COLLEGE STUDENT UNIONS: WHAT PROFESSIONALS ARE DOING TO ASSESS
LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR STUDENT PROGRAM BOARD LEADERS

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degree of Doctor of Education.

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ABSTRACT

The descriptive survey employed in this study explored current assessment practices of learning outcomes, including the resources used and the learning outcomes assessed for student programming board leaders. The researcher collected data through document review and phone interviews. She interviewed 21 student activities and union advisors who are responsible for the assessment activities for their respective student programming boards. Twenty of the 21 are from AAU institutions. One of the interviewees worked at a non-AAU institution that fit the other sample selection criteria. Key findings included that all 21 student programming boards were performing some type of assessment in regard to events, and a majority of professionals had implemented learning outcomes for their student leaders. Through document review and interviews, the top learning outcomes fell within nine themes: 1) communication and collaboration, 2) leadership development, 3) event management, 4) multiculturalism and civic engagement, 5) critical thinking and creativity 6) intrapersonal development, 7) resilience and personal wellness, 8) traditions and institutional connections, and 9) customer service. This study is important as it determined that student activities and union professionals immerse themselves in assessment of some type, be it event assessment or learning outcomes assessment. The student activities and union professionals are spending a great deal of time and effort on these activities, driven by their perceived need to talk about their programs within an assessment context. While they hear the call for greater accountability, they are not being provided with the skills or resources needed to engage in effective assessment practices.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

What is today's college student union? The Association of College Unions International (ACUI) defines unions as the center of the college community, serving students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests. By whatever form or name, a college union is an organization offering a variety of programs, activities, services, and facilities that, when taken together, represent a well-considered venue for the community life of the college (Associations of College Unions International, 2015). Butts et al. (2012) asserts, "the union plays a considerable role also as one of the teaching and laboratory resources of the university" (p. 69). With that said, the college union must be able to tell the story of how it supports the university's academic mission, as university administrators place value on the union's funding and resource allocation (De Sawal & Yakaboski, 2014).

With the limited knowledge of the role of college unions in student learning and self-efficacy development, practitioners need more evidence on the importance of the college union to the university mission and to higher education in general. College unions have been a part of the higher education landscape for the last 100 years, yet their story is still relatively unknown. The early college unions in the U.S. were born out of the idea that students wanted a space to gather and debate the issues of the day. Out of this simple beginning, grew the college union idea (Butts et al., 2012).

Professionals working in college student unions need to embrace the assessment movement in a time of declining resources and increased demand for outcomes based assessment (De Sawal & Yakboski, 2014). Over the last couple of decades, higher education professionals have furthered the assessment movement (De Sawal & Yakboski, 2014). Assessment means to

"gather, analyze, and interpret evidence which describes…effectiveness" (Stage & Manning, 2003, p.5). Additionally, Bresciani (2006) explains that student affairs professionals want to know the learning outcomes of their efforts in working with students. Learning outcomes are not what professionals are going to do to the student, but rather what professionals want the student to know or do as a result of an initiative, course or activity they implement. Typically, professionals in college unions are assessing clientele satisfaction and cost-effectiveness of programming (De Sawal & Yakboski, 2014). However, in today's environment of accountability, college union professionals need to assess student learning.

One of the primary services provided by student unions is programming of student activities. Rullman and Harrington, (2014) assert, "a relationship exists between student learning and student involvement, and that campus community, including the physical design, has an impact on student learning, academic persistence, and student retention" (p. 43). Astin's theory of student involvement (1977) supports this assertion and indicates that student success in higher education directly corresponds to students' levels of involvement. Astin defined this involvement as "the time and effort expended by the student in activities that relate directly to the institution and its' programs" (p.21). The student union plays a critical role in student involvement as it offers students an array of personal, social, and volunteer or job-related opportunities to become involved with new educational experiences. Rullman and Harrington (2014) expand the notion that the student union is a critical part of learning stating,

> Community created in college unions can help individuals apply what they have learned beyond the classroom, while also experimenting with meaningful interaction and a deepening of understanding about self and others. College unions provide such opportunities through, for example, student programming boards and student

organizations that plan lectures, cultural activities, and social events in college unions to educate and challenge other students, while simultaneously offering powerful learning experiences for students who comprise these boards and organizations. (p. 43).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine current assessment practices used by unions to assess learning outcomes, resources used, and results of assessment activities for student programming board leaders and the students attending such planned events at select institutions that are members of the Association of American Universities (AAU). The researcher collected data through document review and phone interviews with each lead programming board advisor responsible for the assessment efforts of his or her respective board. By conducting the research, the researcher learned what assessment activities are conducted by student activities and union professionals for students participating on a programming board or attending planned events.

Research Questions

In an effort to focus the research on a logical starting point, the essential research questions for this study were as follows:

1. Do student activities and union professionals have assessment plans for student leaders and volunteer members serving on a programming board?

2. What, if any, learning outcomes are assessed and how were the learning outcomes developed?

3. How are student activities and union professionals administering assessments for learning outcomes and events based assessment?

4. Who is involved in the assessment planning process?

5. How are student activities and union professionals trained on assessment?

6. How are student activities and union professionals using what is learned from their outcomes assessment in training and development of student programming board leaders and how is the event assessment associated with the programming board events used?

Sample Selection

The researcher determined the student unions at public institutions that are members of the Association for American Universities (AAU) were an appropriate starting point for this study because they represent strong models in higher education. Universities that belong to AAU are on the leading edge of innovation, scholarship, and solutions that contribute to the nation's economy, security, and well-being (Association of American Universities, 2013). The AAU is a nonprofit association consisting of 62 leading public and private research universities in the United States and Canada. Founded in 1900 to advance the international standing of U.S. research universities, AAU focuses on issues that are important to research-intensive universities, such as funding for research, research policy issues, and graduate and undergraduate education (Association of American Universities, 2013). The researcher interviewed 21 individuals. Of the 21, 20 are from AAU institutions. In addition, the author included one institution in the sample (Kansas State University) that was not an AAU institution but that otherwise met the selection criteria. The professionals interviewed were from large, public comprehensive very high research institutions as classified by the Carnegie Foundation. All had student populations of over 20,000 students.

Additionally, all of the individuals asked to participate were members of the Association of College Unions International (ACUI). At each institution, the student union supervised the programming board; at each institution, the programming board was tightly coupled with the union operations.

Significance of the Study

Unfortunately, research is limited on whether student activities and union professionals, specifically those who advise a student programming board in a student union context, have assessment plans in place and are assessing the learning outcomes of student leader experiences. The importance of assessment comes chiefly from the push for greater accountability, requiring colleges and universities to invest resources in identifying and measuring student learning outcomes both within and outside of the classroom (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Martin & Seifert, 2011; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Pressure for greater accountability comes from external organizations (such as accreditation agencies and state legislatures) or internally applied by university administrators. A recent example of the increased demand for accountability measures was an Iowa state legislative mandate for course-level continuous improvement reporting at their three public universities (Flaherty, 2013). By state law, faculty who teach 300-plus person course must create and use "formative and summative assessments" and submit a plan for using those assessments to improve student teaching (Flaherty, 2013). While this example involves classroom learning and is not required of student affairs professionals, it does suggest that there is an external interest in accountability.

An October 2010 occasional paper published by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment discusses accreditation and assessment as inevitably linked concepts (Kuh & Ikenberry 2009). The paper finds that regional accreditation is one of the biggest drivers of assessing student learning. Chief academic officers at regionally accredited institutions cite accreditation as the primary reason their institutions assess student learning (Kuh & Ikenberry 2009). Again, this is an example of an external call for accountability that could be perceived to have an effect on the work conducted by student affairs professionals.

Student learning can happen in a variety of in or out of the classroom contexts throughout a student's university experience. Student programming boards within student unions provide activities for students that their peers plan, coordinate, and execute and serve a college campus by involving students in the campus community outside of the classroom. Student programming boards spend thousands of dollars and their student leaders spend countless hours to offer a variety of event options for students to experience. Such programs provide leadership opportunities for students, build campus community, and offer educational experiences in a different format than traditional classroom learning. Without research to support the endeavors of union student programming boards, there is an absence of data to demonstrate the effect these activities have on student learning. To assess learning for those students involved in activities planning, it is important to understand what types of assessment activities student activities and union professionals are undertaking. Additionally, assessment activities for program audiences serve as a first step in determining if these activities affect student learning.

The lack of research on the effectiveness of student programming boards makes it difficult to defend their importance to administrators at varying levels, student fee granting committees, and parents who may not understand their value and question the level of funding and other resources student programming boards receive. Professional associations, such as the National Association of Campus Activities, the Association of College and Unions International, and university student affairs divisions can use the information generated from this study to inform student activities and union professionals of the importance of assessment and the use of student-learning outcomes. By identifying the degree to which surveyed institutions have adopted learning outcomes, the results will facilitate the sharing of best practices among union professionals. In addition, the study will provide a framework for student activities and union

professionals to allocate and justify resources as well as contribute to the climate of accountability sought by accreditation agencies, governments, students, and parents.

Summary

This descriptive study sought to explore current assessment practices of learning outcomes, including the resources used and the learning outcomes assessed for programming board leaders. The researcher collected data through phone interviews with each programming board advisor responsible for the assessment efforts of his or her respective board. By conducting the research, the researcher learned what student activities and union professionals are doing to assess the outcomes for students participating on a programming board or attending planned events.

The first chapter provided a framework for understanding the study by offering the relevance of the topic and providing the sample selection process and research questions. It has become increasingly important to defend and provide evidence of program effectiveness in higher education as funding mechanisms have shifted greatly in recent years. Union programs are not immune to these changes and, therefore, must prove their worth and effectiveness in order to maintain their status as a strong component on college campuses.

The student union plays a critical role in student involvement and learning outside of the classroom as it offers students opportunities to grow and develop. In order to understand the effect unions and student programming boards have on student learning outside of the classroom, assessment is crucial. This study's examination of assessment trends in AAU institutions provided a clearer picture of the current state of assessment practices for union programs. Leading in that examination, the review of literature provided increased context by examining

the history of college student unions and the evolution of assessment in student affairs, along with establishing a framework for the significance of assessment to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview and discussion of the literature related to seven key topic areas: student union history, the need for assessment, student affairs history with assessment, common assessments used in student affairs, developing assessment plans, importance of outcomes-based assessments, and the research specific to student affairs in assessment. Increasingly, student affairs professionals need to provide evidence that students are learning from their co-curricular experiences on campus. The task of assessing and documenting student learning outside the traditional classroom presents a unique set of challenges:

> There are no grades given at the end of an experience; the skills development may not
>
> fit into one academic area; and there are no national standards or summative curriculum.
>
> Students learn in multiple and varied contexts, whether be it from resolving roommate
>
> conflicts, managing a student organization's budget, or making a persuasive speech in
>
> front of the student government (Collins & Roberts, 2012, forward).

Complicating an already complex issue are the differing opinions of key stakeholders (such as accrediting agencies, legislators, families, employers, faculty, and students) about what individuals should be learning in college (Collins & Roberts, 2012). Student affairs administrators and their respective units provide the majority of the programs and services outside of the classroom. Bresciani, Zelna and Anderson (2004) believe that assessment should be completed by multiple sources in order to truly represent involvement in a learner-centered context. By utilizing multiple sources, one can better understand and further assess the quality of undergraduate education inside and outside of the classroom at an institution.

Historical Background of Student Unions

This section gives a background on the history of student unions. It is important to have an understanding of the college student union for the purposes of this study as the student union serves as the administrative organization for student programming boards to execute their events.

Throughout its history, the college union has served many functions. The union originally started as British debating societies. Over time, the union evolved as, "a place where all could meet on common ground" and it provided many of the services still available today: dining halls, lounges, game rooms, student offices and student programming boards (Butts et al., 2012; Henry, 2004, p.182).

At the turn of the 19th century, American colleges adopted the idea of unions from British unions. At this point, unions were open to male students only. Harvard University established the first union debating organization in the United States in 1832. In 1896, the first union building, Houston Hall, was founded at the University of Pennsylvania. The purpose of Houston Hall, "was to provide all students of various departments a place to meet on common ground and to furnish them with every available facility for passing their leisure hours in harmless recreation and amusement" (Butts et al., 2012, p.9). In 1901, the Harvard Union building was established; its objective was to "promote comradeship among members of Harvard University, by providing at Cambridge "a suitable club house for social purposes" (Butts et al., 2012, p.8).

In the early decades of the 20th century, the notion of a social and recreational center grew on American campuses. Many student senates voted to assess fees on students in order to pay for a portion of the building (Butts et al., 2012). Prior to the 1920s, unions were open to male students only (Butts et al., 2012).

After World War I, the student union movement's "utilitarian" and "social" aspects merged with society's impulse to memorialize the students who died in battle (Butts et al., 2012). Unions started as war memorials, with universities and alumni associations conducting fundraising campaigns across the country to fund their construction as such. The memorial movement was criticized by faculty as a convenient way to gain necessary facilities and services for campuses (Butts et al., 2012). However, the union movement continued to gain momentum with in loco parentis (meaning in place of the parent) still in practice on campuses. Student unions were providing a way to supervise students' free time and distracting them from community diversions such as drinking establishments (Butts et al., 2012). After these early years, unions became such an integral part of the college landscape that their own association was established.

In the 1920s, debate activity tapered off and the unions made greater provisions for games, meetings, and food (Butts et al., 2012). The American union took on more of a social center role, a place to meet friends, and eat. With these new additions starting in the 1930's, student unions were on their way to becoming social-cultural centers, embracing the interests of the total university community including students, faculty, and graduates (Towns, 2005).

The Association of College Unions-International (ACUI) was founded in 1914 before World War I ended and eighteen years after the founding of the first student union in the United States (Associations of College Unions International, 2015). ACUI's role in the early years was to provide a centralized source of information dedicated to the understanding and improvement of student union operations. Each phase of the union's evolution created implications for management of the building and its programs. In the early 1900s, student clubhouses required only caretakers to maintain a clean, comfortable environment for the men. From the 1920s to the

1930s, Unions began evolving into a cultural and programming organization and required increasingly diverse and sophisticated skills in the administrator (Butts et al., 2012). This change necessitated that organizations such as ACUI provide further training and development for student union professionals.

Over the last 20 years, the trend in college unions has been to build new, state-of-the-art facilities or renovate existing structures to serve their evolving role. Many universities have integrated the "union experience" into their recruitment process. For example, the student union is typically the building most often included among facilities showcased to prospective students and their parents (Henry, 2004). "It has also become 'one-stop shopping' for critical student services such as orientation, admissions, and student activities offices – similar to shopping malls that students frequent" (Coffey & Wood-Steed, 2001, p. 352).

ACUI identified the goal of a union was to develop students and their intellects (Associations of College Unions International, 2015). Traditionally considered the "hearthstone" or "living room" of the campus, today's union is considered the gathering place of the college (Butts et al., 2012). The union provides services that members of the college community need in their daily lives and creates an environment for encountering and understanding others through formal and informal association (Associations of College Unions International, 2015). Porter Butts, long time president of ACUI, coined the term "College Union" instead of "Student Union" to capture the broader community concept that unions serve. Today, on college campuses, students and alumni continue to refer to the "student union" regardless of the name of the facility (Butts et al., 2012).

Knell and Latta (2006) provide a description of student unions that embodies many individual descriptions:

As part of the educational experience, the college union is where principles of community are developed and new ideas shape the student perspective. That perspective is one of inclusiveness, a deeper appreciation of our world, and a discovered confidence in oneself. This is the very purpose of higher education. The role of the facility interwoven with that purpose and underscores the value of the college union to the overall educational objective as well as its contribution to society.

The college union is far more than a building; it is a life experience. Its architecture simply houses that experience and provides the physical framework for the programs and activities of this dynamic facility. Ultimately, the interplay of the architecture, people, and ideas makes the college union a truly amazing entity. The whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts.

