Defining and Measuring Impact for Access

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Goals:
Define a common understanding of impact as it relates to access initiatives, while engaging in discussions of best practices for researching and accessing impact.

Opening Questions (what people are burning to know more about)

- data collection side. What methodology to collect data, how measure?
- Narrative inquiry important, interested in trying to find balance, data yes – but how do we put faces to data? Tease out narrative? Use data to inform…
- What is impact? Is it getting in to university? Graduating? Getting straight A's? feel happy that you have? So many different things that go into it. So many stakeholders, so many different types of populations and trying to achieve.

Facilitating broader connections and highlighting the precarity of funding for access programs.

We're pursuing a strength-based outlook and approach
- What value does having diverse populations have add to our institutions?
- How can we measure impact on that basis?

E.g. Dale works well using a strong fact-based approach and using quant models is valued at this institution. However, sometimes working with various groups – for example Indigenous populations – storytelling, narrative. Then how to convert that into meaningful way to communicate at Institution. How do you offer both? Finding ways to quantify qualitative data. Feed into reports for government or governance.

Defining impact for access (**see slide 8**)
- Identity: ours, those in the room/class/campus, those not present
- Meaning: numbers vs story – how to offer both
- Place

How do we remove our own biases to create the best possible programs for you.

Designing an assessment cycle/circle to assess program impact
- Impact can be:
  - Institutional effectiveness
  - Participant learning
  - Societal culture (e.g. gov't)

Community impact – if we are able to have students access education, who are not traditional, they are impacting their own communities. Investment in that community – ability for that community to strengthen, grow and change. And society as a whole – political perspectives, ideas, expands and more valuable.

Impact may be more significant – not just outcomes – but impact can be process. If done by grounding in reciprocity and dialogue. Process can shift who we are as a university and how we are seen. When working with community agencies and certain partners for example.

Strategies for Assessing Impact for Success

Expectations, Hopes, Dreams, Need
- Defining impact of access
    - What is 'impact'?
    - How do we collect data to measure impact?
    - How do we put faces to the data (narrative inquiry)?
- What are the assets we need to look at?
- Benefits of access?

Consider at all levels who we are working with and barriers, and how we're attempting to collect data (e.g. email isn't a feasible method for everyone). Also consider parental consent for youth.

- Benchmarking
- Focus groups
- Rubrics
- Oral storytelling
- Personas
    - Conversations, observations, product (e.g. group project)
    - Talking to other people in the circles of care
    - Creating alumni groups
    - Shaping strategy based on their insights
Helps with sustainability and succession planning

Effectiveness measure
- can be how many bringing in, how many graduating
- Another program may be about learning impacts
- May be societal or cultural impact, may be that the government recognizes that certain populations are underrepresented so they want groups to join for societal impact.
- Specific point in cycle that identifies who or what might be missing?

More about context, impacted on all areas, as thinking about who are stakeholders that are putting initiative forward, who are individuals that are creating. There will be gaps. Impact as it

relates to access programs is contextual based on variety of stakeholder invest – stakeholder needs may be different from participant all the way through to government.

Defining Impact
- Impact can be assessed for various outcomes and depends on stakeholder needs.
- Engaging current and prospective students, especially black, indigenous, and racialized students, as well as their circle of care; first generation students too.
- Also teachers, guidance counsellors, community group advocates, school boards, senior leadership within U of T departments (to be more deeply onboard)
- Students who aren't coming directly from other schooling (e.g. from employment or after a break in schooling or from college)
- Important to understand the context and uniqueness of our populations

Discussion & Questions:
- Creating reciprocity and reporting back when collecting data
- Community as a verb vs a noun
- Keep it simple: impact cannot only be measured in the language of academics
- U of T needs data on who's missing from our classrooms
- Those doing access work need to do some learning too
- What we're measuring is contextual and it's a process
- Theme – internal and external lens. Spend time thinking and talking about internal processes that need to change within U of T. But when go out to talk to students about U of T (black students) they say they are going to go to York or Ryerson. What we are doing in our institution needs to be valuable to people and their lives outside of this place. We can have great access programs but if no trust in what we are doing here, it doesn't help.

Q. How do we measure the experience of students who are here?

Q. How to present info in a way that works for funders?
- Funders say what impact is – experience has shown that funding groups are asking for less than what we are asking for at the program level. We/UofT usually hold ourselves to higher standard.
- Dissecting the unconscious bias of funders, who sometimes don't believe in what they're funding
- Community based – how they perceive impact, how the access program(s) benefits or impacts them
- Investment in the leadership of community partners

Q. How can we develop a more equity-informed approach to assessing impact?

Q. Prioritization: What is U of T prioritizing? How can 'excellence' be more inclusive?
  - Approaching these pieces without employing a colonial framework
  - Thinking about future generations
- Make sure what we're doing is valuable to people outside of here and trusted

– Strategies for accessing impact – how to capture experiences of students/participants to understand general experience. Understand barriers to traditional methods (surveys or focus groups).

Activity 1 – photos of flipchart paper (see end pages).

