

AS Raising the Bar Rubric and Exit Interviews

 Public

Name of Assessment Project: AS Raising the Bar Rubric and Exit Interviews

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Providing Department: Associated Students

Other Units/Departments Involved in Assessment Project:

Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project: Raising the Bar is a mandatory four month leadership development program for members of Associated Students (AS). This year, six workshops were held, covering three topics: Conflict Resolution, Professional Communication, and Problem Solving/Decision-Making. The sessions were offered in collaboration with other departments and third parties, such as the Health Promotions and the National Center for Conflict Resolution (NCRRC).

Assessment Project Description: To assess Raising the Bar, the AS Director and Advisor created a rubric to determine how student leaders' conflict resolution, critical thinking, and communication skills were impacted (if at all) by their participation in the program. Six learning outcomes were developed relating to the above topics, an are listed in the "unit specific goals and learning outcomes" section of this report. Over the course of four months, ten students were scored six times (once every two weeks). Each score reflected the student's behavior for that two week period.

Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes: The Raising the Bar assessment relates to the following **Associated Students goals:**

1. To develop the members of Associated Students' conflict resolution skills
2. To facilitate students' development of critical thinking skills
3. To provide opportunities that lead to improved professional communication skills
4. To raise students' awareness about social justice

The Raising the Bar assessment was designed to measure the following **learning outcomes:**

As a result of participating in Raising the Bar, students will be able to...

1. Demonstrate an increase in their ability to understand problems, including relevant contextual factors
2. Present facts in their discussions that demonstrate consideration of multiple perspectives
3. Manage their emotions (e.g., feelings of anxiety, optimism, shame, guilt, caring) during AS meetings and programs, as measured by the AS observation rubric.
4. Demonstrate at an advanced level of openness to others' viewpoints, as measured by the AS observation rubric
5. Practice respectful listening behaviors at an advanced or expert level, as measured by the AS observation rubric.
6. Exhibit an advanced level of communication skills (e.g. eye contact, rate of speech, posture, clarity) as measured by the AS observation rubric
7. Describe (with examples) how one of their social identities has resulted in privilege

Relationship to Student Affairs: Think Critically and Solve Problems, Communicate Effectively, Promote Social Justice and Community Responsibility

Learning Outcomes: Assessment Project Start: 10/2/2014

Assessment Project End: 3/31/2015

Population/Sample: The population for this assessment is the 45 AS Council members who participated in Raising the Bar. The sample is 10 students who were observed and interviewed by the AS Director and Advisor.

Type of Assessment: Student learning outcomes and/or behavioral outcomes

Other Assessment Type(s): Interviews, Observation, Rating of Skills (e.g., rubrics)

Assessment Methods: Other Assessment Method(s):

Data Collection Tools: The tools used to collect data for this assessment project were the 2014/2015 AS Observation Rubric and the Exit Interview Questions. The rubric was created by the AS Director and Advisor, utilizing elements of the AACU Critical Thinking, Conflict Resolution, and Communication rubrics when applicable. The interview questions were developed by AS staff as a supplement to the observations, to further measure student learning as well as to collect feedback about students' experiences in AS. Both the rubric and interview questions have been attached for review.

 AS Observation Rubric 2014-2015

 Exit Interview Questions

Data Analysis Methods: For the observation component of this assessment project, the AS Advisor and Director scored each of the 10 students once every two weeks on the learning outcomes related to critical thinking, conflict resolution, and professional communication. The scores were then entered into excel in order to see each student's change over time for the six outcomes (Understanding Problems, Fact-Based Decision Making, Managing Emotions, Openness to Others' Points of View, Respectful Listening, and Professional Communication). Then, all ten students' scores for each two-week observation period were averaged and plotted on a graph, allowing AS staff to track the average change for each construct over time. Finally, the AS Advisor looked at final scores for each student to determine how many of the ten students reached the "Advanced" or "Expert" level.

The excel spreadsheet of data and the graphical representation of rubric scores are attached to the Summary of Findings section of the report, along with a breakdown of how many students reached a particular level for all of the learning outcomes.

For the exit interview data, the AS Advisor typed each students' responses, and then reviewed this data to identify relevant themes/trends. These trends are outlined in the "Summary of Findings" section.

How Your Results Will Be Presented: Results of this assessment project were initially shared by the AS Advisor with the Director, with the goal of determining the effectiveness of Raising the Bar, and to develop program improvements for 2015/2016. Results were then shared with the incoming Graduate Assistant, who will be asked to collaborate on the development of next year's program, and will be the lead on implementation.

Additionally, results were shared with incoming AS Executive Leaders, so that they can provide input about what leadership development activities they think would be beneficial for 2015/2016.

Finally, the AS Director and Advisor are open to sharing the results of the assessment project with any colleagues who are interested and/or would like assistant with using observations as an assessment method.

Progress: 100%

Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline :

Name

Source

No items to display.