The success of the college union embedded in its mission, to be a well-considered plan for the community life of the college. As an essential element in the overall fabric and learning climate of the university, the union contributes to the common experience of all. It is the hearthstone, living room, and crossroads for campus life all rolled into one. From its roots as a place for common debate to its outreach into a new millennium, the college union remains dynamic. Like a river that is always flowing, so too are the direction, needs, and architecture of the college union continuously changing (p. 161).

Early American student unions created the union programming board to assist in developing the student union as a community center on campus. The programming function of the union emerged in the mid-1920s to serve students outside the Greek system (Carlson, 1989). Readings, art shows, recreation tournaments, and sponsored lectures were available to students through the union (Carlson, 1989). Porter Butts, "elder spokesman for the College Union

Movement," was a student member of the Wisconsin Union before graduating and going to work full-time as manager of the Wisconsin Union in the 1920s. An example of the unions' transition to serving a wider population was shared by Butts in an interview with McMillian (1984a) where Butts recalled his involvement with the "Union Vodvil," the Dramatic Club, the student newspaper, and a musical show.

Unions started to create student programming boards in the early 1930s as a way to popularize the union and make them the center of activity for students (Butts et al., 2012). A student programming board is a group of students who provide a social network for student involvement similar to student government or fraternities and sororities. Student programming boards are considered a student organization just like other campus club organizations. Student programming boards, were, and still today are tasked with the challenge of creating activities sponsored by the union and on campus such as movie showings, dances, lectures, and concerts. Student programming boards serve an important purpose on a college campus by providing activities to students that their peers plan, coordinate, and execute as a means to engage students in the campus community outside of the classroom.

Student programming boards also focus on the development of the students who serve on the board. Students programming boards typically select a group of students to serve as the leaders in charge of the board, making programming and budgetary decisions, and directing student volunteer members. College union professionals created student programming boards as way to meet students' expressed needs for peer association and involvement (Butts et al., 2012). With these boards, unions provide a mechanism for voluntary integration of education and social life through exposure to cultural programs, through interactions with faculty and alumni, and

through social activities and to encourage a sense of community, and "unity" (Butts et al., 2012; Carlson, 1989; Horowitz, 1987; Humphreys, 1946).

In summary, the student union as described by its history, is important to the fabric of the college campus in creating community life. However, as discussed in the next section college student unions are not exempt from accountability.

Need for Assessment

With the development of student programming boards, unions play an intrinsic role in the social and academic development of the student. Furthermore,

> College union professionals need to create assessment metrics to demonstrate the need
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> for the community created by the college union. The two college union functions of
>
> providing services and creating conditions for student learning can be connected;
>
> however, college union professionals will have to be intentional in their approach to
>
> balancing the delivery of services and creating the optimal conditions for learning within
>
> the college union (Rouzer, De Sawal &Yakboski, 2014, p.9)

Increasingly, colleges and universities are facing shrinking resources, escalating costs, and growing demands for accountability. Student affairs areas are under pressure to demonstrate effectiveness and value (Collins & Roberts, 2012; Schuh, Upcraft, & Associates, 2001). Numerous reports have implored student affairs professionals to move their institutions forward with transparent assessments of student learning and development (American Council on Education, 1983; NASPA, 1997; ACPA, 1996; Seagraves & Dean, 2010). The Association of College Personnel Administrators (ACPA) called on student affairs professionals to join other university and college educators in "creating the conditions under which students are likely to expend time and energy in educationally-purposeful activities" (ACPA 1996, p.4). To enhance

student learning, ACPA (1996) urged student affairs educators to articulate and assess learning outcomes associated with the co-curricular experiences they provide. In 2001, ACPA and NASPA reaffirmed these calls for reform by stressing the importance of learning "as comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student" (ACPA, 1996, p.22, Green, Jones & Aloi, 2008). Despite repeated expectations for student affairs to engage in assessment, it remains unclear whether and to what extent assessment happens. While there are similarities between classroom assessment and co-curricular assessment, student affairs professionals face unique challenges in assessing program outcomes. "The student affairs profession values people; in an era of assessment and accountability, it must also be a profession that values the development and demonstration of competence by those people" (Hoffman & Bresciani, 2012, p. 26).

One unique challenge is student affairs assessment activities are not well integrated with other campus assessments. Assessment defined by Palomba and Banta (1999), is the "the systematic collection, review, and use of information about education for the purpose of improving student learning and development" (p.4). Academic affair professionals conduct much of the work on student learning outcomes; however, they omit a significant amount of student learning that occurs outside the classroom (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Student affairs professionals help create and coordinate out-of-classroom experiences and their perspective is often lost in campus-wide discussions on student learning assessment (Cuyjet & Weitz, 2009).

Currently, limited research is conducted in the area of assessment within student affairs. Doyle (2004) surveyed chief student affairs officers and found that "assessment was one of the least well-practiced actions of student affairs divisions" (p.389). This finding is consistent with Upcraft's and Schuh's (1996) assertion that "among many staff in student affairs, assessment is

an unknown quantity at best, or at the worst, it is misunderstood and misused" (p. 4). A second challenge is the lack of training among practitioners, which hinders many student affairs divisions in conducting assessment and evaluation (Seagraves & Dean, 2010). In the past, student affairs professionals based assessments on benchmarks and student satisfaction, attempting to determine how many students participated in programs and to what degree these students reported satisfaction (Bresciani, Zelna & Anderson, 2004; NASPA & ACPA 2004). This method of assessment did not measure a student's understanding and learning nor did it provide guidance on how to enhance a particular outcome (ACPA, 1996, p. 2).

A common assumption in student affairs is that assessment activities are conducted by professionals who have extensive knowledge in the area of assessment (Astin, 1993). A study of new professionals' knowledge, skills, and abilities showed that new professionals who had varying degrees of formal or informal training were undertaking assessment (Timm, 2005). Support from supervisors combined with an understanding of assessment, can help new professionals design effective assessment plans.

A discussion of the history of assessment in student affairs is important to this study because it provides a context for the current state of assessment practices. While assessment is not a new concept in higher education and student affairs, assessment in the co-curricular environment specifically student programming is emerging.

History of Student Affairs Assessment

With the recent attention given to assessment in higher education, it is easy to assume that assessment is a rising trend. However, the idea of assessment was established prior to the establishment of American higher education (Bresciani, 2006; Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2009; Cohen, 1998; Thelin, 2004). Dating back to 1063, the University of Bologna used "juried

reviews" to demonstrate student learning (Bresciani 2006, Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2009; Cohen 1998; Thelin, 2004). Early assessment centered in the traditional classroom and not in the co-curricular environment, with written and oral tests as two of the most commonly used means to assess learning inside the classroom. Out-of-class activities do not have an equally rich history of assessment because the significant learning that takes place on the athletic field, in the residence halls, and in student organizations is more difficult to capture (Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2009).

For nearly eight decades, student affairs contributions to student learning have evolved from a marginal role to more of a central role (NASPA, 1989). Similarly, assessment in student affairs has evolved, alongside perspectives about how student affairs offices and programs contribute to student life. While the first student personnel dean was appointed in 1890, it was not until 1937 that student affairs put forth *The Student Personnel Point of View* document and became a more permanent feature of higher education in the United States (NASPA, 1989). The student affairs profession has evolved since 1937. Now student affairs professionals address both the personal and intellectual development of the student, whereas previously, student affairs professionals solely addressed the social development of students. Student affairs professionals assume various roles on campuses, among them advising, career counseling, and assisting students' transition to college. While assessment has not always been a function of student affairs, evaluating and understanding programs and their usefulness to students has been a fundamental purpose of student affairs for many years (Schuh & Gansemer-Topf, 2010).

It was not until around 1949, that student affairs offices received recognition for their role in student learning (The Student Personnel Point of View, 1949, NASPA, 1989). At this time, learning experiences provided by student affairs were considered to be extracurricular--meaning

outside of the formal courses in which students were engaged. It was at this point, through

evaluation and continuous improvement, that student affairs staff began to connect

extracurricular/co-curricular learning with students' overall college learning experience

(NASPA, 1989, p.44). As student affairs professionals' responsibility for student learning

increased, assessing programs and their impact became increasingly necessary as evidenced by

the establishment of professional guidelines (NASPA, 1989, p.44).

The first document that shaped the role of student affairs in student learning is the

Student Personnel Point of View (ACE, 1937, 1949). The Student Personnel Point of View

(ACE, 1949) discusses philosophy and practice of student personnel work in college and

universities and examines assumptions and beliefs about what professionals should accomplish

when working with students. The authors of the Student Personnel Point of View advocated that

each student is equal, student involvement enhances learning, out-of-class environments affect

learning, each person has worth and dignity, a supportive and friendly community life helps

students learn, and students are responsible for their own lives (ACE, 1949; NASPA, 1987).

Other subsequent documents, the Student Learning Imperative (ACPA, 1996), and Principles of

Good Practice for Student Affairs (ACPA, NASPA, 1996), provide a framework for

understanding the purpose of the profession, including student learning goals and outcomes.

Two major themes that have influenced the role of assessment in student affairs are

society's push for quality education and the desire of professionals and researchers to understand

the student population (Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2009; Kuh, Gonyea, & Rodriquez, 2002;

Pascarella & Upcraft, 1999). Assessment in student affairs gained a more critical role during the

1960s, with the emergence of student developmental theories and the need to understand the

student population (Kuh, Gonyea, & Rodriquez, 2002). The 1970s, brought issues of access and

public questioning of the costs of higher education and their dissatisfaction with the quality of education and services. As a result, student affairs divisions felt increasingly pressured to demonstrate how they supported and contributed to the overall learning environment (Pascarella & Upcraft, 1999).

During the 1980s, institutions faced increased questioning by government agencies, accrediting agencies, governing boards, administrators, parents, students, and other internal and external groups about college's contribution to student success and society (Miller, 2009). A report by the Wingspread Group on Higher Education in 1993 called for better preparation of undergraduates and encouraged universities and colleges to train staff to engage in assessment activities that would lead to prepared graduates. During this time, the student affairs professional organizations began to discuss and promote the development of standards and tools related to assessment (Miller, 2009). In response to these questions of accountability, accrediting agencies began to drive the assessment movement within student affairs (Erwin, Scott, & Menard, 1991).

In 1987, student affairs professional organizations released a document to publicize professional standards for student affairs offices on campuses, placing their role in student learning as central to the purpose of student affairs (NASPA, 1987). The field was challenged to go beyond providing services for students and supervising the social activities by collaborating with academic affairs to provide learning experiences for students. Scholars began to support the assertion that student affairs professionals play a major role in students' development on campuses, with co-curricular activities having significant impact on student learning (Kuh et al., 2005, 2010; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Professional organizations also began to emphasize the importance of the role that student affairs played in students' collegiate experience (ACPA, 1994; AAHE, NASPA & ACPA, 1998). The importance was expressed in the ACPA

publication*, The Student Learning Imperative, Implications for Student Affairs* (1996), and the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), NASPA, and ACPA publication, *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Student Learning* (1998).

By 1999, conceptualizations of the roles and contributions of student affairs included learning and assessment of learning—with "good practice in student affairs occurring when student affairs educators ask, 'What are students learning from our programs and services, and how can their learning be enhanced?'" (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999, pp. 206-207). Standards of good practice require student affairs educators to assess student learning and use assessment information to revise and improve programs, increasing benefits for students and the institution. Moreover, in defining the role of student affairs staff in assessment, authors Blimling, Whitt, & Associates (1999) assert, "Student affairs educators who are skilled in using assessment methods acquire high-quality information; effective application of this information to practice results in programs and change strategies that improve institutional and student achievement" pg. 207.

At the 1997 joint conference, the American College Personnel Administrators (ACPA) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) developed seven practices for student affairs professionals to follow: engage students in active learning; help students develop coherent values and ethical standards; set and communicate high expectations for student learning; use systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance; use resources effectively to achieve institutional mission and goals; forge educational partnerships that advance student learning; and build supportive and inclusive communities (ACPA & NASPA, 1997). The principles were incorporated into everyday tasks and interactions with students, faculty, administrators, and others. The principles worked as a guide for assessing the

contribution of student affairs to student learning outcomes and a curriculum for ongoing

education. In congruence with ACPA's seven principles was the *Student Learning Imperative*

was written. The *Student Learning Imperative* described how student affairs professionals

intentionally create conditions that enhance student learning (ACPA, 1996). It directly supported

the 1949 Student Personnel Point of View's mission to encourage faculty-student interactions in

one of its five goals. Student affairs professionals should create "seamless" experiences by

bridging organizational boundaries and forging collaborative partnerships with faculty and others

to enhance student learning (ACPA, 1996, p. 3).

Focusing on learning was a fundamental shift in perspective for student affairs

administrators (Wingspread Group on Higher Education, 1993). The *Student Learning

Imperative* called for student affairs divisions to focus on the services they provide, how they

contribute to students' out-of-class learning experiences, and emphasized the need for student

affairs to collaborate with other parts of the university (ACPA, 1996). *Powerful Partnerships*

was created as a joint statement by the American Association for Higher Education, American

College Personnel Association, and the National Association of Student Personnel

Administrators that challenged academic and student affairs divisions to work together to

provide an integrated learning experience for students in and out of the classroom (AAHE,

NASPA & ACPA, 1998). Both documents articulated that learning does not stop once the

student leaves the classroom, and emphasized that professionals should concentrate on not only

assessing programs and services but also, and more importantly, on how student learning occurs

outside of the classroom.

Beginning in the 2000s to today, the focus on assessment has shifted to learning

outcomes based assessment. In recent years, the assessment of student learning has become

central to the process of evaluating institutional effectiveness. The trend of assessing student learning outcomes is the result of institutional concern for the quality of the educational experience, both inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, there are increasing efforts to identify and better address diverse student learning needs in the academy (Beno, 2004). Collins and Roberts (2012) summarized Ewell's four major changes in the higher education assessment movement in the past 20 years that have also affected student affairs (Collins & Roberts, 2012 p. 8).

> First the perceived legitimacy, indicate that more academics than ever before accept the need for assessment to provide evidence of students success to external stakeholders such as accreditors. Second, the new policy centrality of higher education, addresses the urgency of educating our citizens to be competitive in a global economy. Along with the responsibility to be transparent and proactive in developing and assessing learning outcomes. The third change is that external stimuli for higher education are now accreditors rather than states. Ewell's fourth change is the importance in recent years of assessment technology as a means to measure the effectiveness of higher education. The resources now available far exceed what was available a few short years ago.

Assessment Tools

Over the years, several national surveys have been developed to assist universities in assessment. The National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) and the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) are two of the most well known surveys utilized by institutions to understand the undergraduate experience. The NSSE, developed in the late 1990s, was created to assess student participation and perceptions of the college experience (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2015). The NSSE survey typically given to both first year

students and seniors to measure what students are getting out their college experience is based upon a common set of standards. These instruments, and others like them, are often used by student affairs professionals to meet their goals regarding assessment, (including policy and program development), and to examine and understand current programming efforts.

The CSEQ was developed in the late 1970s to measure the degree to which undergraduates were engaged in the university to enhance their learning and development (The College Student Experiences Questionnaire Assessment Program, Home, 2007). More recently, the College Student Expectations Questionnaire (CSXQ) was developed to assess new students' expectations and motivations as related to their undergraduate experience. The CSXQ was designed to identify the types of interactions freshmen desire from faculty and peers and impact of these interactions on both their satisfaction and achievement in college (The College Student Experiences Questionnaire Assessment Program: General Info, 2007).

Common Assessments Used in Student Affairs

Over the past two decades, student affairs assessment activities have increasingly focused on collaborations with academic affairs, specifically student learning outcomes, and preparing professionals to complete assessments (American Association for Higher Education, American College Personnel Association, and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1998). The collaboration with the academic affairs community was driven by the call to demonstrate student affairs' support and development of the whole student (Bloland, Stamatakos, & Rogers, 1996; Collins & Roberts, 2012). The most common types of assessments to help make this demonstration include benchmarking, satisfaction, needs assessments, focus groups assessment based on Astin's I-E-O model (Astin, 1991) and outcome-based assessment

of student learning and development (Palomba & Banta, 1999; Schuh, Upcraft & Associates, 2001; Bresciani, Zelna, & Anderson, 2004: Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009).

