

*Evaluators Institute*

# GEAR UP Evaluation 201

Effective Evaluation Questions, Designs,  
and Methods

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NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
Community and Education Partnerships



- Emphasis on increasing the capacity and value of GEAR UP evaluation
- Follows the flow of the evaluation/research process
- Encourages interactive participation

# Agenda



- GEAR UP Evaluation
  - Standards
  - Expectations
  - Model Plan
  - Process
  - Planning
- Resources
  - GEAR UP-specific
  - General evaluation

# Evolution of GEAR UP Evaluation



- More in-depth examination of GEAR UP
  - Federal requirements: Mandated data, GPRA and Program Office indicators (see handout)
  - Competitive preference priority: Increased and improved use of data for decision-making
  - Program assessment, improvement, and justification
  - Contribute to the college access knowledge base



- Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation
  - Program Evaluation Standards (see handout)
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
  - substantiated by *scientifically-based research* to measure effectiveness of federally funded educational programs and practices

## ***Questions:***

How does your program approach evaluation?

How can you use the Program Evaluation Standards?

# GEAR UP Evaluation Expectations



- APR
- Biennial report
- And beyond...RTI Commissioned Expert Papers:  
<https://edsurveys.rti.org/GEARUP/>
  - Handout on optimal indicators
    - Awareness acquisition
    - Student readiness behaviors
    - GU & comparison group variables

## ***Question:***

Do you already collect the optimal GEAR UP program evaluation indicators?

# Model GEAR UP Evaluation Plan



1. Developing and articulating program logic (*program design*  $\Leftrightarrow$  *evaluation plan structure*)
2. APR (*compliance, inputs, and outputs*)
3. Formative evaluation: Improvement (*process*)
4. Summative evaluation (*outcomes*)
  - Project impacts – Does GU work? How effectively?
  - Project utility – How efficiently does it work?
  - Project contributions to the knowledge base

## **Questions:**

Does your program have a logic model? How is it similar/different from the sample?

# Progression of GEAR UP Program Goals



Stage 1 (6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade): Aspirations, awareness, & knowledge acquisition

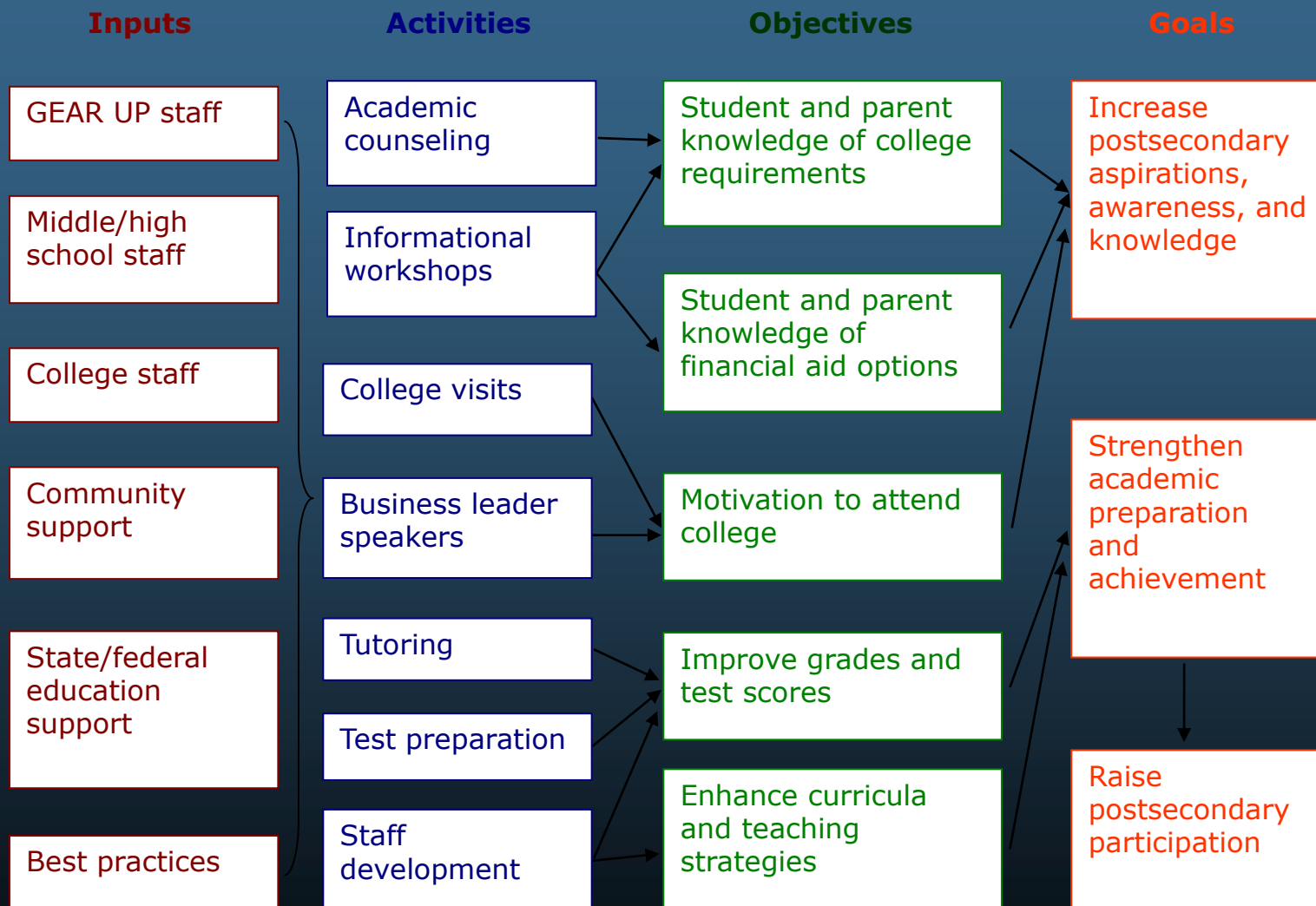
Stage 2 (9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grade): Aspirations, knowledge acquisition, acad enrollment, & prep

