Theory of Change:
Translating Study Abroad Program Goals and Priorities into Assessments

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Session 1 of a 4-part Series
From Theory to Practice: Assessment and Evaluation for Study Abroad Programs
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World Learning Inc.

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MOUNT HOLYOKE. Professional and Graduate Education

USA Study Abroad

IDEAS Program

A program of the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, USA Study Abroad branch

Seeking to expand higher education institutions' capacity to grow and diversify study abroad programs for U.S. students

- Increase number of students studying abroad from underrepresented groups

- Increase the number of U.S. higher education institutions offering study abroad programs

- Expand study abroad to new overseas destinations, particularly those that are less common

Grant Competition

- Approx. 20 grants of up to $35,000

Capacity Building Initiatives

- Virtual and in-person, open to everyone

StudyAbroadCapacityBuilding.org

USA Study Abroad

Mission:

To advance U.S. foreign policy goals by increasing and diversifying U.S. study abroad through programs for both individuals and institutions and to support the next generation of diverse American leaders to gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in a globalizing world.
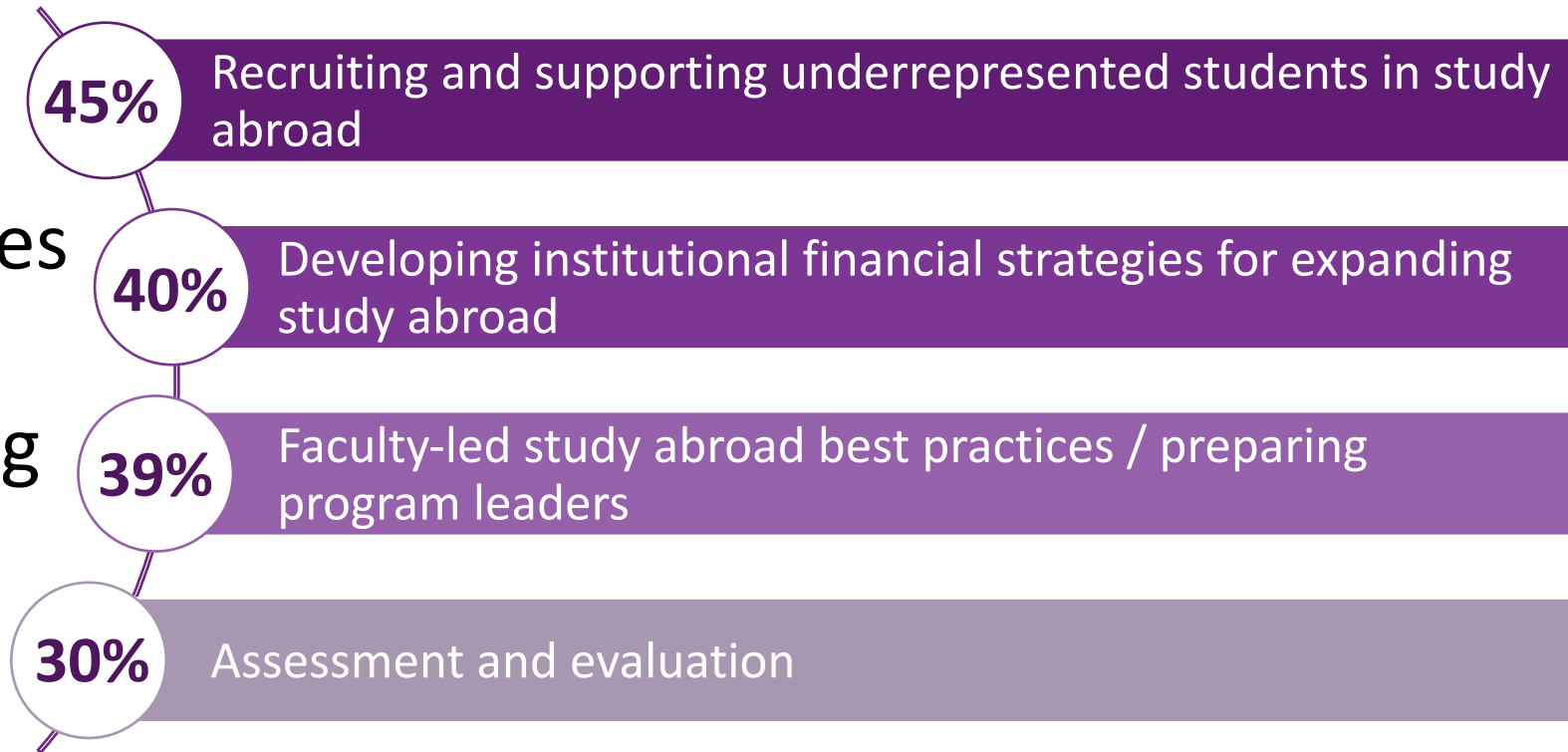
Rebecca Johnson

