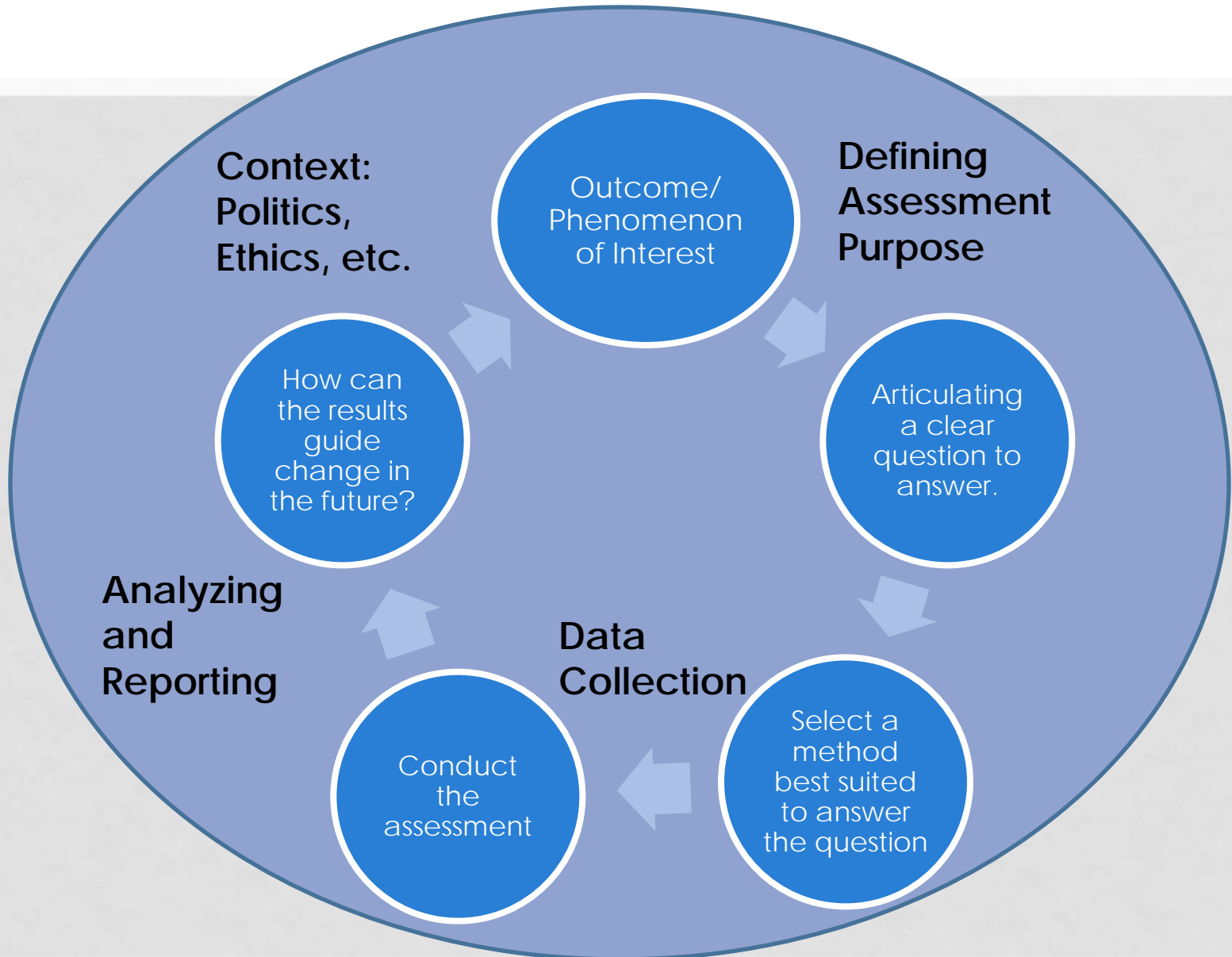


DATA COLLECTION METHODS

CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT IN STUDENT AFFAIRS-
SESSION FOUR

ASSESSMENT CYCLE



SESSION OVERVIEW

PART I

- **Overview of Qualitative and Quantitative Paradigms**
 - Underlying assumptions
 - Research vs. assessment purposes
 - Quality for each paradigm (validity, reliability, trustworthiness, transferability, etc.)
 - Appropriateness for questions

