



Division of Student Affairs

Closing the Loop

Winter 2006-07
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How is the Division of Student Affairs tackling assessment of the complex issues which arise in our day to day work??? Check out this issue for some excellent outside of the box thinking!

Student Conduct and College Restoration Program Students: An Investigation



Submitted by Bernadette Lynch

What happens when two colleagues randomly have a conversation and say, "I wonder if....." The answer: a research project is born! Rob Eckhardt, Student Conduct, and Bernadette Lynch, ASC, decided to look at the incidence of conduct cases among students in the College Restoration Program (CRP). They compared two already existing databases (which made life relatively easy). Preliminary results were quite interesting. In the general student population, approximately 9% of students are involved in conduct cases. Among CRP students, it's 35%. In addition, the types of incidents largely were alcohol, drugs, and harassment and occurred at higher numbers.

After their initial research, they were able to present the information to the group of faculty and staff who serve as mentors to CRP students. It was there that the group came up with relevant and important questions for Rob and Bernadette to ex-

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plore; i.e. what does this mean for us programmatically, how does this relate to persistence; when did the incident occur – pre, post or during the CRP quarter, etc.

The benefits to this have been great! One benefit is increased collaboration between two unlikely areas in student affairs. Others have included better service to students, professional development for staff, and a presentation at a national conference. It was and continues to be a win/win all the way around. So next time you are having one of those seemingly random conversations, it might turn into something (oh no don't say it) assessment related!

For more information about this newsletter or Assessment in Student Affairs, please contact Nicole Boulais, nabcst@rit.edu

Surveys, Surveys, Surveys: The Bader Grant



Submitted by Robert Eckhardt

You may know us as the people slinging glow sticks and pizza as students dance the night away during Week of Welcome. You may also know us as the ones who brought Mark Sterner, John Underwood, and Dr. Drew to campus. But our true passion is asking our students what, when, and how often they put substances into their bodies.

For the past six years, the Bader Team has surveyed RIT students in an effort to gauge their patterns of use for alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Our goal is to help reduce the abuse of alcohol and other drugs through social norms education and programming for our high-risk groups (First-years, Greeks, Athletes,

and NTID students).

Our mainstay survey is the first year student survey that our friends in FYE are so gracious to administer. Our most consistent result over the years is that the majority of stu-

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dents drink 0-2 alcoholic drinks when they socialize. In addition, we have partnered with Athletics, Greek Affairs, and NTID to survey those student

subgroups. In previous years, these surveys were all administered with Scantron sheets and reams of paper. We have recently started to use Clipboard to survey Greeks and Athletes and have partnered with ITS to develop a sample pool of upperclass students that we will survey through Clipboard. ITS was incredibly helpful and Clipboard was surprisingly easy to use.

These surveys have given us invaluable information about our students and their habits when it comes to alcohol and other drugs. They've also helped us to educate the students and to focus our efforts for harm reduction and social norming. We have also opened up a new avenue for partnership with ITS with our efforts.

Assessment Team: The Sequel



The Division of Student Affairs sponsored an assessment committee in one form or another for more than 15 years. With the appointing of a full time assessment coordinator, the team was temporarily suspended in order to determine the right model for the future. Beginning in Winter of the 2006-07 year, the team has

been reformed with key members of the division who work directly with assessment related projects. This group will meet periodically to provide feedback to the assessment coordinator, to discuss ongoing projects and to support professional development in the area of assessment. Members include Matthew Hinton (Campus

Life), Cha Ron Sattler (Resident Life), Michelle Schrouder (CIAR), EW Quimbaya-Winship (Women's Center), Karen Violanti (FYE), Julie Leonardo (Student Health), Robert Eckhardt (SCCMS), Dave Watson (TRiO), Lisa Fraser (ASC), John Weas (Counseling Center), and Nicole Boulais (Assessment).

Your First College Year (YFCY)

Submitted by Karen Violanti

The First-Year Enrichment (FYE) Program is utilizing various tools to assess the growth experience of students in the first year at RIT. The "Your First College Year" (YFCY), a nationally based instrument out of UCLA, was administered last year (Spring 2006) for the first time to provide a capstone assessment of the first-year student experience. The survey provides information institutionally and comparatively at the national level for various analyses.

