Lessons learned from a college-wide student learning outcomes evaluation project: Balancing external and internal impetuses

JOHN DAVIS, YUKIKO WATANABE
Impetuses for evaluation in FL programs

“*To what extent do you feel under pressure from the following sources to engage in program evaluation?*”

- **#1: University administration**
- **#2: University Accreditation**
- **#3: Dean of my college/school**
- **#4: Trend in FL education**
- **#5: Department faculty as a whole**

**TOP-DOWN management-driven impetus**

**BOTTOM-UP internal impetus**

**EXTERNAL professional impetus**

Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project (PI: John Norris)
Impetuses for evaluation in FL programs

“*To what extent do you feel under pressure from the following sources to engage in program evaluation?*”

1. University administration
2. University Accreditation
3. Dean of my college/school
4. Trend in FL education
5. Department faculty as a whole

**TOP-DOWN management-driven impetus**

**BOTTOM-UP internal impetus**

#5: Department faculty as a whole

“We have a social and moral responsibility towards our students and towards society at large to state as clearly as we can what it is that we do for them and why what we do is valuable.”

Different stakeholders are likely to call for

...different purposes & uses of evaluation
...different evaluation foci
...different methodologies

Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project (PI: John Norris)
Challenges:

• As a College, how can we serve both an internal impetus and external impetus for evaluation?

• What would be the most painless yet useful and meaningful way to get faculty involved in program evaluation? What support can the College provide?

• What is the best approach to build evaluation culture in departments, where evaluation may be seen as “added-work” and “no-value”?
Project

- ONLINE STUDENT EXIT SURVEYS for programs in the College of Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics (CLLL)
  - MA/PhD
  - BA
  - Certificates
  - 2-year foreign language requirement
  - Alumni
Project impetus

- Project initiator:  
  Associate Dean of CLLL

- Impetus 1  
  Problematic student data collection - CLLL Program Review report

- Impetus 2  
  Enhanced SLOs assessment/development in CLLL departments

- Impetus 3  
  Enhanced evaluation capacity
Project goals

1. Respond to internal and external needs
2. Encourage programmatic actions based on evidence
3. Build program evaluation capacity
4. Create a program evaluation system
5. Model effective evaluation practices for other colleges/higher education
Project evaluation questions

Q1: What is the value of CLLL programs?

Q2: What areas need attention in order to improve CLLL programs?

Q3: To what extent are educational program-level outcomes being met?
Evaluation users & uses

- Improve teaching & learning
- Demonstrate program values and effectiveness
- Respond to external accreditation/program review

**CLLL faculty and administrators**

**CLLL Dean’s Office**

**Future students & parents**

**External reviewers & WASC**

**Chancellor’s office, Assessment office, VCAA, CPRC**

- Improve teaching and learning
- Demonstrate program values and effectiveness
- Respond to external accreditation/program review

- Enhance evaluation capacity
- Identify and articulate CLLL outcomes
Project history (survey development)

August 2008
- Planning – CLLL-ERT discussions
- Input from evaluation experts

Sept/Oct 2008
- Initial meeting with stakeholders
- ESCIs dissemination
- First draft of common questions submitted to evaluation experts for feedback

Nov/Dec 2008
- Meetings with chairs (answering questions & determining needs)
- Department-specific questions submitted to LLL-ERT (e.g. SLOs)

CIII-Evaluation Resource Team (CIII-ERT)

“Assessment council” (Chairs, eval experts, liaisons)

CIII faculty, students
Project history (survey development)

Jan/Feb 2009
- CLLL-ERT develops surveys for each dept/sect
- Surveys are sent to departments & sections for feedback
- Modifications in collaboration with departments and sections

March 2009
- Survey piloting
- Additional survey development

April 2009
- Survey dissemination to CLLL graduates and 202-level FL language requirement students

CIII-Evaluation Resource Team (CIII-ERT)

CIII Chairs, liaisons, faculty

CIII students
Project reactions
CLLL evaluation/assessment capacity

Range of existing evaluation practice

**Rudimentary**
- No internal evaluation practice
- No evaluation committee
- Atomized assessment
- No SLOs

**Advanced**
- Established and ongoing evaluation practice
- Active evaluation committee
- Evaluation-driven assessment practice
- Established SLOs
Project Reactions

**Evaluation capacity**
- Established, ongoing evaluation practice; evaluation-driven assessment; quality SLOs
- Assessment specialist; some evaluation practice
- Past evaluation practice (nothing current)
- No internal evaluation practice; no SLOs

**Response**
- Enhancing/augmenting existing evaluation practice
- Stimulating evaluation/assessment practice
- Stimulating evaluation/assessment thinking and dispositions
- Reinvigorating evaluation practice
- Stimulating evaluation/assessment thinking and dispositions
- Minimal engagement; no engagement
Strategies taken to build evaluation culture

- consensus building
- transparent process
- rapport building
- responsive to needs
- collaboration
- feasible method

Enhance ownership to enhance USE

“Own up to it and own it” (Byrnes, 2008, p.30)
The end

Thank you

http://www.ill.hawaii.edu/eval/