

ASSESSMENT IN STUDENT AFFAIRS: What's In It For You?

Some Questions...

1. Are sufficient numbers of students – and students representative of the entire student body - using our programs, services, and facilities?
2. Are our programs, services, and facilities a high - priority need for our students?
3. Are our students satisfied with our programs, services, and facilities?
4. Do we understand who your customers and clientele are?
5. Do our services, programs, and facilities contribute to student learning? Student development? Retention? Graduation?
6. Are we, as Student Affairs professionals, delivering what we promised, and are we doing it in a cost-effective, high quality way?
7. In an era of declining resources, can we demonstrate that student services and programs are really necessary?

Where is the evidence? ...

These questions are best answered through systematic, on-going assessment. Without it, Student Affairs is left only to logic, intuition, moral imperatives, goodwill, or luck in justifying its existence.

Thanks to the members of the Student Affairs Assessment Committee for their support and very helpful feedback in the preparation of this presentation. Any and all errors of fact and flaws in the presentation are the responsibility of the presenters.

Assessment Committee Members

Ms. Sage Archer
Mr. Steve Blair
Ms. Stephanie Bullington
Mr. Bob Fankhauser
Mr. Mike Gibbons
Dr. John Grotgen

Dr. Kurt Keppler (Ex-officio)
Mr. Russell Mast (Chair)
Mr. Joseph Mattachione
Ms. Jenny Slear
Mr. Ryan Whitfield
Mr. Gerald Williams

What is Assessment?

Assessment is the ongoing process of systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to describe the effectiveness of Student Affairs activities, facilities, and services.

Assessment is the information we gather.

What is Evaluation?

Evaluation is the process of using assessment evidence to improve the effectiveness of Student Affairs facilities, activities, and services.

Evaluation is how that information is used.

Why Do Assessment in Student Affairs?

1. ***A Matter of Survival.***

- In an era of declining resources, are student services and programs really necessary?
- What evidence do we use?

2. ***A Matter of Quality.***

- Do we have High-Quality programs, services, and facilities?
 - How do we define Quality?
 - What evidence do we have of Quality and what standards are used to measure it?
 - How do we know if we have improved Quality?

3. ***A Matter of Affordability.***

- In an era of declining resources, can we Afford this program or that service?
- Can we continue to fund them at current levels?

4. ***A Matter of Strategic Planning.***

- What do we do well?
- What do we not do well enough?
- What are our opportunities for the future?
- Are our programs, services, and facilities achieving their stated goals and objectives?

5. ***A Matter of Policy Development and Decision Making.***

- What do you rely on to support your decision or policy?
- What evidence do you use to decide how
 -
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 - to allocate resources?

6. ***A Matter of Politics.***

- Do we have information about our programs, services, or facilities that we can use to satisfactorily answer questions from an Important Person?
- Do we have information about our programs, services, or facilities that enables us to take advantage of an opportunity to impress some Important Person?

7. ***A Matter of Personal and Professional Satisfaction.***

- What supports your belief that what you personally and professionally are making a difference?