Resource

Schuh chapter 1 (read at a later time if you have not already)
- Excellent background information on assessment

A surefire way for your assessment study to fail
- Pay no attention to the context for the study
- Write a bunch of survey questions and send them out without getting any feedback on them
- Produce a giant report that summarizes the responses on every question
- Send the report by email to everyone in the department with no explanation
- See if any one has any ideas or suggestions
- When nothing comes of the results, complain that it was a waste of time
- Repeat
(Bad) Example

- Department needed "data" for accreditation report
- Borrowed survey questions from a published article from another campus
- Sent to recent graduates from the program
- Brought results to faculty committee
- Faculty said the questions didn’t match what they were trying to accomplish with their students; would have asked very different questions
- Results not used for anything (unfortunate since accreditors now more interested in how results are used!)

Start by Asking a Question

- Can start with anything – an observation, an anecdote, gut feeling, issue seen in other campuses or units…
- But before starting assessment study, need to refine that into a workable question
- Type of question you write will influence your assessment method

Why should we focus on the question first?

- I have this survey I want to use…
- Start by determining what you want to know and what you hope to accomplish
- Your choice of instrument, study design, etc. will flow from your question
Characteristics of a Good Question

• Meaningful
• Manageable
• Relevant
• Answer to the question points to changes or improvements that could be implemented
• Concise
• Not too general
• Not too focused

“What impacts student success?”
“What are the TV and media viewing habits for NDSU students?”
“What are the demographics of students who eat at the dining hall for lunch on Tuesdays?”
“How many female students from Davies High School major in Industrial Engineering?”
“What factors contribute to the academic success of Presidential Scholars?”

Defining a Clear Purpose

The most effective assessment studies have a clear purpose
• Where do we want to be?
• What are we hoping to accomplish with this project?
• How will we know if we’ve made it?
Characteristics of a Good Purpose Statement

- Two complete sentences (one for purpose, one for results)
- Identifies the participants to be included in the assessment study
- Clearly communicates what will be studied and how the results will be used and the benefits of that use

Write a Purpose Statement

The purpose of this assessment study is to ______
The results from this assessment study will ______

The purpose of this assessment study is to assess the students who participate in the leadership programs on campus.
The results from this assessment study will be shared with leadership staff for discussion.
The purpose of this assessment study is to describe the factors that contribute to the academic success of Presidential Scholars.

The results from this assessment study will help determine the programs in which students will be required to participate and identify new programs that should be developed to support the academic success of Presidential Scholars.

Setting the Stage / Context

• What do we already know about the group of individuals who will be included in our assessment study?
• About this general topic?
  – OIRA
  – Studies from other institutions or published research
  – Prior assessment studies
  – Institutional surveys

• What additional data should we gather about the group of students who will be included in our assessment study? About this topic?
  – How many students at NDSU fit these criteria
  – Demographic information
  – Could be a 2-part assessment study

• Implications for how you will design your assessment study (e.g., different methods would be used for on- and off-campus students)
Participants
Presidential Scholars have earned high ACT / SAT scores and high school GPAs. While they come from all over the country, most of them come from XXXXX. There are slightly more XXXX than XXXX in this group, and the average number of AP credits earned prior to enrolling at NDSU is XXXX. Most students in this group are well-off financially, although XX% are eligible for Pell Grants. XX% graduate in 4 years, but XX% become ineligible for continuation of the scholarship due to college GPA after….

Topic
We define academic success for all undergraduate students as the earning of a bachelor’s degree. For Presidential Scholars, however, the standards are higher as they are required to maintain a 3.0 cumulative college GPA and their scholarship is available for only four consecutive years of continuous full-time enrollment. Further, we define academic success for Presidential Scholars as…

Study types
• Different types of studies answer different types of questions
• By identifying your question(s) and purpose, you’ve already gone a good distance in determining what kind of study you need to perform
• The goal here is to begin to match your question(s) and purpose with an appropriate study type
Types of Studies

See Schuh, chapter 1

- Participation assessment
- Cost effectiveness
- Instrument development
- Needs assessment
- Satisfaction assessment
- Implementation fidelity
- Student Learning and Development Outcomes
- Retention and persistence studies

Participation Assessment

**When to Use**
- Goal is to determine how many people and who are participating in program or service or how much usage is seen by a website, facility, program, etc.
- The most basic of assessment studies, but not without value

**Types of Questions Addressed**
- Number of visitors to the library by category (student / faculty / staff / community member) and time of day (morning, noon, afternoon, evening, weekend)
- Study on number of hours Adobe Illustrator used in campus computer labs

**Examples**
- How many people attended? What are the demographic characteristics of participants?
- How many hours per day is facility used? Who are the primary users?
- Number of visitors to the library by category (student / faculty / staff / community member) and time of day (morning, noon, afternoon, evening, weekend)
- Study on number of hours Adobe Illustrator used in campus computer labs

Cost Effectiveness

**When to Use**
- Goal is to get the most benefit for the resources provided
- Seek to identify efficiencies or way to decrease costs
- Compare various vendors and services offered

**Types of Questions Addressed**
- How does the cost of this service compare to the cost at other campuses? By private vendors?
- Are additional services worth the cost?
- What would be lost if we reduced cost and services?

