

Focus Group Rubric

Criteria		Essential	Limited	Weak
Before: Preparing for the focus group				
Checklist	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Location reservation <input type="checkbox"/> Assign roles (note taker/ facilitator) <input type="checkbox"/> Collect materials and equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Practice questions <input type="checkbox"/> Come 15 min early 		
	During: Conducting a focus group			
Skill Development	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Your role</u>: Both moderator and note taker are expected to welcome participants, offer them food, help them make their name tents • Arrange participants in a circle • Thank participants / follow the script¹ • Remind students that their responses will remain confidential • <u>Setting the Tone</u>: Create a comfortable environment / small talk/ icebreaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No context for questions. Starts with questions straight away. • Make participants uncomfortable (body language and no active listening) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are not facing each other • No script
	Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive and engaging conversation/ look at participants • Ask why and how to responses/Ask for specific examples • <u>Keep on track</u>: Stay focused and follow the questionnaire & cover all the prepared questions within the time allotted • Be aware of time constraints, time the questions • A moderator must tactfully deal with challenging participants² • <u>Note Taking</u>: Take detailed notes, including students direct comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rambling tangents occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate facilitation skills • No record keeping • Questions are not generating the expected feedback
	Consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get response consensus after every question • Get all the participants to talk and fully explain their answers³ • It is good moderator practice to paraphrase and summarize long, complex or ambiguous comments. It demonstrates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students dominate the discussion 	

		active listening and clarifies the comment for everyone in the group.		
	Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the participants • Debrief while the recording is running & mention date and time 		
	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect participants feedback on the facilitation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evaluation system
After: Analyzing the Data				
Checklist	Report Writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete your notes soon after the session where appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze: Identify trends, themes or categories in the comments <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange categories from those with the largest number of entries/ comments to those with smallest. <input type="checkbox"/> Include students comments to support trends <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrate data with graphs and tables <input type="checkbox"/> Synthesize: Identify category and sub-category heading titles & write a short paragraph summarizing findings for each subcategory possibly noting similarities and differences across groups. <input type="checkbox"/> Add powerful quotes to each sub-section		

¹ FOCUS GROUP INTRODUCTION WELCOME Thanks for agreeing to be part of the focus group. We appreciate your willingness to participate. INTRODUCTIONS Moderator; assistant moderator PURPOSE OF FOCUS GROUPS. We have been asked by _____ to conduct the focus groups. The reason we are having these focus groups is to find out _____. We need your input and want you to share your honest and open thoughts with us. GROUND RULES 1. WE WANT YOU TO DO THE TALKING. We would like everyone to participate. I may call on you if I haven't heard from you in a while. 2. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS Every person's experiences and opinions are important. Speak up whether you agree or disagree. We want to hear a wide range of opinions. 3. WHAT IS SAID IN THIS ROOM STAYS HERE We want folks to feel comfortable sharing when sensitive issues come up. 4. WE WILL BE TAPE RECORDING THE GROUP We want to capture everything you have to say. We don't identify anyone by name in our report. You will remain anonymous.

²Here are some appropriate strategies: Self-appointed experts: "Thank you. What do other people think?" The dominator: "Let's have some other comments." The rambler: Stop eye contact; look at your watch; jump in at their inhale. The shy participant: Make eye contact; call on them; smile at them. The participant who talks very quietly: Ask them to repeat their response more loudly.

³Some helpful probes include: "Can you talk about that more?" "Help me understand what you mean" "Can you give an example?" because the moderator holds a position of authority and perceived influence, s/he must remain neutral, refraining from nodding/raising eyebrows, agreeing/disagreeing, or praising/denigrating any comment made.