Program Officer
USA Study Abroad
U.S. Department of State

IDEAS Program 2021 Study Abroad Needs Assessment

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Priorities for Training

45% Recruiting and supporting underrepresented students in study abroad

40% Developing institutional financial strategies for expanding study abroad

39% Faculty-led study abroad best practices / preparing program leaders

30% Assessment and evaluation

Theory of Change IDEAS Program

IF

- If we provide the study abroad community at large with capacity building support, training, and networking opportunities …

AND

- … and promote the sharing of best practices on expanding and diversifying U.S. study abroad…

THEN

- … then U.S. institutions will increase the number and diversity of U.S. students studying and interning abroad and the destinations to which they travel.
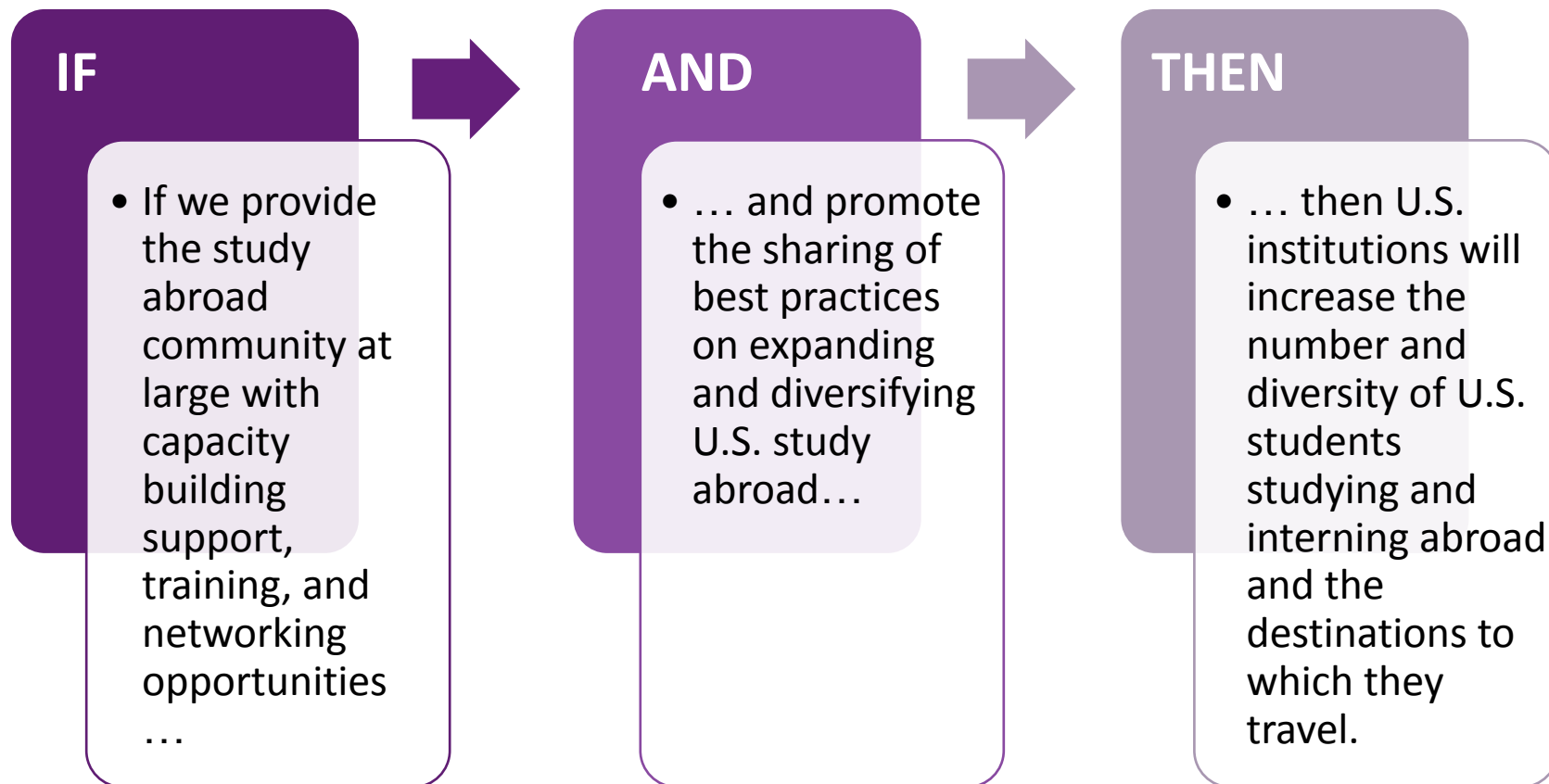
Today's Facilitators

