

## Training Staff for Assessment in SA Overview and Lessons Learned

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**UCLA Student Affairs Information & Research Office**

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### Session Overview

- Context of Assessment in SA
- Assessment Cycle
- Building the Curriculum
- Assessing the First Year
- Findings and Lessons Learned
- Implications and Challenges



## Overall Goals for Assessment in SA

- Long Term Goals for Assessment Culture in SA
  - Leadership interest in developing organizational capacity for assessment
  - Desire to demonstrate our impact
  - Ensure that data is used in strategic planning
- Growing Demand for Assessment Consultation
  - Internal interest in improvement and understanding student populations
  - Increased calls for departments to provide data to support funding, demonstrate value, etc.

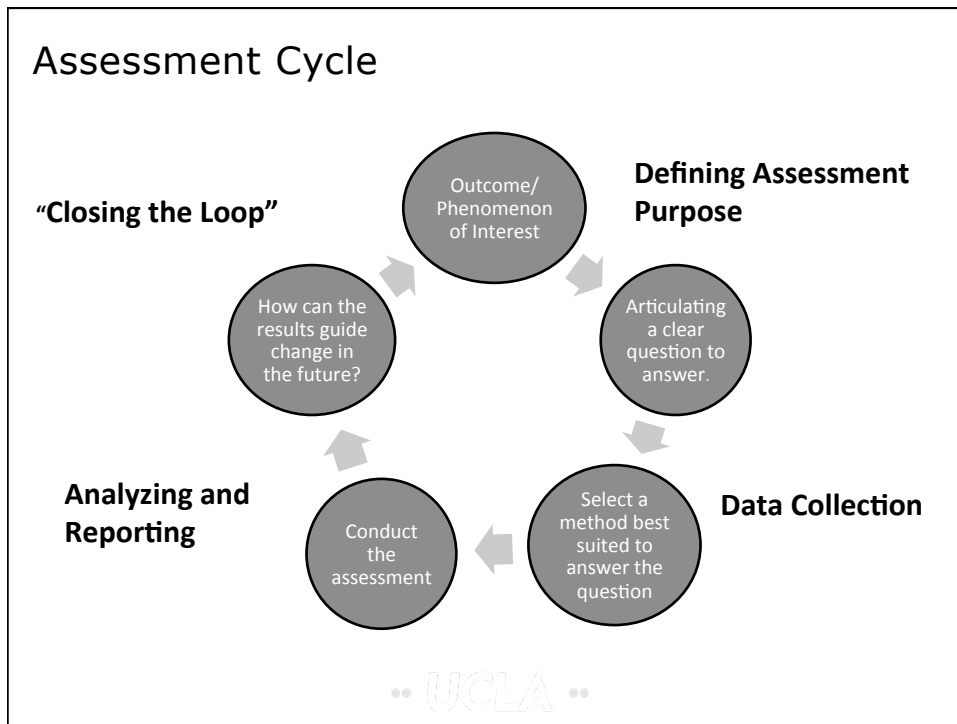


## Curriculum: A Component in Building Capacity

Key components in developing assessment capacity:

- Leadership Expectations
  - Ask for and use data
  - Program review expectations
- Developing Departmental Culture
  - Departmental presentations and support
- Developing Staff Capacity for Assessment
  - Workshops and Online Resources
  - Ad-Hoc Consultation
  - **Assessment Curriculum**





### Building the Curriculum

- Understanding assessment
- Defining your assessment plan
- Context of assessment
- Qualitative data collection methods
- Quantitative data collection methods
- Challenges in assessment
- Analysis
- Reporting
- Long-term planning

## Curriculum Structure

- Taught using a seminar approach that encouraged discussion and collective development and understanding of concepts presented
- 9 Monthly, 3 hour meetings during academic year
- Participants spent 2-3 hours per month outside of class preparing for discussion or practicing skills/concepts
- Culminating celebration



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## Assessment Plan

- Department Background
- Assessment Questions
- Connection to Mission and Goals
  - How does this project related to your departmental mission? Why assess this?
- Identification of Stakeholders
  - Who will be affected by this assessment?
- Assessment Methods
  - Will you provide incentives?
- Costs and Resources
  - What resources are needed that are not covered in the budget?
- Analysis and Reporting
  - How will you analyze and report results?
  - How will you communicate findings with key stakeholders?