SESSION OVERVIEW

PART II

- **Data Collection Methods: A Closer Look**
 - Interviews
 - Focus groups
 - Rubrics
 - Content Analysis
 - Observation
- **Logistics and Resources**
 - Resources needed for your assessment
 - Campus Labs resources
 - Methods resources

QUANTITATIVE PARADIGM- KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- Reality is objective and singular, apart from the researcher
- Researcher is independent from that being researched
- Value free and unbiased
- Formal, based on set definitions, impersonal voice, use of accepted quantitative words
- Emphasis on cause and effect, context-free, static design- categories isolated before study, generalizations leading to prediction, explanation, and understanding , accurate, valid and reliable results.

QUALITATIVE PARADIGM- KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- Reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in a study
- Researcher interacts with that being researched
- Value laden and biased
- Informal, evolving decisions, personal voice, accepted qualitative words
- Inductive process, emerging design-categories identified during research process, context-bound, patterns, theories developed for understanding, accurate and reliable through verification.

QUALITATIVE VS. QUANTITATIVE

- Key differences between qualitative and quantitative research:
 1. Assumptions about the nature of reality (ontological)
 2. Relationship of the investigator to what is investigated (epistemological)
 3. The relationship between facts and values in the process of investigation (axiological)
 4. Language used (rhetorical)
 5. The approach to investigation (methodological)

MEASURES OF QUALITY

- **Qualitative**

- Results are context-bound, not generalizable
- Trustworthiness
 - Effort to make biases explicit – and how they shape the study
- Reflexivity
 - “Natural history” on the development of the evidence

- **Quantitative**

- Generalizable findings
- Reliability
 - Instrument used can be applied to subsequent studies
 - Repeatability of results or observations suggests a reliable instrument
- Validity
 - Extent to which the research measures what it is intended to measure

RESEARCH VS. ASSESSMENT PURPOSES - USE OF METHODS

- Research
 - Guides theory and tests concepts
 - Research typically has broader implications for higher education
 - Generate new knowledge
 - Emphasis on sound methodological approach, key themes
- Assessment
 - Guides practice
 - Assessment typically has implications for a single institution
 - Localized knowledge
 - Emphasis on reporting information that will guide practice

THE QUALITATIVE VS. QUANTITATIVE “DEBATE”

- The paradigm you choose depends on questions being asked.
- Both paradigms lend themselves to quality research, to answering complex questions.
 - One is not “harder” than the other.
 - You are not “smarter” if you do quantitative work.
- Reality bites: one paradigm may be valued over another in a given context.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS: A CLOSER LOOK

- Interviews
 - Activity: Craft your interview questions!

DEVELOPING QUESTIONS

- Move from general to specific questions.
 - General question: Please tell us about your first impressions when you first got to UCLA.
 - Specific question: What resources have been helpful to you in completing your first quarter at UCLA?
- Ask concrete, specific, simple, and open-ended rather than complex, loaded, or close-ended questions. Examples of BAD questions:
 - What does being “out” mean to you?
 - Being that you identify as gay, why do you think your experience has been negative at UCLA?
 - Has your experience in the LGB community at UCLA been positive?

DEVELOPING QUESTIONS- MORE RULES OF THE GAME

- Use phrases like “what prompted you” and “what influenced you” instead of “why”
- Avoid biased, loaded or leading questions
- Ask only one question at a time
- Keep the question short
- Define terms and concepts
- Don't badger your participants...but don't be a push-over

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- Experience and behavior questions
 - What resources on campus do you use?
- Opinion and values questions
 - What could UCLA administrators and staff do to provide a nurturing environment for LGB students?
- Feelings questions
 - When you first came to UCLA, what did it feel to be out on campus?
- Knowledge questions
 - What are the resources available to members of the LGB community on campus?
- Sensory/environmental questions
 - What makes the UCLA campus welcoming or not welcoming to LGB students?
- Background and demographic questions
 - If you feel comfortable, please tell us with which gender you identify.

WHAT IS A FOCUS GROUP?

- A discussion among a small group where the facilitator supplies the topics and monitors the discussion
- The purpose is to gather information about a **specific (or focused) topic in a group environment.**
- A group environment allows for discussion and interaction among participants. The **interaction** involved in focus groups can provide additional information to the researcher.

