

Student Life Studies Assessment Training Series December 2018

Background

According to its website (<http://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu/about>), Student Life Studies “provides leadership in assessment and planning to the Division of Student Affairs and to student organizations, maximizing program effectiveness and emphasizing student learning.” One goal for Student Life Studies is to educate and develop staff within the Division of Student Affairs about assessment. To accomplish this goal, the department coordinates assessment training for division staff members. The department hosted an assessment training that was held in the afternoon on both December 18 and 19, 2018.

While Student Life Studies offers assessment training regularly, this specific one focused on training participants how to write quality survey questions, effectively develop a survey, and utilize Qualtrics to create their own survey. Student Life Studies staff developed the following learning outcomes for this training:

- Recognize good practice and tips in survey development.
- Compose a survey using at least three different questions types in a logical order.
- Design the survey accurately in Qualtrics.

Student Life Studies wanted to assess the effectiveness of the training and the intended learning outcomes. While Student Life Studies has assessed previous training workshops, this was the first time this training was done or assessed.

Method and Sample

Student Life Studies implemented two assessment methods to measure the effectiveness of the training and to gauge the level of satisfaction staff had with the training. The first assessment method was a direct measure built into the activities during the assessment training and focused on participants demonstrating their abilities on each of the identified outcomes. Participants completed a worksheet through a series of activities to write a survey question and then they created their survey in Qualtrics and sent the survey to Student Life Studies staff. Of the 20 staff members who attended the training, almost all (95%) successfully sent their survey to Student Life Studies staff. Staff from Student Life Studies conducted a formal review process of participants’ work using a checklist to determine if the intended outcomes were reached.

The second assessment method was an electronic survey using Qualtrics®, a software program that creates web-based forms and databases. The follow-up survey was comprised of one quantitative question and one qualitative question to understand participants’ level of satisfaction with the training. The survey link was emailed on December 19, 2018, to the 20 staff members who completed the assessment training. Non-respondents received up to three reminders before the survey closed on January 9, 2019. Of the 20 staff members who received the survey, 19 completed it, yielding a 95% response rate. Student Life Studies evaluated the results using Qualtrics® and Microsoft Excel®.

Results

Results include frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Summary themes for the qualitative questions are included in this report; the full qualitative responses can be found in separate documents. This report is divided into two sections: Curriculum Activity and Follow-Up Survey.

Curriculum Activity

Student Life Studies trained participants in several aspects to consider when developing a good survey question. As part of this section, Student Life Studies described some best practices for writing survey questions. After this section, participants initially took part in a group activity to write quality survey questions. Then, participants completed a worksheet to write out at least five questions for a survey they could use in their functional area. Staff members were asked to use different question types and to follow the best practices that had been discussed.

On the second day of the training, participants were trained in Qualtrics and how to use the software. After participating in the hands-on demonstration, participants created the survey they developed on the first day and in Qualtrics. Participants then sent their survey to all Student Life Studies staff for review.

Student Life Studies used a checklist while reviewing the Qualtrics surveys sent to them to determine if the participants utilized the good practices learned in the training, created a survey with at least three different question types, and that they designed the survey accurately in Qualtrics. Each electronic survey was reviewed by two staff members in Student Life Studies. If the two staff members disagreed on their rating, they met to discuss it and reach a consensus for the rating. The checklist that staff used while reviewing the surveys contained 12 areas that were completed.

The frequency percentage of respondents who completed the criteria being scored correctly can be found in Table 1, on the following page. This is based on the 19 electronic surveys received by Student Life Studies staff to review. All surveys sent to Student Life Studies included an initial email with a survey link and a reminder that was sent the next day. Additionally, all participants who sent a survey to be viewed had at least three different question types (58% had four question types and 42% had three question types). However, some of the survey questions were not always developed accurately in Qualtrics. Furthermore, some of the survey introductions and email messages were either not included, not written well, or was the message used for the hands-on demonstration survey.

Correct Responses on the Worksheet	Frequency Percentage [n]
Distribution Received appropriate emails to complete the survey	100% [19]
Number of Different Questions Types Survey contained at least three different question types	100% [19]
Loaded, Emotionally Charged or Leading Questions were not written in a manner that could influence the response?	94% [18]
Double Barreled Questions Questions did not ask about more than one issue?	89% [18]
Question 3 Set up correctly in Qualtrics and appropriate format for question	84% [19]
Question 4 Set up correctly in Qualtrics and appropriate format for question	84% [19]
Jargon or Wording of Questions Question were not written using confusing words or jargon?	83% [18]
Question 5 Set up correctly in Qualtrics and appropriate format for question	79% [19]
Email Message Generally well written, basic information to take the survey, and survey link included	74% [19]
Survey Introduction Generally well written and includes appropriate instructions	68% [19]
Question 1 Set up correctly in Qualtrics and appropriate format for question	68% [19]
Question 2 Set up correctly in Qualtrics and appropriate format for question	63% [19]

Table 1: Number of Correct Responses

Looking at the 12 areas Student Life Studies scored while reviewing the surveys, Table 2 shows that that over half had 10 or more areas correct.