Astin's I-E-O model (Astin, 1991) is comprised of inputs (i.e., characteristics or qualities that students have when entering college), environmental factors (i.e., experiences that students have during college), and outputs (i.e., characteristics and talents that students display at a certain point of time during or after college). Depending on the context of the study, inputs, environments, and outputs are not automatically assigned. For example, high school GPA may be assigned as the input variable when assessing college academic achievement; as an environmental factor when examining a student's roommate's GPA; and as an output variable when examining it as an outcome. Astin (1991) states that assessment and evaluation in the field of education focuses often on the relationship between factors and outcomes. Student inputs also should be accounted for, stating the "the basic purpose of the I-E-O design is to allow us to correct or adjust for such input differences in order to get a less biased estimate of the comparative effects of different environments and outputs" (p. 19).

Astin's (1991) I-E-O model of assessment provides a framework to examine the inputs, environment, and outputs associated with a student's transition through college. This type of assessment is used with pre-and post-test methodology. The pre-test measures a student's knowledge at the beginning stages of development and the post-test measures what the student gained through participating in a certain process (Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009).

Another form of assessment is benchmarking. Benchmarking is a form of assessment that involves comparing one's results with those of another, either inside the institution or with other institutions (Bresciani, et al., 2004). While benchmarking can be a very valuable tool in the

assessment process, one major flaw of benchmarking can be that the individual(s) benchmarking is placing a value judgment on the program in the comparison (Bresciani, et al., 2004).

Both satisfaction and needs assessments are used to understand better the population using the programs and services provided. Satisfaction assessment involves gathering information on the satisfaction of participants about the services, programs, and facilities used by the population being served (Schuh, et al., 2001). Needs assessment provides information about what the clientele needs or what is done based on the information received from the population that is using the services (Schuh, et al., 2001). While needs assessment provides insight into the development of programs and services, satisfaction surveys provide information about the level of satisfaction with current programs and services (Schuh, et al., 2001).

Focus groups and interviews are additional methods for gathering data through direct questioning of individuals impacted by the assessment services, providing the interviewer with thick, rich detail (Bresciani, et al., 2004). The greatest strength of focus groups and interviews is that researchers can get instant clarification from participants on their responses. If used in conjunction with assessments, they also provide a means to test and create stronger survey questions for use afterwards (Bresciani, et al., 2004).

Another example involves measuring student learning outcomes and setting specific goals for what students will gain from the programs and services provided. The two most difficult aspects of goal setting are creating goals that are measurable and reporting results in a meaningful manner (Bresciani, et al, 2004).

As discussed above, there are multiple assessment tools and techniques currently in use by student affairs professionals, each with their respective strengths and vulnerabilities. Depending on a university's resources and emphasis on assessment tools and efforts, creating

meaning from results is a challenge left to the student affairs professional. Establishing a knowledge base of national surveys and common assessments used in student affairs areas is important to this study as the researcher interviewed the student activities and union professional to determine what, if any, kinds of assessment are used with their particular student programming board. It is important for the researcher to have a foundation of the types of tools and assessments that are potentially used by student programming professionals.

Developing Assessment Plans

At the beginning of any assessment process, the problem, need, or issue that serves as the foundation of the assessment should be determined (Bresciani, 2006; Maki, 2004; Palomba & Banta, 1999; Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2009). Developing an assessment plan or tool requires clearly defining the purpose and objectives of the plan and identifying the desired outcomes (Erwin, 1991; Palomba & Banta, 1999; Walvoord, 2004). Walvoord (2004) states that "a major flaw in assessing programs occurs when the assessment is seen as a task that must be accomplished rather than a developed plan for gathering useful information to guide practice" (Walvoord, 2004).

Assessment can be goal-based, responsive, formative, or summative, depending on the use of the results. The type of assessment, in turn, impacts decision making, program quality/need, and resource allocation (Conrad & Wilson, 2003). For student affairs professionals, it is important to be able to answer important questions related to the outcomes of an assessment such as: why are we assessing these programs or services; what is being assessed; how is assessment conducted; who should manage the assessment; and when is the best time to conduct the assessment. The answers to these questions help student affairs professionals identify the type of assessment that will provide the most useful set of results (Brown, 1999). The creation of

a detailed assessment plan, with the help of a committee or an assessment specialist, will lead to an assessment process that is manageable, well-timed, and provides meaningful data about students' experiences (Maki, 2004; Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009).

One of the most commonly used and well-known formalized assessment guides was developed by Schuh, Upcraft, and Associates (2001). It employs an eleven-step plan that begins with one defining the problem or goal. The second step involves determining the purpose of the study, which requires identification of information that will help solve the problem. The third step is to identify the best source for getting necessary information. The fourth step involves determining the assessment method that is most appropriate--whether information is best gathered through qualitative, quantitative methods, or a combination of the two. The fifth step is closely related to the third and involves identifying who to study, which population(s) is going to provide the most useful information based on the criteria developed. The sixth step is determining how to collect the data, which includes identifying if there are other assessments done that one can use, the types of incentives to use, and the method that will yield the return rate desired. The seventh step is determining the assessment instrument or instruments being used. Including whether to use one of the many different types of instruments available or creating an instrument specifically for the assessment. The eighth and ninth steps involve determining who should collect the data and deciding how the data is analyzed. For the tenth step, the assessor must determine the implications of the student policy and practice. This requires the assessor to identify how the problem stated in the first step is solved, in addition to providing insight into policies and practices that may need to be revised, eliminated, or created. The eleventh and final step calls for the effective reporting of results. This requires one to identify factors that make the information useful and purposeful along with determining who

should see the information. Being familiar with this plan can help create an assessment process that has meaning and purpose and provides information that will be useful to student affairs professionals.

Upcraft (2003) provides advice for student affairs professionals in positions where assessment is critical. His advice includes understanding the barriers to conducting assessment and work to overcome them; selecting professionals qualified to conduct the studies; finding ways to gain maximum participation; and making extra efforts to ensure that all students have access to participate in the assessment studies. These help ensure that all students have opportunities to participate in the assessment studies and that assessment is high quality, and providing information that is much more accurate and useful (Upcraft, 2003).

Many professionals make the mistake of determining how quality will be assessed instead of identifying what is to be assessed (Heywood, 2000). Schuh and Upcraft (2000) offer two key strategies to prevent this problem. They recommend initially creating an assessment plan that determines the specific needs of students and clients and then determine whether current programming or services meet those needs. This approach ensures that the assessment process proceeds in a logical fashion that ultimately leads to the identification and implementation of quality programs. Other important elements for developing an assessment plan include collaborating with others outside specific units where the assessment is occurring as well as engaging in ongoing training and development opportunities in research, assessment, and evaluation (Erwin, Scott, & Menard, 1991).

Discussing how to develop an assessment plan is important to the study because the researcher interviewed student activities and union professionals to determine how they

developed their assessment process for the programming board. The researcher also discussed why each professional decided to do assessment for his/her board or not.

Importance of Outcomes-Based Assessment in Student Affairs

In the past, faculty members were primarily responsible for student learning. Today, there is a greater understanding of the impact of out-of-class learning experiences on students and the need for student affairs professionals to assess student learning experience as a way to justify services and programs (Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009). Outcomes-based assessment can be a valuable tool for student affairs professionals who are working to enhance student involvement. The level to which student involvement affects learning at a particular institution may vary from department to department or program to program (Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2009).

> The proliferation of learning outcomes beyond courses is an increasingly common phenomenon, says Jillian Kinzie, a senior scholar at the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Institutions of all sizes and types-from California State University at Fullerton in the west to New York University in the east- are applying learning outcomes to things like advising, student-affairs departments, and extracurricular activities. The idea is to increase opportunities for learning and to assess and improve them. At the very least, it gives the experiences a label (Berrett, 2014, p.4).

Outcomes-based assessment of student learning in student affairs can be put into four categories including accountability, resources and funding, planning, policy and programming, and creating a culture of continuous improvement. This section on assessment focuses on current practices and highlights theses four categories. Additionally, it provides information about how

student affairs assessment demonstrates the importance of assessing student services and aids student affairs administrators in demonstrating what students learn from their programs.

Bresciani, Gardner and Hickmott (2009) present case studies of assessment in student affairs and student services that describe the institutional context for why each student affairs division implemented assessment and learning outcomes. The book is intended to assist faculty and administrators in reflective implementation of student learning and development of outcomes for student affairs divisions. The book discusses 13 different student affairs divisions and how they implemented assessment plans for their respective institutions. For each institution, the text provides an overview of institutional culture, division of student affairs, assessment process, examples of assessment, how the results are used, tips for implementing the process, and a description of the barriers to assessing student learning and development.

An assessment example of Bresciani, Gardner and Hickmott (2009) case study conducted at Texas A&M University, a large research extensive institution known for high student involvement in co-curricular activities, showed that seventy to eighty percent of students are involved in at least one student organization. While holding a learning outcomes training workshop for student leaders and organization advisors during the summer of 2005, the observation made by a group of student affairs professionals was students should develop a similar skill set regardless of the student organizations in which they are participating. The group of student affairs professionals subsequently developed the student leader learning outcomes to promote standardized assessment methods and tools for Texas A&M staff to use with its student leaders. They also developed programs to help in the assessment and documentation of enhanced learning in relation to the students' leadership experiences. The Memorial Student Center, the student union and programming board on the Texas A&M campus, was the first to develop and

use a set of the rubrics, applying a project management rubric with a freshmen leadership group. The project led to a book, Learning is Not a Sprint: Assessing and Documenting Student Leader Learning in Cocurricular Involvement by Collins and Roberts (2012). The book is used by student affairs organizations across the country to implement assessment on their own campuses (Collins & Roberts, 2012).

Green, Jones and Aloi (2008) examined the assessment practices of three student affairs divisions that have significant experience in successfully implementing assessment of student learning and development. The researchers determined six research questions to guide the study: 1) who is involved in the assessment planning process and what are the major responsibilities of these individuals; 2) what are the student learning outcomes articulated in the student affairs assessment plans; 3) how are these learning outcomes assessed; 4) are student affairs educators collaborating with others, such as academic affairs, in the creation and administration of assessments; 5) how are student affairs assessment data used to enhance student learning experiences; and 6) what successes and challenges do student affairs educators face as they implement their assessment plans. The researchers put forth the results of the study in order to show the value and usefulness of learning outcomes assessment (Green, Jones & Aloi, 2008).

Green, Jones, and Aloi used a qualitative case study approach to examine high-quality assessment practices of student affairs divisions at three different research institutions with the objective of bringing a better understanding of learning outcomes assessment within the student affairs profession. Several recommendations for practice resulted from the study's major findings. The first recommendation was that student affairs divisions that engage in assessment must have adequate support from their division leaders. The second recommendation was that student affairs divisions need to identify broad learning goals based on their institution's overall

mission. This is to help guide area leaders as they develop learning outcomes. A third

recommendation was for student affairs educators to carefully consider what they hope students

will learn as a result of their programs and services. A fourth recommendation was for student

affairs assessment coordinators to provide on-going workshops for leaders and staff to become

assessment experts and assist in measuring learning outcomes (Green, Jones, & Aloi, 2008). For

this researcher, the Green, Jones and Aloi (2008) study demonstrates the importance of

assessment and learning outcomes work that student activities and union professionals are

implementing for student programming board leaders.

Another assessment resource for student affairs professionals is the Council for the

Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). CAS is a consortium of professional

associations that was founded "as a direct response to the emerging profession's need to establish

standards to guide both practice and preparation" (CAS, 2009, p. 1). The emergence of the CAS

standards in higher education has helped guide the assessment activity of student affairs

professionals in practice (CAS). CAS works collaboratively to develop and promulgate standards

and guidelines and to encourage self-assessment (CAS, 2009). Since 1986, CAS has provided the

field of student affairs with standards and guidelines for a variety of functional areas. The latest

version of the CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education (2012) contains standards for

43 functional areas and provides a framework for which functional areas can be assessed,

resulting in improved accountability. The utility of CAS standards as a framework for

assessment in student affairs has been established. Mable (2006) observed that "most standards

require an evaluation of the effectiveness of services and programs provided, therefore, student

affairs becomes more accountable" (1991, p. 9). CAS standards and resources can provide a

comprehensive framework for practices in student affairs (Mable, 2006; Mullendore & Bryan,

1991; Zacker, 1996). CAS standards continue to be used in student affairs for evaluation, assessment, and accreditation review (Arminio & Gochenaur, 2004).

While research has been conducted on student affairs preparation programs (Young & Janosik, 2007), academic advising (Keeling, 2010), and student conduct programs (Tschepikow, Dean, & Cooper, 2010), on the whole, very little research has been conducted regarding the use of CAS standards in individual functional areas of student affairs. Creamer (2003) outlined how needed future research is to fully explore the general effects of assessment and the use of the CAS in Higher Education standards and guidelines in particular. CAS includes standards for campus activities and offers direction for campus programming advisors to create quality programs that are engaging and developmental. It also stresses the importance of assessing what students involved in student activities are learning (Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, 2009). Creamer (2003) suggested one type of CAS-related research that would be beneficial to student programming boards involving studies addressing the effectiveness of programs and services that use CAS standards and guidelines. He noted that, "studies that examine program effectiveness reveal our underlying concerns for institutional effectiveness" (p. 113). Even though there is an increasing prominence of assessment in student affairs, researchers have yet to study certain functional units to examine how standards are being used in assessment practices. Research studies that explore the effectiveness of programs and services that use CAS standards and guidelines is an area in need of future research (Creamer, 2003).

Professional associations such as the National Association of Campus Activities (NACA) assist their professional members by providing agreed-upon learning outcomes that include those associated with student involvement in programs and services related to campus activities. For

example, NACA formed a group of leaders in the profession to research and identify learning outcomes for students who volunteer or are employed in student programming areas. The group developed the document "Competency Guide for College Student Leaders" (Brill, Coats, Croft, Hicks & Ogle, 2009), which includes examples specific to students involved in campus programming and other leadership roles. The NACA authors used the CAS Domains and Learning Outcomes as the framework for more specific learning outcomes related to student programming and leadership (Komives & Smedick, 2012).

Additionally, McCluskey-Titus (2003) conducted a study to measure the relationship between student involvement in campus organizations and the outcomes student leaders reportedly learned as a result of their participation in such organizations. McCluskey-Titus' study helped identify skills that appear to be connected to involvement in campus organizations and may not otherwise be apparent to the students involved or the professional staff working with them (McClusky-Titus, 2003).

Establishing a base of knowledge of the available research addressing the assessment programs and practices in student affairs is valuable to this study. The aggregation of the research provides information on the quantity and quality of assessment and learning outcomes within student affairs. It also suggests ideas to develop a plan for assessment and learning outcomes in a student programming board area as well as provided the researcher with an understanding of current best practices in advance of the interviews with the programming board advisors.

Summary

  Ewell (2009) concludes that the contradiction between accountability and improvement has lessened. "Because the stakes associated with higher education are so much higher for policy makers today, aggressive action on the accountability agenda is more likely and a proactive response on the part of the academy is more urgent" (Collins & Roberts, 2012, p. 8). Furthermore, the growing public interest in learning outcomes has placed pressure on nearly all areas of higher education to make more explicit and measurable contributions to student learning. Assessment has become a crucial means for allowing departments and divisions to prove their worth to both internal and external constituents. Calls for accountability in higher education continue and, as such, student affairs divisions need to link student learning to the programs and services provided to indicate their effectiveness. Little research currently exists that confirms whether student activities and union professionals, specifically those who advise student programming boards, are assessing student leader experiences through learning outcomes.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods

This chapter outlines the purpose of this study; the research questions addressed through the data results; the sample selection criteria for data collection; instrumentation employed; research design implemented; and the data analysis.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine current assessment practices of learning outcomes, resources used, as well as results of assessment activities for student programming board leaders and the students attending such planned events. The researcher collected the data through document review and phone interviews with each lead programming board advisor responsible for the assessment efforts of his or her respective board. By conducting the study, the researcher learned what assessment activities student activities and union professionals are conducting of students participating on a programming board or attending planned events.

