

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

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Learning and Assessment Services

## **SFAC Report**

**Fiscal Year 2011 - 2012**

- 1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.**

The mission of *Learning and Assessment Services (LAS)* is to foster a conducive, stimulating and supportive learning environment to promote the success of UH students, the university, and the greater Houston community. LAS identifies needs, provides assessment and evaluative services, promotes healthy choices via outreach activities, and facilitates student learning.

The range of services and the number of students served and impacted by LAS is extensive. Learning and Assessment Services primary services are in the field of assessment, learning support and outreach activities. In the area of assessment, we consulted, developed, and administered surveys for the Division of Research, Residential Life and Housing, Staff Council, Registration and Academic Records, and Transfers Advising Program to name a few. The Student Satisfaction Survey, funded by SFAC, was administered in the Spring 2010. In support of our Institutional assessment activities, LAS recruited and facilitated the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) to evaluate general education outcomes. We continue to support the academic departments in their outcome assessment activities through the administration and reporting of the Major Fields

LAS is routinely requested to research and in collaborating with academic departments requested to recommend and propose the appropriate test for use for placement and the awarding of course credit. Currently we are working on identifying assessments that can be used for the many languages that are offered at our university. We continue to process course credit for Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Entrance Program (CLEP), departmental and other course credit programs. For the reporting period June 09 to May 10, LAS evaluated course credit for 1,364 students and awarded 10,144 course credit hours.

During the Fall 09 semester, LAS administered the faculty/course evaluation online for the UH Law Center, College of Architecture, Department of Hispanic Studies, Distance Education, and selected other courses from several departments. We continue to assist departments in designing customized reports as per college/departmental specifications. LAS also ensures copies of the student faculty/course evaluation reports are made available in the Library. We continue to work on increasing the utility of the course evaluation reports for students, faculty and administrators. The Measurement and Evaluation Center scanned more than 400,000 bubble forms in FY11.

University Testing Services (UTS), a unit of Learning and Assessment Services, provides opportunities for students to take make-up exams as approved by their faculty. During the reporting period for FY 10, 179 faculty make-up exams were administered for UH students. This service provided an opportunity for students who may have had an emergency to take an exam as approved by the Instructor. In addition, students who take a correspondence exam from another institution can have their exams proctored at UTS. We also facilitate the administration of one of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) tests at remote overseas and out of state facilities for our new incoming international and domestic students. More than 22,000 tests have been administered by UTS in FY 10.

In the area of learning support, LAS IT staff continues to develop applications that improve the efficiency of service delivery and evaluation of services. Some of the IT applications include a sign-in system for the Spanish tables at LSS and access to online faculty/course evaluation for client as requested. Our Challenger program, a federally funded program to support student success, has been awarded a five year grant by the U.S. Department of Education totaling more than 1.5 million. The one year retention rate for this program is 94%. Learning Support Services, the Challenger Program and Urban Experience Program are under the umbrella of LAS, continue to support student success with a high degree of effectiveness (See page 6-7).

In support of the student training needs, LAS offers opportunities for students to be interns, practicum trainees, and graduate and research assistants.

We continue to offer quality outreach activities as evidenced by the fact that LAS currently has more than half a million dollars in grant funded projects this fiscal year.

