Moving Surveys from Interesting to Useful to Action

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More studies end up filed under "I" for 'Interesting' or gather dust on someone's shelf because we fail to package the results in ways that move decision makers to make changes based on the study. In fact, how a study is formatted and distributed may be more important than its results." (Schuh and Upcraft, 2001, p. 23)
Good Assessment

You have to start with a solid assessment…
Making decisions on bad data is similar or worse than making decisions on no data.
**Action Must be Based on Good Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think about:</th>
<th>Is the assessment design solid? (research based, valid, reliable, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the measures relate to the mission/program?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are the measures actionable? (useful versus interesting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the assessment implementation solid?</td>
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Analysis Matters

Sometimes you have to do the heavy lifting.
Information Surplus

- Large volume of data
- Data from various sources
- Unclear data
- Data captured from different points in time
When faced with lots of data, what strategies do people use?

- They look for help (bold, bullets, graphs, executive summary, etc.).
- They delay and/or never get to it.
- They skim to find something “interesting.”
  - Personal interests or campus priorities
  - Low numbers
  - Something that confirms or contradicts what they believe
- They look at comparisons.
  - Changes in time
  - Differences between groups
  - Differences between our institution and peers

Is this what you want them to do?
Making Sense of the Data

Sometimes it’s how you report the information...
Think about

Are the results accessible (easy to find, get to, etc.)?

Are the results easy to understand (intuitive, visual)?

Do the results focus attention on what is important?
Think about

Are these results presented in a way that fits my audience (learning style, level of expertise, etc.)?

Do the results link to my audience’s responsibilities?

Do these results include topics they care about?

Do these results reflect “my” students?
Criteria for Best Practice:
Ethics, Transparency, Ease, Fit, and Usefulness
Let's look at some reporting and think about these things…
Criteria 1: Ethical Use

- Thoughtful Decisions
  - Who should have access to the results?
  - When should people have access to the results?
  - What level of access should they have?
    - Group summaries
    - Individual level data
    - Comparative data

- Need to consider/protect
  - Individual participant confidentiality
  - Department or school confidentiality
  - Sensitive subject matter
Criteria 2: Ease of Access

• Accessibility
  • How hard is the information to access or find?
  • What do I have to know or do to access it?

• Format
  • What does this look like (size of font, appearance, etc.)?
  • Do I want to read this? Does it draw me in? Does it intimidate me or overwhelm me?

• Placement / Organization
  • Can I find what I need quickly?
  • Do I need training to use this?
Criteria 3: Ease of Understanding

• Explanations / Text
  • Is the necessary explanation provided?
  • Is the language clear?
  • Is the text written for easy comprehension? Or does it require statistical explanations?
  • Is specific training or expertise needed to understand this?

• Accuracy
  • Does the reporting accurately and truthfully reflect the results?

• Format
  • How is the information provided (text, tables, charts, visuals, etc.)?
  • Are visual representations easy to understand, clearly labeled, etc.?
Criteria 4: Fits the Audience

- Quantitative or qualitative: How comfortable are they with statistics? Or do they prefer narratives?
- Interest and experience: How much explanation is needed regarding the...
  - Topic?
  - Assessment methods?
  - Results?
  - Implications?
- Time available
- Level
  - Will they use university level data? College level? Department level? Individual level?
Strong Reports also

What should I pay attention to?

- Focus Attention
- Ethical Use
- Ease of Access
- Ease of Understanding
- Fit to Audience
Criteria 5: Usefulness and Links to Decision Making and Practice

Does the report

- Highlight and emphasize the important results?
- Differentiate between important and non-important results?
- Discuss the implications of the results?
- Clearly link the results to practice?
- Help professionals determine what should be done?
Let’s look at some examples

Use the criteria to make suggestions.
MAP-Works Student Reports

- Student reporting
  - Individualized provided directly to students within days of assessment
- Three main reporting purposes
  - Purpose 1: Realign expectations
  - Purpose 2: Plan for their success
  - Purpose 3: Connect with appropriate campus resources
Student Report

October 31, 2011

MAKING ACHIEVEMENT POSSIBLE

GETTING STARTED AT BALL STATE

TRADITIONAL ACHIEVEMENT PREDICTORS

Here’s where you stand compared to the average BSU freshman of 2001 with respect to test scores (either SAT or ACT).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT VERBAL</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT MATH</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT MATH</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT ENGLISH</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(An “N/A” means your score is not available.)

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Most BSU students rate themselves average or above average on academic self-confidence.

Based on your self-assessment profile, you seem confident you have the necessary skills and personal abilities to succeed at Ball State. Should any unexpected problems arise, be sure to ask for help. Many of today’s freshmen find college more difficult than they expected. There is a significant advantage of the help that is offered to them. A list of available services appears on the last page of this report.

