Assessment Institute Capstone Project

Overview
The capstone experience will be an ongoing individualized assessment project that allows participants to apply their assessment knowledge and skills. Capstone projects are expected to be mutually identified between participants and their supervisors and will be designed throughout the year with support from Assessment & Research staff. The capstone project must be an outcome-based assessment aligned with unit/department and divisional goals.

Components
The assessment cycle guides the capstone project and includes the following six steps:
1. Identify goals and objectives
2. Develop learning or program outcomes
3. Design assessment method
4. Collect and analyze data
5. Communicate findings
6. Refine and change program or service, if needed

Timeline
December 2015
- Identify your assessment project with your supervisor to ensure it aligns with unit/department and divisional goals
- Create an assessment plan for your capstone project

January - May 2016
- Collect and analyze data

June 2016
- Develop communication product(s) to convey key findings
- Present findings at a culminating event hosted by Assessment & Research

Summer 2016
- Finish the assessment project if not yet completed
- Continue to communicate and take action based on your findings as appropriate

Support
The office of Assessment and Research is available to help you throughout the entire process. Please email your assessment plan to Lucas Schalewski, schalewski@email.arizona and Marla Franco, marlafranco@email.arizona no later than Monday, January 11, 2016. This will provide us with a sense of your direction for this project. Throughout the process please feel free to email us with questions or concerns and/or request a meeting with either one of us.
Assessment Project Components

Goal(s)
- Broad and general statements of what the unit/department or program intends to accomplish
- Focused on core department/unit responsibilities
- Goals are aligned with the UA Strategic Plan and divisional goals

Outcomes
- Outcomes are what will be achieved or completed as a result of a program or service
- Learning outcomes are what a student is expected to do, think, or know as a result of participating in a program
- Outcomes are S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-specific)
- Outcomes are chosen purposefully to promote data-informed decision-making

Assessment Method(s)
- Method used is logical choice for measuring stated outcome
- Criteria for meeting outcome is identified
- Methods include staff responsible for data collection with a timeline

Analysis
- Determine if data needs to be cleaned
- Differentiate data by identifying parts that are descriptive versus inferential
- Select measure of central tendency based on data type
- Apply qualitative or quantitative analysis techniques

Results
- Congruence with the type of data being collected and the data analysis
- Data is interpreted within appropriate means (generalizability, response rates, demographics)

Application of Assessment Findings
- How were the findings applied towards decision-making, actions taken, and recommendations?
- Communicate and share assessment findings as appropriate
- Decisions are made to improve policies, programs, and/or services
- Recommendations are identified, communicated, and informed by the evidence
- Assessment plan for the future is adjusted, if needed