Assessment Basics
Colby Moss and Robert Snyder
DSA Assessment Lunch ‘n Learn
February 26, 2014
Today’s Agenda

• Learning Outcomes

• Why Assessment?

• The Assessment Cycle

• Data and Assessment Techniques

• Resources and Q&A
Assessment Basics
Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to…

• Understand the importance of, and rationale for, assessment in higher education, student affairs, and DSA

• Describe the assessment cycle

• Identify DSA’s current approach to assessment

• List and define multiple types and uses of data and assessment techniques

• Express their needs for future assessment training
Why Assessment?

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

Your Perspectives on Assessment

Why is Assessment Important to You and Higher Education and Student Affairs?
The Context for Assessment in Student Affairs

• **Survival:** responding to external and internal pressures
• **Quality:** defining and measuring success
• **Affordability:** gauging cost-effectiveness
• **Strategic Planning:** defining goals and objectives, identifying critical issues and problems, and providing data and feedback
• **Policy Development and Decision Making:** providing evidence to support decision making
• **Politics:** localizing evidence based on institutional needs

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

DSA Assessment Initiatives

• **Interview Coding and Themes:** learning outcomes, desire for support, data collection over action, enhancing existing efforts

• **Dashboards:** standardized reporting emphasizing trends, progress on goals, and programmatic and strategic projects and accomplishments

• **Program Review:** examine and assess departmental work in the context of continuous improvement

• **Staff Training:** workshops, website, and incentives to support a culture of assessment

• **Coordination:** enhancing access to and feedback on GW and DSA assessment activities and results
Data and Assessment Techniques

- Assessment Techniques
  - Surveys
  - Focus Groups
  - Best Practices
  - Found Data

- Types of Data – Quantitative & Qualitative

- Focus Areas – usage → satisfaction → learning

- Formative vs. Summative Assessment
Data and Assessment Techniques (cont.)

• Other 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
Data and Assessment Techniques (cont.)

What is a question your office is looking to answer with assessment?
DSA Assessment Resources

• Assessment Committee
  • Chrissy Batterson, Administration and Hallmark Programs
  • Bridgette Behling, Administration and Hallmark Programs
  • Adam Bethke, Division of Student Affairs
  • Graham Bottrel, Center for Career Services
  • Amber Cargill, University Counseling Center
  • Toby Davidow, Division of Student Affairs
  • Nikki Hedren, Student Rights and Responsibilities
  • Courtney Luque Jacobson, International Services Office
  • Colby Moss, Center for Student Engagement
  • Anne Scammon, Center for Career Services
  • Robert Snyder, Division of Student Affairs
DSA Assessment Resources (cont.)

• **Upcoming Lunch ‘n Learn Workshops**
  • Population Sampling (March 10)
  • Focus Groups (April 10)
  • Learning Outcomes (May 14)
  • Existing Surveys (June 10)

• **DSA Assessment Website**
  • Currently: Assessment Committee background
  • Coming soon: Assessment forum and workshop materials, online resources, background on GW and DSA assessment activities

• **Education Advisory Board**
  • Anyone with an @gwu.edu email address can register for access to the Research Library; discuss custom research requests with Robert Snyder
Your Questions and Feedback

What More Do You Want to Learn?

How Can the Assessment Committee Help You?