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***Increasing Organizational Capacity Through  
Organizational Self-Assessment and  
Academic/Practitioner Collaboration***

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# Challenges & Propositions (Paton, Foot, & Payne, 2000)

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- Assumptions about what is required to achieve and maintain high quality services
- Difficult to establish the validity of the models upon which self-assessment tools are based
- Concern over the way the models are used

# Propositions from Paton, et al, 2000

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- It is not self evident how a self-assessment model should be applied to a given context
- Perceived benefits from the use of the models seem to arise from the dialogues to which they give rise and from the new thinking triggered by the terms of the self-assessment
- The sustained use of (self-assessment) models requires considerable time and effort, and involves the creation of new sorts of discussions whose relationship to normal decision processes may become problematic

# Propositions Continued

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- The models can be and are used in quite different ways and for different internal purposes; within a single organization the manner of and rationale for use may change over time
- The structure and content of (self-assessment) models provide an integrative map or overview of management issues that many users value highly; this seems important in understanding the appeal of the models and why general managers, in particular, become committed

# Unique Strengths of University-Based Programs

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- Knowledge of Current Literature
- Environmental Scanning
- Action Research
- “Customer” Research
- Developing Surveys
- Analyzing Data
- Educational Workshops, University Classes and Programs

# The ASU-CNLM Nonprofit Organizational Assessment Program

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- Unique partnership between the academic and practitioner communities
- Resources provided by ASU Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Management, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Stardust Foundation.
- Currently an 8 month collaborative process primarily utilizing the Drucker Foundation Self-Assessment Tool

# Through the ASU-CNLM Self-Assessment Program

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- Board, staff, and customers engage in a challenging and collaborative process which aims to convert knowledge into effective action.
- Agencies learn to recognize the opportunities that are appropriate to their individual resources, strengths and competencies in order to better serve the community.
- Agencies work to clarify their focus, add stability, and increase organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Academic community learns to apply knowledge and tools into “useable” formats

# ASU-CNLM Provides

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- Educational Workshops on Conducting Environmental Scans, Customer Research and Strategic Planning
- Professional facilitators to facilitate agencies through SAT meetings and one major stakeholder group retreat
- Self-Assessment Team training
- Environmental Scan report capturing local, state and national statistics and trends

# ASU-CNLM Provides

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- Compilation of Depth Interviews and development of report
- Eight working agendas for agency self-assessment team for internal designated meetings
- Record of Documentation of stakeholder group retreats for each agency
- Designated staff person to the program
- Recognition luncheon for Agency teams

# Participants 2001-2005

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- Aid to the Adoption of Special Kids/ Arizona
- Concilio Latino de Salud
- Housing For Mesa, Inc.
- Native American Connections
- Touchstone Behavioral Health
- Arizona Call-A-Teen
- Arizona Women's Education and Employment
- Body Positive
- Catholic Social Service
- Chrysalis Shelter
- Crisis Nursery
- Family Service Agency
- Florence Cirttenton
- HomeBase Youth Services
- ICAN
- PREHAB of Arizona
- Teen Lifeline
- Tempe Community Action Agency
- Valle del Sol
- West Valley Child Crisis Center

# Research Questions

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- What are the purposes, objectives, and processes of nonprofit organizational self-assessment?
- How can organizational self-assessment be better used to help nonprofit practitioners clarify their focus, add stability, and increase organizational capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness?
- What direct service role can/should academic centers play in building the capacity of the nonprofit sector?
- What are the opportunities and obstacles facing researchers and practitioners collaborating in this arena?

# Research Design

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- Comparative Case-Study Methodology
- Mixed-Methods
  - Online Survey to Past Participants
  - Interviews
  - Utilization of Archival Data and Interviews
- *Other Strategies or Recommendations?*