Total Number of Correct Responses on the Worksheet	Frequency Percentage [n=19]
12	16%
11	26%
10	11%
9	26%
8	11%
7	5%
6	--
5	5%
4 or less	--

Table 2: Total Number of Correct Responses

Follow-Up Survey

Using a Net Promoter Score (NPS) question, participants were asked how likely they were to recommend the assessment training to a colleague. The NPS is an index ranging from -100 to +100 and measures the willingness of someone to recommend a product or service to others. Respondents were given the options of zero to 10 with 10 being most likely to recommend assessment training to others. Scores of a nine or 10 are promoters, a score of seven or eight are passives, and scores six and below are detractors.

Given the NPS range of -100 to +100, generally, a positive score or anything above zero is considered a good score. Anything at +50 is considered excellent, and above +70 is considered “world class.” As seen on Image 1, the Net Promoter Score for the assessment training was +26.32.



Image 1: Net Promoter Score

Image 2 shows the breakdown of promoters, passives, and detractors. Just over one-third (37%) of the training participants were promoters, 53% were passive, and 11% were detractors. Additionally, Table 3 provides a more detailed breakdown of the Net Promoter Score.

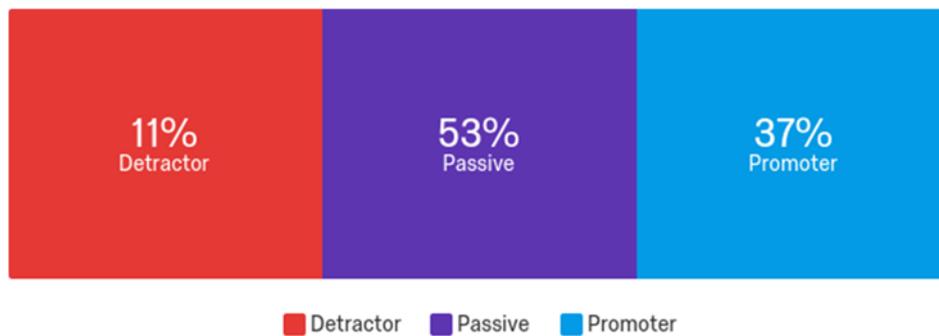


Image 2: Breakdown of NPS Scores

Net Promoter Score	Frequency Percentage [n=19]
10	26%
9	11%
8	42%
7	11%
6	5%
2	5%

Table 3: Breakdown for the Net Promoter Score

Respondents were provided the opportunity to explain their zero to ten rating for recommending the assessment training and 15 wrote a comment. Promoters shared that the training was helpful, thorough, and complete. They also appreciated the hands-on design of the training. Those who were considered passive also indicated the training was helpful, informative, and practical. However, they also reported that the first day was mostly a review, the Qualtrics demonstration was a little slow, and they would have liked to see information about gathering the results in Qualtrics. The detractors indicated they enjoyed having multiple presenters and appreciated the toys and snacks. They also felt that the training was too long and that some information was redundant, due to some participants being less confident in navigating the survey design in Qualtrics.

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Action Plans

Generally, participants learned the intended outcomes identified for the assessment training; however, there were some variations for the different outcomes, as seen below. Additionally, just over half of the participants (53%) were accurate in 10 or more areas that Student Life Studies reviewed.

- Compose a survey using at least three different questions types in a logical order – 100%
- Recognize good practice and tips in survey development
 - Avoiding questions that are loaded, emotionally charged or leading – 94%
 - Avoiding double barreled questions – 89%
 - Avoiding jargon or confusing words – 83%
- Design the survey accurately in Qualtrics – range between 84% to 63% on the five survey questions reviewed

For future training workshops, Student Life Studies staff may want to be clearer with instructions for activities and create a theme or topic for creating practice survey questions for group activities and the Qualtrics demonstration. Additionally, the staff might look at the marketing message and how to better attract the intended audience for the training level being offered.

Department staff members are encouraged to share the results from this assessment with stakeholders. To lead by example, Student Life Studies staff may wish to specifically share with the assessment training participants what improvements will be made based on the results and the plan to share results with each identified stakeholder.

While themes for the qualitative questions were summarized, staff members are also encouraged to read all comments to have a complete understanding of responses.

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