Proving Their Worth:
How to Put Your Assessment in Motion
Aimee Hourigan
University of North Carolina Wilmington
Goals for Today

- Describe learning outcomes, rubrics, and direct assessments
- Explain how these methods can be effectively designed and implemented
- Learn about how we are using these methods and how other campuses can use them
- Ask questions and share best practices related to assessment
- Share a variety of methods for both assessing peer education programs and providing feedback to peer educators.
Learning Outcomes

“Learning outcomes are statements of what is expected that a learner will be able to do as a result of a learning task or activity” (Jenkins and Unwin, 2004)

- What students gain from participating in curricular and co-curricular experiences
What are the learning outcomes for your peer educators?

What knowledge and skills should they gain from their experiences?
Tips for Writing Learning Outcomes

- Make them specific and measurable
- Think about what students should know/be able to do before their experience.
- Use active words
- Use your campus and online resources
## Bloom’s Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Related Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>recalling or remembering something without necessarily understanding, using, or changing it</td>
<td>define, describe, identify, label, list, match, memorize, point to, recall, select, state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>understanding something that has been communicated without necessarily relating it to anything else</td>
<td>alter, account for, annotate, calculate, change, convert, group, explain, generalize, give examples, infer, interpret, paraphrase, predict, review, summarize, translate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>using a general concept to solve problems in a particular situation; using learned material in new and concrete situations</td>
<td>apply, adopt, collect, construct, demonstrate, discover, illustrate, interview, make use of, manipulate, relate, show, solve, use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Related Behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>breaking something down into its parts; may focus on identification of parts or analysis of relationships between parts, or recognition of organizational principles</td>
<td>analyze, compare, contrast, diagram, differentiate, dissect, distinguish, identify, illustrate, infer, outline, point out, select, separate, sort, subdivide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>creating something new by putting parts of different ideas together to make a whole.</td>
<td>blend, build, change, combine, compile, compose, conceive, create, design, formulate, generate, hypothesize, plan, predict, produce, reorder, revise, tell, write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>judging the value of material or methods as they might be applied in a particular situation; judging with the use of definite criteria</td>
<td>accept, appraise, assess, arbitrate, award, choose, conclude, criticize, defend, evaluate, grade, judge, prioritize, recommend, referee, reject, select, support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a result of participating in CROSSSROADS programs and services, students will be able to:

- Reduce high-risk drinking and drug behaviors and associated consequences, including delaying initiation of use.
- Demonstrate awareness of protective strategies to reduce risk from drinking.
- Accurately identify normative behaviors about their peers.
- Participate in the creation of a campus environment that is healthy and respectful of how drinking and drug use impacts fellow students.
- Effectively deliver programs to target populations, such as fellow college students or high school students.
Peer Educator Learning Outcomes

- CROSSROADS Peer Educators will:
  - Develop a working knowledge of alcohol and drug effects and protective strategies to reduce risks related to their use
  - Accurately identify and explain campus social norms
  - Effectively deliver programs to target populations
  - Improve problem-solving, public speaking, communication, listening, referral, and conflict resolution skills
  - Reduce their own high-risk drinking behaviors and related consequences
Measuring Learning Outcomes

- A primary goal of assessment is to deliver truthful and clear information that can be used to inform and improve outcomes (Walvoord, 2004).

- Indirect assessments:
  - Measure what students think they learned or gained
  - Relies on students’ perspectives and self-report

- Direct assessments:
  - Measure what students actually know or can do
  - Relies on predetermined criteria for evaluating growth
Measuring Learning Outcomes

- An indirect question would be...

- A direct question would be...
At UNCW

- **August:** peers complete a direct assessment before training
  - Measures content knowledge and behavior
- **By Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>:** direct and indirect assessment
  - Measures content knowledge and evaluates training
- **December:** 360 evaluations (indirect)
  - Measures their perceptions of each other and themselves, performance as a peer educator
- **April:** senior exit interviews (indirect)
  - Measures their perceptions of their experiences, skills they’ve gained, self-reflection
- **By May 1<sup>st</sup>:** direct and indirect assessment
  - Measures content knowledge, behavior, and perceptions of their experience
Indirect Sample Questions

- From assessment:
  - What was the best part of training? What was the most helpful part?