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Tiffany Espinosa

Executive Director
Professional and Graduate Education
Mount Holyoke College

Roberto Mugnani

Director of New Programs
Professional and Graduate Education
Mount Holyoke College

Amy Asadoorian

Need help?
Send Amy a message in chat.

Goals and Agenda

Today we will explore how to:

Create a Theory of Change and Logic Model

Use a Theory of Change to:

1. Clearly connect your program goals and activities.

2. Translate goals into areas of focus for assessment.

3. Identify key performance indicators.

4. Identify assumptions and conditions for success.

Theory of Change Models "If...... Then"

Your mental model of how change happens:

- More knowledge reduces anxiety and intimidation

- Developing personal relationships increases comfort

- Talking with someone safe helps people be vulnerable and open

- Doing new things can be scary, and we avoid scary things

- Firsthand experience helps people develop nuanced insights

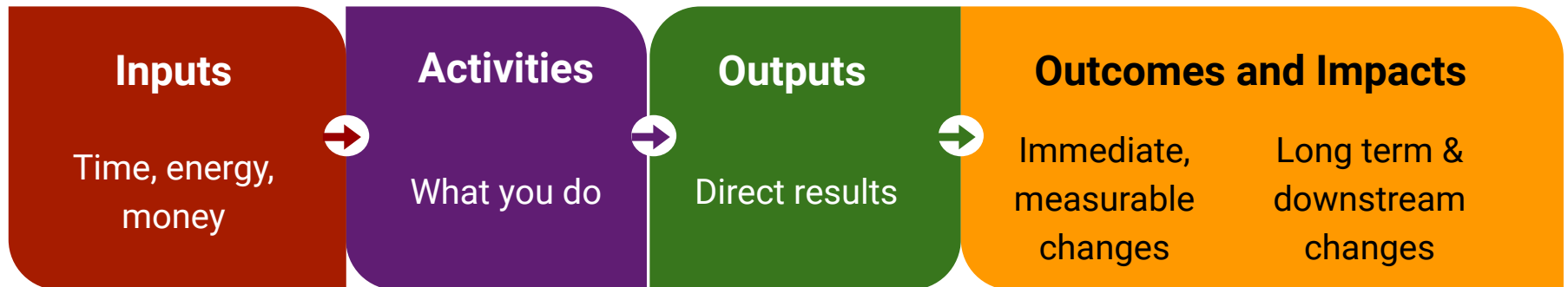- People feel happy to share, it makes them feel valued and engaged

Logic Model Example

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Study abroad alumni
Contact info
Zoom
Calendar
(inputs)

If we pair study abroad alum with first gen students/families (activities)....

Then, first gen families will better understand the value and be less intimidated by it (outputs)

Which should lead to more first gen students participating in study abroad (outcomes).