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|  | Criterion                                     | 1 - Under-Developed   | 2 - Developing  | 3 - Developed   | 4 - Exemplary   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall Plan   | <b>Assessment Plan Design</b>                 | Plan <i>does not include</i> a description of key steps in the design or implementation of the assessment.  | Plan <i>clearly identifies some key steps</i> in the design and implementation of the assessment, but may not identify all necessary or important aspects of the assessment.              | Plan <i>clearly identifies key steps</i> in the design and implementation of the assessment, but may not provide detailed information for one or more steps.                      | Plan provides a <i>well-developed and detailed description of the key steps</i> in the design and implementation of the assessment.   |
|  | <b>Assessment Questions</b>                   | No questions are identified or those questions that are identified <i>are not adequately developed to guide the assessment.</i>   | Assessment questions are identified and <i>somewhat developed but still may lack specificity needed to guide the assessment.</i>  | Assessment questions are clearly identified and are articulated with enough <i>specificity to enable assessment.</i>  | Assessment questions are clearly identified and articulated with enough <i>specificity to enable assessment.</i> Additionally, questions are clearly and logically linked to stated outcomes.   |
|  | <b>Context and Stakeholders of Assessment</b> | Plan <i>does not identify actors</i> who may be affected by the assessment and demonstrates limited or no understanding of how actors are potentially affected by the assessment. | Plan identifies a <i>limited scope of actors</i> who may be affected by the assessment and demonstrates a limited understanding of how actors are potentially affected by the assessment. | Plan <i>identifies the actors</i> who may be affected by the assessment. <i>Provides some description</i> of ways in which actors will be potentially affected by the assessment. | Plan <i>demonstrates considerable reflection on the political and ethical context of the assessment in addition to identifying the actors</i> who may be affected as well as describing in detail how they may be affected by the assessment. |
| Website Address: <a href="http://www.sairo.ucla.edu/AssessmentSupport.html">http://www.sairo.ucla.edu/AssessmentSupport.html</a> |   |   |   |   |   |

## Assessment, Assessment, Assessment

### Components of Assessment

- Quality of participants' assessment plans (formal)
- Participant learning and satisfaction (formal)
- SAIRO staff effectiveness at creating and delivering student affairs assessment curriculum and at building appropriate measures (informal)

### Full Team Effort

- Everyone helped shape and deliver curriculum.
- Everyone weighed in on the content and design of the rubric.
- Reviewing of assessment plans shared across staff, with doubling up for consistency
- Post-curriculum self-evaluation to guide change for future courses



# Assessing Participants' Plans

## Reviewing Written Plans

- Participants received two forms of feedback: their plan with reviewer comments and the completed rubric.
- Common criteria for assessing plans were established in rubric.
- Each plan received reviews by two SAIRO staff.
- Document mark-up was done individually before reviewers met to confer.
- Feedback on the written plan was compiled into a single document and returned to the author.

**"Conducting Assessment in Student Affairs"**  
**Participant Assessment Plan**

Please answer the following questions related to the purpose and significance of your assessment:

**Department Background:**  
1. Department name: Graduate Student Resource Center

2. What program/service(s) are you assessing?  
In this assessment project, we want to create, maintain, and compare two datasets: first, the UID and department of the students who have created printer accounts at the GSRCC (from Fall 2011 through Fall 2013), and second, the UID and department of all students who made Graduate Writing Center appointments during the same time period. After we have created these two datasets, we will compare the two to examine: 1.) GSRCC office usage and 2.) how GSRCC usage correlates with GWC usage.