STUDY HOURS OUTSIDE OF CLASS $S PER WEEK

Jane, in college, study and homework involve much more time than many students expect. About one quarter of last year’s class had academic difficulty. It is recommended that students spend at least two hours studying for every hour spent in class. You reported you planned to spend the recommended amount of time studying. That’s great! You are on the right path. Be sure to follow through.

GRADES (EXPECTED VS. ACTUAL)

As shown on the right, many freshmen overestimate the grades they will receive. Value suggests that earning a B or A average by grade 10 is actually achieved by only 10 percent. The percentage received an average grade of C, which means they were on an academic probation.

CONFIDENCE IS GREAT!

Jane, you anticipate making good grades during your freshman year. Having confidence in your ability to succeed is a good start but only a beginning. You also need to attend classes regularly and practice good study habits. Even students who are doing well overall can benefit from assistance. If you wish to improve your performance in one or more of your courses, do the following:

1. Talk with your instructors to get suggestions for improving your learning strategies and your grades. Most instructors are willing to help you get the best possible grades.
2. Seek out-of-class tutorial assistance. Tutorial help to improve your grades in freshman-level courses is available through the Learning Center and individual departments that offer the courses.

YOUR DESTINATION

Going to college without goals can be like taking a trip without a destination. It’s hard to be committed to the journey if there is no goal or reason. Aim high, expect success. Set goals quickly if you experience difficulty.

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL GOAL

More than 85 percent of 2001 freshmen indicated they were seeking a Bachelor’s degree or an Associate’s degree.

Jane Doe

WHAT NOW?

You’ve made a very important decision and commitment by enrolling at Ball State University. It is up to you to think about challenges that lie ahead and begin MAP-IT for your future. Now that you’ve read this report, the next step is to see your academic advisor. Phone 285-1161.
Think about the needs of students

- Students are tech-savvy
  - Not interested in paper report
  - Want timely, if not immediate, responses
  - Want things personalized
- Format must be engaging & easy to read
  - Student language
  - Graphics and photos
  - Bullet points rather than large sections of text
  - Easy to navigate

Want to see what we did?
CORE ACADEMIC BEHAVIORS

Turn by Turn Directions
Katie's Core Academic Behaviors

1) Attends class
2) Pays attention in class
3) Takes good notes in class

Traveler's Status:
Likelihood of good GPA

Potential Issues?

Travelers' Advisory
Travelers' Tips

Next Stop: Advanced Academic Behaviors...
SIGHTS TO SEE

Welcome, Katie Scott!

Career Center  Library
Counseling Center  Multicultural Center
Disability Services  Recreation Services
Financial Aid  Student Life
Health Center  Veteran Student Services
Learning Center  Writing Center

What's this all about?
2011-2012 MAP-Works First Year Fall Transition Report

Welcome Courtney Adolph! The following report is about you created from your responses to the Fall Transition Survey. It's designed to help support you and ensure your success here at North State University.

Did you know...

While 9 out of 10 students anticipate making all A/Bs...

...only 66% do.

The truth is, there are many factors that play a part in your academic success and it's easy to get held back by something you least expect. Class attendance, study habits, even adequate sleep all have an affect on your ability to achieve your goals.

Earning the Grades You Want

Connecting with Others

Basic Academic Skills

- Writing Composition
- Reading Comprehension
- Math Ability
- Problem-Solving Skills

Key

- Good
- Needs Work
- Issue

Campus Involvement

Sense of Belonging

You

Middle 2/3 of Peers
Individual student data for faculty and staff

- Residence hall staff
- Academic advisors
- First-Year Seminar Instructors

Three main reporting purposes

- **Purpose 1:** Identify students who may benefit from personalized attention — identifying students
- **Purpose 2:** Provide information for one-on-one meetings with students — individual meetings
- **Purpose 3:** Provide input regarding programming and training needs
# Advisor Report

## General Information
- **Name:** ASSEET DOE (99999999)
- **Advisor:** WILLIAM SMITH
- **Residence Hall:** ACAD 201
- **Birth Date:**
- **Minority:**
- **HS: ACT-English**: ACT-English
- **SAT**: SAT-MATH 650, SAT-Verbal 600
- **Non-Test**: Y Y

## Pre-College Decisions
- **Program type:** college prep
- **Preparation:** very supportive
- **Course of Study:** among the best

## Goals
- **Immediate goal:** Bachelor’s degree
- **Long-term goal:** Master’s degree
- **Most important Goal:** gains skill for career

## Expectations
- **Deep-seated reasons:**
  - Temporarily: No
  - Permanent: No

## Expected Grades
- **Overall GPA:** A
- **English:** A
- **Math:** A

## Anticpated Needs Help With
- **Academic:** no
- **Personal/Emotional:** no
- **Career/Work:** no

## Plans for College Involvement
- **Resident hours:** 15
- **Study hours:** 54
- **Work hours:** 15
- **Community hours:** 10
- **Reason for employment:**

