Today’s Agenda

• Learning Outcomes

• What is Assessment? Why do we do it?

• Types of Assessment and Techniques

• Assessment in DSA

• Resources and Q&A
Assessment 101
Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to...

• Understand the importance of, and rationale for, assessment in higher education, student affairs, and DSA
• Describe and apply the assessment cycle
• List and define multiple types and uses of data and assessment techniques
• Describe DSA’s current approach to assessment
• Identify resources for future assessment projects and training
• Express their needs for assessment support

* Additionally this workshop is aligned with the ACPA/NASPA basic-level assessment, evaluation and research competency area
What is Assessment?

“Good assessment and evaluation practices support the success of students, programs, and institutions through clearly communicated learning outcomes, solid methodology, and the informed use of data; assessment and evaluation’s importance to the field of student affairs continues to grow every day.”

NASPA Assessment Evaluation (retrieved from http://www.naspa.org/focus-areas/assessment-and-evaluation)
Why Assessment?

“Assessment is not another education fad that will disappear when newer fads emerge...Assessment must be done because if it is conducted properly, it is the best way to ensure our commitment to high-quality student services, programs, and facilities.”

How Can We Use Assessment in DSA?

- **Understand** the needs of our stakeholders, especially students and parents
- **Validate** our - #onlyatgw – strengths
- **Align** with national best practices, professional standards, and academic program evaluation methods
- **Guide** continuous improvement and strategic decision-making
- **Amplify** the case for philanthropic and university financial support
- **Advocate** for enhanced services and programs
The Assessment Cycle

Evaluate:
Use assessment information to examine programs and services

Assess:
Determine if you have achieved outcomes

Establish outcomes and structure programs/intervention to address them

Departmental Assessment Priorities

Departmental Mission • Strategic Plan
DSA Mission • Strategic Plan
GWU Mission • Strategic Plan

Assessment Techniques

• **Surveys**
  - Webster definition: to query (someone) in order to collect data for the analysis of some aspect of a group or area
  - In student affairs: “the process of collecting and analyzing information to improve the conditions of student life, student learning, or the quality and efficiency of services and programs provided for students” (Blimling, 2013, p. 5).

• **Interviews: Focus Groups and Individual**
  - Purpose: to gather as many perspectives from as many people as possible
  - Focus groups: discussion groups that meet only once for a specific purpose

• **Best Practices and Benchmarking**
  - “A continuous, systematic process for evaluating the products, services, and work processes of organizations that are recognized as representing best practices for the purposes of organizational improvement” (Spendolini 1992).

• **Existing Data**
  - Utilizing current or past assessments to inform assessment results
Data Types and Approaches

- **Quantitative:**
  - “measures requiring that a numerical or other evaluative symbol be assigned to the construct of interest” (Stage, 1992, p.7)

- **Qualitative:**
  - “The detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behavior; use of direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs and thoughts…” (Patton, 1990)

- **Mixed Methods:**
  - The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to yield the best possible results

- **Focus Areas:**
  - usage → satisfaction → learning

- **Formative vs. Summative Assessment:**
  - Monitoring vs. evaluating student learning
Assessment Considerations

- **GW Institutional Review Board** (IRB)
  - In general, research and assessment activities for internal GW use **do not need** to be reviewed by the IRB
  - Research and assessment activities for publication and presentation beyond GW, involving sensitive topics and/or interventions, those involving national surveys, and conducted by post-doctoral students as part of their academic activities generally **do need** to be approved by the IRB

- **GW Internal Questionnaire Policy**
  - Surveys that are going to be distributed to large groups of students or others at GW need to be reviewed and approved by Survey Research and Analysis to ensure adherence to sampling practices and survey blackout periods, such as when online course evaluations are distributed

- **ACPA/NASPA Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners (2010)**
  - Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency area (pp. 8-9)
DSA Assessment Overview

Board of Trustees Dashboard Reporting
- Matrix Connections
  - Dashboards and KPI reporting
  - Summary of assessment findings
  - Use of assessment results
  - Outcomes of assessment

Annual Departmental and Individual Goal Setting
- Matrix Connections
  - Division and department goals
  - Implementation steps
  - Purpose
  - Collaborator(s)
  - Intended outcome(s)
  - KPI development

Divisional and Departmental Assessment Planning and Coordination
- Matrix Connections
  - Target population
  - Selecting and reaching targeted individuals
  - Methods of assessment
  - How will you use the assessment?

Program Review
- Middle States Accreditation
- Fundraising and Grant Writing
- Budget Planning
- Division and Department Accomplishments
DSA Assessment Resources

• Upcoming Workshops
  • Wednesday, October 28: Data Driven Decision Making
    • 11 am – 12:30 pm, Marvin Center, Room 402
  • November 2015: Introduction to Quantitative Methods
  • December 2015: Introduction to Qualitative Methods
  • January 2016: Ethics in Assessment
  • February 2016: Now That You Have Your Data, What Will You Do With It?
  • March 2016: DSA Program Review: A Staff Discussion

• DSA Assessment Website
  • Committee information, workshop materials, online resources, background on GW and DSA assessment activities
  • Academic Planning and Assessment Website
  • NASPA/ACPA Knowledge Communities
DSA Assessment Committee

• **Charge:** The DSA Assessment and Continuous Improvement Committee provides resources, guides, and frameworks to improve the programs and services that support the university mission and enhance the student experience. The committee is charged with developing, promoting, coordinating, and advising on assessment resources and activities in order to build a culture of assessment and continuous improvement in DSA.

• **Members:**
  • Kelly Bartz, *Planning and Outreach*
  • Amber Cargill, *Colonial Health Center, Mental Health Services*
  • Toby Davidow, *Planning and Outreach*
  • Karen Dyches, *GW Housing*
  • Nikki Hedren, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*
  • Emily Kane, *Health Promotion and Prevention Services*
  • Courtney Luque Jacobson, *International Services Office*
  • Christine James (Batterson), *Center for Career Services*
  • Greg Rheault, *Center for Student Engagement*
  • Anne Scammon, *Center for Career Services*
  • Robert Snyder, *Planning and Outreach*
Your Questions and Feedback

What have you learned?

On what projects is your office working?

What more do you want to learn?

How can the Assessment Committee help you?
References:


NASPA Assessment Evaluation (retrieved from http://www.naspa.org/focus-areas/assessment-and-evaluation)