3. What are the outcomes of the program/service(s) you wish to assess?  
The Graduate Writing Center provides one-on-one writing appointments, workshops, and programs for graduate and professional school students from all disciplines. The Graduate Writing Center keeps detailed (and confidential) records of each appointment. The Graduate Student Resource Center provides each student with 100 pages of this printing per quarter (which is paid for by their student fees). Because we want the GSRCC to be a safe, hands-on space for graduate students—which is part of our mission to provide Tier 2/Tier 3 level mental health intervention for the graduate/professional student population—we as our role for graduate students to sign in or keep records when they use our GSRCC office, services, and computers. However, we do require that students provide us with their UID when they initially sign up for a printing account (before the printing is done as a part of our mission, the printing accounts currently have the only information we have to measure GSRCC office usage data (i.e., how many students from each department/school currently are signed up for GSRCC printing accounts). We would like to assess GSRCC office usage and compare it with GWC usage to help inform our advocacy for students and our outreach on behalf of the GSRCC, and to help us determine where best to use our resources (even though we have to make program and printing decisions).

**Assessment Questions:**  
3. What are the key questions guiding your assessment (what, specifically, do you want to know)?  
• How many graduate/professional students from each department/school are currently signed up for a printer account at the GSRCC?  
• Which department/schools are overrepresented or underrepresented in their GSRCC usage based on total enrollment numbers for each department/school at UCLA?  
• Which department/schools are overrepresented or underrepresented in their GWC appointment usage based on total enrollment numbers for each department/school at UCLA?  
• How do the numbers of students from the first two questions compare with the GWC overrepresented/underrepresented in terms of both their GSRCC usage and GWC appointments, or are they different?

4. How does this assessment project relate to your departmental mission?  
The mission of the GSRCC is:



# Assessing Participants' Plans

**Student Affairs Assessment Opportunity- Assessment Plan Rubric**

| Overall Plan                           | Criterion   | 1 - Under-Developed  | 2 - Developing  | 3 - Developed  | 4 - Exemplary |
|--|---|--|---|--|---------------|
| Assessment Plan Design                 | Plan does not include a description of key steps in the design and implementation of the assessment, but may not identify all necessary or important aspects of the assessment. | Plan clearly identifies some key steps in the design and implementation of the assessment, but may not provide detailed information for one or more steps.                         | Plan clearly identifies key steps in the design and implementation of the assessment, but may not provide detailed information for one or more steps.               | Plan provides a well-developed and detailed description of the key steps in the design and implementation of the assessment.   |               |
| Assessment Questions                   | No questions are identified or those questions that are identified are not adequately developed to guide the assessment.  | Assessment questions are identified and some are developed but still may lack specificity needed to guide the assessment.  | Assessment questions are clearly identified and are articulated with enough specificity to enable the assessment.   | Assessment questions are clearly identified and articulated with enough specificity to enable the assessment. Additionally, questions are clearly and logically linked to stated outcomes.   |               |
| Context and Stakeholders of Assessment | Plan does not identify actors who may be affected by the assessment and demonstrates limited or no understanding of how actors are potentially affected by the assessment.      | Plan identifies a limited scope of actors who may be affected by the assessment and demonstrates a limited understanding of how actors are potentially affected by the assessment. | Plan identifies the actors who may be affected by the assessment. Provides some description of ways in which actors will be potentially affected by the assessment. | Plan demonstrates considerable reflection on the political and ethical context of the assessment in addition to identifying the actors who may be affected as well as articulating in detail how they may be affected by the assessment. |               |

**Notes on Overall Plan:** It is a good start that you want to use your existing data and do something with it. However, we are not sure how representative your sample is of graduate student utilization of GSRCC. More information about the nature of students' printer accounts would have been helpful. Do students create these accounts online or in person in the GSRCC? Is there any way to know if students use the accounts created (i.e., what if it was created and never used)? Additionally, are printer resources a good reflection of the GSRCC resources, programming, and services? Also, the descriptions of the printer account data you indicated that you do not have access to students' academic departments. Given that, you will not be able to answer research questions 1 & 2 and will not be able to do any comparative analysis and reporting to departments with any other information than students' utilization of the GWC. Overall, it is difficult to draw conclusions to your assessment questions. Please refer to the comments in the document. The challenge is that the proposed study does not measure actual utilization and that is a major limitation. For Context and Stakeholders of Assessment, you listed all the departments you work with, but not necessarily provided description of ways in which actors will be potentially affected by their "under assessment." You can narrow down to only a few actors who are going to be really impacted by this assessment.