Who are the populations you are engaging in your work?
– High school kids
– Grade school kids
– Indigenous youth, LGBTQ
– Big brother big sister, lower income youth
– Newcomer programs
– Post-secondary youth
– Working with the community
– Involving everyone – youth and staff, incorporating different populations
– Mature students (diverse ages)

What stakeholder groups other than target populations are involved?
– Community partnerships
– Clubs and groups
– Working with associate professors
– Third party groups and associations
– Placement students

What impact are you seeking to achieve for various stakeholder groups?
– Trying to change students' lives and providing as much access and help as they can

Considering your access populations and various stakeholder needs – define and relate to initiatives
– Sense of belonging – even have one person you can ask questions to
– Opportunity to define it differently, see how impact changes depending on the demographic
– Value on the individual
– Deciding what to reflect on, to tell people (individual stories), what we should keep to ourselves

What methods do you use to assess impact within your access programs or services?
– Paper surveys
– Online surveys
– Videography – reflections
– Journaling
– Assessments at the beginning and end (compare)
– Looking at development over time

- Storytelling
- Showcasing work – dance, poetry, writing
- Various narratives
- Development shows the impact and the growth/development
- Focus groups – research placement student group
- Tracking when they use affilliate resources (gym memberships etc.)

How might we develop a more equity informed approach to assessing impact as it relates to access initiatives?
- Smaller, shorter modules that give a taste of the program – digestible and not intimidating
- Surveys that only send 1 question to each person, but have a broad reach
- Meeting people's other needs so they can give you their feedback
- Idea of importing a "lifetime guarantee" into our access programs
  - Continuity of engagement (e.g. alumni programs, reunions, pins)

Category 1: Assessment methods
- Pre post test
- Focus groups
- Storytelling
- Video groups
- Surveys
- Happy or not buttons
- Feedback post its
- Bulletin boards
- Anonymous suggestion box
- Promoter score (spectrums)
- Photo voice
- Emojis

Category 2: A company with an exceptional user experience
- Google
- Ikea
- Eataly
- Everything in one place, live editing
- Design on the floor

Access Assessment Mash-up
- Smiley face buttons to show satisfaction
- Seeking more feedback after initial reflection (e.g. telling the target group the reflections they received and asking for more e.g. 30 people liked this, but 50 did not. Can you provide more info as to why this is true?)

- Child-minding – Ikea have staff take care of kids while parents etc., shop - seeking reflections on that
- Loblaws online shopping – accessible, but they also take info on demographics, recommendations for future purchases.
- Grant writing proposals to and back to the government reporting
    - o Grants can be precarious at times – tied to 2 or maybe 3 year packages, government changes. Even if you have a three-year grant, government shifts and don't know if funding is coming. You may receive it in February and must spend it by March 31.

General discussion

People providing funds – dissecting unconscious bias. Sometimes assigned to give funds but don't understand why these programs exist. At conference - people doing groundwork not necessarily the people who are responsible for the funds.

Duty of care is important – impact, aiming for sustainable positive impact. Succession planning. With duty of care not approaching some pieces using colonial methods but instead focus on intergenerational pieces. Thinking generationally challenging when initiatives funded on 1 or 2 year terms.

External pieces – how do we improve student perceptions of U of T? Conversation – we need to think about what we are measuring in terms of broader context of process – new thought.

Populations

→ youth grade 5—12
→ People of Colour
→ Black
→ Immigrants (12 - 20yrs)
→ Newcomers
Indigenous youth

underground
Black youth Black
East Scarborough Boys & Girls
Club

Campus / Urban University
Corporate / Institutional funders
Community partners

🟥 Others   Stakeholders
🟦 Populations

IMPACT WE SEEK

Qualitative

- Critical consciousness
- Cultural pride
- Diasporic Awareness
+ Intersectional identity

-Self - Determination

Quantitative

- Boost recruitment to the University
- Improved high-school grades

POPULATIONS

- Current students
- Prospective students (Black, Indigenous, Racialized, 1st generation
- Circle of care for students
- Teachers, Guidance Counsellors, School Boards
- Community Group Advocates, Community Agencies/Groups
- Leadership within UofT departments
- Non-traditional learners ("non-standard")
- Faculty

IMPACT

- More pathways to meeting ~~requir~~ admission requirements
  (eg. College diploma → OISE ; mature student → undergrad)
- Institutional processes that are more inclusive
  eg. 3 yr degree → 1 yr non-degree → no guarantee to OISE
- Public Perception of UofT
- Data Access (self identification on applications
- Graduation Outcomes
- Profile forms & Scholarship Applications that measure competencies rather than volunteer/work experience

* POPULATIONS.
  - how we create data from
    specific populations.

  - community

  - heterogeneity → e.g. 'Black'

  - age.

  - responsibility shift.

* STAKEHOLDER GROUPS.   peers
  * Community ⟨ teachers
                parents, etc.
  * Reviewers.
  * Teaching / learning community.
  * the facilitator plays a role

* WHAT IMPACT ARE WE SEEKING
   TO ACHIEVE FOR LEARNERS
       GROUPS?

   → Sustainability.
   → reciprocity.
   → Community impact.
   → how to balance needs of
      individuals vs Institution.

   × impact might be limited
      by others / staff vs academic PIs.

   → are we increasing the # of students who are missing?
   → how do measure that experience while they are there?

   retention?   attendance? grades?   perception?
   graduation? persistence?

Stakeholders
High school & elementary students

Community centres The entire university → shift the perception of who we are

Student groups

Academic depts → diversity of discussion
                → improve relationships to community

Registrar's Office

Faculty Larger Community → healing
Staff Indigenous communities
           ↳ reciprocity

Populations

- 3rd + 4th year students → Increase enrolment in EL
                          → make accessible to all

- High school students → engagement

- undergrads who identify as black → Increase apps, yield, registrants
                                    ↳ improve understanding of options + support

- indigenous → process just as important (or more) than outcomes
  Students