FACULTY-ENGAGED ASSESSMENT OF A COLLEGE PROGRAM FOR MARGINALIZED STUDENTS

Assessment Institute in Indianapolis

October 29-31, 2023

Materials available on the Assessment Institute website
https://assessmentinstitute.iupui.edu

- John Girdwood, University of Michigan-Flint; Presentation Type: 20-Minute Concurrent Session
- Audience Level: Intermediate; Primary Track: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Faculty-Engaged Assessment of a College Program for Marginalized Students

Providing students with **supportive services** on campus assumes that students will utilize the services and support on campus is preferable to that outside the university. There are many reasons why students do not embrace the services offered on campus. Universities that continue to bolster institutional services can overlook informal networks of support beneficial for first-generation and many other **marginalized students**. **This qualitative study engages faculty to assess a college program at a midwestern regional university**. The purpose of this research is to **improve programming** for marginalized students at a predominantly white institution (PWI) through faculty-engaged program assessment.

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First and Foremost: Thank You!

Here are several reasons I am thankful you are listening:

1. I'm relatively new to student affairs program assessment
2. I'm passionate about increasing educational opportunity
3. I'm driven to improve educational quality and delivery
4. I'm out of my comfort zone as a sociologist
5. This was a learning experience!

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Foundational Terms

- **Assessment**
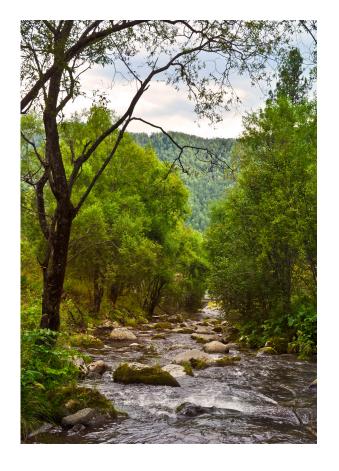 - "Focuses on an area of concern, weakness, or difficulty in student learning"[1]
- **Marginalized**
  - "Academically- or economically-disadvantaged"[2]
    - Statutory language; Deficit approach
- **Framework for Analysis**
  - Program Design (upstream)
    - Faculty were engaged through a survey
    - Program staff conducted the assessment
  - Student Outcomes (downstream)
    - Improved Grade Point Average (GPA)
    - Advanced Class Standing
    - Increased Acceptance Into Major
    - Increased Graduation Rate

1. https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/assessment/what-is-assessment/assessment-vs-evaluation.html
2. https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/wd/education-training/kcp
3. https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/pictures/40000/velka/mountain-river-1358249434fvl.jpg

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First Steps to Quality Improvement

Research Question: Are we providing our students with the best quality/quantity programming to support their goals?

1. Reason for Action

2. Initial State

3. Target State

4. Gap Analysis

5. Solution Approach

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Reason for Action

UM-Flint Student Affairs intends to...

- Develop well-rounded students

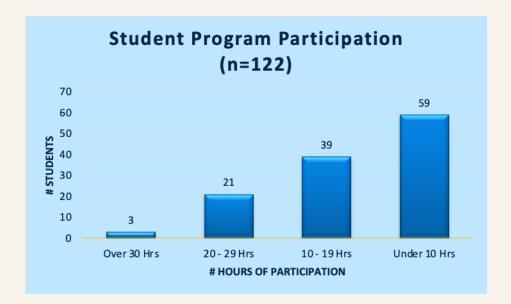- Support a diverse, equitable, and *inclusive* campus community of students, scholars, and citizens

By offering...

- Educationally purposeful activities and *engagement*

- https://news.umflint.edu/2020/01/20/meet-the-um-flint-division-of-student-affairs
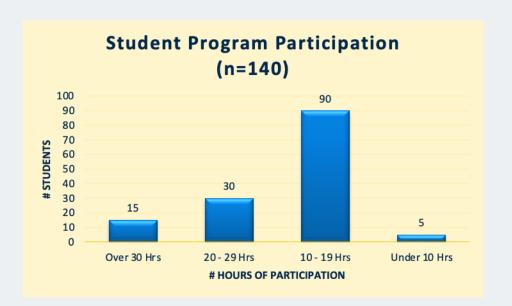- https://news.umflint.edu/2023/08/16/um-flint-aims-to-grow-traditions-with-2023-welcome-programs/

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Initial State

Student Program Participation (n=122)

A bar chart showing # Students versus # Hours of Participation:
- Over 30 Hrs: 3
- 20 - 29 Hrs: 21
- 10 - 19 Hrs: 39
- Under 10 Hrs: 59

Our support program for marginalized students offers…

1. Academic Advising
2. Career Services
3. Financial Literacy
4. Instruction in Academic/Social Basic Skills
5. Learning/Study Skills
6. Mentoring
7. Networking Opportunities
8. Personal Counseling
9. Research Opportunities
10. Time Management
11. Tutorial Services
12. Writing Labs

Through…

✓ On-campus workshops and coaching
✓ Some services offered virtually

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Target State

Gap Analysis

Student Program Participation (n=140)

Participation (Quantitative)

✓ Increase from 32% to 64% students who participate 10-19 hours (up 51 students)

Delivery (Qualitative)

✓ Offer programming that is *inclusive* and *engaging* to more students

Solution Approach

- Comprehensive Study

- Triangulation
  - Methods, Subjects, Investigators

- **Faculty-Engaged Assessment**
  - **Grounded Theory**
    - Start with observation
    - Inductive rather than deductive
      - Discover theory/explanation rather than test existing theory
  - **Survey Faculty**
    - Based on Literature Review

