It’s a Data Job
But Somebody’s Gotta Do It

Heather Mack
Gulf South Summit
April 14, 2016
Introductions

• 12 years
  • Community engagement assessment director
  • International & domestic NGO evaluation consulting

• 3 years grappling with increasing data ROI

• Loyola University New Orleans Case Study
  • Lessons learned from our crash and burns

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Why are we here?

• Connecticut chapter Campus Compact

• Common Service Learning data issue: Low Return on Investment (ROI)

• Why are you here?
  • What is the state of data in your SL program?
Current Data Inventory

Tracking
• What are you counting up?

Assessment
• What are you checking on (systematically)?
Current Data Inventory

Reports generated
• What data do you share?

Audience
• Who would follow up if they didn’t receive the data?
• Who else gets the reports?
SL Data Needs Assessment Tool
Case Study - Loyola University New Orleans

• Revamped SL 2009

• Best practices
  • Committed to mutuality and reciprocity w/community
  • Focus on quality as well as quantity

• Diligent data collectors and reporters
  • Accountability-driven assessment
    • Internal
    • External
Case Study – Semester Data Collection

• Student Records system
  • Student enrollment in SL courses
  • Transcript notations

• Google spreadsheets
  • Student participation in SL-optional courses
  • Student hours of service with agencies
  • Transportation resource distribution

• Surveymonkey surveys
  • Student about course and partner
  • Faculty about course, students and partner
  • Partner about course, students, and institution
  • Partner about student performance evaluations

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Case Study

• Despite their efforts, no progress on:
  • Getting more use out of the info
  • Telling the story about why SL matters
  • Streamlining annual reporting, Honor Roll applications, etc.
SL Data Needs Assessment – New Data
# SL Data Needs Assessment – New Data

## Inputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students, Faculty, &amp; Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## New Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Data</th>
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SL Data Needs Assessment – Tracking Data
SL Data Needs Assessment – Tracking Data

**ACTIVITIES**
- STUDENTS SERVE & REFLECT
- COMMUNITY PARTNERS CO-TEACH & OVERSEE

**TRACKING DATA**

Internal Records

- # Students’ service hours
- # SL courses with structured reflection component
- # Hours of service for each community partner
- # Placement students’ visits to partner site
- # Community partners completing Student Performance Evaluations
SL Data Needs Assessment – Assessment Data
### SL Data Needs Assessment – Assessment Data

#### Assessment Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student experience</td>
<td>Students Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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**RESULTS <1 SEM**

**STUDENT LEARNING: ATTITUDE, SKILL, & KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY BENEFIT: TIME & TANGIBLE PRODUCTS**
SL Data Needs Assessment – Checking In

**New Data “Inputs”**

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**Storage**

**Summarization Reporting**

**Community Engagement Data Cycle**

1. **Enlightenment Reporting “Results >1 Sem”**
2. **Analysis: Qualitative & Quantitative**
3. **Aggregation: Sem/Year Tracking & Assessment**
4. **Aggregation: Sem/Year Tracking & Assessment**
SL Data Needs Assessment – Reporting

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**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DATA CYCLE**

1. New Data “Inputs”
2. Tracking Data
3. Assessment Data
4. Enlightenment Reporting “RESULTS >1 SEM”
5. Analysis: Qualitative & Quantitative
6. Aggregation: SEM/Year Tracking & Assessment

**STORAGE**

**SUMMARIZATION REPORTING**

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## SL Data Needs Assessment – Summarization

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### TRACKING DATA

Source: Internal Records

- # Students’ service hours
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- # Hours of service for each community partner
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SL Data Needs Assessment – Summary Reports

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**STORAGE**

Recaps/Counts of:
- New Data
- Tracking Data
- Assessment Data

**SUMMARIZATION REPORTING**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DATA CYCLE**

**ENLIGHTENMENT REPORTING “RESULTS >1 SEM”**

**ANALYSIS: QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE**

**AGGREGATION: SEM/YEAR TRACKING & ASSESSMENT**

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SL Data Needs Assessment – Relevance Check

**NEW DATA “INPUTS”**

- **Students enrolled**
  - Source: Student Records
- **SL courses offered**
  - Faculty teaching SL courses
  - Source: Course Catalogue
- **Community partners available**
  - Source: Internal Records

**TRACKING DATA**

Source: Internal Records
- # Students’ service hours
- # SL courses with structured reflection component
- # Hours of service for each community partner
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- # Community partners completing Student Performance Evaluations

**ASSESSMENT DATA**

- **Assessment Data**
  - Source: Students
  - Student experience
  - Student learning
  - Student performance Artifacts
  - Faculty Survey
- **Partner Experience**
  - Student performance Benefits & Costs
  - Community Partner Survey

**STORAGE**

Recaps/Counts of:
- New Data
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**SUMMARIZATION REPORTING**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DATA CYCLE**

**ENLIGHTENMENT REPORTING “RESULTS >1 SEM”**

**ANALYSIS: QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE**

**AGGREGATION: SEM/YEAR TRACKING & ASSESSMENT**
SL Data Needs Assessment – Relevance Check

Hands:

Do you recognize your own SL program in this case study?

Areas where you feel ahead?
Areas where you feel behind?