Research Questions

In an effort to focus the research on a logical starting point, the essential research questions for this study were as follows:

1. Do student activities and union professionals have assessment plans for student leaders and volunteer members serving on a programming board?

2. What, if any, learning outcomes are assessed and how were the learning outcomes developed?

3. How are student activities and union professionals administering assessments for learning outcomes and events based assessment?

4. Who is involved in the assessment planning process?

5. How are student activities and union professionals trained on assessment?

6. How are student activities and union professionals using what was learned from their outcomes assessment in training and development of student programming board leaders and how is the event assessment associated with the programming board events used?

The Sample Selection

The researcher contacted 23 student activities and union professionals who serve as the lead programming advisor for the student programming board to participate in the study. The institutions included are as follows: Georgia Institute of Technology, Iowa State University, Kansas State University (pilot), Michigan State University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University, Texas A&M University, University of Arizona, University of Colorado, University of Florida, University of Illinois, Indiana University, University of Iowa, University of Kansas (pilot), University of Maryland-College Park, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of Missouri, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, University of Pittsburgh, University of Texas, and University of Wisconsin. All of the programming board professionals interviewed work at institutions that are members of the American Association of Universities (AAU) with the exception of Kansas State University (pilot). All of the individuals asked to participate in the study were members of the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) and their student programming boards are organizationally situated in their student union (i.e., student leaders are advised by the student union and the union's activities professionals). The sample selection excluded university programming board professionals who work at private institutions or who are with public universities in which student union professional staff members do not advise the programming board.

The study involved 21 out of the 23 student activities and union professionals contacted to participate, and included the two pilot institutions who were purposefully selected due to their position with a student programming board and experience with assessment in the student union. The student activities and union professionals with the University of Arizona and the University of Iowa declined to participate in the study with the explanation that the student programming board was not a part of the union department at the time of the study.

It was the researcher's assertion that student programming boards advised by student union professionals enjoy the benefits of a closer connection and understanding of the facilities and operations staff. This synergy, in turn, can provide more support and resources for programming efforts while bolstering the overall operations and mission of the student union. For this particular study, the researcher had a strong interest in what activities programming board professionals are doing to assess learning outcomes with regard to event planning. The researcher also had the ability and opportunity to make professional connections to the institutions' student activities and union professionals who fit within the sample selection criteria.

Instrumentation

The term "survey" is commonly applied to a research methodology designed to collect data from a specific population or a sample from that population and, typically, utilizes a questionnaire or an interview as the survey instrument (Robson, 1993). In this study, the survey incorporating descriptive questions was administered orally through an interview procedure. "Descriptive questions show a trend, illustrate a process, convey the status of something, or describe and analyze a program, process or procedure. Descriptive designs are commonly used in

needs assessments and monitoring or process studies" (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2004 p. 263).

The objective of utilizing an interview method standardized across all individual programming board advisors was to capture richer, more nuanced information and to facilitate the understanding of multifaceted assessment processes. Interviews were video or voice recorded, which allowed for verbatim transcription and provided additional reliability of the data collection method and results.

The researcher applied for and received permission from the University of Kansas Human Subjects Committee to conduct this study (see Appendix C). The researcher also provided an introduction (see Appendix A) of the study to each university's participating lead programming board advisor stating this is a study to learn what assessment and learning outcomes efforts they are using for their programming board leaders and students attending the planned events. The researcher also informed the participants that their participation was voluntary and asked if their information concerning assessment could be included in the dissertation document. The participants' completion of the survey indicated their willingness to participate.

The interview (see Appendix B) in this study consisted of 37 open-ended descriptive questions that the researcher posed to and discussed with each participant. Depending on the prior information and document collection submitted to the researcher by each participant on his or her institution's programming board, the researcher may not have had to ask each individual question of the participants. Documents submitted to the interviewer consisted of learning outcomes for the student programming board, pre and post self-assessments, background information on the programming board, and event assessment documents. If the researcher

previously received the information through the document collection process and the information was clear, then questions regarding that information were not repeated in the interview process. The researcher benefited from receiving the programming board documentation prior to conducting the interviews allowing follow-up during the interview on any information previously gathered that raised questions, appeared inconclusive, or was unclear.

It is also important to discuss the survey validity of the interview procedure. The validity hinges on two primary factors, face and content validity. Face validity is concerned with how a measure appears, in that the survey items appear to measure what they were intended to measure. In contrast, content validity achieved when qualified experts compare the survey contents to what is claimed to being measured and determine the content is, in fact, measuring what it claims to be measuring (Huck, 2004). In this study, validity was established in part to the researcher's decision to adapt the interview questions from the NILOA 2010 survey distributed to academic program and department coordinators. In addition, the interview questions were carefully reviewed by faculty for clarity of ideas and substance (McCluskey-Tutus, 1996).

Pilot Survey Conducted

The researcher conducted a pilot interview to ensure that the respondents understood the questions and that both instructions and interview questions were clear, further ensuring the validity of the interview. The researcher conducted the interviews by telephone. The purpose of the pilot interview was to check that the questions flowed in a conversational manner, to determine how long the interview would last, and to determine if the interview questions could effectively collect the information needed. The primary objective of the pilot was to identify potential problems with methods, logistics, and the questionnaire itself.

For this study, the researcher pilot-tested the interview with programming board advisors responsible for assessment from the University of Kansas and Kansas State University. She emailed each advisor prior to the interview explaining the purpose of the interview was to pilot a survey for dissertation research. She then asked each participant to send learning outcomes and event assessment documents, allowing the researcher to review the institutions' assessment materials in advance of the interview. The researcher emailed each programming advisor the questions included in Appendix B.

Each programming board advisor agreed to the interview and sent information about the student union and programming board budget along with his or her current assessment activities. The researcher sent a follow-up email to each advisor to schedule a day and time for the interview. The researcher recorded all of the pilot interviews. The researcher then worked with a transcriptionist to transcribe the interviews and convert them to a text-searchable digital document. After conducting the first pilot interview with the University of Kansas programming board advisor, the researcher changed the order of survey questions due to some confusion during the interview. The pilot interview experience at the University of Kansas and subsequent survey interview revisions and adjustments enabled the next pilot interview with the Kansas State University student programming advisor to be executed with greater continuity.

Procedures

Following the pilot interviews, the researcher interviewed the principal programming advisor for each union's programming board by telephone. The researcher conducted the interviews in the spring of 2014; the interview calls lasted from 45 to 90 minutes each. As the management structure of each union is unique to the needs of the campus, the titles of individual union staff members varied significantly (i.e., program advisor, program coordinator, and

director of programs). The researcher explained the purpose of the study to each participant, determined if his or hers union had an established and active programming board, and obtained contact information. The researcher then contacted the person responsible for oversight of the programming board. By contacting each programming advisor and interviewing them directly, the researcher was able to increase subject participation, as well as develop a stronger and potentially more personal connection with the participants. Once the potential subjects decided to participate in the study, the researcher contacted the lead advisor for assessment to schedule an appointment for a phone interview and to determine if institutional policies and his or her personal preferences allowed for a recorded interview.

The researcher collected data in two stages, which allowed for rich exploration of all areas within the topic. She collected data through document analysis of submitted learning outcomes and event assessment materials. The researcher also collected data through personal interviews concerning programming board assessment practices associated with the student union.

The researcher asked each interviewee the same set of questions. Appendix B includes each research question with the corresponding survey question(s) that were asked. Before asking questions associated with survey components, the researcher asked introductory questions in order to contextualize information about the union and the student programming board. This provided the requisite information and context for each institution participating in the interviews. Responses to the introductory questions provided a detailed description of each union and student programming board (see Appendix B for full interview protocol).

Data Analysis

   After working with a transcriptionist, the interviews were transcribed into a digital,

searchable document. The researcher conducted analysis on each research question.

Additionally, the researcher included interview comments from the programming board advisors

that were representative of the themes discussed.

   For question number one: *Do student activities and union professionals have assessment*

plans for student leaders and volunteer members serving on a programming board? The

researcher created a spreadsheet from the interview responses most closely associated with the

question. From the interview transcripts, the researcher listed each answer from all the subjects

and sorted through the list to create themes. The researcher then narrowed the answers to three

themes addressing whether student programming boards are conducting assessment for student

leaders.

   Question number two: *What, if any, learning outcomes are assessed and how were the*

learning outcomes developed? The researcher reviewed each learning outcome definition

submitted by the subjects and highlighted the overall theme. After the themes were identified, the

researcher determined the number of reoccurring words used in the outcome definitions to

finalize the learning outcomes. From that, the researcher determined an overall meaning or

definition of each outcome.

   Question number three: *How are student activities and union professionals administering*

assessments for learning outcomes and events based assessment? For this the question, the

researcher created two spreadsheets to sort the information presented. The first spreadsheet

aggregated how learning outcomes were assessed and the associated timeline for assessment.

From the spreadsheet, the researcher categorized how the various interviewees assessed their

outcomes. In the second spreadsheet, the researcher sorted and analyzed the interview transcripts and the assessment documents submitted under four categories of how event assessment was being conducted. For this question, the researcher also included information from the learning outcomes and event assessment in previously submitted documents to provide support and better understanding of the themes presented.

Question number four: *Who is involved in the assessment planning process?* For this question, the researcher created a list from the interview transcripts of the lead assessment professionals for each student programming board and then color-coded similar categories of professionals to determine logical groups. The lead assessment individual types fell into four categories.

Question number five: *How are student activities and union professionals trained on assessment?* The researcher reviewed the interview transcripts to determine the types of training and resources available for assessment. The researcher also looked at who coordinated assessment for the individual student activities and union offices and four themes emerged for coordination and assessment of activities. The researcher included quotes from the professionals interviewed that supported the four themes of assessment coordination. The researcher also included types of resources available to the student activities and union professionals and included relevant quotes from the professionals to support the resources used.

Question number six: *How are student activities and union professionals using what is learned from their outcomes assessment in training and development of student programming board leaders and how is the event assessment associated with the programming board events used?* The researcher reviewed each transcript and created a list to determine how learning outcomes were applied. From this list, two themes were determined and represented in a chart.

For the second part of the question, the researcher analyzed the documentation submitted and the interview transcripts to determine three themes for how event assessment is used.

Limitations

At the time of data collection, the researcher had more than twelve years of experience working in student unions with student activities and advising student programming boards with nine of those years spent working at major public comprehensive institutions having large and sophisticated student-led student programming boards. The researcher has a strong interest in effective implementation of learning outcomes and assessment for student programming boards. The passion the researcher has for working with student programming boards and student leaders could have influenced her interpretation of the interviews and documentation submitted as she could have assumed how much each programming board is doing for assessment.

Another limitation of the study is that the researcher supervises the student activities and union professionals for the University of Kansas who work on assessment activities for the programming board, and their interviews for the pilot survey are included in the overall results section in Chapter 4. The researcher was highly involved in creating the learning outcomes and assessment materials for the student programming board. The researcher trained the staff involved with assessment on the process. The researcher's relationship to the staff interviewed could have created bias in the respondents' answers. The staff members may have felt pressure to represent the office's assessment efforts as more extensive than they may actually be.

Another possible limitation is that there could be a potential bias in answers from the interviewees if they are inclined to overstate or represent in an overly favorable light the extent to which they are using learning outcomes assessment. The researcher interviewed participants by telephone only. The limited interpersonal engagement resulting from this approach can create

a barrier to eliciting the most meaningful and comprehensive data. Finally, the researcher's personal involvement in the operation of a student union at an AAU-member institution might have influenced the interpretation of the information gathered as she has an extensive knowledge of the type of programming board professionals she interviewed and how student programming boards are organized.

Summary

By conducting the interviews, the researcher was able to gather information about what assessment activities student activities and union professionals are conducting for students participating on a programming board. The next two chapters describe analysis, results, and implications of the research information collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The descriptive survey employed in this study sought to explore current assessment practices of learning outcomes, resources used, and outcomes of assessment activities for student programming board leaders. The researcher collected data through document review and phone interviews. The researcher personally contacted 21 student activities and union advisors at select public AAU universities who are responsible for the assessment activities for their respective student programming boards.

In an effort to focus the research on a logical starting point, the essential research questions for this study were as follows:

Research Questions

1. Do student activities and union professionals have assessment plans for student leaders and volunteer members serving on a programming board?

2. What, if any, learning outcomes are assessed and how were the learning outcomes developed?

3. How are student activities and union professionals administering assessments for learning outcomes and events based assessment?

4. Who is involved in the assessment planning process?

5. How are student activities and union professionals trained on assessment?

6. How are student activities and union professionals using what is learned from their outcomes assessment in training and development of student programming board leaders and how is the event assessment associated with the programming board events used?

Findings

Do Union Professionals Have Assessment Plans? The first research question was do student activities and union professionals have assessment plans for student leaders and volunteer members serving on a programming board. The group of 21 schools including the two pilot programs fell into three categories for the use of assessing outcomes: currently assessing, starting to assess, and not assessing. Table 1 (below) describes to what extent the student activities and union professionals were assessing learning outcomes. Sixteen of the student activities and union offices (76%) were actively assessing student learning outcomes for student leaders. Four offices were in the process of creating learning outcomes, and one office had no plans to implement learning outcomes. Within the group of 16 institutions actively assessing outcomes, none was assessing outcomes for what they would consider a volunteer member (i.e., a student who does not hold a leadership position on the programming board). All of the professionals surveyed indicated that they were considering assessing volunteer members in future implementations of learning outcomes assessment.

For the 20 having assessment, the researcher noted from the data the reasons they assess. The sources of pressure to assess tended to be similar across student programming boards (Table 2 describes student activities and union professionals' reasons for assessment). The two categories for why the professionals implemented assessment are internal and external pressures. Internal pressure refers to demands from departmental leadership while, in contrast, external pressure refers to demands from division or university leadership. The professionals who cited internal pressure for their decision to implement assessment indicated the internal pressure came from the student union management. Four interviewees indicated that the decision to implement assessment was an internal student union management decision. Thirteen interviewees indicated

the decision to implement assessment was a result of external pressure from their larger

division's administration or from a campus-wide push external to the student union. For

example, the professional from the University of Minnesota stated in regard to their decision to

assess, "From my sense of the culture of the union is that it was more the union professionals

being seen as proactive and wanting to fall within the greater vision of student affairs and the

direction of the university."

Table 1

Institutions with Student Programming Boards having Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Actively assessing learning outcomes-(16)	In process of implementing learning outcomes for next year-(4)	No plans at the time to implement learning outcomes (1)
Georgia Institute of Technology	Pennsylvania State University	Iowa State University
Kansas State University	University of Colorado	
Michigan State University	University of Illinois	
Ohio State University	University of Missouri	
Purdue University		
Texas A& M University		
University of Florida		
University of Indiana		
University of Kansas		
University of Maryland-College Park		
University of Michigan		
University of Minnesota		
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill		
University of Pittsburgh		
University of Texas		
University of Wisconsin		

Table 2

Pressures for Assessment

Internal Pressure (4)	External Pressure (16)
Georgia Tech University	Michigan State University
Pennsylvania State University	Purdue University
University of Indiana	Texas A&M University
Kansas State University	Ohio State University
	University of Colorado
	University of Florida
	University of Illinois
	University of Kansas
	University of Maryland
	University of Michigan
	University of Minnesota
	University of Missouri
	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
	University Pittsburgh
	University of Texas
	University of Wisconsin-Madison

Of the groups actively assessing learning outcomes, regardless of the source of pressure, the professionals overwhelmingly indicated the need and interest to know what students are learning and how to aid students in their ability to reflect on their learning. For example, the professional at the University of Indiana stated, "We want to be more intentional of our leadership development of students and not just event planners…to be able to provide qualitative or quantitative data back to our students on what they are learning."