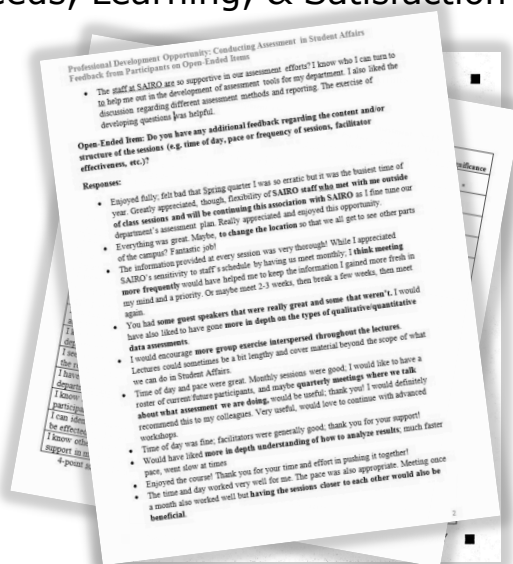
## Using Rubric to Provide Feedback

- Assessment of plan quality across different domains and dimensions
- Reviewers consulted to compile feedback.
- Written notes offered suggestions for improvement.
- Overall scores were *not* given to participants but kept for internal review.

## Assessing Participant Needs, Learning, & Satisfaction

### Participant Surveys

- Surveys administered at two points
- Pre-/post- quantitative survey to measure learning
- Open-ended questions:
  - Needs assessment (pre-)
  - Establish baseline skills (pre-)
  - Self-reported gains (post-)
  - Satisfaction/suggestions (post-)
- Paired-samples T-Test
- Qualitative analysis for common themes



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## Assessing Our Own Effectiveness

### “Closing the Loop”

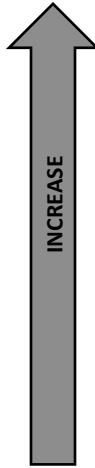
- Formal assessment results drove group self-reflection about successes and potential areas of improvement in the curriculum.
- Summer extended planning meetings and staff meetings have supported continuous review and improvement of the curriculum.
- Outcomes of informal self-assessment:
  - Revisions and simplifications to rubric
  - Adjustments to course content and design
  - New opportunities for staff to lead sessions and introduce new ideas



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# Findings

## Findings from the Pre and Post Test (N=13)



### Ability to conduct an assessment

- Articulating key assessment questions
- Ability to connect assessment questions to the goals
- Quantitative and qualitative approaches
- Factors influencing the analysis and reporting
- Technical training and experience
- Familiarity with different styles and formats of reporting
- Strong understanding of existing data to use for future assessment plannings

### Ethical Considerations

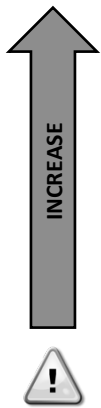
- Designing assessment that protects the participants
- Understanding the ethical considerations involved in assessment

|  | Pre-Test Mean | Post-Test Mean | Change | Significance |
|--|---------------|----------------|--------|--------------|
| I feel confident in my ability to conduct an assessment of my department or program.                             | 2.50          | 3.42           | .92    | *            |
| I know the difference between quantitative and qualitative approaches to assessment.                             | 3.23          | 3.92           | .69    | *            |
| I could design an assessment that would provide useful information to guide change in my department or program.  | 2.54          | 3.62           | 1.08   | *            |
| I understand the factors that influence the analysis and reporting of data.                                      | 2.51          | 3.38           | 0.87   | *            |
| I feel confident that I could participate in a discussion of assessment results with key stakeholders.           | 2.98          | 3.54           | 0.56   | *            |
| I have sufficient experience and training to conduct an assessment in my department or program.                  | 2.25          | 3.08           | 0.83   | *            |
| I am able to articulate key questions for an assessment.   | 2.65          | 3.48           | .84    | *            |
| I can construct assessment questions to the goals of my department.  | 2.77          | 3.48           | 0.71   | *            |
| I understand the ethical considerations involved in assessment.  | 2.71          | 3.62           | .91    | *            |
| I am able to look at my assessment questions and choose the appropriate method to take.                          | 3.92          | 3.42           | -0.5   | *            |
| I am familiar with different styles and formats for reporting assessment results.                                | 2.00          | 3.69           | 1.69   | *            |
| I know which reporting formats are most effective with my department's stakeholders.                             | 1.87          | 3.77           | 1.91   | *            |
| I am viewed as a leader in discussions with stakeholders about the results of assessments within our department. | 2.87          | 3.83           | .96    | *            |
| I have a strong understanding of existing data in my department and could use it to planning future assessments. | 2.31          | 3.38           | 1.07   | *            |
| I know how to design assessment in a way that protects the participants.   | 2.89          | 3.38           | .49    | *            |
| I can identify stakeholders beyond my department who could be affected by the results of my assessment.          | 2.75          | 3.10           | .35    | *            |
| I know other staff on campus who can provide me with support in my assessment planning.                          | 2.87          | 3.83           | .96    | *            |



