

Student Affairs Assessment Plan

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**Introduction**

The Division of Student Affairs has created a comprehensive assessment plan based on the inaugural book, *Assessment in Student Affairs* (1996). In their work, Upcraft and Schuh outline the following types of assessment:

* Utilization of programs and services
* Needs of students, faculty and staff
* Satisfaction with programs and services
* Campus environment
* Student learning
* Comparison of programs, services, resources, and strategies to other institutions
* Alignment with professional standards

As part of the plan, an assessment infrastructure section has been added to focus on the logistics of implementing the division’s assessment plan. Each section of the plan includes information about the progress that has been made and next steps for moving forward in each area.

**Assessment Infrastructure**

Infrastructure refers to assessment technology and resources. Once in place, these components provide a foundation for carrying out assessment activities.

**Progress**

* **New Community Engagement Platform.** Transitioned from OrgSync to Campus Groups in January 2018. Capabilities for tracking program attendance, rosters, administering surveys and workflow has improved.
* **New Co-Curricular Catalog.** Provides a foundation for examining the student experience and understanding the extent to which our programs and services have an impact on students.
* **Assessment Resources Expanded.** Descriptions for seven types of assessment, recommended questions and rubrics for student learning, planning template for communicating assessment results, links to tools for visual design and online polls, university accreditation information, assessment and research ethics training and resources, a list of potential grant evaluators in Pennsylvania and neighboring states (available upon request), recommendations for selecting external evaluators, list of external surveys related to functional areas, tips on increasing survey response rates, a list of assessment partners and professional organizations, and a webinar on assessment from a vice president’s point of view, learning outcomes development resources, list of WCU’s peer institutions, began compiling assessment articles, and student development theory resources.
* **New CAS Standards.** Purchased copies of the newest CAS standards book.
* **Allocated Secure Server Space.** Established for securely storing assessment files with a backup system in place.
* **Equipment Purchases.** Individual departments have purchased card readers to track attendance and iClickers for conducting polls during programs.
* **Established Division-wide Assessment Report Topics.** Six themes have been developed based on program content. These guide for division-wide assessment reports and strategic planning.
* **Change in Assessment Council Membership and Leadership.** Growing organically through interest from staff in the division. A co-chair has been recently been appointed.
* **New Survey Schedule.** Established in spring 2019. Encouraging folks to work together and not overlap email dates.
* **IRB Applications Increasing.** Number of staff certifications in CITI is increasing. Federal regulations have made the application easier to complete. Number of application submissions are increasing. IRB review members are becoming more familiar with Student Affairs work.

**Assessment Infrastructure Continued**

**Next Steps**

* **New Survey Product.** Transition from CampusLabs Baseline survey product to Qualtrics will be completed by October 2019.
* **Educational Plan for Staff and Students.** Review staff professional development survey regarding staff interests in assessment training. Include program attendance tracking, benchmarking, data security practices, data sharing practices, assessment planning, CITI, rubrics, survey design, report writing, creating posters, communication plans, action plans, data management techniques, book club, articles/books, webinars and conferences, and brown bags/coffee.
* **Technology and Data Inventory.** Create a list of systems within the division and descriptions of the data that is housed in each. Review the best options for storing data securely.
* **Literature Review on Benefits of Student Affairs Functions.**
* **Assessment Celebrations.**
* **Create a Divisional Framework.**
* **Committee Structure Review.** Department representatives and ex-officio representatives.
* **Grant Opportunities.**
* **Recommend Format for Commonly Used Survey Questions/Scales.**
* **Developing Deeper Partnerships.** Institutional Research. Institutional Review Board. Registrar. Foundation. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Teaching, Learning Assessment Center. Student support departments outside Student Affairs.
* **Consider a Survey Review Process.**
* **Create Listening Posters.**
* **Populate a Report Repository.**
* **Identify Strategies to Increase Student Participation in Assessments.**

**Benchmarking StudIes**

Sometimes referred to as a comparison study or environmental scan, benchmarking involves reviewing peer institution structures and practices compared to the home institution. If done early, these studies can be particularly helpful for new leaders and those who are starting the strategic plan process.

**Progress**

* **Nine Benchmarking Studies Completed.** Student Health Services, Women and Gender Equity, Wellness Promotion, Campus Recreation, LGBTQA Services, Counseling Center, New Student Programs, Off Campus and Commuter Services, First Generation Initiatives.
* **Student Affairs Assessment Benchmarking Study.** Presentation for the DOSA Assessment Council scheduled for summer 2019.
* **Student Affairs Divisions Benchmarking Study.** Currently underway.

**Next Steps**

* **New Studies Under Consideration.** Career Center, Family and Parent Programs
* **Create Institutional/Division Peer List.** WCU anticipates be reclassified as a Research 2 institution next year.

**UTILIZATION Studies**

Utilization data simply refers to participation in programs and events as well as use of services. This information can be combined with demographic data and helps us understand who is/is not engaged in programs and services on campus. Research suggests that engagement in programs and services is related to retention and graduation rates.

**Progress**

* **Department Results.** Departments collect information about the number of students who attend programs and events. Some also collect student identification information.