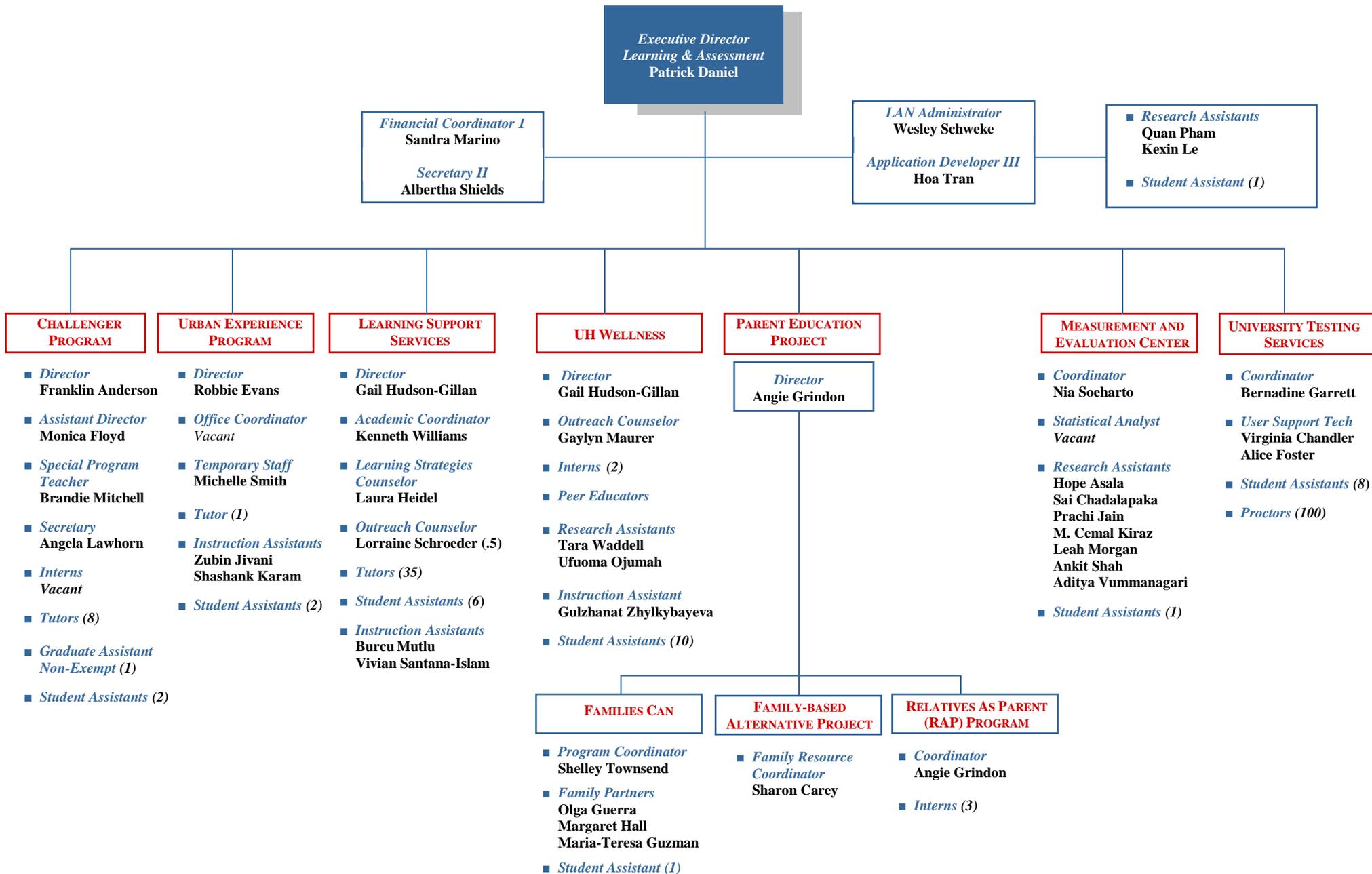
- 2. Provide an organization chart for your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for each program.**

**Where you have multiple staff in the same position (e.g. counselor, custodian, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.**

See attached Organizational Chart.

# Learning & Assessment Services

2010



3. List the objectives that you provided with your 2010-2011 SFAC request. Please comment on your success in achieving those objectives. If an objective changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new objective, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these objectives.

### LAS Objectives:

In addition to continuing LAS objectives (listed below: #1-4), we wish to report LAS is responding to an increase in demand for accountability and outcome assessments from both the University and individual departments and units. LAS has become central in the development of accountability measures for several UH departments and within Student Affairs. We are also experiencing an increase in demand from the UH community for LAS expertise in the areas of outcome assessment, especially survey design and administration as well as program evaluation.

