INTERVIEWING:  (Radcliff, Chapter 7)

Overview:

Interviews are usually conducted face-to-face, but can be done by telephone. Some forms of interviewing are similar to survey research in that a questionnaire is used. While surveys ask respondents to record their own responses, interviewing asks respondents to speak their responses and expand upon them. Because of the time factor, less time-consuming methods such as surveys and focus groups are often preferred to interviewing. However, interviewing can produce much deeper and richer results than either of these methods and is effective in studying the perceptions and feelings of course and program participants.

Indicators:

- Requires a significant time commitment
- Requires little money unless outside expertise is needed
- Level of assessment: Programmatic
- Domain: Affective
- Access to participants: Requires medium level of effort
- Faculty collaboration not required but helpful and recommended
- Outside expertise may be helpful if in-house skill and experience are not available

Key Characteristics:

- Assesses how respondents think and feel through one-on-one questioning and listening.
- Takes advantage of peoples’ natural inclination to discuss things;
- Strong choice for evaluating new or changing programs;
- More than other methods, it allows for the deep exploration of questions and issues;
- Works well to explore questions raised by prior assessments;
- Results, shaped by the voices of actual participants, are powerful and understandable;
- Requires interpersonal skills and experience in conducting interviews;
- Requires a great deal of time to conduct interviews;
- Not a good choice for assessing knowledge-based outcomes.