



2019 Institute for
New Faculty Developers
at UNC Greensboro

Workshop: From Needs Assessment to Action Planning

Thursday, August 1, 10:45 am – noon

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Slides available in Google Drive: <https://tinyurl.com/INFD2019-Horii> or [click here](#).

Definitions and Workshop Outcomes

Needs Assessment:

A systematic process for determining needs, or "gaps," between current and desired conditions

- Apply evidence-based needs assessment approaches to your unique context.

Action Plans:

Steps and strategies to be used in service of meeting goal(s), which may emerge from needs assessment

- Prepare to move from needs assessment insights to action plans (and actions) with ease.

“Critical engagement requires questioning, forming and challenging opinions, and feeling outrage or inspiration. It is about helping individuals find their voices and learn to trust their instincts. And it is about teaching the value of what [people] know and encouraging them to use their knowledge in the service of their academic, personal, social and political lives.”

– Amy Scharf, *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education*

1. Opening Reflection

Circle one of the following likely focus areas for your needs assessment work:

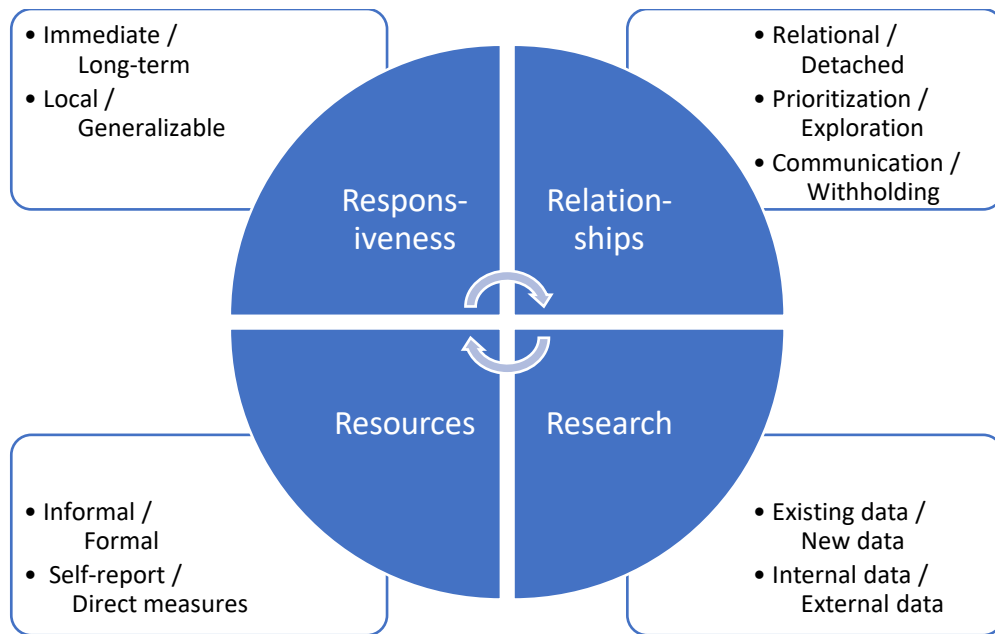
For that focus area, begin exploring the heuristic below: make notes about what you **already know** and what you **do not yet know** about *the people, the context, and the evidence*.

	Individual, Departmental, Institutional...
People: <i>Stakeholders, needs, capacities, potentials, constraints...</i>	
Context: <i>Mission, goals, population(s), histories, cultures, challenges...</i>	
Evidence: <i>Scholarship, research, data (local/unpublished; broad/published); learning, teaching, educational development...</i>	

Heuristic adapted from Felten, Little, Ortquist-Ahrens, & Reder, 2013

Discussion:

2. Frameworks and Approaches to Needs Assessment



Four Rs (Responsiveness, Relationships, Resources, Research)
from Wright, Lohe, Pinder-Grover, and Ortquist-Ahrens, 2018

For each pair of characteristics below, does your needs assessment focus area lean toward one side or the other? What could that imply for your approach?

Immediate	↔	Long-term
Local	↔	Generalizable
Relational	↔	Detached
Prioritization	↔	Exploration
Communication	↔	Withholding
Informal	↔	Formal
Self-report	↔	Direct
Existing data	↔	New data
Internal data	↔	External data

3. Action Planning

Read one of the following scenarios (suggestion: chose the scenario associated your likely needs assessment focus area). With your small group, discuss how elements of an action plan that you think are especially important.

Scenario 1: Program/Service

Routine program evaluation data for a long-standing, high-profile educational development event indicates that aspects of the program are no longer meeting participant needs.

Whereas participants used to enjoy a concentrated set of workshops and discussions on different topics, they are now asking for programs that go into greater depth on the same topic, spread out over time so that they have a chance to apply new ideas and receive feedback on their efforts. However, campus leaders love this particular high-profile event and consider the attention and prominence to be important.

Scenario 2: Center

At the invitation of the Provost, several department chairs recently attended a conference on STEM education. They heard a talk by a prominent scientist who has been advocating for improving undergraduate STEM education through a particular model that focuses on departments as the main location for change. They are excited about this idea and have asked if your center could start a program based on this model. You are aware, though, that in recent focus groups you held as part of an informal needs assessment for your center, faculty expressed ambivalence when asked about where and with what kinds of communities they prefer to engage in conversations about teaching—some expressed a reluctance to do so in their departments, and preferred strongly a multi-disciplinary setting where colleagues were not likely to be in positions evaluating them in the future.

Scenario 3: Institutional Change

You oversee a small center for teaching and learning, which has been operating effectively for about 10 years and has an excellent reputation for quality, relevance, and trust among the faculty, who primarily teach undergraduate courses. The president of your college has indicated that equity and inclusion are high priorities for the institution, where demographics of incoming students have become more diverse in recent years. You recently conducted a needs assessment survey in order to examine your center's programming and ensure that it is keeping pace with changing interests and challenges faced by faculty. Although "inclusive teaching" and "diversity in the classroom" were included on the survey, they were ranked as low priorities by the faculty, who also, relative to your experience, seem to have overestimated their own expertise and skills in these areas.

4. Synthesis and Discussion

Take a few minutes to synthesize your main take-aways, insights, and remaining questions below. We will use the remaining time to address shared questions and additional scenarios you have for the group.

References and Resources:

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