Coordinating Student Affairs Divisional & Departmental Assessment

COORDINATING DIVISIONAL AND DEPARTMENTAL STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT
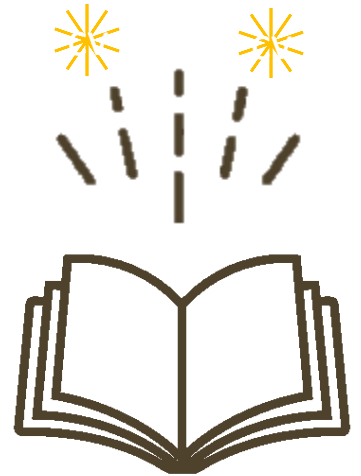
SECOND EDITION

Edited by
GAVIN W. HENNING,
ERIN M. BENTRIM and
KIMBERLY YOUSEY-ELSENER

NASPA
Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

ACPA
College Student Educators International

Gavin W. Henning
Kimberly Kruchen
Stacy A. Jacob

The adventure begins…

Book Overview

Update for 2015 edition
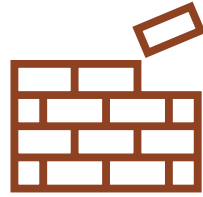
Expand to departmental assessment

Provide guidance for coordinating assessment

13 chapters

Overarching
Themes

Infrastructure & Organization

Skills & Knowledge

Relationships & Collaboration

Chapter
Highlights

Building Capacity, Talent, and Professional Development

Sharing Compelling Results: Data Storytelling and Data

Organizational Frames of Assessment

Politics in Student Affairs Assessment

Building Capacity, Talent, and Professional Development

Kimberly Kruchen — University of Colorado Boulder

Competency Development

Considered the following:

- NASPA/ACPA Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators

- NASPA/ACPA Professional Competencies Rubrics

- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

- You Are a Data Person: Strategies for Using Analytics on Campus (Amelia Parnell)

Competency Development

Examples:

- Skills (ability to select and use appropriate methodologies, clearly discuss findings with multiple audiences, design assessment plans)

- Knowledge (campus context, industry context)

- Dispositions (interpersonal, responsiveness, work approach, helpful)
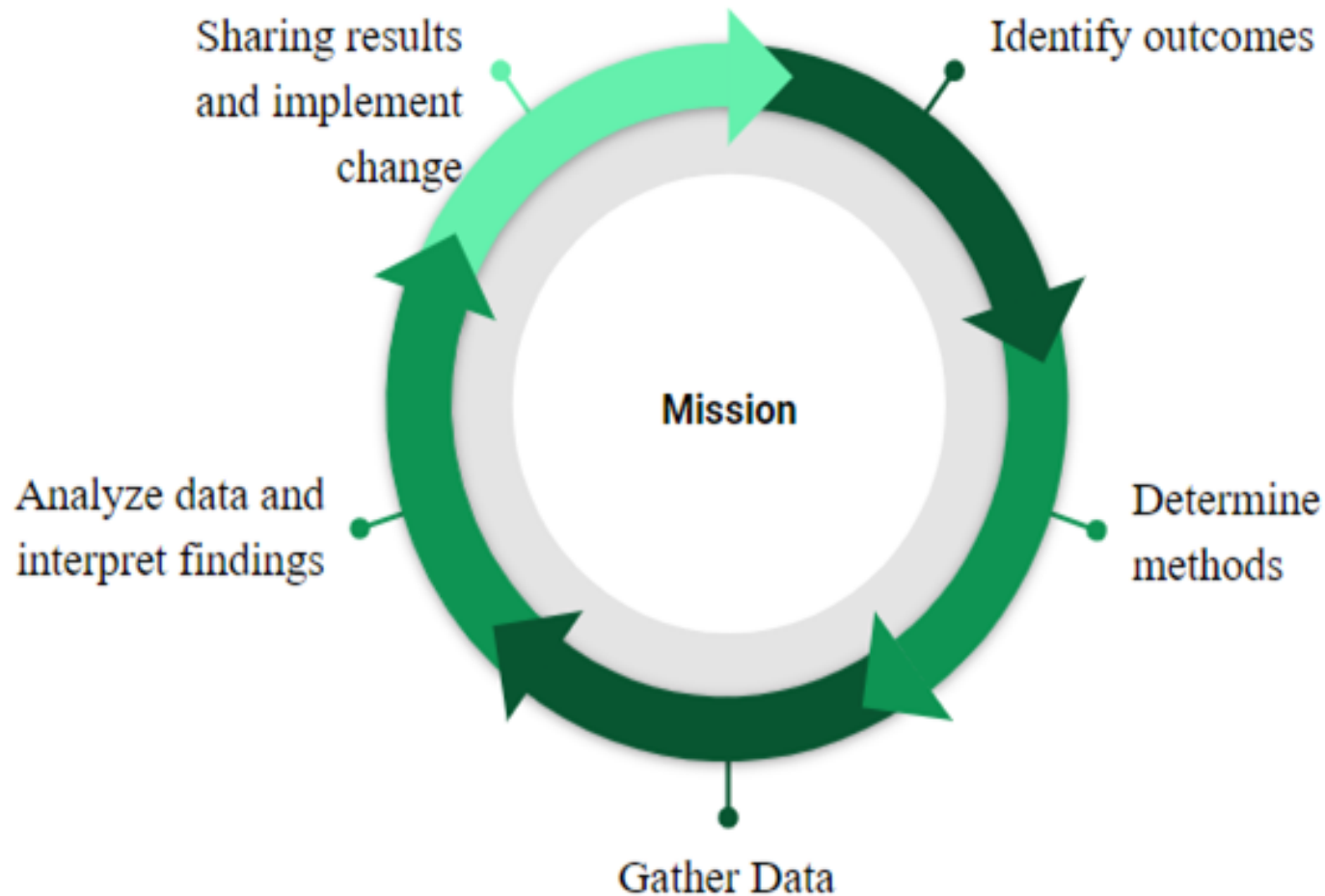
Work Contained within the Stages