The professional at the University of Michigan commented, "We want to make sure students are meeting their goals and they are not just planning events…are they reaching a greater audience?" The University of Texas and the University of Wisconsin professionals talked about perceptions that they work in the "fun and games area." The University of Wisconsin professional discussed assessment as a way to counteract that image by stating, "It is important to make certain that we as student activities and union professionals are credible in what we do. We constantly need to tell our story and educate the campus and you do that through learning

outcomes and assessment." The professional from Michigan State University shared that they were "mandated to implement assessment." Even with a mandate, all professionals agreed that it was important to know and share what students are learning.

It was evident in all the interviews that the student activities and union professionals felt the need to show what they do contributes to learning on campus, particularly in an era when funding is increasingly tight. A majority of the individuals interviewed discussed that the pressure to assess outcomes came either from an initiative of their reporting division or from an initiative of the larger university and felt the need to be on board with it.

The interviewees from the group of four student activities and union offices where they were beginning the process of implementing learning outcomes cited the same reasons behind implementation as the offices already working with learning outcomes. For example, the professional from the University of Colorado stated that, "Higher education is moving in the direction of outcomes because you have to legitimize and explain what you're doing so assessment is really the way to show that…the union and student affairs are developing an assessment plan and we need to a part of the process."

The only outlier of all the interviews came from Iowa State University, as they did not have plans to implement learning outcomes. The interviewee indicated that the division of student affairs was very decentralized and while many student affairs departments were implementing learning outcomes, in the union, they had not felt pressure to start implementing assessment. At the moment, the professional discussed not having the staffing abilities to take on the work necessary to assess learning outcomes.

What if any learning outcomes are assessed and how were the learning outcomes developed? The interviewer talked with each lead programming board advisor about their use of

learning outcomes and reviewed documents submitted by the programming advisor. The outcomes, as described by the programming board advisor and information submitted, fell within nine themes: 1) *communication and collaboration*, 2) *leadership development*, 3) *event management*, 4) *multiculturalism and civic engagement*, 5) *critical thinking and creativity* 6) *intrapersonal development*, 7) *resilience and personal wellness*, 8) *traditions and institutional connections* and 9) *customer service*. Though each outcome for each programming board was not titled exactly as those listed above, the definition as described by the programming board advisor and information submitted determined the nine themes. Table 3 lists the programming board using each outcome. All student activities and union advisors shared that the learning outcomes were for their student leaders only at this time and not the volunteer committee members.

It is important to know the definition of each of the learning outcomes listed in Table 3. Thirteen student programming boards were assessing the outcome, *communication and collaboration*. A generalized definition for *communication and collaboration* came from the University of Michigan's learning outcomes, stating that the student is able to establish mutually trustworthy and rewarding relationships and effectively share information, ideas and opinions in a respectful and professional manner. *Critical thinking and creativity* was measured by thirteen student programming boards as an outcome for student leaders. Similar definitions came from Michigan State University and the University of Texas documents stating that *critical thinking and creativity* referred to students' ability to identify a problem, analyze elements, gather and interpret information and construct solutions. *Critical thinking and creativity* also involved students demonstrating and applying breadth of knowledge and generate new ideas and solving complex problems in an original way.

Eleven student programming boards were assessing *leadership development* as an outcome for student programming board leaders. From the University of Kansas documents, *leadership development* is described as focusing on community building, creating goals in alignment with the organization's mission, and making and supporting decisions for the good of the group. Ten student programming boards were assessing *event management*. The University of Texas and Michigan State University documents describe *event management* as students' abilities in regard to managing time appropriately, demonstrating fiscal responsibility and adapting to new situations including knowledge of risk management and ability to utilize feedback. Additionally, the documents described *event management* as knowing how to obtain and utilize information and resources and as well as being able to identify all aspects of planning an event. Ten student programming boards were assessing *multiculturalism and civic engagement* as an outcome for programming board leaders. Both the University of Michigan and Ohio State University definitions of *multiculturalism and civic engagement* referred to students' commitment to civic engagement and social justice, embrace of multiculturalism, and understanding and appreciative of differences. Additionally, the documents from these two student programming boards mentioned the ability to work effectively with others from a variety of backgrounds and experiences and the ability to incorporate multiple perspectives.

Eight student programming boards were using outcomes related to *interpersonal development*. The University of Kansas definition, as shared in their documents, states that to meet this outcome, a student holds a realistic self-view, demonstrates congruence between actions and values, and seeks emotional balance. Five student programming boards were assessing *resilience and personal wellness* of their student leaders. The University of Florida documents define *resilience and personal wellness* as students' ability to maintain personal

health and wellness, being able to articulate personal skills and abilities, as well as knowing when to take time for themselves.

Two student programming boards were assessing *traditions and institutional connections* as an outcome. From the University of Indiana's documents, *traditions and institutional connections* involved students' awareness of and concern for organizational and university heritage, preservation and promotion. Finally, two student programming boards were assessing *customer service* as an outcome for student leaders. Referring to the University of Minnesota's documents as an example, *customer service* involves students' ability to identify the needs/popular interests of the student population. Furthermore, students who meet this outcome would provide conscientious, courteous, and positive service to customers and treats program participants with respect.

Table 3

Most Popular Programming Board Learning Outcomes

Communication & Collaboration (13)	Georgia Tech
	Kansas State University
	Michigan State University
	Ohio State University
	Penn State University
	Texas A&M University
	University of Florida
	University of Indiana
	University of Kansas
	University of Michigan
	University of Minnesota
	University of Texas
	University of Wisconsin
Critical Thinking & Creativity (13)	Georgia Tech
	Kansas State University
	Michigan State University
	Ohio State University
	Penn State University
	Texas A&M University
	University of Indiana
	University of Kansas
	University of Michigan
	University of Minnesota
	University of North Carolina
	University of Texas
	University of Wisconsin
Leadership Development (11)	Kansas State University
	Michigan State University
	Ohio State University
	Penn State University
	Purdue University
	University of Florida
	University of Indiana
	University of Kansas
	University of Michigan
	University of Texas
	University of Wisconsin

Table 3 continued: *Most Popular Programming Board Learning Outcomes*	
Event Management (10)	Georgia Tech Michigan State University Ohio State University Penn State University University of Florida University of Kansas University of Michigan University of Minnesota University of Texas University of Wisconsin
Multiculturalism & Civic Engagement (10)	Kansas State University Ohio State University Texas A&M University University of Indiana University of Kansas University of Michigan University of Minnesota University of North Carolina University of Texas University of Wisconsin
Intrapersonal Development (8)	Georgia Tech Kansas State University Ohio State University Texas A&M University University of Indiana University of Kansas University of Minnesota University of North Carolina
Resilience and Personal Wellness (5)	Ohio State University University of Florida University of Minnesota University of Texas University of North Carolina
Traditions and Institutional Connections (2)	Ohio State University University of Indiana
Customer Service (2)	Georgia Tech University of Minnesota

Unique outcomes

The most unique and lengthy learning outcomes used were by the University of Indiana

student programming board as they were more value based than those from other boards were.

For example, the Indiana board has an outcome named *humanity*. They have *humanity* as a spirit of thoughtfulness, compassion, tolerance and empathy. Indiana also has outcomes titled *socio-political understanding*, *morality*, and *spirituality*. Though Indiana has many unique outcomes, they also had outcomes that fit into the nine categories in Table 3. The Indiana advisors shared that they were relatively new on the staff and decided it was time to re-examine the board's learning outcomes and discussed they wanted to ground the outcomes in the organization's core values. The advisor from Indiana shared this in the discussion about their assessment process.

> You know, five years is awhile, so we wanted to look back at our learning outcomes. We still kept a big piece of them based on the CAS standards for student leadership, then also the union board's constitution, back in the 1980s the student identified eight basic core values of the organization. We call them dimensions. Basically, we looked at what those eight core values were and then which CAS standard fit for student leadership development and then fit the eight core values.

Additionally, the Texas A&M student programming board advisor was working with learning outcomes that were unique to the university, including *master depth of knowledge for a degree* and *engage in life-long learning*. The advisor shared that their outcomes were developed under a university-wide initiative and all areas of the university focus on the same overall outcomes for their students. She commented, "I think this is where Texas A&M is unique in saying, okay these are the seven learning outcomes that no matter your major, you are going to gain from being a student at Texas A&M. For example, if you're an architecture major you have that knowledge."

After learning about the different learning outcomes the student programming boards were using with their students leaders, the researcher asked a follow up question about how the

learning outcomes were developed. How the professionals developed the learning outcomes fell into four categories including: using university or division wide-developed outcomes, developing outcomes based on national standards, benchmarking other programs or departments, and developing the outcomes internally within their office. Tables 4 and 5 below report what the different programming board advisors used to develop learning outcomes.

Table 4

How Learning Outcomes were Developed

University or Division-Wide Developed (6)	Benchmarking Programs (3)	No Model Used (1)
Kansas State University	Michigan State University	Georgia Tech University
Texas A&M University	Purdue University	
University of Minnesota	University of Texas	
University of North Carolina		
University of Pittsburgh		
University of Wisconsin		

When developing their learning outcomes, six student programming boards strongly linked their learning outcomes to the overall university or division wide outcomes. A typical example of a strong linkage came from the program board advisor from University of Minnesota who commented, "My sense is that we are a very proactive unit, and so when the University or our Student Affairs unit has identified student learning outcomes, we want to be a part of the vision of our larger area."

Three student programming boards discussed how they benchmarked what other student programming boards or departments were using for learning outcomes while developing their own. For example, the director from the University of Texas stated, "I basically borrowed from some work that had already been done here in the division, as well as work that my staff and I had done at previous institutions when putting together our learning outcomes."

Only one programming board, Georgia Tech, discussed that they did not use a particular model when determining their learning outcomes. The professional interviewed commented, "As a staff it was more of a conversation and what we felt was important for the students to be able to express what they were learning."

Table 5 lists the programming board professionals who discussed looking to national standards and professional associations when developing learning outcomes.

Table 5

Considered National Standards in Learning Outcomes

CAS (6)	NACA Competencies (3)	ACUI-Competencies (3)	ACPA/NASPA (2)	Learning Reconsidered (2)	Other (2)
Ohio State University	Penn State University	Ohio State University	Penn State University	Ohio State University	K-State University Strengths Quest
Penn State University	University of Kansas	University of Florida	Ohio State University	Penn State University	Texas A&M University SLLO
University of Florida	Ohio State University	University of Michigan			
University of Indiana					
University of Kansas					
University of Michigan					

Six advisors referenced utilizing the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) when they started developing their learning outcomes. The CAS standards were the national standards mentioned the most frequently in the interviews conducted. Three advisors shared that they linked their outcomes to the National Association of Campus Activities (NACA) competencies for student leaders. NACA is the premier national association focused on student programming boards. Three student programming boards discussed reviewing Association of

College Unions International competencies (ACUI). Ohio State University and Penn State also discussed keeping Association of College Personnel Administrators, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the Learning Reconsidered documents in mind in the development of outcomes.

The University of Florida advisor shared a typical answer from the groups in Table 5. She stated, "I linked the outcomes to the competencies from ACUI as well because I felt like along with the CAS standards is where it's grounded in professional associations." The University of Kansas advisor added, "The outcomes were developed based on research by our director and then we worked with graduate students from a higher education program evaluation class that looked to CAS standards and NACA competencies so they were grounded in our work."

Based on the submitted documentation and interview responses, the influences in the development of learning outcomes among the participants included national standards, benchmarking other institutions, and use of learning outcomes assessment within the university or student affairs division.

How are student activities and union professionals administering assessments for learning outcomes and events based assessment? Each programming board professional interviewed shared how they introduced the learning outcomes to the student leaders and how the learning outcomes were carried out during the student leaders' year in their positions. All professionals interviewed shared that the learning outcomes were discussed at the beginning of a student leader's term in his or her position. Learning outcome orientation started at the first training session for student leaders, typically with the advisor sharing with the group that the board developed learning outcomes for their experience as a leader. A common approach for the professionals using learning outcomes was to use a self-assessment at the beginning of each

student's term in office to gauge the student's understanding of the identified learning outcomes. The learning outcomes assessments were typically developed internally from the learning outcomes established by the programming board advisors. The pre and post self-assessments consisted of questions centering around each learning outcome typically on a Likert scale in which the student indicated his or her level of competence with the outcome. An example of a self-assessment question from the University of Wisconsin would read: "I have had the opportunity to work with others from diverse backgrounds". The student would check a number between one and five. Another example from Ohio State University was: "I am able to think critically about a situation while considering other people's perspectives and feelings". The student would check a number between one and seven. This approach was typically followed with at least one touch point during the student's year involving an individual meeting with the programming advisor to talk about the learning outcomes and where the student felt like they had progressed. This approach would end at the completion of the student's leadership year with administration of a post self-assessment. Table 6 shows which programming board advisors were using a pre and post self-assessment of learning outcomes and the timeline of when the assessments were administered.

Table 6

Using Pre/Post Self-Assessment for Learning Outcomes

Student Programming Boards Using a Pre/Post Self-assessment for Learning Outcomes Assessment (8)	Timeline for Administering the Outcomes
Kansas State University	Pre, mid-year touch point, post
Michigan State University	Pre, mid-year touch point, post
Ohio State University	Pre, mid-year touch point, post
University of Florida	Pre/post at new leader retreat with individual advisor meeting check-ins after each event completed.
University of Kansas	Pre & post
University of Minnesota	Pre, mid-year touch point, post
University of Texas	Pre after 1st semester, mid-year touch point, post
University of Wisconsin	Pre & post

A typical example of this came from the professional from the University of Kansas who commented that they use the pre and post self-assessment and how the assessment is not only monitoring individual student growth, but to also survey the needs of the larger group. The professional stated, "We compare the answers on the pre-test to the post-test, so we do a pretty broad analysis for each organization on the difference in their comfort level basically for each skill from the pre to the post. So, we're looking for a difference in self-determined knowledge level and this informs our training processes."

Individualized approach. The other professionals interviewed took a more individualized approach to administering learning outcomes with the student programming board leaders. Similar to what is demonstrated in Table 6 above, learning outcomes were presented to the student leaders at the start of their term in office. However, once the learning outcomes were introduced, the professionals' approach was more individualized to each student leader. A common approach was for the student leader to decide what learning outcomes they would like

to work on for the year and then have the student set goals with his or her advisor and a plan to achieve those goals. Table 7 below shows this more individualized approach.

A common response for the group taking a more individualized approach came from the University of Michigan professional, "It's very individualized based. We have to be clear with the students from the start of the year that this is a developmental educational model for them. It is not just a performance evaluation. At the start of the year, we will have them begin a sort of reflective process and with the advisor set some smart goals for the semester or year. Those smart goals end up being the benchmark for how the student is developing, and we don't expect any of our students to master the learning outcomes."

Table 7

Individualized Outcomes for Programming Leaders

Programming board leaders using an individualized process (7)	Individualized process for learning outcome conversations
Georgia Tech University	Pre conversation to determine which learning outcomes to use, mid-year touch point, post conversation of goals.
Penn State University	Talking with the student leaders at the beginning of the year about learning outcomes.
Purdue University	Monthly self-evaluation sheet completed with advisor at individual meeting.
Texas A&M University	Student determines which outcome they would like to use and together a learning contract is developed.
University of Indiana	Four touch points during the year with an individual evaluation to complete.
University of Michigan	Beginning a reflective process to set smart goals around learning outcomes. Touch point each month in individual advisor meetings on progress.
University of North Carolina	Conversation with the students about the learning outcomes.

