EvaluATE
Evaluation Resource Center for advanced technological education

Data Collection Planning Matrix
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An evaluation plan needs to describe what data will be collected, from what sources, and how, by whom, and when, as well as how the data will be analyzed. Placing this information in a matrix format helps ensure that there is a viable plan for collecting all the data necessary to answer each evaluation question and that all data collected will serve a specific, intended purpose. The table below may be copied into another document, such as a grant proposal, and edited/ expanded as needed.

Evaluation Question:					
Indicator	**Data Source**	**Data Collection Method**	**Responsible Party**	**Timing**	**Analysis Plan**

DEFINITIONS

Evaluation Questions are overarching questions about a project's merit, worth, or significance. The number of evaluation questions depends on the scope and purpose of the evaluation; 3 to 7 questions is typical. Questions should address both project implementation and outcomes.

Indicators are specific data points about an aspect of a project—basically, what will be measured in order to answer the evaluation questions. It is useful to use multiple indicators to address an evaluation question, including qualitative and quantitative data.

Data Source identifies from whom or what entity data will be collected. Typical data sources for ATE evaluations include project personnel, students, graduates, faculty, project partners, business and industry representatives, institutional records, Web usage statistics, and teaching and learning artifacts.

Data Collection Method is the means by which information will be gathered, such as surveys, focus groups, interviews, observations, and institutional database queries.

Responsible Party is the individual or organization that will be tasked with collecting the needed information. In many cases, data collection requires cooperation among multiple entities. For example, an external evaluator may be responsible for an administering a survey, but a member of the project staff may need to supply the contact information.

Timing identifies when and how frequently data will be collected (e.g., at events, quarterly, annually). It is important to identify approximately when data collection will take place to ensure the information will be obtained when needed for reporting purposes and decision making and that the data collection schedule is conducive to other things taking place in project's context (e.g., other major data collection activities, semester schedules).

Analysis Plan is the approach to be used for making sense of the data, basically how the information will be transformed to reach conclusions in relation to the evaluation questions.