PURPOSE OF FOCUS GROUPS

- Understanding the why? and how? Questions
- Examine perceptions, beliefs, or opinions of participants
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of a program, service, or experience
- Build on existing information or contribute to the development of future studies

ADVANTAGES OF THE FOCUS GROUP

- Members respond to one another resulting in potentially rich data
 - “Synergistic group effect”: Interactions among and between group members stimulate discussions in which one group member reacts to comments made by another (Stage & Manning, 2003)
- Flexible and dynamic
- Relatively low cost as compared with technology driven methods
- Participants may feel more comfortable in a group setting with others who are sharing similar opinions

LIMITATIONS

- Difficult to assemble
- Logistic issues
- Groups can influence individual opinions
- Strength of data drawn from focus group is largely dependent on the strength of the facilitator(s)
- Lack of control over discussion

RUBRIC

What is Rubric?

- A scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work, or “what counts”
- Articulates gradations of quality for each criterion, from excellent to poor.

Why Use Rubric?

- Powerful tools for teaching and assessment
- Helps guide self and peer-assessment to become more thoughtful judges of the quality of work
- Reduce the amount of time to spend evaluating work
- Easy to use and explain

RUBRICS

Rubric Development

- Articulate the outcome(s) being assessed
- List criteria
- Articulate gradations of quality
- Practice on models
- Use self- and peer-assessment
- Revise
- Use as assessment

COMMON COMPONENTS

- **Scale:** represents established levels of achievement, performance, or mastery
- **Common Scales:**
 - Exemplary, Competent, Developing
 - Distinguished, Intermediate, Beginner
 - Excellent, Competent, Needs Work
 - Expert, Intermediate, Novice
 - Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor

OBSERVATION

- Collecting data through participating and observing in a setting
 1. Complete observer (sidelines)
 2. Overt observer (interviewer)
 3. Covert participant (infiltrate covertly)
 4. Participant observer (combination of observer and participant roles)
- Systematic observation

OTHER METHODS

Content analysis:

Some examples:

- Refer back to data audit / existing data
- Open ended survey responses
- Notes from town hall meeting

ETHICS AND LOGISTICS

- Ethical issues
- Recruitment
- Data storage and handling
- Stakeholders
- Funding and resources
- Timeline
- Analysis and Reporting

CAMPUS LAB RESOURCES

- <http://www.ucla.campuslabs.com>
- Webinars:
 - <http://www.campuslabs.com/support/training/>
- ahtut@saonet.ucla.edu for more info

31	1	2	3 How to Use Baseline: An Introduction ●	4	5	6
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Upcoming **Baseline Series** Webinars in alphabetical order.

(Click on a webinar title for description and registration information.)

- > **Assessing Learning Outcomes** - 02/14/2013 ●●
- > **Basic Statistics & Quantitative Analysis I** - 05/07/2013 ●●●
- > **Basic Statistics & Quantitative Analysis II** - 05/16/2013 ●●●
- > **Developing an Assessment Plan** - 04/19/2013 ●●●
- > **Focus Groups** - 04/12/2013 ●●
- > **How to Use Baseline: An Introduction** - 02/05/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: An Introduction** - 03/04/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: An Introduction** - 04/03/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: An Introduction** - 05/02/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: Reporting Tools** - 02/25/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: Reporting Tools** - 03/25/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: Reporting Tools** - 04/30/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: Reporting Tools** - 05/10/2013 ●
- > **How to Use Baseline: Rubrics** - 03/28/2013 ●
- > **Qualitative Data Analysis** - 05/20/2013 ●●●
- > **Rubrics as a Methodology** - 03/08/2013 ●●
- > **Survey Administration and Fatigue** - 02/20/2013 ●●●
- > **Survey Design** - 02/11/2013 ●●●
- > **Writing Assessment Reports** - 05/24/2013 ●●●

RESOURCES AND READING

- Qualitative
 - Peshkin, A. (1993). The Goodness of Qualitative Research. *Educational Researcher*, 22(2), 23-29.
- Quality in Qualitative Research
 - Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative Quality: Eight “Big-Tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837-851. doi: 10.1177/1077800410383121
- Qualitative research in student affairs
 - Manning, K. (1992). A rationale for using qualitative research in student affairs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 33, 132-136.