Inputs Time, energy, money	➡	**Activities** What you do	➡	**Outputs** Direct results	➡	**Outcomes and Impacts**

Outcomes and Impacts:

Immediate, measurable changes | Long term & downstream changes

Logic Model Example
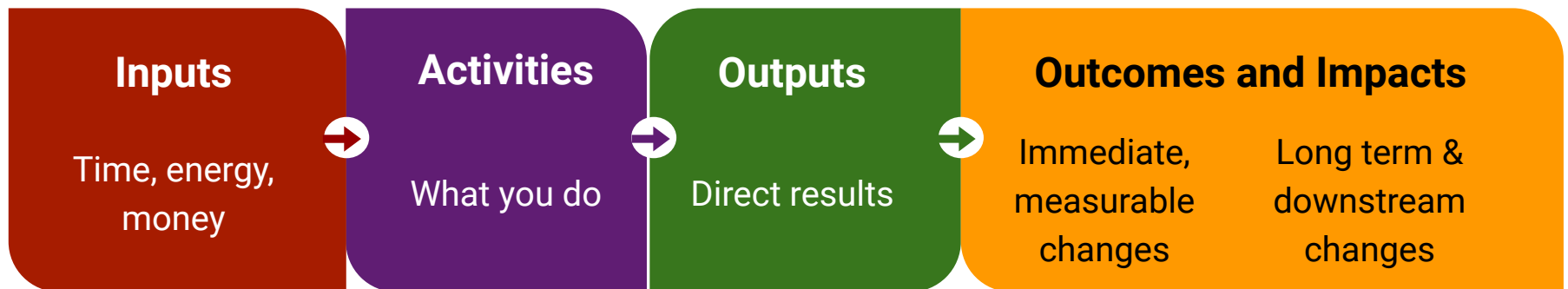
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Which should lead to more first gen students participating in study abroad (outcomes).

Prerequisite indicators are… (outputs)

If we do… (activities)

To do that **we need**… (inputs)

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes and Impacts	
Time, energy, money	What you do	Direct results	Immediate, measurable changes	Long term & downstream changes

Your Turn! Speed round

Working backward, identify as many different ways you could achieve this outcome with different "threads"

Which should lead to more first gen students participating in study abroad (outcomes).

Prerequisite indicators are… (outputs)
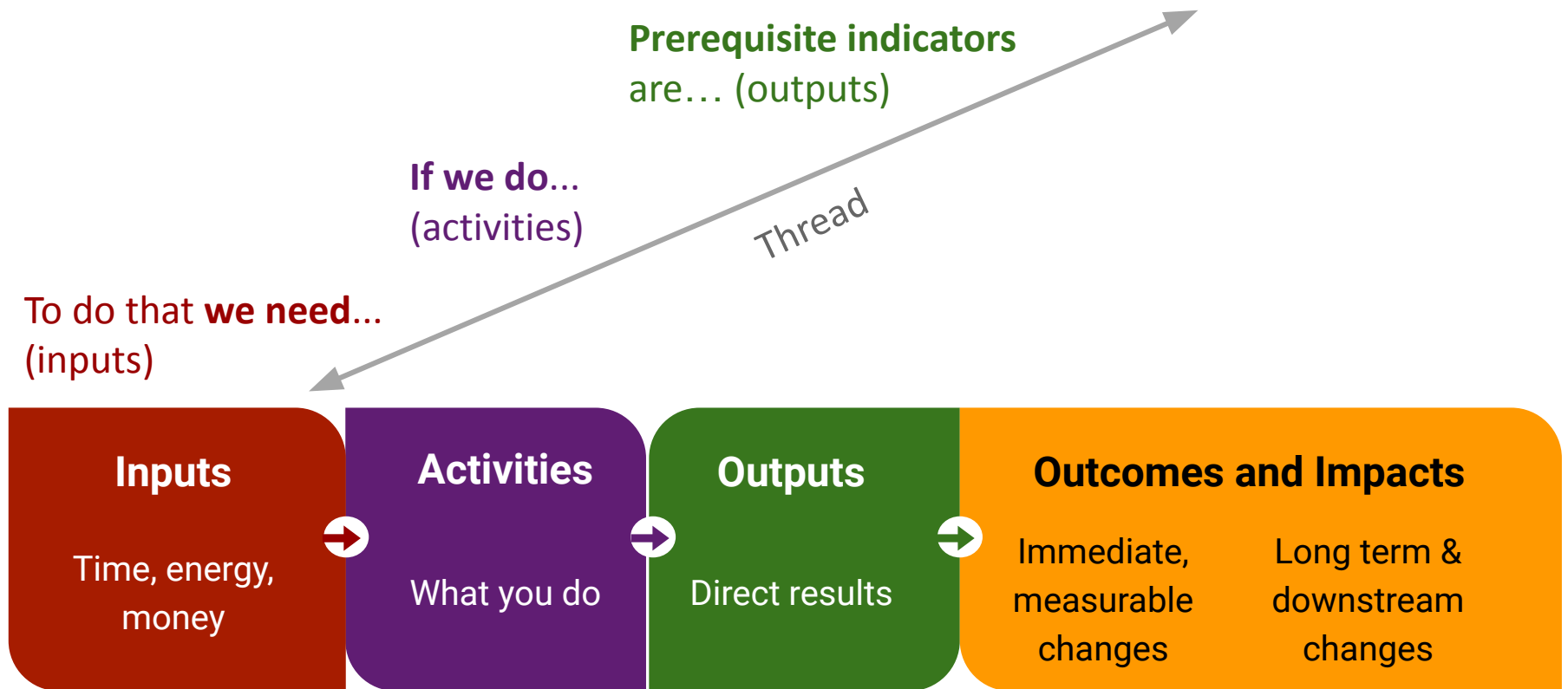
If we do… (activities)

