Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit

A portable guide to helping colleagues involve various stakeholder groups in their assessment planning, implementation, or response

Cathy Barrette, WSU Director of Assessment

Preparation

- Read program's mission statement and stakeholder engagement plan.
- Brainstorm possible stakeholder groups.
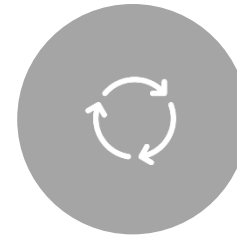
Stakeholder Engagement Definition

- **Stakeholders**: Individuals or groups involved in, supporting, or affected by your program's activities or performance

- **Engagement**: Active participation
  - Compared to passive participation – e.g., reading newsletters, reports

Stakeholders Can Engage Across the Assessment Process

PLANNING/DESIGN

IMPLEMENTATION

ANALYSIS

INTERPRETATION

ACTION

Engagement Example: Interpretation of Results

Faculty are satisfied with student outcomes, but want to know whether the level and type of performance meet employers' needs.

Employers and alumni can review results and discuss strengths/gaps.

Current students can provide context about how they approached the assessment task, which can affect results.

Advisors can provide context about sequencing of courses and common student pathways that can affect results.

Common Stakeholder Groups

Faculty

Staff

Students

Administrators

Other institutional units (e.g., related disciplines, student services/academic program partners)

Accrediting agencies

Community partners

Employers

Why Stakeholder Engagement Matters/Uses

Broader, more diverse perspectives help programs ask the right questions, get better data, and understand what the data mean.

Active participation builds ownership, capacity, and collaboration across stakeholders.

Different stakeholders bring different resources to the table.

Transparency enhances credibility of the process and use of the results.

Good WSU Examples
of Stakeholder Engagement

Social Work: Revised LOs through discussions with faculty, staff, students, community partners (e.g., practicing social workers)

Medical Education: Students lead focus groups to get feedback from their peers about (in)effective curricular or pedagogical design.

English: Students serve on the graduate and undergraduate committees, providing input into assessment priorities, instruments, data analysis, interpretation, and action planning.

Engineering: Advisory boards and industry partners discuss employer expectations, program strengths/gaps, responses to assessment

Other Engagement Formats

Community fair: to provide information, raise awareness among not-yet-engaged stakeholders

Launch meeting: to identify engagement opportunities among identified stakeholders

Fishbowl technique: to build understanding of multiple perspectives

- a small, representative group of stakeholders discusses relevant issues while a larger group observes; observer participation can follow

Workshop: to provide professional development and/or pilot assessments

Formal meeting: to share information, get input, or collaboratively solve problems

Discussion Questions

- Who are our stakeholder groups?

- How do we currently engage them in planning, implementation, interpretation, or response?

- How do/could we benefit from their engagement?

- What don't we know about our students' learning that our stakeholders could get at better than we do?

- How would we want different stakeholders to engage, considering time commitment, budget, diverse perspectives, etc.?

Hands-On Activity

Identify	Identify your program's stakeholders.
Pick	Pick one phase of the assessment process that you'd like to improve.
List	For each stakeholder group, list ways they could contribute to improving that phase.