# Findings

## Findings from the Pre and Post Test (N=13)



### Communicating assessment with stakeholders / Creating buy-in

- Ability to discuss assessment results with key stakeholders
- Ability to choose effective reporting formats for stakeholders
- Ability to identify stakeholders affected by the assessment
- Ability to identify other staff on campus who can provide assessment support
- Seeing oneself as a leader in discussions with stakeholders about the assessment results

Conducting Assessment in Student Affairs  
Pre-Test Continued

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

|   | Strongly Disagree        | Disagree                            | Agree                               | Strongly Agree                      |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| I know which reporting formats are most effective with my department's stakeholders.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| I can myself as a leader in discussions with stakeholders about the results of assessments within our department. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| I have a strong understanding of existing data in my department and could use it to planning future assessments.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| I know how to design an assessment in a way that protects the participants.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| I can identify stakeholders beyond my department who could be affected by the results of my assessment.           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| I know other staff on campus who can provide me with support in my assessment planning.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

What are the most important things you hope to get out of this opportunity?  
 Provides training of research & assessment with stakeholders in terms of why we conduct, based on current standards, assessment design, data analysis & how to report results.  
 ↑ understanding of how to interpret results a decide what to report on.

Comments?  
 Looking forward to this learning opportunity, thank you for providing it!

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## Lessons Learned

- **Concerns/challenges:**
  - Politics/buy-in
  - Unknowns
  - Mostly “underdeveloped” in Analysis planning
  - Relating theories to student affairs practices
- **Benefits/Positive outcomes:**
  - Confidence, understanding of the cycle
  - Resources and support
  - Forum, alum/circle, rapport with SA colleagues



## Lessons Learned

### Revisions and changes made to the structure of the curriculum

- More hands on, less lecture
- More data analysis
  - Specific examples of using different tools
  - Step-by-step examples of data analysis and report formats
- Formative assessment continued to be useful to customize
- Mentoring
- Workshop

|   | Strongly disagree |         | Disagree |          | Count |
|---|-------------------|---------|----------|----------|-------|
|   | Count             | Percent | Count    | Percent  |       |
| I am a registered user with a login ID, but I haven't used it yet.  | 0                 | 0.00 %  | 1        | 33.33 %  | 2     |
| I currently do not have an assessment project in Baseline but I am familiar with it (e.g., attended webinars, browsed through the resources). | 0                 | 0.00 %  | 1        | 33.33 %  | 5     |
| I have used/am using Baseline for an assessment project.  | 0                 | 0.00 %  | 1        | 33.33 %  | 0     |
| Total   | 0                 | 0.00 %  | 3        | 100.00 % | 7     |

Printed are percent responses.



## Moving Forward

- Ongoing Components
  - Continued support to graduates
  - Forming an Alumni circle
  - Assessing outcomes for program continuation
- Toward a culture of assessment
  - Managing “mandated” assessment
  - Buy-in from staff supervisors
  - Balance of assessment and other work roles
  - SAIRO capacity to manage assessment feedback, support, etc.



**Questions?**



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