Thread

To do that **we need**… (inputs)

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes and Impacts	
Time, energy, money	What you do	Direct results	Immediate, measurable changes	Long term & downstream changes

Context & Assumptions

What is unique about this moment and this place?

How will this affect your model?

What assumptions are you making that must be true for this to work?

Areas of Focus
(What you want to assess)

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To do that **we need**…... (inputs)

If we do... (activities)

Prerequisite indicators are… (outputs)

Which should lead to what we hope to achieve… (outcomes)

- Resource intensity

- Logistics & organization

- Effectiveness of outreach
- Quality of experience
- Knowledge gain

- Program interest
- Personal growth
- Academic engagement

Inputs	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Outcomes and Impacts**	
Time, energy, money	What you do	Direct results	Immediate, measurable changes	Long term & downstream changes

Performance Indicators
(How you could measure it)

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To do that **we need**…
(inputs)

If we do…
(activities)

Prerequisite indicators are…
(outputs)

Which should lead to what we hope to achieve… (outcomes)

- Cost per person
- Cost to advertise
- On budget?

- # of events
- On schedule?
- Involved staff evaluation of the activity

- # of attendees
  - New?
  - Returning?
- Attendee satisfaction
- Demonstrated ability to _____.

- # of new study abroad applicants
- Increased tolerance for ambiguity
- Participation in co-curriculars
- Graduation rate

Inputs	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Outcomes and Impacts**
Time, energy, money	What you do	Direct results	Immediate, measurable changes · Long term & downstream changes

Your Turn! Speed round

Develop one thread fully for your program.

Inputs		Activities		Outputs		Outcomes and Impacts	
Time, energy, money	→	What you do	→	Direct results	→	Immediate, measurable changes	Long term & downstream changes

To do that **we need**…

If we do…

Prerequisite indicators are…

Which should lead to what we hope to achieve…

Step 4	Step 3	Step 2	Step 1

Areas of Focus we are interested in assessing: (Step 5)

Performance Indicators to measure our success would be: (Step 6)

Assumptions and Context Considerations

This is iterative and might be updated at each step

Reflections & Questions

| **Inputs** Time, energy, money | → | **Activities** What you do | → | **Outputs** Direct results | → | **Outcomes and Impacts** Immediate, measurable changes / Long term & downstream changes |

