



Assessing Student Learning

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Objectives of Session

- Discuss methods and examples for assessing student learning
- Apply these methods to assessing student learning from service learning experiences
- Identify relevant stakeholders for assessing student learning
- Identify challenges and barriers for assessing student learning and brainstorm how to address these challenges



Goal of Assessment

“Improvement and sustainability of the (Blah, blah, blah) experiences and the partnerships are enhanced through formal assessment activities that involve community, faculty, student and institutional voices and perspectives.”



Why Do Assessments?

- Better prepare students--assess learning
- Better manage programs--program redesign and improvement
- Regulatory demands—accountability—outcomes and resources
- Service-Learning or Civic engagement—define and measure



Bane of Assessment

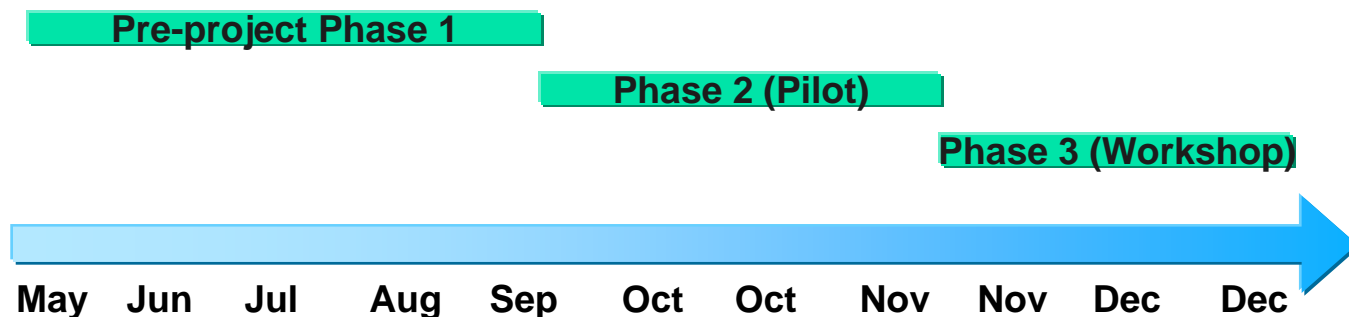
“Faculty, Students, community partners and institutional participants all come with different concerns and expectations—these demand a complex and intentional assessment strategy”

Gelmon, Holland, Driscoll, Spring, and Kerrigan, (2001) Assessing Service-Learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and Techniques.
Campus Compact



Launch S-L Program

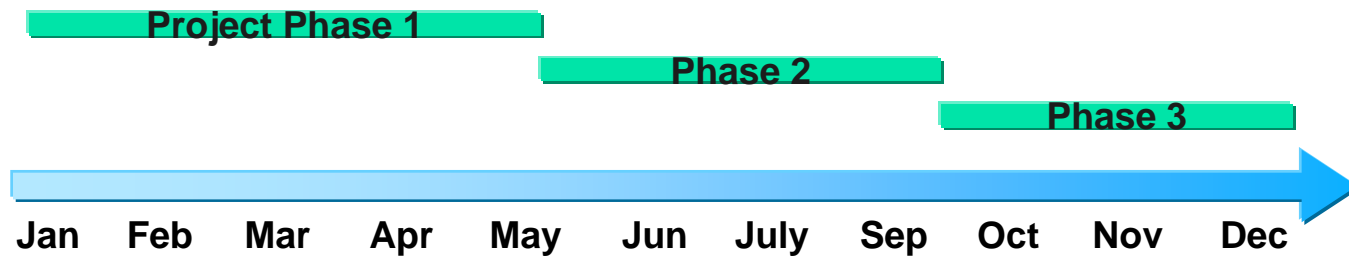
- Begin planning (advisory board)
 - Start small then expand
- Plan Formative evaluation/assessment
 - Feedback from all participants at key points





Launch S-L Program

- Begin projects/program
 - Start small then expand
- Formative evaluation
 - Supply faculty and community partner with ongoing assessment information





Link Quantitative with Qualitative

- Using qualitative as well as quantitative information can enhance understanding of what is happening
- Document and recognize intermediate outcomes (i.e., community and systems changes)
- Use existing data!!



Qualitative Method: Focus Group

- A focus group is a small-group discussion guided by a trained leader, used to learn more about opinions on a designated topic, and then to guide future action
- Differs from regular groups:
 - They are focused on a specific topic
 - They have a trained facilitator
 - Members of the group are encouraged to talk openly about their opinions and respond to other members
- Starts with prepared questions



Have a data collection plan

- Distribute a survey
- Conduct a focus group
- Include measurable assignments
 - Middle and end of course?
 - Student
 - Faculty
 - Agency
- Collect the data
- What does partner have/need? School?



Analyze the findings

- Is program consistent with its vision or mission?
- Did S-L project/program fit needs?
- Does program include and respect target population?
 - Is the program ethical?
- Did program reach its desired outcomes?
- Is the continuation plan feasible?