Summary of Findings: After analyzing the rubric scores and exit interview data, the AS Advisor and Director, the AS Director and Advisor noted

As demonstrated in the "Graphical Representation of Rubric Scores," there was an increase in the average scores for all of the constructs measured by the rubric (Understanding Problems, Fact-Based Decision Making, Managing Emotions, Openness to Others, Respectful Listening, and Professional Communication). Notably, the final average score for 5 out of 6 of the outcomes was Advanced or higher. The outlier was "Respectful Listening," which had a final average score of 3.5 (Intermediate).

In addition to positive average changes, no student decreased in skill level through the duration of the program. 9 of the 10 students demonstrated an increase in skill for all six outcomes measured by the rubric, while two students remained constant for one outcome each (respectful listening and Openness to Others).

During the final observation, all students scored at an "intermediate" level or above, with a majority reaching the "advanced" level (and several attaining "expert").

The following is a breakdown of students' final scores by outcome, as well as any relevant themes from the exit interviews:

Understanding Problems: At the end of the program, 3 students demonstrated an "Expert" level, 4 were "Advanced," and 3 were "Intermediate."
Percentage of students demonstrating Advanced or higher level: Beginning: 10% End: 70%

Fact-Based Decision Making: At the end of the program, 4 students demonstrated an "Expert" level, 5 "Advanced," and 1 "Intermediate"
Percentage of students demonstrating Advanced or higher level: Beginning: 20% End: 90%

Managing Emotions At the end of the program, 4 students demonstrated an "Expert" level, and 6 "Advanced"
Percentage of students demonstrating Advanced or higher level: Beginning: 30% End: 100%

During the exit interviews, 8 out of 10 students mentioned managing emotions as an effective strategy for conflict resolution. For example:

"Remaining calm is key. This helps transition into explaining the why behind actions, which mitigates misunderstanding. Managing my emotions also helps me to separate the professional from the personal."

Openness to Others: At the end of the program, 1 student demonstrated an "Expert" level, 7 Advanced," and 2 "Intermediate"
Percentage of students demonstrating Advanced or higher level: Beginning: 20% End: 90%

During the exit interviews, many students commented on how AS has impacted their level of openness to others. For example:

"A big part of effective collaboration is staying open minded to other way's of thinking"

"One of the biggest rewards of AS is getting to work closely with people from other backgrounds and ideologies."

Respectful Listening: At the end of the program, 2 students demonstrated an "Advanced" level, and 8 "Intermediate"
Percentage of students demonstrating Advanced or higher level: Beginning: 0% End: 30%"

Although not directly tied to student learning, many students provided feedback about the structure of AS council meetings during the exit interviews that may be impacting their listening behaviors. For example:

"It is hard to focus when meetings run long and feel inefficient."

"People talk in circles sometimes--the meetings are just too big."

Professional Communication At the end of the program, 4 students demonstrated an "Expert" level and 6 "Advanced" Percentage of students demonstrating Advanced or higher level: Beginning: 20% End: 100%

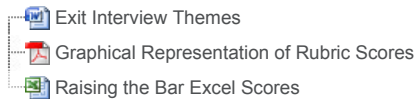
During the exit interviews, many students referenced an increase in communication skills. For example:

"I've learned to speak more eloquently in order to be taken seriously. I would not be where I am today without this experience"

"AS helped me become more confident, and find my voice"

Social Justice: 100% of students interviewed were able to provide relevant examples of how they have experienced privilege as a result of one of their social identities. For example:

"AS helped me see how social justice/power/privilege plays a role in people's UCSD experiences. For example, growing up as a man I have never had to fear walking alone at night, whereas many female students have. The council discussion about the UCSB shootings really helped to contextualize this issue"



Impact of Assessment: Given the increase in students' scores on the six outcomes measured by the rubric, and the positive results of the exit interviews, the AS Director and Advisor are committed to offering Raising the Bar for a third year with several program improvements. Specifically, additional strategies for developing students' respectful listening skills will be explored, given that this outcome saw the smallest improvement overtime. After sharing results with the incoming AS President, the AS staff also plan on researching potential structural changes that would impact AS council meetings in an effort to make them more efficient (and hopefully, students will be less distracted).

In analyzing the results, AS staff also determined that additional measures of critical thinking may be useful next year. The AVC Student Life has expressed interest in creating a more robust construct for the next phase of Raising the Bar, and AS staff is excited to begin researching.

Lessons Learned: Consistent with last year's take-aways, AS Staff feels strongly that direct measures of assessment (such as observations) provide rich and meaningful data. Implementing a multi year assessment cycle has also been beneficial, because it allows staff to capture a more in-depth analysis of each learning outcome when it is time for them to be assessed. Additionally, the exit interviews provided an opportunity for students to both demonstrate their learning and share feedback regarding their experiences. Several students indicated that the interviews served as an appreciated opportunity for reflection.

Supplemental Information:

Last modified 8/3/2015 at 11:50 AM by [Hayley Weddle](#)
Created 7/15/2015 at 4:58 PM by [Hayley Weddle](#)