Event assessment. Even though not all student programming boards were not utilizing some type of learning outcomes assessment, all the professionals interviewed shared they were doing some type of assessment related to the events produced by the student programming board. It was clear by the conversations that event assessment was still a very important part the programming board experience. Table 8 below describes the different pieces associated with the event assessment process including tracking the number of events held and the attendance at each event, providing some type of event satisfaction survey, distributing a marketing or needs survey to event participants, collecting demographics, and having the student leader complete a post-event survey. As seen in first column 1 Table 8, all 21 professionals interviewed shared that they were counting the number of people attending events and counting the overall number of events offered each academic year by the student programming board.

As shown in the second column, 20 professionals indicated the programming board was administering some type of survey to event participants or potential participants. Student programming boards utilized multiple types of assessment including distributing post-event satisfaction surveys to event participants and conducting pre-event polling to determine what types of events students want to attend and how they learned of the event. Some boards administer a semester or annual survey to learn what type of programming students want to experience on campus. Another goal of assessing the student programming boards' events was to capture who was attending the events and the attendees' opinions of the events. Surveys were administered using a variety of methods. Programming board leaders administered surveys by using written surveys at the conclusion of an event, social media and campus list-servs or working with technology companies to incorporate the use of mobile technology such as tablets and IPads. Surveys were developed internally and, typically, with staff and student leader input.

For some student programming boards, event surveys were developed with the assistance of Campus Labs, a technology based assessment consulting company. In some cases, the student affairs division provided additional consultation from an assessment specialist. Common surveys included a Likert scale to gage attendees' opinions of an event, as well as open ended questions so attendees could provide more detailed feedback. The University of Texas post-event survey included typical questions including: how well organized was this event, how likely is it you will attend future events, what type of events would like to see planned in the future, how they found out about the program, and what factors encouraged the participant to attend the event.

In another aspect of event assessment (as seen in the third column of Table 8) thirteen student programming boards collected some type of demographic characteristics of event participants. Demographic information was typically collected by including questions in a post-event survey for participants to self-identify. Nine of the student programming boards captured demographic information through the post-event survey. For example, common demographic information collected through the survey process from the University of Kansas included: class standing, gender, race/ethnicity and place of residence. Four student programming boards were using a card swiping system through Campus Labs, allowing event participants to swipe their identification cards in order to capture even more accurate demographic information of event attendees. The professionals from the University of Indiana discussed why they captured demographic characteristics,

> "A big part of our assessment is figuring out who is coming to our events. We purchased scanners that can scan IDs. Then when we scan IDs we get all gender, race, ethnicity, class standing, if they live on campus, if they don't, if they're an international student. We have advisement compiling that and figuring out who's coming to our events, and

who is not, and providing that to our students. We compare that against the actual number

to what they perceived to be the attendance, because when they propose an event, they

will estimate 800 people and after the number was 665, and then we can compare and

develop that information."

In the fourth column of Table 8, nine programming board advisors indicated each student

leader is asked to complete a post-event evaluation. The purpose of the post-event evaluation is

an opportunity for the leader to capture the strengths and weakness of the event. This can include

looking at marketing efforts, attendance numbers, budgeting, volunteer management, and other

logistical aspects that go into planning events. Typically, once the post-event survey is

completed, the advisor and student leader discuss what was learned from the event and what can

be improved upon for subsequent events. The professional from Iowa State University provided

a typical response, "Each director after the event are required to do a post-event evaluation so

they can internally reflect on what they think went well, what could be improved and who helped

and who participated. We use that for our annual reporting on participation and how many folks

attended." See Table 8 on page 69 for event assessments.

Who is involved in the assessment planning process? When discussing who is

involved in the assessment planning process, it is important to know who leads the process for

each individual programming board area. In Table 9, the group of 21 schools (including the two

pilot programs) fell into four categories in terms of which professional leads the assessment

efforts. In only one instance, a union professional staff member who is not the advisor of the

programming board leads assessment efforts (first column). Typically, this person coordinates

assessment for the entire union. The second column shows 10 offices in which the assessment

lead was also the lead programming board administrator. The third column lists eight student

activities and union offices in which the professional coordinating assessment was a professional staff member in the office, but was not the lead programming board administrator. The last column shows that two student activities and union offices had graduate assistants in charge of the assessment process. Finally, Iowa State University's student activities and union office did not have anyone specifically working on assessment for the programming board. The Iowa State student activities director did comment that evaluation or event data they did collect would fall under his area of responsibility. However, the Iowa State Union did have a graduate assistant working on assessment for the entire union organization (not learning outcomes).

Table 8

Event Assessments

Event #s and Attendance #s (21)	Event Satisfaction &/or Marketing Survey (20)	Collected Demographics (13)	Post Event Evaluation by Student Leader (9)
Georgia Tech University	Georgia Tech University	Georgia Tech University	Georgia Tech University
Iowa State University	Iowa State University	Iowa State University	Iowa State University
Kansas State University	Kansas State University	Kansas State University	Kansas State University
Michigan State University	Michigan State University		
Ohio State University	Ohio State University	Ohio State University	Ohio State University
Penn State University	Penn State University		
Purdue University	Purdue University	Purdue University	
Texas A&M University	Texas A&M University		
University of Colorado	University of Colorado		
University of Florida	University of Florida		University of Florida
University of Illinois	University of Illinois	University of Illinois	
University of Indiana	University of Indiana	University of Indiana	
University of Kansas	University of Kansas	University of Kansas	University of Kansas
University of Maryland	University of Maryland		University of Maryland
University of Michigan	University of Michigan	University of Michigan	
University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota	
University of Missouri	University of Missouri		
University of North Carolina		University of North Carolina	University of North Carolina
University of Pittsburgh	University of Pittsburgh		
University of Texas	University of Texas	University of Texas	
University of Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin

Table 9

Lead Assessment Professional for the Programming Board

Union Administrator (1)	Programming Office Director/Lead Programming Board Administrator (10)	Programming Professional Staff Member (8)	Graduate Assistant (2)
University of Florida	Georgia Tech University	Kansas State University	Iowa State University
	Penn State University	Ohio State University	Michigan State University
	Purdue University	Texas A& M University	
	University Maryland	University of Illinois (future)	
	University of Colorado	University of Indiana	
	University of Kansas	University of Michigan	
	University of Missouri	University of Minnesota	
	University of North Carolina	University of Wisconsin	
	University of Pittsburgh		
	University of Texas		

Using Table 9's categories, the section below provides several different examples of how

assessment is being handled with programming board areas.

Union Administrator Leading Programming Board Assessment. The assessment

responsibilities outlined by University of Florida's programming board lead assessment

professional were the most unique in that the assessment administrator did not advise the

programming board. In this case, the lead assessment professional for the programming board

was also the coordinator for assessment within the entire student union. The associate director of

administrative service was the Florida union's assessment coordinator as written into her job

description. She shared: "I was hired to work in the union when they shifted this position to

include assessment…I think at that point the division as a whole was focused a little bit more on

everyone's needs to do assessment." The Florida associate director talked about how she worked

with the programming board coordinator ahead of time to prepare for the incoming student

leaders. Assessment being part of her position, it helps all areas of the union to be more

coordinated with their assessment efforts. "We worked all the instruments and the plan out ahead

of time and so then it just happens. It's really nice. It's not an 'oh, no I forgot to do assessment

for the huge thing and now it's too late.'"

Programming Office Director/Lead Programming Board Administrator. The most

common approach for assessment was for it to be a part of the lead programming board

administrator's job description. At the University of Texas, for example, the director of student

programs coordinates and leads the assessment process for the programming board. The director

shared that they have a "point person for all assessment in the union as well as an assessment

lead for the division of student affairs." She went on to discuss why assessment was part of her

position as director: "When I was hired here two years ago, tossed in between my phone

interview and my on-campus interview, I was delivered a letter from the union's executive

director at the time stating, whoever gets this position needs to conduct a massive self-study and

overhaul of the department." This example was typical of how assessment responsibilities were

assigned throughout the union. In this scenario, the lead programming board administrator was

responsible for assessment and another individual working for assessment for the entire union.

This individual with union responsibilities tended to either work with an assessment office, or a

committee charged with assessment for the division of student affairs.

Georgia Tech associate director of student center programs provided another example of

a popular assessment organization approach. The associate director who leads assessment efforts

for the entire programming office supervises three program advisors who work with student

programming board advising. Assessment is a part of the associate director's job description. She leads the assessment efforts; however, the staff members who report to her are also part of carrying out the process. Essentially, the lead programming administer decides the direction of assessment and uses her staff as committee members to carry out the plan.

Programming Professional Staff Member. Having a staff member volunteer to lead part or all the assessment efforts is another common approach for how assessment is conducted in union programming board offices. At Ohio State University, a programming coordinator took the lead on assessment of their student leaders. The Ohio State office includes three full-time staff members who work with the programming board areas. All three staff members play a role in the assessment process for the programming board. When discussing which staff member leads assessment for the programming areas, the associate director shared the following:

> The program coordinator is the person for the Ohio Union Activities Board aspect. When it comes to major campus events committee and signature events. I would be the person doing those assessments and each entities…each entity that oversees a student group, that's our structure and they all would do their assessment. We don't have an assessment person in student activities, so we utilize the Center for the Study of Student Life.

Graduate Assistants Leading Assessment Efforts. Least common among the professionals interviewed was to have graduate assistants coordinate and the lead the assessment efforts for the programming board. However, the professional at Michigan State discussed why she began having the graduate assistants lead the assessment efforts. At Michigan State University, two graduate assistants, guided by the assistant programming manager, lead assessment for the area. The graduate assistants came into their positions with some assessment experience and worked on the initial assessment plan for the student programming board. The

Michigan State program manager shared that she was short one full-time staff when they were

"mandated to start assessment two years ago." The assistant manager guided and had overseen

the project and has done that again with this team, but we just had to delegate it. We just

absolutely had to…It looks very different this year than it did last year because I had two grads

that had zero experience and were just kind of late in getting it started."

   Overall Trends. As described above, each programming office assigned responsibility to

one or more individuals to lead the assessment process. It was clear through the interviews that

coordinating thorough assessment efforts was an additional demand on an already busy

programming staff who spend considerable time and effort working daily with students to

produce events. The Georgia Tech associate director of student center programs and lead for the

programming office's assessment efforts talked about this demand. She shared: "I think we do a

good job… I talk about how we have two pieces to the assessment process the event side with

counting the numbers and then we do learning outcomes and we're looking at student growth

and development and it is just kind of more focused on what they need… I think it's hard to do

both sides and do it well." She goes on to share, "We probably need more staff because I think

it's a time issue. I think you talk about it, but then okay well, we just assessed this so now we've

got to move on to the next thing and we don't have time to reflect on the process."

   Another example was the professional from the University of Illinois who discussed the

time needed to do assessment of learning outcomes for the programming board. The

programming board was not using learning outcomes assessment at the time. However, as a

result of the strategic plan from student affairs to implement learning outcomes, the associate

director is able to hire an assistant director who will lead future assessment efforts for the office.

She commented, when asked who leads assessment for the area, "Oh, you've hit the nail on the

head, one of the main reasons we're looking to get that assistant director in here. We need someone that will lead assessment. We haven't been very successful without having that conduit since I'm overseeing all the other areas, to be able to make sure we're funneling in that direction."

How Are Student Activities and Union Professionals Trained on Assessment? This question describes what kind of training student activities and union professionals received in regard to assessment. When the professionals were asked about the type of training they had received in regard to assessment, the discussion ranged from the educational degrees generally held by staff, to the set-up of assessment within the student affairs division or union, to how assessment consultation was offered.

All professionals who led assessment initiatives in their respective offices had completed or were completing a master's degree in higher education or student affairs administration with two professionals having completed doctoral programs related to higher education. This includes the student activities and union offices that were starting to put together an assessment plan for their area. The professionals expressed that they had received some training and background regarding learning outcomes assessment as part of their advanced degrees. Most commented that they had taken a course in program evaluation and assessment and shared that it was important to stay abreast of what was happening with assessment in any area of student affairs or higher education. The professional from Penn State commented, "I would say that coming out of grad school, it was sort of drilled in me that assessment was going to be the way of the future, and I think at Penn State in some areas it is."

All individuals discussed the importance of taking advantage of assessment workshops offered when attending a professional association conference. For example, the professional from Ohio State University commented,

> Something unique about Ohio State Student Life is we have a Center for Student Life and so it's a unique unit that's really focused on doing assessment work for all of Student Life, not just student activities. They're consultants in all of the Student Life areas. We frequently will consult them for help in developing some of those assessment tools. There are training opportunities given that the staff attend. The Center hosts an annual assessment conference that all staff members are encouraged to go to and opportunities to leave our office and go other places to experiences things.

The range of resources for professionals regarding assessment training varied throughout the sample due, in part, to the overall approach toward assessment by the student affairs division or by the university. Though the individual student activities and union's office had one or more professionals leading assessment, many unions and overall reporting divisions had multiple layers of staff dedicated to coordinating assessment. Table 10 is a visual representation of how assessment is coordinated for the student activities and union areas. At many of the campuses, assessment starts with the overall reporting division.

Table 10

Assessment Coordination for Student Activities and Union Professionals

Dedicated Office or Individual Staff Person in the Division for Assessment (8)	Dedicated Union Professional for Assessment (4)	Division wide or Union Coordinated Committee for Assessment (9)	Individual Student Activities Office Coordinating Assessment (4)
Ohio State University	University of Florida	Kansas State University	Georgia Tech University
Penn State University	University of Maryland	University of Colorado	University of Indiana
Texas A&M University	Purdue University	University of Florida	University of Wisconsin
University of Kansas	University of Colorado	University of Illinois	University of Pittsburgh
University of Michigan		University of Maryland	
University of Missouri		University of North Carolina	
University of Texas		University of Minnesota	
Michigan State University		University of Texas	
		Texas A&M University	

Resources. For eight student activities and union offices, the overall reporting division had a dedicated office or professional charged with assessment. Resources available to the eight offices included: individual consultation on assessment planning; development of survey and learning outcomes; aggregation of data for the individual areas; and workshops and conferences on assessment offered to the division and the campuses.

For the universities in which the overall division included an assessment committee or council, each department typically had a representative to participate on the committee. Nine divisions had an assessment committee or council. It was common for the committee to offer workshops or conferences on assessment and to be charged with developing the overall learning

outcomes for the division. Four unions had a dedicated staff member who was charged with assessment for the entire union. The dedicated assessment staff person's position would generally include working on customer service, marketing, student programming, and student employee assessment. Notably, all four individuals also sat on the overall division's assessment committee. The interviewee from the University of Florida who was responsible for all assessment in the union commented, "I'm the co-chair of the student affairs assessment committee. We don't have someone who is dedicated to assessment for the division, which I wish we did, because I would love that. We do put on a boot camp in the fall typically…we also do what we call a poster party in the spring for people who want to highlight some of their work."

Georgia Tech University, University of Indiana, and University of Pittsburgh professionals all shared that even though the directive was to perform assessment by their overall division, the divisions did not have coordinated assessment efforts. When asked if they felt they received adequate training to administer assessment, the professional at the University of Indiana commented,

> I would say for the small scale of effort that we're doing, we feel pretty comfortable. If they decide to expand it like they hope to do in the next couple of year years, then we will definitely be looking for opportunities to learn where they can expand and what other kind of assessments we could be doing. Between the three of us, we're relying on a lot of our personal experiences and previous professional experiences, but we've definitely talked about as a staff bringing in other professionals on campus to help us expand our efforts.

The University of Wisconsin professional, whose union was part of the business affairs division and not student affairs, discussed that assessment was a greater university conversation that started with the university's commitment to learning outcomes. Though they were not part of a division committee, they did discuss that training workshops were available university wide. She commented,

> The advisor working on assessment attended workshops by Campus Labs. Though most of our training has really been a lot of our own self learning and then deeply rooted in the mission and vision of the Wisconsin Union as well as UW-Madison has learning outcomes. We wanted to make certain that what we're doing was also embedded in those learning outcomes as well.