1

Stage 1
Mission & Identifying Outcomes

2

Stage 2
Determining Methods

3

Stage 3
Gathering Data

4

Stage 4
Analyzing Data and Interpreting Findings

5

Stage 5
Sharing Results and Implementing Changes

Awareness and Resources

Strategies

- Workshops and trainings
- Conferences and institutes
- Books and journals
- Webinars, blogs, and MOOCs
- Peer support groups

Challenges

- Time and energy
- Lack of leadership commitment and support
- Fear of failure
- Adequate support resources

Sharing Compelling Results: Data Storytelling and Data Visualization

Stacy A. Jacob — Independent Researcher

Data Storytelling

Storytelling Principles

Persuasion

Primary Message

Incorporating Voices

Elements of a Story

Character
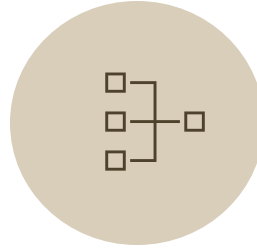
Plot

Setting
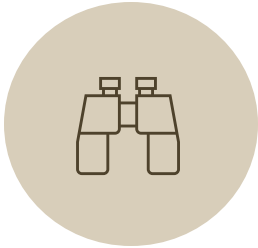
Point of View

Styles

Themes

Data Visualization

Data Visualization Principles

Center the
Audience

Contrast to
Show the
Main Point
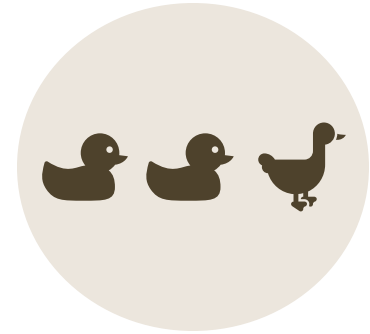
Keep it Simple
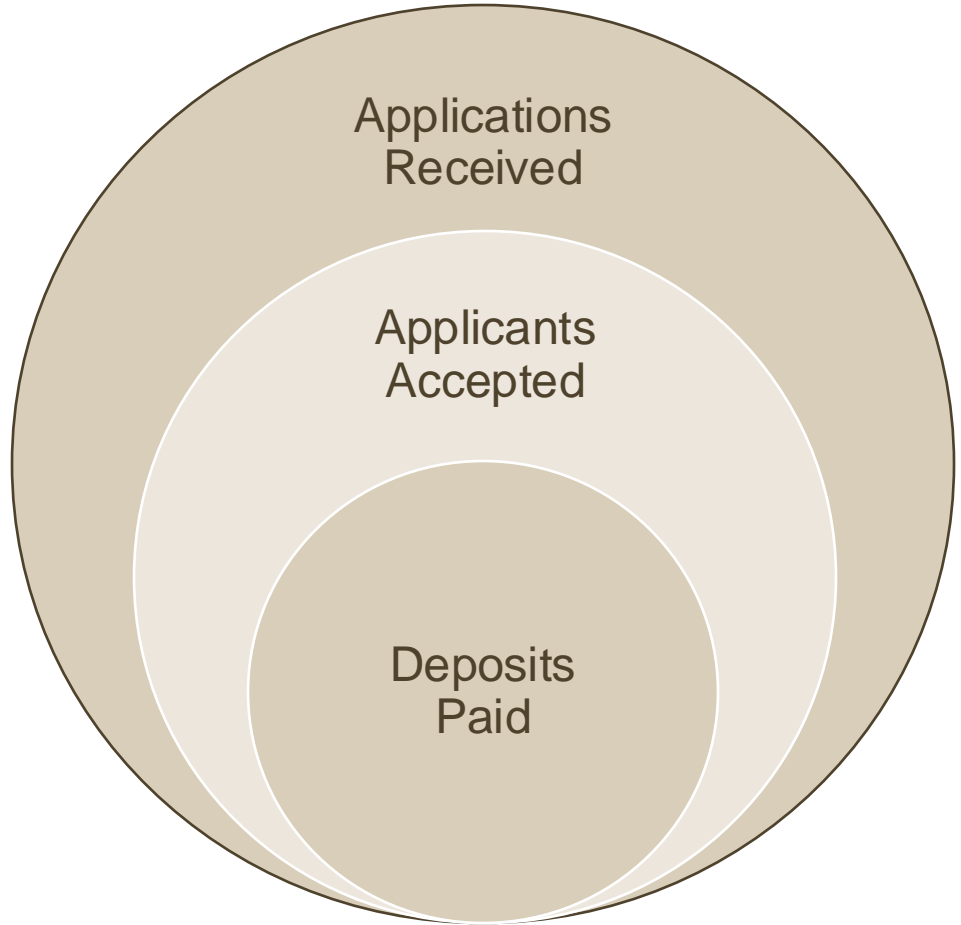
Pictogram