First-year students were

asked to participate in the YFCY as a follow up assessment to the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) given during the Orientation period. This pairing of assessment tools was particularly valuable as it allowed matching of student cases from the CIRP to the YFCY providing extremely valuable insights to the first-year experience. The FYE Program will utilize the YFCY data in conjunction with other assessment processes occurring within the department measuring growth of students. Some of these tools include the



FYE course evaluations, individual coaching session assessments, GPA and DWF data, and student focus groups.

Data collection in the first year is valuable to the FYE Program and to the entire institute as we strive to most effectively serve the needs of the first-year students at RIT. In the use of national assessment tools like the YFCY and the CIRP, we are able to gain insight into the experience of the RIT first year student and how to best formulate the FYE Program and other institute initiatives to meet the changing needs of this population.

North Star : Using Assessment in Redesign

The North Star Center for Academic Success and Cultural Affairs, which recently rejoined the Division of Student Affairs, is in the process of restructuring and restaffing. A steering committee has been formed to advise division leaders during this process and a number of assessments have been undertaken to provide key decision makers with vital information needed to develop the best model for the future! Assessments undertaken for this project include a series of focus groups of currently enrolled AALANA students. These

groups were well attended and valuable insights were gathered. Additionally, a team of steering committee members conducted an on-site benchmarking/best practice evaluation at Georgia Tech which also provided a first hand look at a nationally recognized model. Recent AALANA alumni were contacted to complete a Clipboard survey regarding their usage of and satisfaction with North Star services during their time at RIT. This information is particularly valuable as these individuals have the perspective of looking back post-graduation and commenting on

what helped them complete their education at RIT. Finally, basic demographic information and success rates were compiled for review to assist with the appropriate balancing of work load and identification of target areas for programming and service opportunities.

Assessment has been an important aspect of the transition process for the North Star Center and there are plans for this to remain an integral aspect of serving AALANA students and the entire RIT community in the future.



Winter/Spring Major* Assessment Events in Student Affairs

(*projects which impact 1000 or more students)

- Student Government Student Survey (Dec/Jan)
- Educational Benchmarking, Inc Survey of Apartment Area Students (Jan/Feb)
- FYE Post-test Instrument (Feb)
- Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation Usage and Satisfaction Survey (Feb)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (partnership with Academic Affairs—March)
- Campus Life Involvement, Usage and Satisfaction Survey (April)
- Bader Team Upperclassmen Survey (Winter/Spring)
- Pilot survey on gambling behaviors (in development)

Understanding Campus Involvement

Submitted by Matthew Hinton

Student involvement on campus is relatively easy to quantify in a shallow way. If you want to know how many people are going to events – go to the event and count them. Similarly, with club membership you can count the number of members who are regularly involved or registered as active members. Though not always that easy, involvement numbers can be found with little real work. The challenge isn't in quantifying involvement; it is in getting at how students can be engaged in the campus environment. The survey that the Center for Campus Life will implement in April aims to describe current student involvement, the events or activities that will instill pride in RIT and get them engaged, SAU facility usage and satisfaction with physical resources in the Center.

Several instruments were reviewed in deciding

what we needed to ask to get at involvement, engagement and satisfaction. Ultimately

“The challenge isn't in quantifying involvement; it is in getting at how students can be engaged in the campus environment”

we decided to take some of the best concepts and questions from several surveys and customize them to target RIT's population. In addition to the sample questions below, we are also asking the usual demographic questions to try to describe who is and, just as important, who is not using our services.

Sample questions might include:

How often do you participate in campus activities?

- a. Not Active
- b. Somewhat Active (1 – 3 events per quarter)
- c. Active (4 – 6 events per quarter)
- d. Fairly Active (6 – 8 events per quarter)
- e. Very Active (8+ events per quarter)

How important are each of the listed events and factors in building your school spirit?

- a. Men's Varsity Hockey Games
- b. Other Varsity sports competitions
- c. Major concerts
- d. ...

Where do you eat on campus?

- a. Crossroads
- b. SAU Cafeteria
- c. RITZ
- d. ...