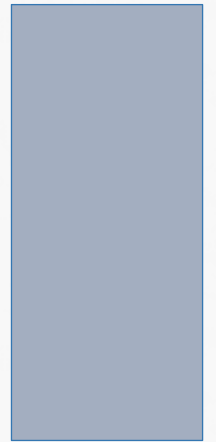


# CHALLENGES IN ASSESSMENT

CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT IN STUDENT AFFAIRS  
SESSION SIX



# OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S SESSION

- Topics from mid-term evaluation
  - Learning outcomes
  - How much is enough? (# of respondents)
  - Organizational buy-in
- Assessment Design
  - Determining Qualitative vs Quantitative
- Small group discussions of individual projects and challenges with a SAIRO staff facilitator
  - Assess own work against the rubric
  - Discuss your “sticking points”

# IDENTIFYING AND MEASURING OUTCOMES

- Begin with the End in Mind
  - What are the goals of your project?
    - Consider departmental mission/goals, stakeholders, participants
  - What do you want individuals to learn?
    - Three dimensions: knowledge, ability, attitudes
- Write your outcome in three parts:
  - What do we expect to happen?
  - Who do we expect to be affected?
  - When do we expect results?
- Use the three parts to determine the measurement:
  - Did what you expect to happen actually happen? (observation, survey, focus group)
  - Did the people who expect to learn/attend do so? (survey, focus group)
  - Did the results happen in the time frame you expected? (observation, survey)

# HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

- No “one-size-fit-all” number
- Survey
  - Response rate, incentive, sample size, survey fatigue, timing, politics and logistics
- Interviews
  - Resources and logistics (think interviewers' time, location booking, incentives, transcription and coding)
- Focus group
  - Recommended one primary facilitator, one secondary facilitator/note taker and 6-8 participants
- Work with what you have and make the most out of it!

# CREATING BUY-IN

- Involve people from the start
- Share the information with your team
  - Why is the assessment important?
  - What are the benefits of a positive result?
  - What are the benefits of a negative result?
  - How will it be carried out?
- Address concerns
  - What barriers exist to doing the assessment?
  - What barriers exist to implementing change as a result?
  - What are the resources and support available?
- Asking for *their* assessment questions and ideas

# REVISITING TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

- **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

# FOCUS GROUP VS. SURVEY

## Focus Group

### PROS

- Capture perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes on a deeper level
- Rich data
- Beyond the checkbox
- Good for exploratory stage
- Opportunity to further probe for more information

### CONS

- Findings vary on the dynamic of the group
- More expensive
- Difficult to reach out to more participants
- Difficult to ask sensitive information in a group setting

## Survey

### PROS

- Cheaper
- Easier to report in numbers
- Bigger N, therefore, higher generalizability
- Can reach out to more participants
- Set questions with set responses
- Easier for the participants
- Findings does not depend on the group and facilitator

### CONS

- Cannot capture rich information
- No opportunity for in-depth dialogue that can lead to an understanding of underlying attitudes beliefs and motivations.



# “WORKSHOPPING” YOUR ASSESSMENT PLAN

- What areas have been the most difficult to complete? Why?
- Are there specific questions you already have regarding your project? Areas where you'd like feedback?
- How would you rate your plan against the rubric?
- How can we help you?