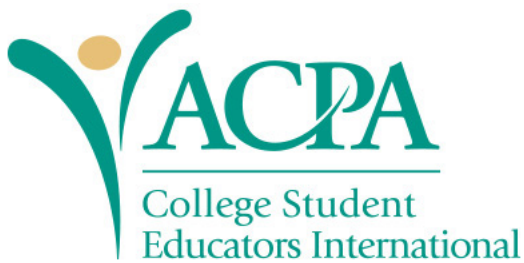


# Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators



## Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (AER)

The *Assessment, Evaluation, and Research* competency area focuses on the ability to design, conduct, critique, and use various AER methodologies and the results obtained from them, to utilize AER processes and their results to inform practice, and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses in higher education.

### Foundational Outcomes

- Differentiate among assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research as well as the methods appropriate to each.
- Select AER methods, methodologies, designs, and tools that fit with research and evaluation questions and with assessment and review purposes.
- Facilitate appropriate data collection for system/department-wide assessment and evaluation efforts using current technology and methods.
- Effectively articulate, interpret, and apply results of AER reports and studies, including professional literature.
- Assess the legitimacy, trustworthiness, and/or validity of studies of various methods and methodological designs (e.g. qualitative vs. quantitative, theoretical perspective, epistemological approach).
- Consider rudimentary strengths and limitations of various methodological AER approaches in the application of findings to practice in diverse institutional settings and with diverse student populations.
- Explain the necessity to follow institutional and divisional procedures and policies (e.g., IRB approval, informed consent) with regard to ethical assessment, evaluation, and other research activities.
- Ensure all communications of AER results are accurate, responsible, and effective.
- Identify the political and educational sensitivity of raw and partially processed data and AER results, handling them with appropriate confidentiality and deference to organizational hierarchies.

- Design program and learning outcomes that are appropriately clear, specific, and measurable, that are informed by theoretical frameworks and that align with organizational outcomes, goals, and values.
- Explain to students and colleagues the relationship of AER processes to learning outcomes and goals.

### Intermediate Outcomes

- Design ongoing and periodic data collection efforts such that they are sustainable, rigorous, as unobtrusive as possible, and technologically current.
- Effectively manage, align, and guide the utilization of AER reports and studies.
- Educate stakeholders in the institution about the relationship of departmental AER processes to learning outcomes and goals at the student, department, division, and institutional level.
- Discern and discuss the appropriate design(s) to use in AER efforts based on critical questions, necessary data, and intended audience(s).
- Use culturally relevant and culturally appropriate terminology and methods to conduct and report AER findings.
- Actively contribute to the development of a culture of evidence at the department level wherein assessment, program review, evaluation, and research are central to the department's work and ensure that training and skill development in these areas is valued, budgeted for, and fully embedded in day-to-day procedures.
- Apply the concepts and procedures of qualitative research, evaluation, and assessment including creating appropriate sampling designs and interview protocols with consultation, participating in analysis teams, contributing to audit trails, participating in peer debrief, and using other techniques to ensure trustworthiness of qualitative designs.
- Participate in the design and analysis

## Intermediate Outcomes (cont.)

of quantitative AER studies including understanding statistical reporting that may include complex statistical methods such as multivariate techniques, and articulating the limitations of findings imposed by the differences in practical and statistical significance, validity, and reliability.

- Demonstrate a working knowledge of additional methodological approaches to AER (e.g. mixed methods, historical or literary analysis, or comparative study) including elements of design, data collection, analysis, and reporting as well as strategies for ensuring the quality.
- Communicate and display data through a variety of means (publications, reports, presentations, social media, etc.) in a manner that is accurate; transparent regarding the strengths, limitations, and context of the data; and sensitive to political coalitions and realities associated with data as a scarce resource.
- Manage and/or adhere to the implementation of institutional and professional standards for ethical AER activities.
- Utilize formal student learning and development theories as well as scholarly literature to inform the content and design of individual and program level outcomes as well as assessment tools such as rubrics.
- Prioritize program and learning outcomes with organization goals and values.

## Advanced Outcomes

- Effectively lead the conceptualization and design of ongoing, systematic, high-quality, data-based strategies at the institutional, divisional, and/or unit-wide level to evaluate and assess learning, programs, services, and personnel.
- Effectively use assessment and evaluation results in determining the institution's, the division's, or the unit's accomplishment of its missions/goals, re-allocation of resources, and advocacy for more resources.
- Lead a comprehensive communication process to the campus community of the relationship of institutional AER processes to

learning outcomes and goals at the student, department, division, and institution level.

- Lead the design and writing of varied and diverse communications (e.g. reports, publications, presentations, social media, etc.) of assessment, program review, evaluation, and other research activities that include translation of data analyses into goals and action.
- Lead the strategic use and prioritization of budgetary and personnel resources to support high-quality program evaluation, assessment efforts, research, and planning.
- Lead, supervise, and/or collaborate with others to design and analyze assessment, program review, evaluation, and research activities that span multiple methodological approaches (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, among others) including writing and disseminating results in a manner that critically considers the strengths and limitations of implications for practice, policy, theory, and/or future study in a sophisticated way.
- Anticipate and proactively address challenges related to individual and institutional politics, competing constituencies and interests, and divergent values especially as related to communications, reporting, and utilization of data to inform practice. Create a culture of evidence in which the institution, division, or unit expects AER to be central to professional practice and ensures that training/skill development happens across the organization.
- Ensure institutional, divisional, or unit compliance with professional standards concerning ethical AER activities.
- Facilitate the prioritization of decisions and resources to implement those decisions that are informed by AER activities.