**Examples**
- Cost benchmarking study between campuses
- Vendor comparison for services offered at various price points
### Instrument Development

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<tr>
<th>When to Use</th>
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<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Goal is to create a new rubric, survey, observation protocol, etc. to use in future assessment study</td>
<td>● How do we best gather information on ____?</td>
<td>● Focus groups with international students to identify key questions to include in a needs assessment survey for international students</td>
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<tr>
<td>● No existing instrument or current instrument inadequate</td>
<td>● How would we measure ____?</td>
<td>● Creation of quiz items to see if students learned key points of presentation on the health risks of tobacco use</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Can be combined with other types of assessment studies (e.g., instrument development, then use instrument for SLDO assessment)</td>
<td>● We need an instrument that ____?</td>
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### Needs Assessment

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<td>● Goal is to better understand a group of individuals and their desires, wants, needs</td>
<td>● Seeking to better understand needs of a group</td>
<td>● Study on technology supports needed for faculty research</td>
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<td>● Demographic changes</td>
<td>● Changes in beliefs, attitudes, needs, desires, over time</td>
<td>● Study on perceived accessibility of campus buildings for students in wheelchairs</td>
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<td>● Turnover of 50% or more in the group</td>
<td>● Environmental, experiences, perceptions</td>
<td>● Study on special dietary needs of students who live in residence halls</td>
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### Satisfaction Assessment

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<td>● Goal is to understand level of clients’ satisfaction with service, facilities, programs offered, cost, etc.</td>
<td>● Perceptions from clients on quality of facilities, products, timeliness, etc.</td>
<td>● Study on taste of new healthy-choice menu in dining hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>● SLDO assessment better choice if desire to see effectiveness of program / service in achieving learning / development goal</td>
<td>● Major changes in a department or deciding to make major change</td>
<td>● Study to determine whether to update bathrooms or repaint parking lot</td>
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<td>● Perceived value of service provided</td>
<td>● Study on satisfaction with friendliness of advisors and front-line staff</td>
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# Implementation Fidelity

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<td>● Goal is to determine if programming is implemented as it was designed</td>
<td>● How much time was spent on topic X?</td>
<td>● Secret shopper visits front-line staff to see if questions are answered accurately</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Understanding if program is implemented as designed is interim step between program design and determining if program is successful</td>
<td>● Was the program implemented as planned?</td>
<td>● Self-report on amount of time spent on various aspects of planned program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● What is the experience of the program / service from a user’s perspective?</td>
<td>● Observer notes the amount of time, depth, and repetition of topics at Orientation</td>
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# Student Learning / Development Outcomes

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<td>● Goal is to learn if program / service brings about desired learning / development in participants</td>
<td>● Amount of learning or development resulting from participation in program, service, experience, etc.</td>
<td>● Quiz on risky behaviors for sexually transmitted infections</td>
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<td>● What knowledge, skills, abilities, dispositions do students have now that they did not prior to this program?</td>
<td>● Scoring of portfolio by rubrics for participants in leadership program</td>
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<td>● Standardized inclusiveness instrument administered every 4 weeks to multicultural program participants</td>
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# Retention and Persistence

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<td>● Goal is to identify factors that relate to students persisting to graduation and being retained at NDSU</td>
<td>● Why do students not persist to graduation at NDSU?</td>
<td>● Phone calls to students who did not return for subsequent semester</td>
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<td>● What programs or services could be offered to support student retention and success to a degree</td>
<td>● Analysis of institutional data on predictors of attrition</td>
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<td>● Focus group with students identified as at-risk for attrition</td>
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Worksheets
Module 1 worksheet and rubric will get your team started on this portion of the task.

Use Google Drive to prepare presentation and write-up summary of module 1.

Presentations
• Each team will prepare a short (5-7 minute) presentation for the group
• Please use PowerPoint
• Should include:
  – Assessment question(s)
  – Purpose statement
  – Context / set the stage
  – Study type
• Be prepared for questions and feedback

Viewers of the Presentation
• Use the rubric to provide feedback
• Will collect rubrics and give to the team
• Be prepared to ask questions or provide feedback
• Be constructive – coaching model