Shawn Opara, UM-Flint (Future Faculty Fellow)
Community-Engaged University Programming in Genesee County (HUM00228429)

Antonio Parks, UM-Ann Arbor (Grad Assistant)
Student-Engaged University Program Development (HUM00232454)

John Girdwood, UM-Flint (Adjunct Lecturer; Program Manager)
Faculty-Engaged Assessment of a College Program for Marginalized Students (HUM00239171)

Maeko McGovern, UM-Flint (Grad Assistant)
Developing Trauma-Informed Programming to Support and Retain Academically and Economically Disadvantaged Students (HUM00232832)

- Heale, R., & Forbes, D. (2013). Understanding Triangulation in Research. Evidence-Based Nursing, 16(4), 98-98.
- Chun Tie, Y., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded Theory Research: A Design Framework for Novice Researchers. SAGE Open Medicine, 7, 2050312118822927.

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Interpreting Data Inductively to Create a Solution Approach

Observations from Faculty-Engaged Survey Data

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Method and Results

IRB Exemption [HUM00239171]

182 faculty were surveyed

28 responses (15% response rate)

Brief Findings (on next two slides)

- Faculty can provide personalized referrals to on-campus support

- Faculty view family as both a positive and negative force on student educational outcomes
  - *Discovered but omitted for time*

Faculty Survey

UM-Flint staff and faculty are working together to assess a program that supports students. Your responses to this survey will help us improve our program. There are no right or wrong answers on this survey and we ask you to answer honestly so we can better understand how to support students. We appreciate you letting us know what you think. This survey is administered by the King-Chavez-Parks 4S program. Contact program manager Dr. John Girdwood by emailing johngird@umich.edu with any questions.

This survey should take about **30 minutes to complete**. Only begin the survey when you are certain that you can dedicate 30 minutes straight to complete the survey. There is a progress bar at the bottom of each page to show you how much farther you will go to complete the survey. There are **30 total questions**.

Please click "**Next**" at the bottom to begin.
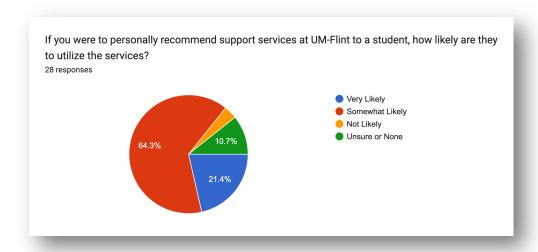
johngird@umich.edu Switch account

* Indicates required question

Where do students find support?

Survey responses:

- "unlikely to reach out to somebody on campus... they must be *referred* to support"

- "*Contact* them"

- "maintain *contact*"

- "Oneon-one *communication*" (sp.)

- "talking to my students *individually*"

If you were to personally recommend support services at UM-Flint to a student, how likely are they to utilize the services?
28 responses

- Very Likely
- Somewhat Likely
- Not Likely
- Unsure or None

64.3% 10.7% 21.4%

Faculty reported confidence in the effectiveness of their own individual recommendations to students for utilization of institutional support.

- Survey Question: "Tell us one big idea you have that could help marginalized students advance their class standing.* What is something we could try?"

What type of contact is effective?

Survey responses:

- "*Personalized...* Plans"

- "Reach out *personally*"

- "show students that you care *personally*"

- "*Personalized* counselling"

- "ensure success for a *variety* of learning styles"

- "*diverse* needs... case-by-case basis"

- "it would really depend on the *individual*"

- "cater to their *individual* needs"

Faculty reported confidence in the effectiveness of their own personalized contact with students for utilization of institutional support.

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Rapid Improvement Experiment

Faculty-Engaged Program Delivery

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STUDENT SUCCESS SERIES

UM-Flint Psychology is excited to announce the return of our Student Success Series. This series consists of professional development sessions led by professors on a variety of topics. Come learn about the things you can do to be successful here at UM-Flint and in the workforce!

- Invite 140 KCP Scholars
- Personalized Contact
- Evening Availability
  - Working students
  - Student parents
  - After classes
- Measure Participation and Learning Outcomes

Cover Letters
Nov. 2, 2023 6:00pm

NOV 02

Join Dr. LaCosse to see a sample cover letter and learn how to write your own! Register at:
go.umflint.edu/

Resumes
Nov. 16, 2023 6:00pm

NOV 16

Applying for an award or scholarship? Applying for a job? A good resume can make all the difference.
Register at: go.umflint.edu/

- Believe it or not, this is different than 2020—2022 in many ways!
- Major Improvement + Variable to Test: Hosted and Initiated by Faculty Member (rather than solely Student Affairs)

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Summary and Lessons Learned

- We "focused on an area of concern, weakness, or difficulty in student learning"[1]
  - **Career** (Preparation) Services
  - **Writing** Labs (Resume/Letters)
- We engaged faculty in a survey to find themes for engagement
  - **Personalized Contact**

We hope to see:

- Improved Delivery **Quality**
- Increased **Engagement**
  - Students
  - Faculty
- Strengthening **Partnerships**
  - Academic Affairs (faculty)
  - Students Affairs (staff)

1. https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/assessment/what-is-assessment/assessment-vs-evaluation.html

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Thank You! Questions?

KCP Team Members

- Diamond Wilder

- Maya Jefferson

- Jerry Alexander

- Bianca Torbert

- Antonio Parks*