



The Wide World of Methods

Kimberly Yousey, PhD.
Associate Director, Assessment Programs
StudentVoice
kyouseyelsener@studentvoice.com
716-652-9400 press 1

Goals of the program

- Introduction to data collection methods
- Provide reasons for using, pros/cons that can be used in decision making
- Resources for more information

Quantitative and Qualitative

Quantitative:

- Works with numbers
- Goal is to take large amounts of data and find one voice
- Usually deals with the who, what, where type questions

Qualitative:

- Works with words
- Goal is to take smaller amounts of data and present individual voices
- Usually asks the why and how questions

Surveys

- Type: Quantitative or Qualitative (open-ended questions)
- Design: Very specific way of asking questions
- Medium: paper or on-line
- Pros: lots of data relatively quickly and easily
- Cons: students are HIGHLY surveyed, response rates becoming a huge issue on campus, skills sets for analysis

Previously Collected Data

- Type: Quantitative or Qualitative, examples: usage data, shared survey data, judicial data, etc.
- Design: none needed, just need to get access to data
- Medium: usually electronic
- Pros: no time needed to collect data, no worry about response rates
- Cons: reliant on reliability of source, non-responsive in nature

Interviews

- Type: Qualitative (open-ended questions)
- Design: Very specific way of asking questions
- Medium: one-on-one conversations
- Pros: excellent source of finding voice in a topic, smaller number needed, individual contact, responsive in nature
- Cons: data collection more time consuming, need to be careful who are you are selecting, harder to recruit, bias in analysis

Focus Groups

- Type: Qualitative (open-ended questions)
- Design: Very specific way of asking questions
- Medium: group conversations
- Pros: excellent source of finding voice in a topic, smaller number needed, group interaction, responsive in nature, students seem to like
- Cons: data collection more time consuming, harder to recruit, good facilitators/note takers, bias in analysis

Visual Methods

- Captures images as a main form of data collection
- Examples: Pictures, x-rays, videos, art work, sculpture, etc.
- Common example: Photo Journaling
<http://www.usi.edu/depart/instires/air99%20reflex/index.htm>



- “When it rains or snows this is what we have to walk through to do our laundry or go to the convenient store.” - *Becky*



- “Psych/Forum class. Huge classroom; Dr. Donaldson, hilarious, uses microphone to teach class.” - Lynn

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Visual Methods

Strengths

More detail

Picture says a
thousand words

High levels of student
investment

Images captured for
other uses

Limitations

Threat of alterations

Smaller number of
perspectives

Time for
implementation and
follow-through

Putting it into Practice: Visual Methods

- As a group, create an image that depicts the skills, knowledge, qualities, etc. that one needs to do assessment

Document Analysis

- A form of qualitative research in which documents are used to give voice, interpretation and meaning
- Kinds of documents: flyers, magazines, agendas, blogs, emails, calendars, listservs, websites, student newspapers, papers written for a class, training manuals, handbooks, syllabi, annual reports, etc.

Document Analysis Example:

- Do deaf students have different needs than hearing students?
 - Literature review
 - Time Use (staff Calendars)
 - Duty Logs
 - Incident Reports
 - Judicial cases
 - “Complex” cases

Document Analysis

Strengths

Available

Already “collected”

Low costs

Stable

Precise

Quick timeline

Limitations

Context and language
specific

Not interactive

Not reactive

Disconnected from
their creator

Lack objectivity

Putting it into practice

Document Analysis

- Group Exercise
- Brainstorm a list of documents you can use on your campus

Rubrics

- A set of criteria that describes different levels of achievement
- Meant to be descriptive in nature and give participants a guideline for a quality performance
- Examples: can be used anywhere there is a clear learning goal, or you are observing behaviors

Rubric Example:

■ Reflective Paper

Criteria	Beginning	On Target	Exceed Expectations	Score
Personal and professional learning and growth	Reflection does not connect to personal needs and experiences and/or does not reflect an effort to seek out growth and experiences	Reflection identifies self-initiative in seeking experiences for personal and professional growth beyond requirements	Reflection analyzes areas for personal learning and growth that exceeds the requirements and shows evidence of collaborations with others in at least a beginning effort to obtain additional experiences	

(Maki, p. 122)

[Rubric]

Strengths

Clearly sets standards

Awareness of
expectations

Consistency in
grading

Gauge your own
performance

Limitations

Excludes items not on
rubric

Less flexible/harder to
change mid-stream

Timeline – need to
develop well ahead
of time

[One Minute Assessments]

- Very short assessments of what a participant is “taking away” from their experience
- Most often used in programming evaluations or classroom settings
- Examples: Minute papers (or e-mail minutes), one-sentence summary, muddiest point, word journal, direct paraphrasing, application cards, plus/delta cards, Quizdome (Health Center)

One Minute Assessments

Strengths

- Summary of key points from students' perspective
- Quickly identify areas of weakness and strength
- Track changes over time
- Non-verbal
- Use students words to describe programs and services
- “One-minute” short time commitment
- Immediate feedback

Limitations

- Non-responsive/reactive
- May lose specific information
- Hard to interpret
- Need to collect over time
- Logistics of how/when to collect and compile need to be planned well and in advance

One Minute Assessment Example

- RA programming
- “Please take 1 minute to let us know the most positive things you got out of this program”
- “Please take 1 minute to let us know the least helpful part of this program”

[Other Alternatives to Consider:]

- Historical Research
- Unobtrusive Measures
- Portfolios
- Secondary Measures
- Observations
- Mixed Methods

[One final go-around]

- Look at your questions or outcomes from this morning, brainstorm in small groups different methods you could use to examine them, think big and think about how different ways of collecting data will yield different results

Sources of Inspiration and Instruction:

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Questions??