- From senior exit interviews:
  - What have you learned from your peer educator position?
  - Tell me about a time when you faced an ethical dilemma as a result of your CROSSROADS position.

- 360 evaluations
Direct Assessment

• Sample questions:
  • What are three signs of alcohol poisoning?
  • What percentage of UNCW students do not drink?

• Behavior
  • Anonymous, self-report completed in August and May
  • Quantity and frequency of alcohol and marijuana use
  • Frequency of alcohol-related consequences
  • Use of protective strategies
A rubric is a “set of criteria and a scoring scale that is used to assess and evaluate students’ work” (Cambell, Melenyzer, Nettles, & Wyman, 2000).

Rubrics can:
- ensure fidelity to intervention design
- formalize expectations for behavior
- evaluate the intended learning outcomes for peer educators.

Used to assist in training peer educators, provide immediate feedback to individual presenters and to evaluate and reflect on their growth over the semester.
First Year Seminar Presentations

• One initiative of a federal grant project
• Assessment of the presentation:
  • reduces key alcohol expectancies and reduces the typical increase of drinking among first-year students who received this presentation when compared to control
  • Rigorous experimental design over the last five years
• Trained peer educators co-present this intervention with professional staff.
• Rubric designed to:
  • Provide concrete feedback to presenters
  • Evaluate learning outcomes
  • Assist in training process
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Great</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Asks yes/no questions</td>
<td>• Asks open-ended questions</td>
<td>• Summarizes answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asks questions that are too long or too complicated</td>
<td>• Gives class time to think/answer</td>
<td>• Makes connections to other students’ answers, video, previous discussion, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Doesn’t wait for class to think/answer</td>
<td>• Re-phrases questions as needed</td>
<td>• Asks relevant follow up questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Doesn’t repeat students’ answers</td>
<td>• Repeats students’ answers</td>
<td>• Asks follow-up questions which generate additional responses from audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Speaks too quietly</td>
<td>• Maintains audience’s attention</td>
<td>• Engages audience by asking questions to explain content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reads from outline</td>
<td>• Explains content (signs/symptoms, protective strategies, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Rubric helped...

**New Presenters:**
- Building confidence and learning info
- Developing brief intro to office (elevator speech)
- Basic facilitation skills: repeating answers, giving audience time to think, where to stand

**Experienced Presenters:**
- Advanced facilitation skills: rephrasing questions, building on audience’s answers, more in-depth discussion
- Handling bigger challenges: unusual questions, talkative classes
- Preparation & co-facilitating with newer peers
Benefits of the Rubric

• Immediately:
  • Prepare students to give and receive criticism
  • Provide written feedback to peer educators
  • Improve on-going training efforts and attend to specific areas that may need additional focus

• Long Term:
  • Assist peer educators in reflecting on their growth over the semester
  • Inform the training program
  • Affirm that students are improving their skills as a result of their experiences in this position
Challenges & Suggestions

- Developing your assessment takes time and many drafts.
  - Carve the time out now to be impressive later
  - Have experienced peers review it
- Incorporate assessment into the regular routine.
  - Take time for reflection at every meeting
  - Schedule observers for presentations
  - Plan ahead for mid-year/end-of-year meetings
- Prepare students for reflection and criticism.
  - Lead by example – start with new peers observing and evaluating advisor and experienced peers.
  - Repeat often: There will always be room for improvement.
Questions, Thoughts, Suggestions?

How are you assessing what students learn from being peer educators?
Thanks!

- Aimee Hourigan:
  hourigana@uncw.edu, 910.962.7458

- CROSSROADS:
  www.uncw.edu/crossroads
  Search UNCW CROSSROADS on Facebook & Twitter