Assessing the Impact of a Co-Curricular Program on Student Learning

This document provides 5 examples for designing instruments.

**Example 1**

**Survey Instructions for students:**

Reflecting on your experience in [insert the Program Name]:

Using a 1--7 rating scale (with 1 denoting the lowest level, and 7 the highest level), please rate yourself on some of the areas that might be enhanced through participation in [insert the Program Name]:

**On the left:** Check the number that best represents your previous level of knowledge, skills, etc. (i.e., prior to participating in [insert the Program Name]).

**On the right:** Check the number that best represents your current level of knowledge, skills, etc. (i.e., after participating in [insert the Program Name]).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BEFORE Participation</th>
<th>AFTER Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Understanding of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. _____ skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Awareness of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Knowledge of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How to develop the survey items?**
The indicators of impact (survey items) can be derived from the Program mission, goals, and objectives.

**How to use the data?**
For each item, the average score for *Before Participation* is compared with that for *After Participation*, thus enabling the Program Director to make inferences about Program impact and effectiveness.
Example 2

Survey Instructions for students:

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. (Rating Scale: 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly agree)

Sample Statements:

Through involvement in [insert the Program/Activity Name],

1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly agree

a. I am better able to ….
b. I am more likely to….
c. I am more willing to…..
d. I have enhanced my understanding of…
e. I have enhanced my ability to ….
f. My involvement in [insert the Program/Activity Name] has positively affected my……

How to use the data?
For each item, the percentage and average score are calculated, thus enabling the Program Director to make inferences about Program impact and effectiveness.

Example 3

Survey Instructions for students:

To what extent has your experience in [insert the Program/Activity Name] contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? (Rating Scale: 1=Very little; 2=Some; 3=Quite a bit; 4=Very much)

Sample survey items:

1=Very little; 2=Some; 3=Quite a bit; 4=Very much

a. Resolving conflict in interpersonal relationships
b. Seeking out views and opinions of others

How to use the data?
For each item, the percentage and average score are calculated, thus enabling the Program Director to make inferences about Program impact and effectiveness.
Example 4

Survey Instructions for students:

The list below contains some abilities that may be developed through [insert the Program/Activity Name]. Please indicate the extent to which each capacity was enhanced by your experience in [insert the Program/Activity Name]. (Rating Scale 1=Not at all; 2=A little; 3=Moderately; 4=Greatly)

Sample survey items: 1=Not at all; 2=A little; 3=Moderately; 4=Greatly

a. Participate in open dialogue with an open mind
b. Relate well to people of different backgrounds
c. Function effectively as a member of a team
d. Supervise groups of people

How to use the data?
For each item, the percentage and average score are calculated, thus enabling the Program Director to make inferences about Program impact and effectiveness.

Example 5

Sometimes the Program Director asks the Program Participants to write reflective journals, to write comments to an open-ended question regarding Program impact, or interviews Program participants.

In addition to using quantitative results collected from close-ended survey questions, the Program Director can also use qualitative results (based on analysis of such documents as journals, comments to open-ended questions, testimonials from interviews). The purpose is to illustrate Program impact and supplement quantitative results.

Sample questions for reflective journals, open-ended questions, or interviews:

1. What have you got out of [insert the Program/Activity Name] (e.g., through resources, activities, interactions with the staff)?

2. What differences has [insert the Program/Activity Name] made in your educational experience at Gettysburg?

How to use the data:
The Program Director categorizes and thematizes these verbal data and uses them to illustrate the Program Impact. For example, 80% of participants reported that participation in [insert the Program/Activity Name] “moderately” or “greatly” improved their ability to “Function effectively as a member of a team”. One participant wrote in his journals: [insert relevant comments from this participant to illustrate this impact].