Building Assessment Culture and Capacity: Multiple Perspectives

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Agenda

- Appreciative Inquiry as an Overarching Philosophy
- Best Practices for the Assessment Cycle
- Celebrating and Sustaining Success
- Questions and Discussions

If you have a question for the panel members please write them on a 3*5 card with your email. Justin will collect these during the presentation and deliver them to the presenters.
Overarching Assessment Practice: Appreciative Inquiry

Once the people of an organization create a shared image of their preferred future, dialogue about ways to align the functions and people of the organization with that image, and act in ways that are congruent with the image, the organization becomes that image.
Discover
“What gives life?”
(The best of what is)
Appreciating

Destiny
“How does one best learn, actualize, and improvise?”

Design
“What should be, the ideal?”
Co-constructing

Dream
“What might be?”
Envisioning Results
Mission, Purposes, Goals and Outcomes

Indiana University Division of Student Affairs
Assessment Team - Overview

Mission, Purposes, Goals and Outcomes

• Streamlining Efforts
• Division-wide vs. office-wide
• Long-term vs. short-term
• Getting things done vs. making things better
Additional Resources for Mission, Purposes Goals and Outcomes

• National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment:
  http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/publications.html

• Association of American Colleges and Universities:
  http://www.aacu.org/resources/assessment/

• Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education:
  http://www.cas.edu/index.php/standards/

• Lumina Foundation:
  http://www.luminafoundation.org/newsroom/topics.html?_stopic=0
Create an environment that facilitates success

• Establish and announce an annual process that makes sense for your institution

• **Compose plan and results forms that are short, self-explanatory, and free of assessment jargon**

  • Create an online repository for resources and results

  • Option to assess one outcome per year, via two methods of assessment

  • Determine necessary assessment method/tools. Consider:

  • Quantitative or qualitative?
  • Single event or occurrences over time?
  • Do pre-existing resources exist that already measure this?
  • If not, how can we embed this assessment?

• Provide templates, tools, and training on assessment methods

Lindsay Onufer
Laura Dulaney
Point Park University
Establish a sustainable assessment process

- Start with a pilot department or unit and identify “low hanging fruit” outcome
- Acknowledge:
  - Staff as successful experts in their field
  - Diversity of departments
  - Motivation as improvement over accountability
- Adopt an open-door policy for questions and concerns
  - Assist with creating tools, data analysis
- Track where departments are in the assessment cycle and communicate this information with constituencies, including directors and the executive team
- Check in before results are due
Gather systematically and regularly

- Formalize procedures for keeping track of internal data and data entry
  - Collect a variety of data and outcomes
  - Survey students and others you serve

Store electronically

- Taking paper or anecdotal information and making it electronic
- Spreadsheet programs (e.g. Excel, SPSS)
- Database programs (e.g. Access, TutorTrac)

Utilize external data sources

- Work with institutional research to generate datasets from institutional data
  - Collaborate with connected offices/departments
Interpret evidence

Utilize Various and Appropriate Interpretation Methods

- Rubrics
  - Quantitative Analysis
  - "Trends" Analysis

Go Back to Your Question - Think Outside the Box

- What and Why?
- You don't always have to do a sophisticated analysis.
  - How is the data going to be used?

Do what you're comfortable with

- Ask for help when you need it!
Additional resources for: Interpret evidence

- Rubrics
- AAC&U
- Texas A&M
- Other
- WORDLE
Make Decisions to Improve Programs

Divisional/Department Goals & Priorities

Linked to Resource Allocation

Strategies, Programs, Activities, Operations and Services

Assessment

Improvement and Change

Strategic Planning

Our Desired Future State

2012-13 Student Affairs Goals, Objectives and Strategies
Make Decisions to Improve Programs

Steering Committee
• Oversee Strategy Teams
• Align budget with priorities
• Report results

Assessment Committee
• Review & approve assessment projects
• Professional development
• Reward & recognize assessment achievement

Key: Vice Presidential Leadership
Acknowledge good assessment already happening. Present as an opportunity to showcase department.

Focus on improvement, usability, and professional development as motivation

"How can I help?"

Publish results. Highlight innovative plans or excellent results.

- In print: intranet, website, newsletters, campus newspapers
- In-person: vocal acknowledgement in meetings (especially by senior administration), assessment expos or symposiums

Offer incentives

- Assessment process tied to strategic plan and budget allocation process
- Awards: Ceremonies, scholarships or grants
- Nominate staff exemplars or mentors for peer-to-peer training

Lead by example

*Assessment cannot be punitive
Assessing Assessment

- The assessment process should continuously improve just like departmental outcomes
- Type of assessment may depend on where your institution is in the assessment process
- Use your results to identify strengths and weaknesses, make improvements, and to create useful tools or design targeted trainings

(Levine Laufgrabin, 2013)
Questions/Discussion

Please write your questions on 3*5 cards and Justin will deliver them to the presenters.

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Justin can forward your questions to other presenters. Or get their business card.
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Select Resources can be found at: http://tinyurl.com/SACpanel