**Next Steps**

* **Division-wide Effort to Track Program Attendance.** Ask staff to record information about who visits offices and participates in programs as much as is possible and within reason.
* **Expand Reporting Capabilities.** Explore opportunities to create reports on student demographics, engagement, learning and retention.

**NEEDS Assessments**

Needs assessments help us understand what is needed in order to be successful.

**Progress**

* **Department Assessments.** Needs assessments have been conducted by departments on an ad hoc basis (e.g., Pantry needs assessment, Youth Mentoring Program, community organization needs assessment, student union assessment, winter shuttle bus assessment, parking/commuter assessment, staff workspaces, food and housing) and in some cases are part of a study involving other forms of assessment.
* **2018 Student Affairs Staff Development Survey.**

**Next Steps**

* **Division-wide Needs Assessments.** Based on program themes.

**SATISFACTION Assessments**

Satisfaction assessments look at the quality of a particular aspect of the college experience. These types of assessments could be focused on overall experiences, technology, facilities, programs, services, processes and more.

**Progress**

* **University Assessment.** National Survey of Student Engagement.
* **Department Assessments.** Housing, Sykes Student Union, Career Center, Dining, Lawrence A Dowdy Multicultural Center Survey.
* **Program Assessments.** Alternative Spring Break, Martin Luther King Day, American Youth Mentoring Program, Parent and Family Weekend
* **Group Assessments.** Community partners, parents.

**Next Steps**

* **Division-wide Assessment.** Develop a comprehensive survey that includes questions about satisfaction with all departments, facilities.
* **Create a Divisional Goal for Level of Satisfaction.**
* **2019 Veteran’s Experience Survey.** Conducted by theGreg and Sandra Weisenstein Veterans Center.

**CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT Assessments**

This type of assessment also focuses on the quality of experience but is not limited strictly to satisfaction. The term “campus climate” is often used when studying sexual misconduct, diversity and inclusion, space layout and design, and more.

**Progress**

* **2016 Campus Climate Study.** Conducted by the Office of Social Equity.
* **2017 Assessment Perceptions and Skills Activity.** Staff were asked to participate in a study on their perceptions of and level of assessment knowledge, skills, and abilities.
* **2018 Most Promising Places to Work Survey.** Part of the award application process.
* **2019 National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climate Survey.** Sent to all undergraduate students. Coordinated by Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Institutional Research.
* **2019 Great Colleges to Work For Survey.** Conducted byHuman Resources.

**Next Steps**

* **Undetermined at this time.**

**OUTCOMES ASSESSMENTs**

Often known just as “assessment” to faculty, outcomes assessment looks at the level of learning that occurs inside and outside the classroom. National organizations such as the Council on the Advancement for Standards in Higher Education (CAS), the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) have published guiding documents on developing learning outcomes.

**Progress**

* **University Assessment.** National Survey of Student Engagement conducted by Institutional Research at the request of PASSHE.
* **Divisional Learning Outcomes.** Learning outcomes have been assessed for several programs (e.g., Alternative Spring Break, American Youth Mentoring, Community Engagement Scholars, paraprofessionals, Service Learning, American Reads, Sykes).
* **Rubrics for Divisional Learning Domains.** Established seven new division-wide learning domains.
* **Co-Curricular Catalog and Education Plan Template.** 100 programs have been identified that address these learning domains. A co-curricular transcript is in the process of being developed.
* **Established Reflection Questions Related to Student Learning.** Nine questions for assessing student learning and development have been recommended for use by the staff within the division.
* **First Destination Survey Report.** FDS was written by the Office of Institutional Research in the past and is now being led by the Twardowski Career Development Center and the Executive Director of Assessment and Planning for Student Affairs. The report design is being revamped. The 2017-18 report will be released this summer.
* **NASPA Consortium Residence Life Survey.**
* **NASPA Fraternity and Sorority Life Benchmarking Survey.**  2019 WCU results are in. Peer comparison results will arrive in June. Communication plan and report designs are underway.
* **NASPA Student Conduct Survey.** 2019 WCU results are in. Peer comparison results will arrive during the summer. Meetings are set up to work on report design and communication plan.
* **Piloting learning surveys and questions.** Data are currently being collected through student learning surveys.
* **NASPA Orientation Survey.** Institutional Review Board is close to being submitted.

**Next Steps**

* **Pilot Rubrics.** Host training after staff have collected data.
* **Increase the FDS Knowledge Rate.** Leverage partnerships with faculty and staff.
* **Strategic Alignment.** Determine how we can align major initiatives to the co-curricular focus areas (e.g., next strategic plan, assessment plans, marketing and communication plans, professional development, etc.).

**Algining Our Practices with PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

Several professional organizations have developed standards to guide the practices of their members. For the Division of Student Affairs, the majority of these standards are provided by the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education (CAS), however individual departments may follow standards set by their specific professional organizations (e.g., National Association of Colleges and Employers). Some departments within the division have also pursued accreditation.

**Progress**

* **Department Program Reviews and External Reviews.** Conducted for at least 15 years. Paused to allow the division to settle into staffing changes and to focus on a divisional assessment plan, co-curricular catalog and learning rubrics.

**Next Steps**

* **Re-examine the Structure of Department Program Reviews.** Develop a new framework, schedule and feedback process.