Technology Resources Used for Assessment. Data management plays a large role in assessment practices. A popular resource used by student activities and union professionals for data management was a company called Campus Labs. Campus Labs Baseline program provides technology, resources, and expert consultation to create an integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive assessment approach.

> Campus Labs Baseline is designed to connect and translate assessment data for the purposes of improving the student experience both inside and outside the classroom. Baseline allows campuses to measure learning, document student involvement, and inform strategic directions. The divisions and individual department can collect direct and indirect measures of learning, benchmark with peers and use assessment results to improve programs and services. Campus Labs Collegiate Link program provides tools for managing student organizations and co-curricular activities. Table 11 below includes campuses utilizing Campus Labs. (www.campuslabs.com)

Table 11

Student Activities & Union Professionals Using Campus Labs

Campus Labs Baseline (9)	Campus Labs Collegiate Link (3)
University of Florida	Purdue University
University of Illinois	University of Texas
University of Maryland	University of North Carolina
University of Kansas	
University of Michigan	
University of Texas	
University of North Carolina	
University of Wisconsin	
University of Missouri	

Twelve student activities and union professionals who used Campus Labs services indicated it was funded through the overall division or union and not their individual office. As such, the services were available for use by a range of offices. As part of their contractual arrangement, Campus Labs also provided individual consultation to the campuses as an additional service, as well as webinars and regional workshops on assessment and learning outcomes. The professional from the University of Kansas commented, "As someone new to learning outcomes assessment, Campus Labs has been responsive for questions or concerns through their individual consultation and the regional workshops we have been able to attend."

The professional from Texas A&M discussed the many assessment resources available on campus. After talking with the Texas A&M University professional and researching the university website, it was clear how embedded learning outcomes and assessment were in the entire campus culture, even more so than was the case at other institutions included in this study. Though many of the student activities and union professionals discussed how their learning outcomes and assessment were part of an entire university effort (including the University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin, Ohio State University and the University of Michigan) none of the campuses seemed to have as stringent of a top-down approach as Texas A&M

University. The A&M professional commented, "Institutionally, the campus uses the WEAVE online system which is a central repository for assessment information. Each degree-granting program and student, administrative, and academic support office is required to use WEAVE to document its assessment processes and program improvements." The WEAVE program is coordinated through the university's office of institutional assessment.

Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, and Kansas State University professionals all discussed that their individual campuses created their own division-wide integrated technology and data systems for their assessment work. The rest of the student activities and union professionals discussed how they collected the assessment data in more ad hoc terms by using tools such as Survey Monkey and Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

How were student activities and union professionals using what is learned from their outcomes assessment in training and development of student programming board leaders and how was the event assessment associated with the programming board events used? Overwhelmingly, the professionals shared they used their learning outcomes as formative assessment to provide ongoing feedback to help student leaders identify their strengths and areas of improvement. This formative assessment was additionally used in the training process of current and incoming student programming board leaders. Table 12 indicates how the professionals interviewed used their learning outcomes.

A common response during the interviews in regard to how the professionals use the learning outcomes assessment is shown in this quote from the Ohio State professional,

> We identify with the pre-test what that particular group needs to focus on, but I also
> know that we use the post-test results from last year's group to enhance the training that
> we provide our students with. For example one of the areas that we're hoping to improve

upon is personal wellness, they didn't show a lot of growth in that area initially, and so we're trying to find ways that we can through individual one-on-one meetings with the student or partnering with the wellness center to provide new resources to increase their understanding of what it means to develop their own personal wellness.

Another response that highlighted how learning outcomes are used came from the University of Michigan professional,

I'll say the learning outcomes are a basis for all of the trainings that we do throughout the year with our students. As I mentioned, we will be intentional about doing workshops throughout the year related to each of these learning outcomes, and then with those workshops we'll do a pre and post assessment with our students to try to identify their outcomes from the experience.

Table 12

How Learning Outcomes Are Used

Individual Student Leader Growth/Feedback (13)	Inform Training Needs for Current & Future Leaders (10)
Texas A&M University	Texas A&M University
University of Minnesota	
University of Florida	University of Florida
University of Kansas	University of Kansas
University of Texas	University of Texas
University of Indiana	University of Indiana
University of Michigan	University of Michigan
University of Maryland	
Georgia Tech University	
	University of Wisconsin
Kansas State University	Kansas State University
	Michigan State University
Ohio State University	Ohio State University
Penn State University	
Purdue University	

How event assessment is used for the programming board. The different types of event

assessment data that were collected by the student programming boards, included: event and

attendance numbers, satisfaction and marketing focused surveys, demographic information, and

student leader post event evaluations. The data fell into three categories: using the information

for program improvement and development, budgeting, and developing reports. Table 13 shows

how the professionals interviewed used the information.

Table 13

How Event Assessment Is Used

Program Improvement/Development (19)	Budgeting (16)	Developing Reports (19)
Georgia Tech	Georgia Tech	Georgia Tech (monthly, semester, yearly)
Iowa State University	Kansas State University	Iowa State (yearly)
Kansas State University	Michigan State University	Kansas State University (yearly)
Michigan State University	Ohio State University	Michigan State University
Ohio State University	University of Colorado	Ohio State University (yearly)
University of Colorado	University of Illinois	University of Colorado (yearly)
University of Illinois	University of Kansas	University of Illinois (yearly)
University of Kansas	University of Texas	University of Kansas (yearly)
University of Texas	Texas A&M University	University of Texas (yearly)
University of Indiana	University of Indiana	Texas A&M University (yearly)
University of Michigan	University of Michigan	University of Indiana (yearly)
University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota	University of Michigan (yearly)
University of Florida	Purdue University	University of Minnesota (yearly)
Purdue University	Penn State University	University of Florida (yearly)
Penn State University	University of Maryland	Purdue University (yearly)
University of Maryland	University of Wisconsin	Penn State University (yearly)
University of Pittsburgh		University of Maryland (yearly)
University of North Carolina		University of North Carolina (yearl
University of Wisconsin		University of Wisconsin (yearly)

Program improvement and development. Nineteen student programming boards were

using what they learned from their various forms of event assessment in the process of

improving events and in the development of future programs. A common response about

program improvement came from the professional from the University of Michigan,

> We'll look at the data that we've gathered at least once a semester mostly for decision
>
> making purposes moving forward. For me, the assessment data is unrelated to the
>
> learning outcomes, the administrative assessment data is just as important as we consider
>
> short term, what we're doing for programs coming up—maybe it's marketing or
>
> something else, or different sort of experiences that we can provide for students at our
>
> upcoming programs. We budget for our programs a year in advance, and so we need to be
>
> able to use assessment data to help us think strategically about what we are going to
>
> budget for in the next fiscal year. Part of that is our own creativity and what our
>
> programming students are saying, but the other piece is really students who experience
>
> our events, and who's coming and what they're doing.

Another response from the University of Minnesota professional, discussed program

development and improvement and the importance of using the data to inform programming

decisions,

> Our goal is to have more regular reports so that we are bringing the data from the last
>
> weekend's event and maybe trends for the current month to our board, so when they are
>
> planning the next semester they can say, 'oh wow, nobody wanted to go to comedians
>
> this fall, or is it that we picked bad comedians, or that comedy just isn't popular
>
> anymore?

Budgeting. Sixteen programming board advisors talked about the importance of using

their assessment results in trying to obtain new funding or justify current funding (e.g. using

attendance numbers to show the cost per person in budgeting). The professionals shared that in

these tight economic times and with shrinking budgets, it is important to show they are being good stewards of their funding. A typical response came from the professionals from Ohio State University, "Maybe more so than asking for more money, we're justifying how we are spending our dollars, so when you're receiving 53% of the student activity fee, there's a lot of responsibility and questions that come with that. There's a need to justify how we're trying to invest our funding in the best way possible that reaches the most students."

The University of Kansas professionals also shared,

From a specific standpoint with the programming board, we look at the assessment to judge cost per person and if we feel like events are being cost effective, and if we see trends where they're not. This gives us a pretty good sign to take a hard look at it and see if we maybe need to reallocate that money and try something different.

Developing reports. The assessment results were also used for developing reports. Nineteen professionals discussed the assessment results are shared with constituents in monthly, semester, or annual reports. The reports were either an individual report for the specific programming or student activities area or a part of an overall union report. Typically, the reports were given to the immediate supervisor who would then share with the greater division. The professional from Georgia Tech discussed that not only do they put together an annual report but a monthly report as well. She commented that, "The report assessment is going to be very quantitative; it's going to be very much like: we had a program, we had 500 people, includes revenue and expenses, so they're very numbers driven."

Summary

This chapter provided the summary of the interviews with the student activities and union professionals as well as the analysis of the information submitted concerning each student

programming boards learning outcomes and event assessment processes. Six research questions were analyzed for themes around learning outcomes and event assessment for student programming boards. Though a strong emphasis was seen on incorporating learning outcomes assessment into the student programming boards, it was evident that event assessment still had a higher priority. For many student activities and union professionals, balancing the performance of learning outcomes assessment while continuing event assessment was a challenge.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Summary of Research

The first two chapters of this dissertation introduced the research study and prior research on assessment in student affairs. Chapters one and two also demonstrated the lack of research regarding whether student programming boards have implemented learning outcomes assessment. Chapter three described the targeted population involved, methodology, and instruments used in the study, while chapter four presented the findings that emerged from this study. This chapter concludes the study by exploring implications of these findings for practice. It highlights three major sections: discussion of key findings, implications for practice, and limitations of the current study including suggestions for future research.

Key findings.

The descriptive survey employed in this study sought to explore current assessment practices of learning outcomes, resources used, and outcomes of assessment activities for student programming board leaders. The data were collected through document review and phone interviews by the researcher with each lead programming board advisor responsible for his or her board's or office's assessment efforts.

Assessment plans. From this group of programming board professionals, all twenty-one student programming boards were performing some type of assessment about events and a majority of professionals had implemented learning outcomes assessment for their student leaders. The number one assessment measure being collected was counting attendance at events. Attendance counting was used for budget presentations, annual reports and post-event evaluations. In regard to learning outcomes, sixteen of the offices (76%) were actively assessing student learning outcomes for student leaders. Four offices were in the process of creating

learning outcomes and one office had no plans to implement learning outcomes assessment. The professionals who cited more internal sources of pressure behind their decision to implement assessment indicated the internal pressure came from union management. Four interviewees indicated that the decision to implement assessment was an internal student union management decision. Thirteen interviewees indicated the decision to implement assessment came from external pressures either from larger division administration or from campus-wide initiatives that were external to the student union. It was surprising to learn that all the boards were using some type of assessment and that the majority were implementing learning outcomes assessment.

Learning outcomes used. Through document review and interviews, the top learning outcomes fell within nine themes: 1) communication and collaboration, 2) leadership development, 3) event management, 4) multiculturalism and civic engagement, 5) critical thinking and creativity 6) intrapersonal development, 7) resilience and personal wellness, 8) traditions and institutional connections and 9) customer service. The approaches in how professionals developed learning outcomes broke into four categories: using university or division wide-developed outcomes; developing outcomes based on national standards; benchmarking against other programs or departments; and developing the outcomes themselves through their own staff.

A common approach for the professionals using learning outcomes was to use a pre self-assessment at the beginning of the students' term in office to gauge the students' understanding of the identified learning outcomes. Typically, learning outcomes assessments were developed internally based off the learning outcomes established by the programming board advisors. The pre and post self-assessments consisted of questions incorporating each learning outcome with

responses collected using a Likert scale in which the student indicated their level of competence with the outcome.

The rest of the professionals who were interviewed took a more individualized approach to administering learning outcomes with the student programming board leaders. Once the learning outcomes were introduced, the professionals' approach was more individualized to each student leader. A common example of the individualized approach was for the student leader to decide what learning outcomes they would like to work on for the year and then to set goals with their advisor as to how he or she would accomplish them.

When examining the event assessment process, the researcher identified multiple categories of the types of data collected. These data included: the number of events held and the attendance at each event, providing an event satisfaction survey, distributing marketing or needs survey to event participants, collecting demographics, and having the student leader complete a post event survey.

The level of effort that went into developing learning outcomes for student leaders was clear from interviewing the professionals. The professionals worked with assessment directors and technology tools and resources to create the outcomes assessment used with their individual student programming boards. A key finding from this section is the extent to which event assessment was used when compared to learning outcomes assessment. Event assessment appeared to be used to provide information about program worth, while learning outcomes assessment was mostly used for student training and development.

Assessment lead staff person and training. During the discussion about the professionals' level of assessment training, the comments ranged from the educational degrees generally held by staff, to the set-up of assessment within the overall division or union and to

how assessment consultation was offered to staff. It was surprising that the Michigan State University programming board was the only group in which the graduate assistants led assessment efforts. Most student programming boards' assessment efforts were coordinated and lead by a student activities and union professional who worked with the programming board leaders as an advisor. The theory behind Michigan State's approach was because the graduate assistants were currently immersed in a graduate training program, the opportunity to lead assessment efforts would provide a hands-on approach for them to implement what they learn in their coursework.

Implications for Practice

Although valuable and needed on campus, assessment of learning outcomes is not extensive. As discussed in chapter four, when the interviews were conducted the programming professionals utilized student learning outcomes assessment only for the student leaders. The learning outcomes fell into two categories that utilized student leaders' self-assessment. Student leaders were given a pre and post self-assessment of the learning outcomes. Professionals then either focused on all of the outcomes with all of the leaders, or the assessment process was more individual and the student picked the outcomes they would like to work on during their year as a leader. Even though a lot of time and thought went into the developing the learning outcomes, the delivery and process did not translate into comprehensive learning outcomes assessment for the student programming board and events. However, the process of developing the learning outcomes provided a means for the professionals to speak in the language that is valued on campus. Having the framework of the learning outcomes also provided a structure to the training processes and a structure to the individual advisor and student leader meetings. For the programming professionals, the learning outcomes process provided the same context for each

individual professional advisor working with student leaders to facilitate the delivery of a similar leadership experience.

The professional from the University of Wisconsin supported this notion with the comment,

> Certainly we just live in this era of assessment. You always have to prove what you're doing and your impact and so it just became really clear that we had to start demonstrating how we're having an impact." The professional goes on to add, "Almost weekly I hear from our alumni who about how valuable this experience was. I think for us to be able to tell that story in language that resonates with the rest of campus was really important for us.

This quote from the Wisconsin professional indicated that the pressure to implement learning outcomes is felt by programming board professionals today. The pressure is supported in the literature. Schuh and Gansemer-Topf (2010) discuss the importance of linking assessment to institutional mission and purpose. They discuss that it is imperative that student affairs professionals develop, services, and experiences that contribute to student learning experiences that are valued at their institution.

Programs staff are limited in the time and resources needed to further assessment efforts. Throughout the interview conversations, a recurring theme emerged that student programming boards had implemented learning outcomes only for top student leaders. The professionals discussed that with the hundreds of events planned each year and the large funding (i.e., funding sources ranged from $200,000 to 2 million dollars) provided for the boards, it was a struggle to develop outcomes that extended past top student leaders to general committee members, student volunteers, or student event attendees. Additionally, they had not developed

outcomes for the events being planned or for the students attending the events. The professionals were not using learning outcomes for budget purposes, but they were finding they still needed to count event numbers, determine demographics, and use satisfaction surveys for budget and future event proposal purposes. Most professionals cited the time and effort it takes to implement learning outcomes for the student leaders is enormous and time was a major factor in furthering implementation to reach other student populations. The professional from the University of Colorado discussed the time limitation,

> I think it's just really challenging. Trying to find a system that works best for everyone and someone who's got the time to put it all together so I'm sure you understand that. Everyone works a lot and has a lot of hours and putting one more thing on a list like what comes off the list, and I think that's probably the biggest challenge, and then implementation, whether it's for assessment or for student learning outcomes assessment.