Stage 3 (11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade): Academic enrollment, preparation, & achievement

Stage 4 (1<sup>st</sup> postsecondary year): College course enrollment, success, & persistence



# Sample Logic Model



# The Evaluation Process



- Purpose: So what?
- Review of Literature
- Statement of the Problem: Stakeholders
- Questions/Hypotheses
- Methods
- Findings
- Conclusions and Implications

## *Question:*

Which of these phases of the process do you want/need/plan to enhance?

# Break





## ■ Considerations

- S Specific
- M Measurable
- A Achievable
- R Realistic/Relevant
- T Time-Bound

*“Does GEAR UP prepare students for college?”*

VS.

*“Does the level of participation in GEAR UP tutoring services influence student passing rates in AP courses?”*

# Planning an Evaluation



- What is the benefit of answering your question?
- Is the topic discussed in current literature?
- What are the important questions asked in the college readiness and preparation field?
- What areas of study have been identified as needing further study?
- Could the study lead to greater understanding of an area of concern identified in the literature and have an impact on the field?
- Are the proposed evaluation questions relevant for my community?

# Planning an Evaluation



- What can be measured? How will it be measured?
- What methodology will be needed/used to answer the questions?
  - Qualitative vs. Quantitative Approaches: Each have advantages and disadvantages
  - Comparison groups, baseline figures
- Is the data necessary to address the evaluation available? Accessible? Manageable?
  - Realistic expectations: feasibility, practicality, political viability, cost effectiveness
  - Program Evaluation Standards



## *Questions:*

What do you intend to do with the information presented today?

Where are you going with your evaluation from here?

What are your burning questions?

# GEAR UP Evaluation Resources



- Evaluators Institutes
- GEAR UP Evaluation Council
- American Evaluation Association's College Access Program Topical Interest Group
- Department of Education Program Officer
- RTI Commissioned Expert Papers:  
<https://edsurveys.rti.org/GEARUP/>
- [www.gearupdata.org](http://www.gearupdata.org)



# Other Tools for Evaluators



- Education Resources Information Center <http://eric.ed.gov/>
  - “The world’s largest digital library of education literature”
  - Search on GEAR UP, middle school, college outreach, parent involvement, student aspiration...
- American Evaluation Association  
<http://www.eval.org/Resources/Collections.asp>
- American Educational Research Association (AERA)  
[www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)
- International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement [www.iea.nl](http://www.iea.nl)
- National Center for Education Statistics <http://nces.ed.gov>

# Other Tools for Evaluators



## ■ Program evaluation

- Free management library: Basic Guide to Program Evaluation  
[http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl\\_eval.htm](http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm)
- American Physiological Society (online short course in evaluation) <http://www.the-aps.org/education/promote/promote.html>

## ■ Writing & administering a survey

- Websites for college courses  
[http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/ed690sp05/SurveyDesign\\_ResponseOption.pdf](http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/ed690sp05/SurveyDesign_ResponseOption.pdf)
- Online survey sites: <http://www.questionpro.com/survey-design.html>  
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/use-cases/>
- Sample size calculators – many online. My favorites:  
<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html> <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>

# Other Tools for Evaluators



## Data, statistics

- Online statistics textbooks <http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/>  
<http://wiki.stat.ucla.edu/socr/index.php/EBook>
- UCLA Dept of Statistics <http://www.stat.ucla.edu/>  
<http://forums.stat.ucla.edu/?5>
- Web Center for Social Research Methods (includes a ‘select a statistic’ advice module) <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/>

### *Question:*

What other GEAR UP evaluation resources do you know/use/recommend/want?