To do that **we need**…

If we do…

Prerequisite indicators are…

Which should lead to what we hope to achieve…

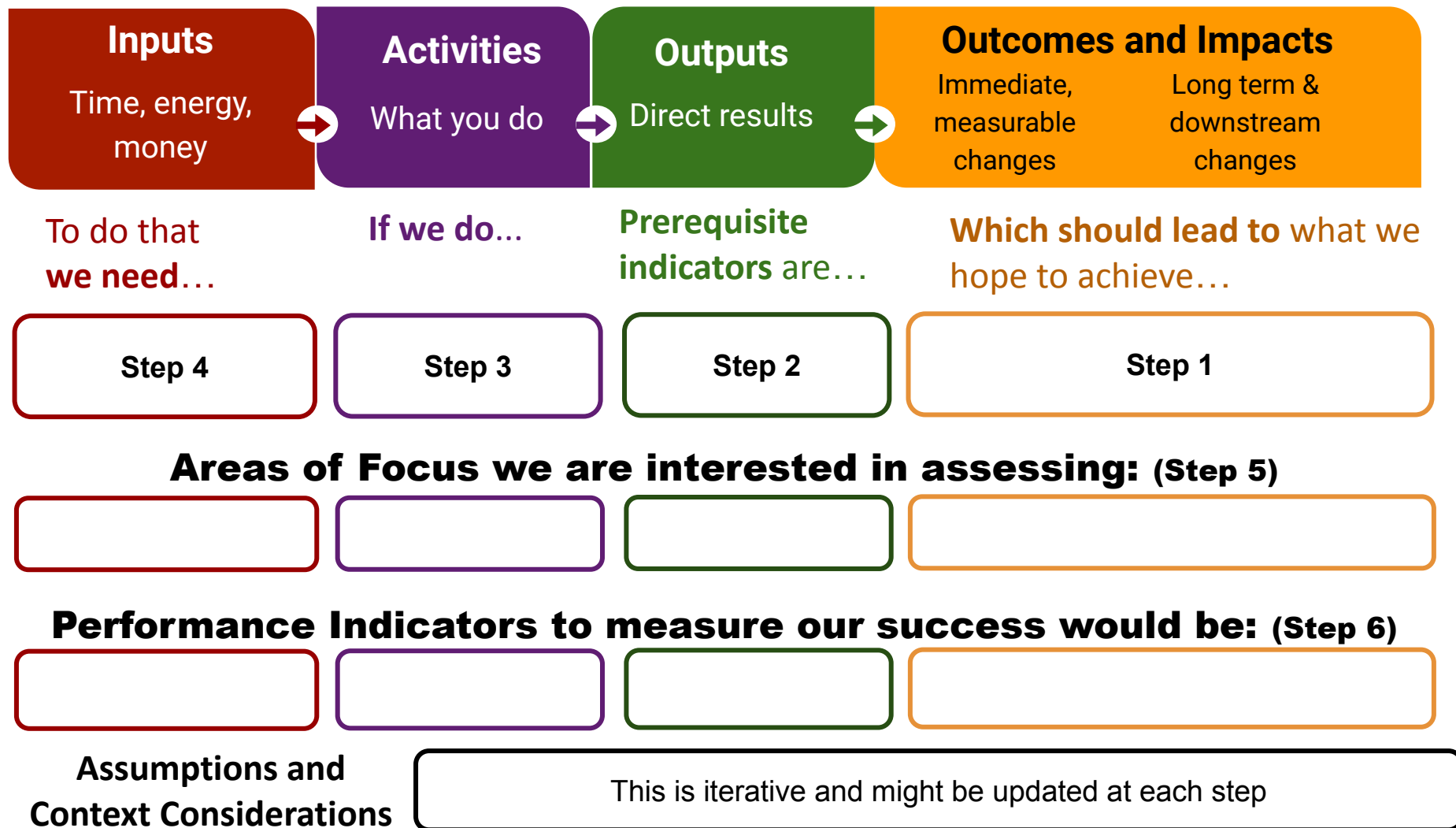| Step 4 | Step 3 | Step 2 | Step 1 |

Areas of Focus we are interested in assessing: (Step 5)

| | | | |

Performance Indicators to measure our success would be: (Step 6)

