Student Organization Training (SOT) is an annual program consisting of educational sessions to prepare new organization officers for their role. The 2014 SOT included risk management training, two blocks of educational sessions (students were able to choose between 5 sessions: GiveGab, T-Space, event planning, publicity and promotions, and essential leadership skills), and a resource fair. SOT took place on Friday, January 17, 2014 from 2:30-6:00PM beginning in Laurie Auditorium. SOT utilized RCC classrooms, a Coates Library computer lab, and the RTT Cafe Theater. The attendance was approximately 250 students, primarily first years, sophomores, and juniors who were newly elected to officer positions. Risk management training is required each year for presidents, risk management, membership, orientation, and social chairs. T-Space training is required each year for T-Space coordinators.

A paper questionnaire was provided as an insert to the SOT program booklet. All attendees were asked to complete the questionnaire prior to leaving SOT. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: Risk Management Training, Block One, Block Two, and Overall. At the end of each of these portions of the program, presenters encouraged students to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was unique to this program and adapted from the 2012-2013 SOT questionnaire. Of the approximate 250 attendees, 90 students submitted the questionnaire with a response rate of approximately 36%.

For this particular assessment, we did not collect demographic information.

The program was designed with several CAS Learning and Development Outcomes in mind. As a result of attending SOT, students should have been able to:

- Acquire new knowledge useful to their officer position (A2: Connecting knowledge). There was some evidence that this learning outcome was attained:
  - For all sessions, students either agreed or strongly agreed that all sessions was useful to them. (The risk management training session was an exception with 7 of 90 students disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the session was useful.)
  - For the risk management training session and all five breakout sessions, students were able to write statements identifying new things they had learned based on the content of the session(s) they attended. Examples below:
    - “It's better to motivate the middle than the bottom third” (referring to which type of members to focus on within an organization)
    - “How to properly submit an SGA funding request form”
    - “I can work brainstorming into weekly meetings”
    - “Approaches to advertising and how to reach the audience I want”
- Think critically about how the sessions apply to their position in their organization (A4: Relating knowledge to daily life). There was some evidence that this learning outcome was attained:
  - Of the 90 respondents, 24 responded to the question directly linked to this learning outcome.
  - 24 students were able to respond with a written statement about something specific they had learned and how they might apply it.
These statements can be grouped into 9 themes including: meeting management, T-Space reservations, overall club improvement, membership recruitment, membership event attendance, organization and event promotion, SGA financial requests, where to find support and resources, risk management policies.

- Learn about specific leadership skills, specifically through the Essential Skills for Organization Leaders session (D4: Effective leadership). Evidence of this outcome is difficult to discern.
  - Only 12 of the 90 respondents responded to questions about the session related to this learning outcome.
  - Of those who did respond about this session, they agreed or strongly agreed the session was useful to them. Approximately 7 students were able to articulate specific “new things” they had learned from the session.

“To request a copy of the assessment instrument, email DAT@trinity.edu.”

Discussion

Overall, it is difficult to discern the success of our event based on our assessment instrument. I had a much lower respondent rate than anticipated. While 90 of approximately 250 students responded, most responses were very limited and incomplete, rendering many surveys almost useless. While we have specific learning outcomes for SOT, our primary motivation for hosting this event is for our annual, state-mandated risk management training, and we are most concerned with this aspect of the program. Based on word-of-mouth feedback from students, the risk management training specifically went well and was successful. Next year we plan to distribute a similar survey. However, we will offer an incentive at the end of SOT that those who submit a 100% completed assessment survey will get a free t-shirt.

The budget for this event was $1,700.00, and we spent $1,610.27. The budget for SOT 2015 is already set at $1,400.00. Each year, three to four students are selected to assist in planning SOT. From late September until the event in January, these students spend one hour per week meeting with the Coordinator for Student Programs for progress updates. They spend one to two additional hours per week planning this event.

This event is required by the state of Texas each year, so we will continue to host SOT. With that said, we will eliminate the resource fair aspect, as it was not particularly successful this year. We will require the entire event to be mandatory, including all sessions. In the past only risk management training and T-Space sessions were mandatory. We will have a 45 minute risk management training session, then two, 30 minutes sessions. We feel this shorter event format will encourage students to stay for the entire event.