Questions?
SL Data Needs Assessment – Aggregation

**New Data**
- Students enrolled
- SL courses offered
- Faculty teaching SL courses
- Community partners available

**Source**
- Student Records
- Course Catalogue
- Internal Records

**Tracking Data**
- Source: Internal Records
  - # Students’ service hours
  - # SL courses with structured reflection component
  - # Hours of service for each community partner
  - # Placement students’ visits to partner site
  - # Community partners completing Student Performance Evaluations

**Assessment Data**
- Assessment Data Source:
  - Student experience
  - Student learning
  - Student performance
  - Artifacts
  - Partner Experience
  - Student performance
  - Benefits & Costs

**Storage**
- Recaps/Counts of:
  - New Data
  - Tracking Data
  - Assessment Data

**Summarization Reporting**

**Community Engagement Data Cycle**

**Enlightenment Reporting**
- “RESULTS >1 SEM”

**Analysis**
- Qualitative & Quantitative

**Aggregation**
- SEM/Year Tracking & Assessment
SL Data Needs Assessment – Aggregation

New Data
- Students enrolled
- SL courses offered
- Faculty teaching SL courses
- Community partners available

Source: Internal Records

Source
- Student Records
- Course Catalogue
- Internal Records

Tracking Data
- # Students’ service hours
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Assessment Data
- Assessment Data
  - Student experience
  - Student learning
- Student performance Artifacts
- Partner Experience
- Student performance Benefits & Costs

Source
- Students Survey
- Faculty Survey
- Community Partner Survey

Recaps/Counts of:
- New Data
- Tracking Data
- Assessment Data

SUMMARIZATION REPORTING

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DATA CYCLE

ENLIGHTENMENT REPORTING “RESULTS >1 SEM”

ANALYSIS: QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE

AGGREGATION: SEM/YEAR TRACKING & ASSESSMENT

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Case Study – Aggregation Needs Example

Loyola’s spreadsheets containing individual student data by semester:

1. Student records enrollment by course
2. Student hours of service with an agency
3. Partner questionnaires about individual students’ performance
4. Student records transcript notations
5. Student participation in SL in SL-optional courses
6. Student profile info
Aggregation requires reconciling:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Stored in Formats/Platforms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Catalogue</td>
<td>Website by semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Records System</td>
<td>Exports of Excel spreadsheets by varying report by semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal records</td>
<td>Multiple spreadsheets by semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Surveys</td>
<td>Data entry version of Surveymonkey survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Surveys</td>
<td>Surveymonkey survey by semester</td>
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SL Data Needs Assessment – Storage Wars

**New Data**
- Students enrolled
- SL courses offered
- Faculty teaching SL courses
- Community partners available

**Source**
- Student Records
- Course Catalogue
- Internal Records

**Tracking Data**
- Source: Internal Records
  - # Students’ service hours
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**Assessment Data**
- Source
  - Assessment Data (Students’ experience, learning, performance)
  - Student performance Artifacts
  - Partner Experience
  - Student performance
  - Benefits & Costs

**Storage?**
- Recaps/Counts of:
  - New Data
  - Tracking Data
  - Assessment Data

**Summarization Reporting**

**Community Engagement Data Cycle**

**Enlightenment Reporting “Results > 1 SEM”**
- Analysis: Qualitative & Quantitative
- Aggregation: Sem/Year Tracking & Assessment

**Analysis**
- Student experience: Students’ Survey
- Student learning: Faculty Survey
- Partner Experience: Community Partner Survey

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Loyola’s SL Data Need: **Storage**

Can’t aggregate data until storage is resolved!

Manual storage includes:
- Cleaning and correcting data
- Converting data to cooperative platforms
- Coding data
- Merging clean data
- Storing meta data about the various data

- The “Hit by a Bus/Won the Lottery” test
Reflections on Aggregation and Storage

• Systematic tracking of data develops organically
  • Starts as un-systematic tracking
  • Task/Administration driven
• Weak spot for the early converts to tracking and assessment

How many grew organically and have SL data that doesn’t connect?
What could you do if your SL data did connect?
SL Data Needs Assessment – Aggregation

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**ANALYSIS:**
- Qualitative & Quantitative

**AGGREGATION:**
- SEM/YEAR TRACKING & ASSESSMENT

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Case Study – Approaches to Aggregation Obstacle

1. Ask for Help
2. Existing Software
3. Design Our Own
Spoiler Alert – CE Assessment Database

For programs with data collection approaches that developed organically and over time.
Approach #1: Ask for Help

**Institutional Research**
- Comfort zone: NSSE, HERI
- No framework for community component of SL
- Alumni research = minefield

**Information Technology**
- Comfort zone: servers and internet connections
- No framework for SL at all

Under too high demand with obligations even if they had the ability to help
Lessons Learned: Approaching IR and IT

1. Start with asking if they’ve ever helped any other offices with assessment data management
   1. If not, be prepared to explain what you see as the connection between your data needs and their office

2. Be prepared them to be unfamiliar with any nuances of SL

3. Expect and patiently address communication barriers
   1. Terminology!
Approach #2: Existing Software

• Tried or explored:
  • Nobel Hour, CBISA, OrgSync, Give Pulse, Volsoft

• Lessons learned:
  • Easy to find those that
    • Match students with community agencies, track student time,
  • Hard to find those that
    • Aggregated records with tracking and assessment data, could meaningfully integrate non-SL CE
Approach #3: Design our own

• Assets:
  • 1 enthusiastic data geek
    • History of bending data to her will
    • Stick-to-it-iveness

• Lessons learned after 40+ fails:
  • Enthusiasm is no substitution for expertise
  • Generic database programs are for people who don’t have much data yet
    • Access
    • Filemaker Pro
  • Go with a professional
SL Data Needs – Looking Forward

• Can you fill in the entire CE Data Cycle Framework?
  • If not, where are your obstacles?
    • Circle them on the worksheet

• Think ahead to the end of 2017 spring semester
  • Ideally, what does your CE Data Cycle look like?
SL Data Needs - Benchmarking

Your SL Data Goal is:

To make that goal a reality, what needs to happen by:

<table>
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<th>Start of Spring 2017 semester</th>
<th>End of Spring 2017 semester</th>
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impact@hmackconsulting.com