There also has been an increase in the need to identify appropriate placement and Credit By Exam options for students especially in the Foreign Languages. We are pleased to report that faculty is using our Testing facilities to provide an opportunity for students to take a make-up exam.

Lastly LAS is receiving an increase in grants. This is accompanied by each funding source increasing its requirements for measurable outcomes, financial and program accountability. Further, these requirements are different for each grant and often change year to year. In addition to providing services to the clients, students in selected disciplines are able to obtain direct clinical experience as part of their internship or practicum requirements for course credit.

#### 1. *To facilitate student learning*

Learning assistance programs are composed of tutoring services, learning strategies counseling, wellness and parenting education, cultural enrichment activities, computer-aided instructional resources, and workshops on academic learning strategies and personal development. LAS also offers three academic courses in social health and learning strategies.

LAS supports graduate and professional education with research services and consultation for data collection, survey design, coordination of focus groups, introduction to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), learning strategies counseling, and workshops on topics such as American Psychological Association writing style, scholarly writing, presentations, learning styles, and time management.

#### 2. *To promote a supportive learning environment*

The administration of surveys assists the university in identifying areas that are meeting the needs of the clientele as well as to identify areas for improvement that will contribute to the overall student success at the University. The Student Satisfaction Survey is one of the major survey reports that are used by several stake holders on campus to improve the level of student satisfaction.

Moreover, the administration of faculty course evaluation by LAS provides feedback by students to faculty on their assessment of teaching. We continue to work with individual departments to increase the utility of the Faculty/Course evaluations in support of student learning.

All 7 LAS Units promote a supportive learning environment in multiple ways. Examples of this include **Learning Support Services**: Learning styles and strategies assessment, workshops, learning strategies counseling, tutoring, library and resource materials including books, computer software, and videos on learning and other topics; **Challenger Program**: Counseling, tutoring, academic, career, and personal counseling; Reading, Writing, and Study Skills credit courses; Financial Aid Advising and

Assistance; Social support and cultural enrichment; *Urban Experience Program*: Internships, tutoring, community service, mentoring, cultural enrichment activities, career and personal development activities.

3. *To provide comprehensive assessment services*

Learning and Assessment Services provides comprehensive assessment services to the UH community and local public and private organizations. These assessment activities range from student admission, placement testing, to development of test items for departmental course credit. Assessment services also include program evaluation via focus groups and institutional research, including administration of staff survey, student satisfaction, and student needs assessment.

Additional assessment activities include administration of psychological and vocational batteries, course placement tests, credit by examination, college admission tests, licensure/certification examinations, and scoring of departmental and course examinations, and consultation for outcome assessment.

The surveys administered to the UH community include Student Enrollment Preferences Survey, Division of Research Survey, Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Families CAN Surveys, Fraud Risk Survey, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Residential Life & Housing (RLH) Survey, Transfer Advising Program Student Survey, Campus Activities Survey, Staff Survey, College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences (CLASS) Exit Surveys – Undergraduate and Graduate, Department English Surveys, College of Technology Graduating Students Survey, and Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) Exit Survey.

In addition the online elections for the Student Government, Association, Staff Council, and a few chairs were administered via the LAS online voting system.

4. *To provide prevention and education outreach activities*

LAS offers a variety of workshops on personal development, healthy choices and decision making, academic success, and parenting support groups. UH Wellness offers outreach and educational programs for the campus and community and provides referral information and resources on a wide range of health related topics including stress management, alcohol, drugs, and sexual health. The department co-sponsors large-scale prevention campaigns including Alcohol Awareness Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Domestic Violence/Rape Prevention (Clothesline Project), Safer Sex Awareness Week, Eating Disorders Awareness Day, Great American Smoke Out, National Collegiate Health and Wellness Week, Take Back the Night, and the Safe Spring Break Campaign. The department also involves student peer educators in the development and implementation of service learning projects.

