DART PROGRAM EVALUATION

A Collaborative Evaluation and Sharing of Results by Alana Quigley, April McCabe, Claire Sharpe, and Hannah Voss
Introduction

Good Afternoon!

• Who are we?

• Division Assessment Resource Team
  • DART is comprised of a diverse group of people from different departments from across the Western Washington University campus.
  • The DART committee meets twice monthly to plan & implement assessment projects, report on project findings, share resources, and discuss best practices that assist in their work and ultimately improve the student experience at Western.
  • The vision of DART is to “craft a culture within the division where assessment is valued, collaborative, and an integral part of strategic planning & continuous improvement efforts.”
Agenda

• Outcomes
• Background on DART
• Our Methodology
• Instruments we used
• Implementation
• Our results
• Recommendations
• Summary
• Conclusion
• Time for questions
Outcomes (What YOU Will Get From This)

• Through our assessment and presentation, we hope that you will get a sense of where DART is currently as a group via the voices and ideas of its members.
• Why we chose our particular methodology and instruments for DART
• What our results mean for DART
• Our recommendations for DART moving forward
Background on DART

• Division Resource Assessment Team (DART) was started to train various programs for directors and department heads
  • “Train the trainer” model
• Over time, the focus of DART has changed
  • Change of department head
    • Sara Wilson, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services) took over
  • Increased focus on accreditation
  • More inclusive of various departments at Western
• Since the changes, Wilson had noticed a decrease in attendance
• Our goal was to find out whether DART is beneficial for the committee members and whether or not there are changes that would be valuable to the participants of our evaluation
Methodology

• The researchers collaborated with Wilson to decide on two methods of data collection
  • Mixed methodology survey
  • Focus group
• Why mixed methodology?
  • Gave the researchers the opportunity to reach the target population (committee members with low attendance to DART meetings)
  • Opens up the conversation while also allowing for concrete data collection
  • Allows for subjective interpretation of the data
  • Favored by Wilson
Instruments

• Survey
  • We employed a survey through e-mail to all participants of DART
  • Mixed methodology survey
  • 11 questions
  • 18 respondents

• Focus group
  • Qualitative data collection method
  • Invited all committee members
  • Originally had numerous questions
    • During the focus group, we decided that it was more beneficial to let the conversation naturally flow
  • 10 Participants
Implementation

- Informational interview with Sara Wilson
  - Gained perspective on history of DART
  - Discussed goal of needs assessment
  - Received feedback on what was most important to address
- Constructed questions for survey and focus group
  - Receiving feedback from Wilson, adjusting questions, and implementing
- Introduction to DART committee
  - Explanation of project
  - Room for questions/comments
- Sent out the survey
- Conducted focus group
- Analyzed data
Results

• Analyzing data from survey and focus group
  • Reoccurring themes were presented through both methods

• Four main themes:
  • Desire to move towards a more hands on, collaborative style of meeting
  • Too high of a demand on time for members of committee
  • Feeling as though the current focus of DART is irrelevant for the members and what they are doing within their departments
  • No strong support for new members as they enter committee
Recommendations

• DART meeting once a month vs. twice a month
  • Less of a strain on members time
  • Increased attendance and motivation of members

• Return to “Train the Trainer” method
  • More hands on meetings
  • Collaborative discussion
  • Meeting in smaller groups
  • Creating space for topics members see as most relevant in their work/departments

• New member training/mentorship
  • New members feeling not “caught up to snuff”
  • Value in creating space for them to ask questions, gain an understanding of the purpose of DART
  • Help develop relationships between members of committee
    • Allowing for members to feel more valued → increased motivation to engage in DART
Summary

• Who are we
• What is DART
• Methodology – to gather both qualitative and quantitative
• Instruments – survey and focus group
• Results and recommendations
  - DART is beneficial for the committee members
  - Yes, there are valuable recommendations
Conclusion

• “My biggest takeaway from this evaluation is that to be an effective leader, you must be willing to take direction from the people you are leading” – Alana Quigley

• “My biggest takeaway from this evaluation was the importance of clear communication. With it, our teamwork was smooth and successful, which resulted in quality work,” – April McCabe

• “I believe this process reinforces the importance of putting our clients, or those we are supporting/serving through our profession, and their perspectives, at the frontline of our work” - Claire Sharpe

• “This evaluation helped me learn that it is really important to listen to the people that you work with. This resonated both in my group work and in the work of DART.” - Hannah Voss

• Wilson will receive program evaluation reports post grading

A big thank you to Sara Wilson, the DART team and Christina!
QUESTIONS?