Photos Next to Words

"I'm sick of not being able to find a bathroom. Why should I have to go two buildings over?"

-Mark

Metaphorical **Visual**

Heat Map

Gauge Chart

Organizational Frames of Assessment

Jacob D. Lemon — Michigan State University
Alexander S. Kappas — North Carolina State University
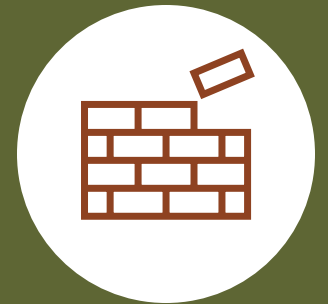
Adapting Bolman & Deal Four Frame Model of Organizations

- Structural
- Human Resource
- Political
- Symbolic

Structural Frame

- **Definition**: Social, bureaucratic, and hierarchical units and subunits determine organizations' roles, responsibilities, and goals

- **Application**: Identify positional leaders, departments, and other org. structures that can assist with operationalizing assessment

Human Resource Frame

- **Definition**: Interpersonal and emotional needs determine collaboration and buy-in within an organization

- **Application**: Generate buy-in and collaboration for assessment

Political Frame

- **Definition**: Competition, strategy, and advocacy influence resources within an org.

- **Application**: Recognize assumptions and constraints of resources available for assessment and how the political dimension may influence assessment practice

Symbolic Frame

- **Definition**: Belief, rituals, and culture highlight the history and meaning of an organization

- **Application**: Connect assessment to organizational missions, goals, and other cultural artifacts of the institution

Divisional Assessment
- What is the organizational structure?
- What types of infrastructure exists for assessment?
- What other organized bodies can be leveraged?

Divisional Assessment
- Who at the institution values assessment and why?
- Who are internal and external assessment partners?
- What trainings can be created for practitioners to build assessment skills?

Departmental Assessment
- What divisional oversight and guidance exists?
- Do any of the position descriptions in your department include assessment as a duty?
- Is there a strategic plan you can align with?

Departmental Assessment
- What staff incentives exist for assessment?
- What assessment training opportunities exist?
- How can assessment yield meaningful feedback to improve programs and services for students?

Structural

Human

Assessment Coordinator

Divisional Assessment
- What institutional policies and directives influence or constrain assessment work?
- How do departments view resource allocation in the division as related to assessment?
- Do all divisional leaders invest in assessment?

Divisional Assessment
- What is the culture of student affairs at your institution?
- What divisional or institutional rituals exist?
- What divisional or institutional symbols, traditions, or stories can be leveraged?

Political

Symbolic

Departmental Assessment
- What resources can be utilized for assessment?
- How can assessment be used to justify decisions?
- Does the departmental director invest in assessment?

Departmental Assessment
- How does your departmental culture align with the broader divisional culture?
- What departmental rituals exist?
- What departmental/functional area symbols, traditions, or stories can be leveraged?

30

Politics in Student Affairs Assessment

Darby Roberts — Texas A&M University

Professional Competencies

- ACPA/NASPA Competencies emphasize the political nature of assessment

- Must use data strategically and ethically to inform decisions

Barriers to Coordinating Assessment

- Resistance, fear of sharing poor results, and data hoarding are frequent challenges/barriers

- Building ethical foundations, relationships, and effective communication help overcome barriers

Power and Politics

- The political context shapes how assessment results are used and shared

- Be politically astute

- Recognize who holds decision-making power and how to engage them to effect change.

Role of Power in Decision-Making

- Politics plays a role in resource allocation and decision-making

- Be aware of competing interests and priorities

Four Frames of Leadership

- Bolman and Deal's four frames can be used to understand and navigate different leadership styles
  - Structural
  - Human resource
  - Political
  - Symbolic

Strategic Planning & Decision-Making

- Assessment should be integrated into planning and budgeting

- Coordinators ensure data informs decisions

Questions?

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ROUTLEDGE

Discussion

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ROUTLEDGE

Discussion Questions

- Thinking about coordinating assessment, what are some of the challenges you face?
  - Are they related to skills/knowledge, relationships/ collaboration, infrastructure/organization, or something else?

- What strategies might help you address this issue?

Wrap Up
(the end)