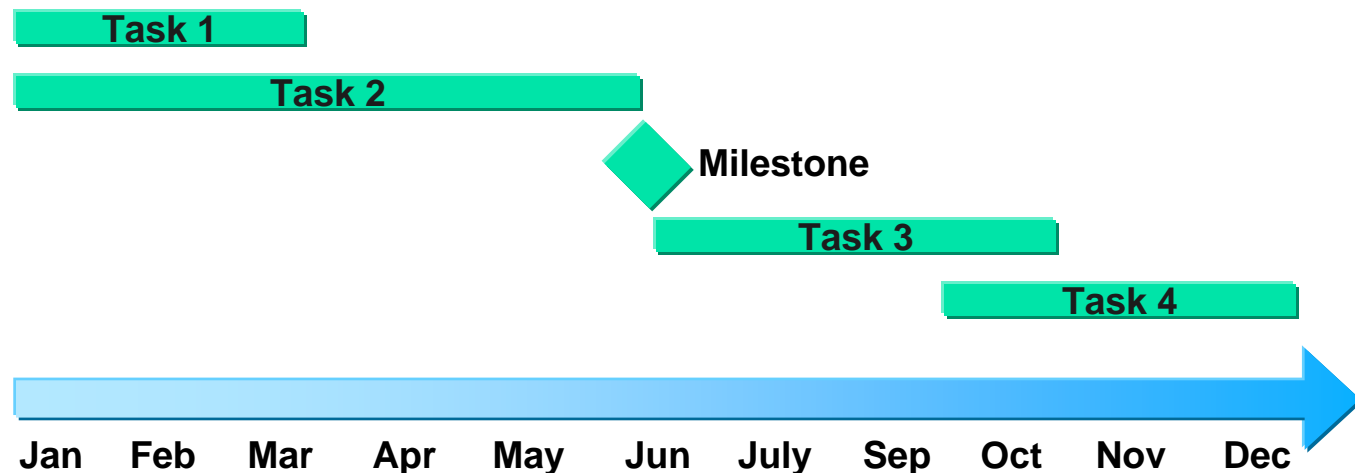


Summative Evaluation

- Service provided to agency, underserved populations
- Enhanced sensitivity to needs of community
- Enhanced learning
- Recognized roles as community resource and community as resource

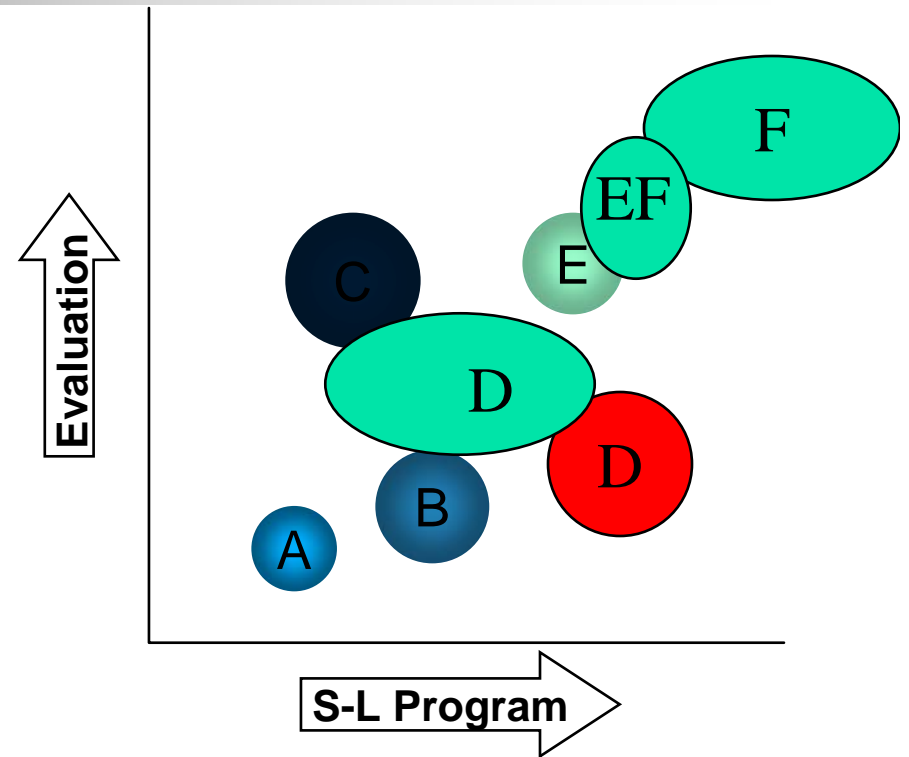
Follow-up

- Review assessment/ evaluation schedule/ highlights of findings
- Timing
 - Include milestone point for revision



Summary Steps in Assessing Student Learning

- A. Engage participants
- B. Describe the program
- C. Focus the evaluation design
- D. Gather credible evidence
- E. Justify the conclusions
- F. Ensure use and share lessons learned-
 - Dissemination





Key Components of Assessment

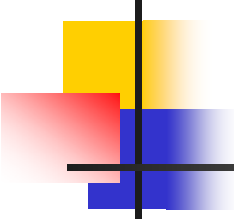
- What do we want to know? Define problem and purpose
- What will we look for? Establish criteria, refine objectives, **core concepts**
- What will we measure? Develop **measurable key indicators**, processes of data collection
- How will we gather the evidence needed to demonstrate what we want to know? **Methods** and tools to collect information
- Identify **sources** of the data

Use findings as the basis for decisions and recommendations



Construct an Assessment Framework or Evaluation “Crosswalk”

Core Concept	Key Indicators	Methods	Source
Cultural Sensitivity			
Communication			



Participatory or Collaborative Assessment of Learning

- Engage Stakeholders in Assessment - share responsibility and decision-making, all steps of process, respond to program needs
- Empower Participants to improve understanding, share expertise, methods and skills
- Promote utilization of findings



Relevant Stakeholders

- List....

- 1

- 2

- 3

- 4

- 5



Relevant Stakeholders

- How to integrate needs – gain-gain?
- Crucial decision points
 - Written agreements
 - Agree on
 - Time and Effort
 - Personnel
 - Resources and money
 -



Challenges and Barriers

- List

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

- How to address

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

