



Overcoming Common Challenges in GEAR UP Program Evaluation

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Welcome!

Session Overview



- Introductions
- Common Challenges
- Team Session - Overcoming Challenges
- Solution Sharing and Discussion
- Q & A



Who We Are

CoBro Consulting



- ✓ CoBro Consulting is a research and consulting firm providing data management and evaluation services for college access programs nationwide.
 - Data management via Compass and CompassMatch
 - Program evaluation
 - Statistical data analysis
 - Survey design, analysis, & reporting
 - Comprehensive annual and biennial evaluation reports



Who We Are

CoBro Consulting



- **Compass** is a secure student tracking system and database management tool that allows you to enter student and service data quickly and easily, run user-friendly reports and analyses, and generate APR data tables at the click of a button.
- **CompassMatch** is an in-kind contribution management system that allows you to easily record, calculate, and run reports of matching funds.

CoBro Consulting currently serves 38 GEAR UP state and partnership programs nation-wide.

Who We Are

GEAR UP 4 LA



- ✓ Grant period: 7 years: Sept 2011 - 2018
- ✓ Total award: \$20.5 Million
- ✓ Average annual budget: \$3.1 Million
- ✓ Implementation Model: Cohort
- ✓ Current Students Served: 3880

GEAR UP 4 LA serves 8 middle schools and
17 high schools

Who We Are

GEAR UP 4 LA



34 staff

Central	At Each School Site
Project Director	1 FT Coordinator
Data/Budget Coordinator	1 FT Counselor
Senior Office Tech	1 FT Mentor Coordinator
IT Support	1 PT Program Assistant
	1 PT Community Representative

14 Partners

4 IHE's	5 CBO's	5 Businesses
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Who We Are

GEAR UP 4 LA



Services

- ✓ Academic and financial counseling program
- ✓ Intensive extended learning programs
- ✓ Professional development for teachers
- ✓ Early college readiness tests
- ✓ Concurrent enrollment programs
- ✓ College visits
- ✓ 75 in-class college tutors
- ✓ Adult, college and peer mentoring for students and parents

Who are You?

GEAR UP Session Participants

- ✓ How many are new to GEAR UP?
- ✓ How many have a new 2011 or 2012 grant?
- ✓ How many have been with GEAR UP for more than a year?
- ✓ More than 5?

A lot of collective knowledge in the room!



Session Outcomes



- ✓ Assist programs in understanding essential evaluation strategies.
- ✓ Work together to identify common challenges programs may encounter.
- ✓ Use collective knowledge in the room to identify solutions and resources to overcome these common challenges.

Trend in Federal Data Requirements



- ✓ Recently, federal programs have embraced a common theme of data-driven decision making and the creation of a culture of evidence to promote formative program improvement.
- ✓ However, there are many challenges in gathering accurate and timely data, interpreting evaluation findings, and using the results to effect program improvement.

Why is this important?



- ✓ Accurate and timely data is needed to:
 1. ensure compliance with DOE requirements re: program administration
 2. examine program processes and promote continuous improvement
 3. inform stakeholders of the effectiveness of GEAR UP and the services it provides nationwide



Common Barriers



✓ Program components that often present challenges to effective evaluation:



- Administering & Processing Surveys
- Collecting Service Participation Data
- Collecting Student-Level Academic Data
- Completing the APR
- Using Data to Inform Decision Making

Other Common Challenges



What are common evaluation barriers you have encountered during GEAR UP program implementation?



GEAR UP 4 LA



Challenge: Using Data for Informed Decision Making Example: Mentoring

- ✓ **Objective 4:** % of GEAR UP students who graduate from high school will increase.
- ✓ **Objective 5:** % of GEAR UP students who are enrolled in college will increase to 10% by June 2018.
- ✓ **Objective 8:** 80% (or higher) of GEAR UP students and their parents will demonstrate increased knowledge of available financial aid, and costs / benefits of pursuing postsecondary education.

