Year One

Session Seven: Designing the Assessment Project
Setting Priorities Follow Up

What did your department / program decide with regard to...

- The 2-3 most important things you need to know about your program/your students (etc.) today
- The most critical student learning [service] concepts/outcomes being addressed in your field today
- Your departmental/programs priorities
Where We Are...

- Identify Priorities/Goals/Outcomes
- Plan Assessment
- Mission/Educational Objectives
- Gather Evidence
- Interpret Evidence/Action Plan
- Implement Change
“To improve learning and promote learning communities, we must recognize that successful assessment is *not* primarily a question of technical skill, but rather one of *human will*.”

~ Thomas Angelo, 1999

“Doing Assessment as if Learning Matters Most”
1. Define the context of the assessment.
   - Why are we doing this assessment?
   - What opportunities / concerns / pressures are driving the need for the assessment?
   - What internal circumstances exist?
   - What external circumstances exist?
   - Who are the stakeholders in this assessment?

2. Determine the purpose of the study.
   - What information do we need to address the items in #1?
   - This information determines the purpose of the study.
   - What is *the* question?

~ adapted from Schuh & Upcraft, 2001
3. Determine where to get the information needed.
   - Existing data?
   - Existing documents?
   - From whom should we gather information? (Population)

4. Determine the best assessment approach(es).
   - What is the best way to get the information we need?
   - The question drives the approach.
   - Qualitative? Quantitative? Mixed methods?
Design Steps

~ adapted from Schuh & Upcraft, 2001

5. Determine how the data will be collected.
   - Population? Sample? Selection criteria?
   - Who will collect the data?
   - When and how will we collect the data?

6. Determine the assessment tools to be used.
   - Quantitative → what instruments? rubrics?
   - Qualitative → interviews? observations? documents?
   - Mixed methods → both
7. Determine how the data will be analyzed.
   - Guided by the purpose of the study.
   - Statistical analyses ➔ descriptive, inferential
   - Systematic search for themes ➔ coding, meaning-making

8. Determine strategies for identifying the implications of the results for practice.

9. Specify how the results will be used and reported.
Additional Considerations

- What’s in your tool belt?
- Timeline?
- Resources?
  - Time? Money? Human?
- KISS
Questions to Ponder

Who will be involved in the project? What roles will each of us have?

Who must be informed of our project?

What ethical issues must we consider?

What other projects are taking place? Are there overlaps/conflicts?

What opportunities for collaboration exist?
“Don’t undertake any assessments without a clear understanding of who will use the results and the decisions that the results will inform.”

“It is not the assessment itself but how faculty, staff, and institutional leaders use it that leads to improvements in student learning.”

~ Linda Suskie, 2009

“Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide”
Next Time

Selecting Methods for Knowing

April 15, 2010
3:30-4:45 p.m.
108 Cole Library
Next Time

In preparation:
  • Work with your department / program to map out your *initial* responses to each of the “design steps”

Consider:
  • Brainstorming ideas
  • Questions that emerge
  • Methods of data collection / analysis