</td>
<td>Student Interviews (FA13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Turn!

- Use the handout to sketch out an assessment matrix.
- The columns can be semesters, years, or specific assessment activities.
- The rows are learning outcomes.
  (see example outcomes: http://edge.psu.edu/SAOutcomes.shtml)
Making Use of the Data

- Collect data from multiple sources
- Collect *actionable* data
- Report out! Findings should not be stored solely in your brain or your file cabinet
- Organize reports around issues, not just data
- Interpret data so that it informs your programming, budgeting, planning, decision-making, etc.
Closing the Loop

- Every assessment should have an accompanying report
- Briefly document the methodology
- Document where students are meeting the intended outcome and where they are not
- Document decisions made as a result
- Refine the assessment method and repeat the process
Resources

- Much of the material in this presentation is modified from Dr. Carrie L. Zelna’s, *Basic Assessment Plan Development* at [http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/old/presentations/assess_process/basic_plan_devt.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/old/presentations/assess_process/basic_plan_devt.pdf).

- SARA Assessment Plan Template
Questions?

Betty J. Harper, Director
Student Affairs Research & Assessment
BHHarper@psu.edu
(814) 863-1809