Mentoring Retention

Less than 20% Retention



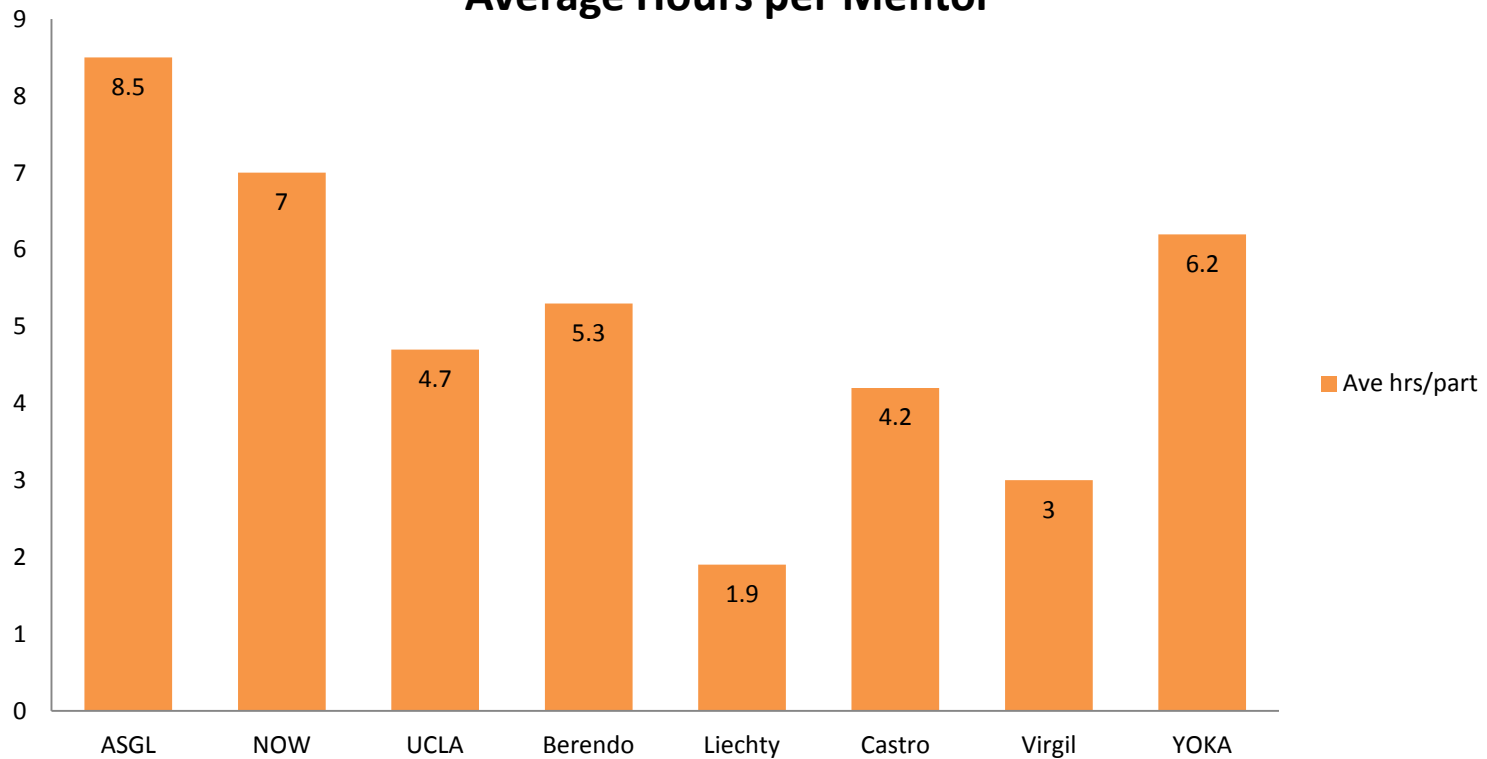
	ASGL @ RFK	NOW @ RFK	UCLA @ RFK	Berendo	Liechty	Castro	Virgil	YOKA	Total
Number of Mentors	11	14	10	23	31	20	19	43	171
Recruitment participants	100	66	68	84	52	142	95	315	922
Hours to recruit	58	41	37	37	36	40	134	69	456

Mentoring

Mentoring-Participation Hours



Average Hours per Mentor



Team Brainstorming



How can we
overcome these
common barriers to
be able to use data
effectively?



Compass System



What is Compass?

A secure data management and evaluation tool that expedites data entry, organizes program data, generates reports and conducts statistical analysis to evaluate program success. Compass Features:

- ✓ Customized data entry screens
- ✓ Automated participation reports
- ✓ Batch entry for documenting group activities
- ✓ Automatic computation of data for required reports



Compass System



Challenge: Obtaining and entering student academic data.

Solution: Data electronically transferred into the system.

Challenge: Time-consuming hand-entry of services and activities data.

Solution: Screens designed for speed and accuracy.

Challenge: Collecting and organizing data for required reports.

Solution: Automatically computes and exports such data.

Challenge: Lack of expertise/resources to conduct impact analyses.

Solution: Conducts statistics & displays results in graphs and tables.



THANK YOU!

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