| | | | |

Assumptions and Context Considerations
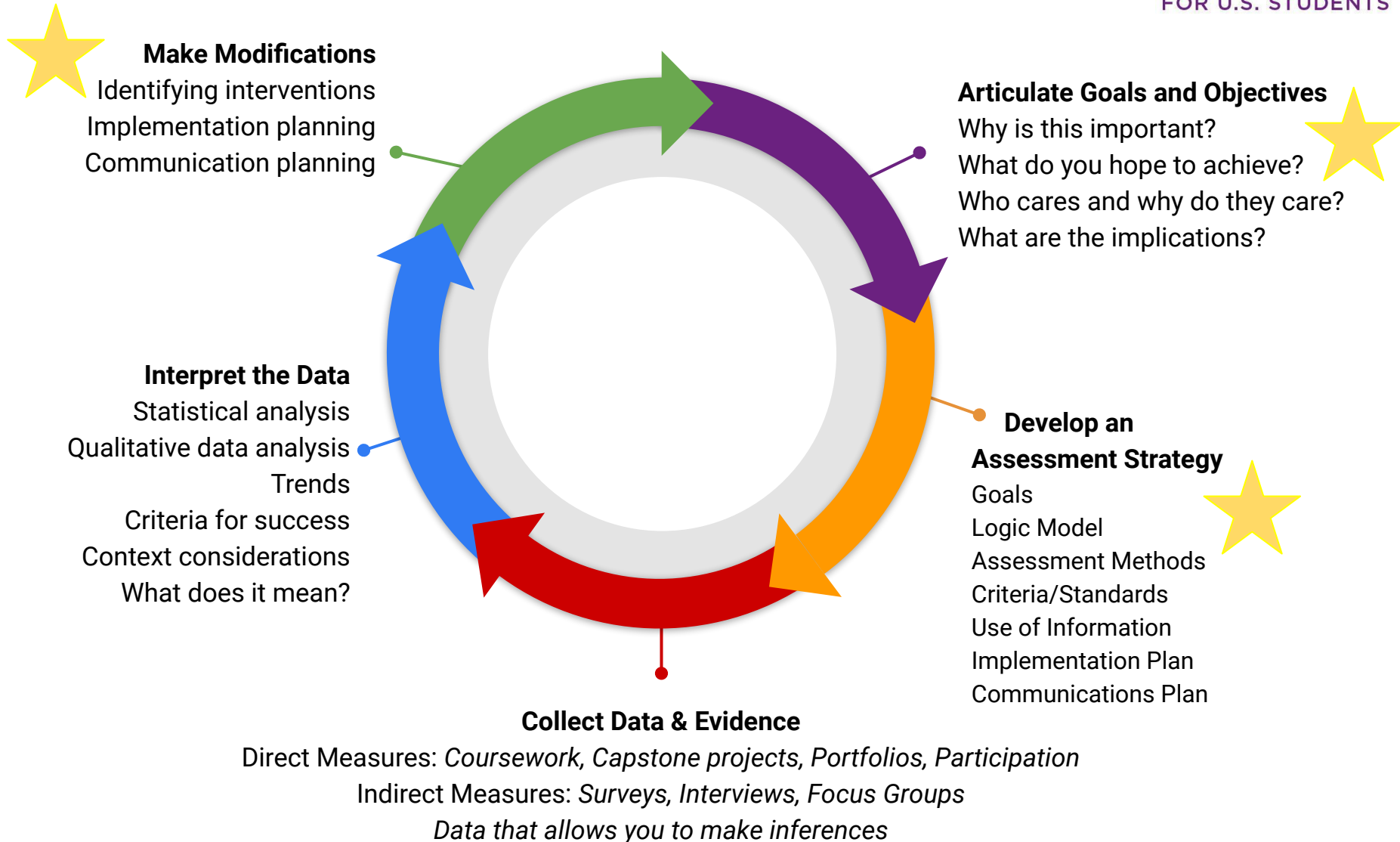
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Assessment Process

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Make Modifications
Identifying interventions
Implementation planning
Communication planning

Articulate Goals and Objectives
Why is this important?
What do you hope to achieve?
Who cares and why do they care?
What are the implications?

Interpret the Data
Statistical analysis
Qualitative data analysis
Trends
Criteria for success
Context considerations
What does it mean?

Develop an Assessment Strategy
Goals
Logic Model
Assessment Methods
Criteria/Standards
Use of Information
Implementation Plan
Communications Plan

Collect Data & Evidence
Direct Measures: *Coursework, Capstone projects, Portfolios, Participation*
Indirect Measures: *Surveys, Interviews, Focus Groups*
Data that allows you to make inferences

Logic Modeling as a Team Sport

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How is it connected to institutional strategic priorities?

Does it reflect your institutional mission?

Who are your key stakeholders?

What are your feedback mechanisms?
    During development?
    During implementation?

Hannah Busing

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Upcoming Training Sessions

Assessing Student Growth and Development Abroad
    December 15, 2021, 3:00-4:30pm EST

When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Analyzing Data for Diverse Student Populations
    February 2, 2022, 3:00-4:30pm EST

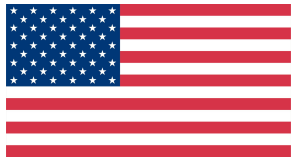Incubator Session: When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Analyzing Data for Diverse Student Populations
    March 9, 2022, 3:00-4:30pm EST

IDEAS PROGRAM FUTURE INITIATIVES

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FY21 Grant Competition

Webinars

Workshops

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