Community based programs include the Relatives As Parents Program, Services for Families with Children with Disabilities. These granted projects in addition to providing direct service to the clientele offers an opportunity for students to obtain an internship or practicum experience for course credit.

4. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving your aforementioned objectives and their importance as compared to other objectives that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and the satisfaction levels of those served. Please provide the method for collective these data.

Please find below tabulation of our usage data for selected services offered.

**Learning Support Services (LSS)**

Tutoring Sessions	6,814
Spanish Table Tutoring	793
Learning Strategies Counseling	741
Learning Strategies Workshops	8,397
Outreach/ Information Fairs	1,257
Computer Use	556
Fliers/Brochures	2,115
Tutoring retention/graduation rate (1 year)	80.04%
Tutored students in good academic standing	86.75 %

**Challenger Program (CP)**

Participants served	171
Retention Rate (one-year)	94%
Good Academic Standing	84%
Total Graduates	21
Total Dean's List Honors	52

**Urban Experience Program (UEP)**

Students/Participants	99
Retention/Graduation Rate	93.94%
Good Academic Standing for Undergraduate	93.81%

**University Testing Services (UTS)**

Institutional Tests	9,013
Credit By Exams	856
Placement Tests	512
Community Tests	25
Distance Education/Correspondence Tests	591
Faculty Course Make-Up Exam	179
National Tests	5,528
Computer Based Tests	5,618

***Total Tests Administered*** **22,322**

**Measurement & Evaluation Center (MEC)**

Academic:	
Class Exam Scoring	249,645
Institutional Testing	1,967
Faculty/Course Evaluation	140,627
Exit Survey	2,618
Survey Research	32,672
Psychological/Vocational Testing	186
Special Project	187

**UH Wellness (UHW)**

Outreach Programming	
- Workshops/Classroom Training	15,788
- Informational Services	19,352
Special Programs	3,468
Walk In/Consultations	10,598
- Office contacts	11,090
- Office consults	307
<b>Total Contacts for UH Wellness</b>	<b>50,005</b>
Brochures/Fliers/Other	11,197

**Parent Education Program (PEP)****Families CAN Program (Serves Families of Children with Disabilities)**

Ongoing Case Management Services	723 (unique) served on an ongoing basis
<i>Children with disabilities</i>	289 (unique)
<i>Parents of children with disabilities</i>	434 (unique)
Parent Groups	
Parents of children with disabilities served	49 (Unique) individuals
Information & Referral Services	
Parents of children with disabilities served	343 (unique) individuals
Outreach Service Contacts	
Parents of children with disabilities served	205 (unique) individuals

**GRAND Total served by Families CAN: 1,411****Relatives As Parents Program (Serves Grandparents & Other Relatives Raising Kin Children)**

- Relative Parents served	182 (unique) individuals
- Kin Children served (directly)	45 (unique) individuals
- RAP Support Group Leaders served	10 (unique) individuals
- Technical Assistance to other Professionals	23 (unique) individuals
- Collaborations with other Organizations	15 organizations

**GRAND Total served by RAPP 275****Family Based Alternatives Project/EveryChild, Inc. (Specialized Program for Children with Disabilities)**

Total clients served (unique)	165
Total community agency/collaborators/partners	56
GRAND Total clients served by EveryChild	165 (unique) individuals

**Total (unique) Individuals Served by PEP 1,851**

5. Please discuss any budget changes from your last (FY 2011) SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them. SFAC recognizes that some programs did not receive the funds that they requested, that some programs were impacted by additional expenses after the conclusion of the budget cycle, and that some programs may be ahead of or behind their self-generated income projections. In addition, if your unit concluded FY 2010 with a Ledger 3 Fund Equity balance, please describe the conditions which cause the fund balance.