## Personal Reflections
- **Choosing BSU:**
  1. Advice of counselor, teacher, etc.
  2. Recommended by employer
  3. Friends attending BSU
  4. Family wanted me to go
  5. Advice of BSU student
  6. Freshman Connections program
  7. Recruitment efforts of BSU
  8. Location
  9. Cost of tuition and fees
  10. Availability of financial aid
  11. Reputation for good teaching
  12. Availability of specific courses
  13. Reputation of a major or program
  14. Graduates get good jobs
  15. Emphasis on computer technology
  16. Identity with fellow students
  17. Reputation of academic support
  18. BSU in right size
  19. Accessible for disabled students
- **Most important reason:**

## Major and Career Plans
- **Major choice:**

## Campus Involvement
- **Activities:**
  - Athletic events
  - Campus clubs
  - Student performance

## Participation
- **Independent study/research:**
- **Outside study sessions:**
  - BSU non-college athletics
  - International/national sports
  - Social fraternity/sorority
  - Campus government
  - Student organization
  - Student organization clubs
  - Leadership role

## Residence Hall Involvement
- **Help organize or plan event:**
- **Participate in hall government:**
- **Attend educational programs:**
- **Participate in floor/hall event:**
- **Participate in weekend activity:**

## Reflections on Residence Hall
- **Staffed with hall staff:**
- **Residence hall staff helpful:**
- **Rapport with hall facilities:**
- **Good relations with roommates:**
- **Satisfied with social activities:**
- **Made friends in hall:**
- **Can study in room:**
- **Develop rules with roommates:**
- **Understand hall policies:**

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## Ethical Use
- Familiarity with subject
- Instructor's influence
- Highly recommended careers
- High salaries in field
- Friends major/field
- Challenge
- Course taken
- Confidence in success
- Advisor's help
- Counselor's help
- Work life expectations

## Ease of Access

## Ease of Understanding

## Fit to Audience

## Focus Attention

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Think about the needs of staff

- Staff need to know which students are at risk.
- Time is precious.
- Usefulness is key.
  - Format must be easy to use and understand.
  - Best formats require little or no training.
- Reporting must clearly link to specific tasks that staff already do.
New Staff Reports

Talking Points

Information found on this page comes from either survey data or institutional data uploaded about the student.

- **Weaknesses**: Information either potentially places that student at risk or are areas that, if addressed, could potentially improve their success.
- **Strengths**: These are items that the student excels at or are things that are positive for the student.

**Weaknesses**

- **Thu Sep 15**
  - **Fall Transition - Number of Study Hours Per Week**
    - Expects to study less than 10 hours a week. Research shows this is likely not an adequate amount. Discuss how difficult college work can be and the need to devote an adequate amount of time.
  - **Fall Transition - Test Anxiety (Stressors)**
    - Student is experiencing high levels of test anxiety. Refer to academic support services.

**Strengths**

- **Thu Sep 15**
  - **Fall Transition - Basic Academic Behaviors**
    - Reports good basic academic behaviors (i.e., taking good notes and turning in required homework). Strong predictor of academic performance. Students typically overestimate these skills; may still need some improvement. Ask about grades on assignments/tests.
  - **Fall Transition - High School GPA (Self-Reported)**
    - HS GPA of 3.00 or higher (self-reported).
New Staff Reports
Dashboards

Success Markers

**Academic**
- Academic Integration
- Course Difficulties
- Academic Self-Efficacy
- Communications and Analytical Skills
- Commitment to Earning a Degree

**Socio-Emotional**
- Social Integration
- Commitment to the Institution
- Satisfaction with Institution
- Homesickness: Distressed
- Peer Connections
- Living Environment (On or Off Campus)
- On-Campus Living: Social Aspects
- On-Campus Living: Roommates

**Performance and Expectations**
- Number of AP/College Credit Classes
- High School Cumulative GPA
- Entrance Test Scores
- Number of Credit Hours Enrolled
- Parents'/Guardians' Educational Level
- Expected Grades this Term

**Behaviors and Activities**
- Basic Academic Behaviors
- Advanced Academic Behaviors
- Number of Study Hours Per Week
- Class Attendance
- Campus Involvement
- Self-Discipline
- Time Management

**Financial Means**
- Ability to Pay Next Term's Tuition/Fees
- Ability to Pay Monthly Living Expenses

**Special Population Concerns**
- Off-Campus Students
Think about the impact on decision making

- Those in decision making positions need to know the bottom line
- What will be most useful for them?
  - Pinpoint areas/groups that need the most attention
  - Prioritize the outcomes of the research
  - Illustrate where they will see the most “return on their investment”
  - Use benchmarking when possible
As a campus decision maker, how can I best use this?
Final Thoughts

Questions & Discussion
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