However, the research emphasizes that the importance of assessment comes chiefly from the push for greater accountability. Such accountability requires colleges and universities to invest resources in identifying and measuring student learning outcomes both within and outside of the classroom (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). In the past, student affairs professionals based assessments on benchmarks and student satisfaction, attempting to determine how many students participated in programs and to what degree these students reported satisfaction (Bresciani, Zelna & Anderson, 2004; NASPA & ACPA, 2004). This method of assessment did not measure a student's understanding and learning nor did it provide guidance on how to enhance a particular outcome (ACPA, 1996, p. 2).

Resources, chiefly time and training, for assessment are vital. Though it seemed resources were available for assessing learning outcomes, whether it be through a dedicated

student affairs assessment professional or assessment based technology like Campus Labs, resources is an area in which there should be the most improvement. A study of new professionals' knowledge, skills, and abilities showed that assessment was being undertaken by new professionals who had varying degrees of formal or informal training (Timm, 2005). Support from supervisors combined with an understanding of assessment can help new professionals design effective assessment plans.

Administrators need to develop sustainable assessment activities. During the interviews, some of the professionals shared that their division had a new top administrator and it was the administrator's goal to implement assessment. A challenge presented is when the administrator leaves the position and assessment is not the next leader's priority. New leaders often set new goals and assign resources and reports accordingly. Assessment needs to be part of an annual cycle, providing ongoing data collection for reports that outline assessment activities, their results, and the changes based on the results for dissemination on a yearly basis (Schuh & Gansemer-Topf, 2010). This means that, regardless of whether a division is experiencing an administrator transition, assessment needs to be maintained as a priority.

Specific goals for assessment need to be set and constant for funding sources available. The research indicates that accountability in higher education results in reduction of budget dollars if an institution cannot demonstrate learning of their students. However, the professionals interviewed shared that the event assessment was more important to their local budget process than implementing learning outcomes for student leaders. Campus funding sources were less interested in the learning of a few student leaders and were more interested in the overall impact of programs or amount of programs created. Yet, learning outcome assessment was more important to the programming board professionals to be able to participate

in the learning outcomes and assessment conversations happening on campus with their academic counterparts. The contradiction further reduces resources and creates competing goals.

Limitations of the study

No study is without its limitations. In an effort to make the study a manageable project, the researcher established parameters when determining which student activities and union professionals should participate in the study. The focus was to interview programming board professionals at public AAU institutions where the programming board was a part of the campus student union department. The narrow scope of the group interviewed limits the generalizability of the study. Another limitation is potential bias in answers from those interviewed. Some may be inclined to overstate or represent in an overly favorable light the extent to which they were using learning outcomes assessment. It is more likely they would overstate than understate the degree that the programming board is participating in learning outcomes assessment. The programming board advising profession for large public campuses is a small network and the professionals generally know each other. Within these associations, the importance of learning outcomes assessment is a frequently discussed topic. In addition, participants were interviewed by telephone only and the limited engagement created by this medium could have created a barrier to eliciting the most meaningful and comprehensive data. Additionally, personal involvement of the researcher in the operation of a student union at an institution of higher education that is a member of the AAU might have influenced the interpretation of the information gathered. Instead of administering a large quantitative survey across a cross section of student programming boards at different institutions, the researcher picked the individuals to interview, which can lend to some bias as the programming professionals were colleagues of the researcher.

Future Research Directions

   Individual Student Leader Outcomes. It was clear from the interviews and the information submitted that even though the professionals were implementing learning outcomes that event assessment was still the priority for programming boards. An area of future research could address whether programming board leaders who are using learning outcomes for self-assessment make better event planners. The study specifically looking at the result of the learning outcomes assessment for student leaders and see if they create more successful programs in terms of event planning, attendance and budget management. This could be in comparison to student programming boards that are not using learning outcomes assessment.
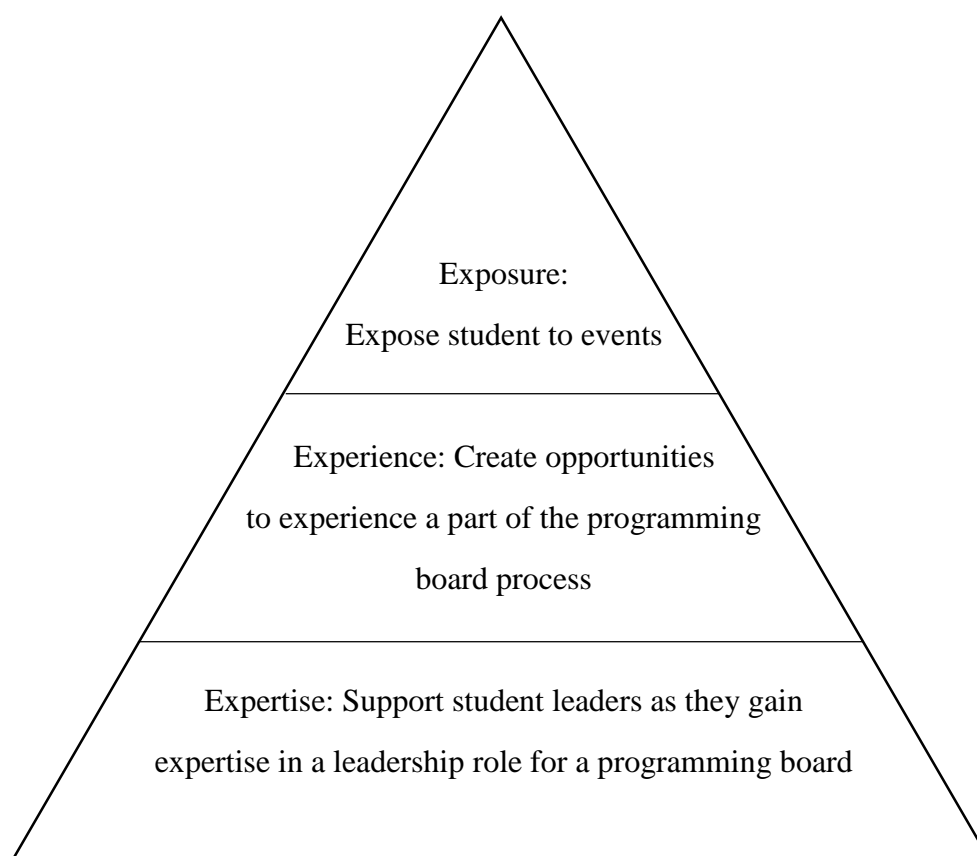
   Implementing Learning Outcomes beyond Student Leaders. From the interview conversations, a theme emerged of student programming boards implementing learning outcomes for student leaders only. The professionals shared that they have not adopted learning outcomes for general student volunteers nor developed outcomes for their board-organized events and for the students attending the events. Further research involving a differently selected sample of programming board advisors could determine whether student programming boards are successfully implementing learning outcomes assessment with programming board volunteers and event attendees. This research also could identify best practices for assessment of these targeted student groups.

   With the intensive processes used by the student activities and union professionals that focus on the student leaders learning outcomes, it is difficult to implement all aspects currently used for a greater audience. Looking at a model from the University of Kansas undergraduate research center, the center's student programs are focused on three areas illustrated in a triangle diagram. The bottom layer of the triangle is where they are exposing students to research. The

middle layer includes creating opportunities to experience part of the research process. The third

layer involves supporting students as they gain expertise in a particular area of research (KU

Undergraduate Research, 2015). Student activities and union professionals could use this model

to illustrate how to expand the learning outcomes assessment to all students involved in union

programming. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Model to display student learning at programming board events

Exposure:

Expose student to events

Experience: Create opportunities

to experience a part of the programming

board process

Expertise: Support student leaders as they gain

expertise in a leadership role for a programming board

To enhance student learning, ACPA (1996) urged student affairs educators to articulate

and assess learning outcomes associated with the co-curricular experiences they provide. In

2001, ACPA and NASPA reaffirmed these calls for reform by stressing the importance of

learning "as comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development" (ACPA, 1996, p.22, Green, Jones & Aloi, 2008). Student activities and union professionals, using a triangle model similar to the KU undergraduate research center, could show how learning demonstrated through a student programming board's activities could be explained to a larger audience. The author used the triangle model as a symbol to explain how programming fits into students' learning experiences. Such a symbol could be useful to faculty members, academic administrators, parents or even state legislators. Additionally, the triangle could be displayed at student events and in programming board marketing materials for student event attendees to aid with the connection to their own student learning experiences.

Follow Up Survey. Finally, future research also could include a three to five year follow-up of the programming board professionals in this study to determine whether they have changed their use of learning outcomes assessment, been successful in implementing outcomes more broadly, and experienced challenges and opportunities since the initial study. Additionally, it would be informative to determine whether the use of learning outcomes by programming boards had changed and whether funding allocations were tied to assessment results or these results were incorporated in boards' annual reporting. For those programming professionals who indicated they were currently not using learning outcomes but were in the process of implementing them, a follow-up survey could determine the degree to which their boards are performing assessment.

<center>**Conclusion**</center>

From the 21 student activities and union professionals interviewed and the document analysis, the researcher determined that union professionals are fully immersed in assessment of some type. This included varying levels of event assessment or learning outcomes assessment. It

was surprising to learn the number of professionals implementing student learning outcomes for their programming board leaders despite them identifying it as a challenging and time consuming process. This speaks to the internal and external pressures placed on these professionals to demonstrate their effectiveness.

In addition, this study contributes to the currently limited research assessment for student programming boards. The results are specific to a defined population of programming board professionals and cannot be extrapolated to determine what may be found with student programming boards that were not part of the study. However, the study included one student activities and union professional where the university was not part of the AAU and the assessment activities were the same as the group of AAU programming boards. This speaks to the ability of programming board professionals to implement learning outcomes processes no matter the type of institution. Although the goals of this study were met, there is work yet to be done to paint a more complete picture of assessment practices involving student programming board leaders and organizations.

In summary, student union programming staff are spending a great deal of time and effort on assessment and evaluation. While they hear the call for greater accountability, they are not necessarily being provided with the skills or resources needed to engage in effective assessment practices. Further, student activities and union professionals confronted with competing goals from funding sources and campus administrators, face difficulties in identifying what outcomes they should measure. As a result, most of their assessment practices focus on the outputs associated with their boards' activities, counting how many people attend events and the number of events produced and, occasionally, collecting satisfaction data from event attendees. Meanwhile, they are limited to assessing learning outcomes for a select number of top student

leaders and not the larger student population at their institutions. Universities and student unions

need to address these resource constraints and goal contradictions to facilitate effective

assessment of the learning experiences afforded to students by student programming boards.

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Appendix A: Introduction to the Study Sample Email

Hi Lindsay,

I'm JJ O'Toole-Curran, Director of Programs for the KU Memorial Unions, and our office advises the student programming board. You may have seen an email today from your Union Director about my dissertation project. I know this is a really crazy time of year in programming, however I was hoping we could arrange an interview in the next 2 weeks.

I'm also a graduate student at the University of Kansas, working on my dissertation proposal. I'm working on a descriptive survey to programming board advisors from AAU public universities where the programming board is a part of the Union structure specifically advised by Union professionals. Essentially for the paper I hope to be interviewing Union based programming board advisors on what they are doing for assessment and learning outcomes practices.

If you would agree, I would like to include Georgia Tech in my interviews. Prior to interviews I was hoping to obtain documents on what you are currently doing so I can do some document analysis prior to the interview and then follow up with questions about your board and assessment.

In preparation for the interview, I was hoping to obtain what Georgia Tech is doing with assessment and learning outcomes with the programming board. My plan is to do some document analysis and shorten the interview process so it takes less of your time. I would anticipate an hour interview at max. Anything you can send/email me would be great. Or any information that you can point to a website would be great as well.

Here's a few questions that might help:
        Do you have an assessment plan for the board?
        What do you do?
        Event evaluations? If you have a copy to send. Reports of the year.
        Learning Outcomes for leaders and members? What are the outcomes?
        How do you assess the outcomes or not?
        How is the board structured?
        How is the board funded? Student Fees, Union dollars? Budget if you can share.
        Union is an auxiliary? Funded by retail sales and dollars?

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns. By review of your program board's website, it's clear you have a really strong program at Georgia Tech and I would really like to work with you on this project.

Thank you again,

JJ

Appendix B: Phone Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this phone interview survey. As discussed during our initial phone call or email this survey is to learn about your assessment activities that your student activities office has in place for your student programming board.

Introductory questions to be asked during the interviews follow:

Tell me about your union…What does it do? What are the functions?

When was the union founded?

Who does the union report to within the organizational structure of the university?

Is the union considered an auxiliary service of the university?

How is the union funded?

Tell me about your programming board…

What types of activities/programs does it provide?

Describe the structure of your programming board in terms of:

Student leadership, including the number of student leadership positions

General membership, including the average number of general members

What are the board's main sources of funding and approximately how much does it receive from each? Student fees, Union retail dollars, Ticket income, Other types of incomes.

Research Question #1:

Do student activities and union professionals have assessment plans for student leaders and

volunteer student members serving on a programming board?

Why do you assess outcomes?

What are the sources of pressure?

What is the timeline for your assessment?

Research Question #2

What are the components of their assessment plans?

Please describe the assessment process for your programming board?

What kinds of assessment do you do?

How was the assessment developed?

Research Question #3

What, if any, learning outcomes are assessed?

What are the goals and learning objectives for your student activities offices?

How do they apply to the student leaders? To the general members/volunteers?

What model, if any, do you use for measuring learning outcomes?

Can you explain it to me?

How were the outcomes developed?

How do you assess your learning outcomes?

Research Question #4

Who is involved in the assessment planning process, and what are the major responsibilities of these individuals?

Please explain the structure of your student activities and union programming office?

How many professionals work with the programming board?

Who is responsible for coordinating assessment and learning outcomes for the programming board? What does this person do?

Number of staff?

Research Question #5

How are student activities and union professionals trained on assessment?

What kind of resources do you put towards your assessment? (personnel, time, training, money, etc.)

What type of training does the staff receive that are working with assessment and learning outcomes?

Adequate training provided?

Provided a budget to carry out assessment?

Research Question #6

How are student activities and union professionals using what is learned from their outcomes assessment in training and development of student programming board leaders and organization programming being offered to the campus?

How do you use your assessment results?

For budget purposes?

What budget processes have you incorporated your assessment results into?

Have you been successful in receiving more funding for the programming board?

Was the funding allocated to general programming efforts or for specific programming topics?

What if any future programs been developed due to your assessment results?

Why were the programs developed?

What has been the success of the program?

For training and development of students?

What changes have you made to your training and development of students from your assessment results? New training procedures or methods?

To generate annual reports? Who receives these reports?

What would be helpful to your office to more effectively assess student learning outcomes?

More training?

Financial resources to pay for assessment resources?

Full time assessment position in the office or the Union?

Other?

Closing

Thank you for participating in the interview today.

KU RESEARCH &
GRADUATE STUDIES
The University of Kansas

NOT HUMAN RESEARCH

December 16, 2013

Janette OToole-Curran

Dear Janette OToole-Curran:

On 12/16/2013, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	WHAT ARE STUDENT UNION AND ACTIVITIES PROFESSIONALS DOING IN REGARD TO IMPLEMENTING ASSESSMENT PLANS FOR STUDENT LEADERS ON A PROGRAMMING BOARD
Investigator:	Janette OToole-Curran
IRB ID:	STUDY00000626
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Otoole.curran.survey.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • JJ O'tool HSCL_Initial_Submission_Form.pdf, Category: IRB Protocol; • Oral Consent form.Otoole.Curran.pdf, Category: Consent Form;

The IRB determined that the proposed activity is not research involving human subjects. IRB review and approval is not required.

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please submit a study modification to the IRB for a determination. You can create a modification by clicking **Create Modification / CR** within the study.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Dyson Elms, MPA
IRB Administrator, KU Lawrence Campus

Human Subjects Committee Lawrence
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