LAS would like to request two additional one time requests for the following items:

1) Networking Repair (Second Floor Student Service Center 1	\$22,882
2) Security Surveillance for Computer Testing Labs	\$13,222
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<b>Total Request</b>	<b>\$36,104</b>

- 6. Please list your 2011-2012 objectives in priority order. Larger units may wish to group your response by subprogram. Under each objective, state the specific programs, activities, and/or services that you plan to implement to meet your objectives.**

**LAS Objectives:**

1. To facilitate student learning
  - Learning Support Services
  - Challenger Program
  - Urban Experience Program
2. To promote a supportive learning environment
  - LAS overall and all 7 Units
3. To provide comprehensive assessment services
  - Measurement & Evaluation Services
  - University Testing Services
4. To provide prevention and education outreach activities
  - Wellness Program
  - Parent Education Project

**7. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them (e.g. grants, donations, etc.)?**

Due to the diversity of services LAS provides, it generates funding from many different sources: the Provost's Office, UH Central Administration, in Grants & Contracts, Gifts, Designated Fees and SFAC. LAS serves every constituency in the UH community (students, faculty, staff and departments) as well as providing services to the Greater Houston community. Thus, LAS requires, pursues and obtains many different types of funding from a variety of funding sources.

Grants and Contracts:

<i>Grants</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Funding</i>
Parent Education Project		
Relatives as Parents - Simmons	01/01/10 - 12/31/10	\$ 10,000.00
Families CAN	09/01/10 - 08/31/11	\$ 148,029.00
Family Based Alternatives - Every Child	09/01/10 - 08/31/11	\$ 67,500.00
Challenger Program	09/01/10 - 08/31/11	\$ 311,018.00
UH Wellness		
IMAGE	08/02/10 - 08/01/12	\$ 189,000.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 725,547.00</b>

**8. Please describe any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.**

LAS (Learning & Assessment Services) is unique in what it provides the University community, and thus there is no overlap with other units. In addition, it is the philosophy of LAS to promote a supportive learning environment based upon a guiding principle of collaboration and support for the various entities on campus.

Three units of LAS that provide direct services to students – Learning Support Services, Urban Experience Program, and UH Wellness – are funded in part through student service fees. Wellness has also been awarded additional grant funds which enhance its program. Two units are primarily grant-funded, one of which is the Challenger Program. The program provides direct service to students including the provision of counseling, academic tutoring and learning strategies support to students in a high risk group for retention. These services are supported primarily through grant dollars and supported through designated fees.

University Testing Services and Measurement and Evaluation Center, two other units within LAS, are funded through self generated and designated fees. These units also provide support for students. University Testing Services provides academic placement tests (i.e., Language Placement) for minimal fees and administers the credit by exam program (Advance Placement, International Baccalaureate (IB), CLEP, etc.) for the University. Currently, the credit is processed for students at no charge. Since spring 2008, University Testing Services has taken on the additional task of reviewing student requests for providing a Foreign Language required waiver.

The Measurement and Evaluation Center (MEC), which also does not receive any student service fees, provides services to support students. Graduate and professional students can utilize the expertise of MEC staff for data collection. The data forms or answer sheets used for data collection are scanned at no cost to these students to support their research. SFAC funded units must meet institutional effectiveness and other program evaluation needs, and the MEC staff provide support for these units when requested. In addition, this unit supports students through many of its other services, such as exam grading, faculty evaluations, and research support. Please see page 6 for statistics. MEC also administers the online Student Government and Staff Council elections for a minimal fee.

Finally, LAS central staff provide major support for SFAC units within LAS (Learning Support Services, Urban Experience Program, UH Wellness) including financial management, budgeting, personnel, technology (computer support, web design, programming) and data analysis. Non-SFAC LAS units also support LAS SFAC units through provision of materials, furniture, equipment, computers, and even student staff when those units could not otherwise afford these necessary support services.

As a result of the administrative structures, Learning and Assessment Services has been able to offer many services to the University community at minimal cost. This in turn allows for many units on campus not to initiate new or increase current fees. In addition, the University and its diverse units, increasingly call upon LAS for its expertise in accountability measures, outcome assessment, surveys and focus groups.