



The Evaluation Center News

Newsletter of The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University

September 2004

From the Director...



The Evaluation Center is an unusual University entity. It is not housed within a college or department. Rather, it is part of the research arm of WMU; as Center Director I report to the Vice President for Research. We have long played a major role in the University's external funding programs, and our staff are routinely among the University's top producers of funded research.

Importantly, our University base enables us to collaborate extensively across the University's colleges. The new interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in evaluation is a prime example of the fruits of such collaborations. It is quickly becoming a major academic force and is developing strong concomitant research credentials. This new degree program is housed in the Center, though administratively separate. The program's cross-colleges base uniquely positions it to serve the whole University, draw students from a wide array of disciplines, and makes it possible to serve and build upon the transdisciplinary nature of evaluation.

We are delighted to welcome Michael Scriven to the WMU as director of the evaluation Ph.D. program and Associate Director of the Center. A friend and colleague for years, Michael brings his vast evaluation expertise, enthusiasm, and sage countenance to the Center and the interdisciplinary degree program. We count on him to continue and expand that program's strong growth.

After 31 years at WMU we continue to contribute substantially to the development of evaluation theory and

practice through our research, evaluation services, preparation of evaluation professionals, and leadership in the field. The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation has been housed at the Center since its inception in 1975. In chairing the Committee, I follow Dan Stufflebeam and Jim Sanders. As a member of the Advisory Council on Government Auditing Standards, Dan Stufflebeam is playing a key role in determining this country's policy for and use of evaluation. Gary Miron has served on advisory groups for national studies on school reform and has been invited to present his research findings at the Brookings Institution, Columbia University, New York University, and Rutgers University. His work is helping to shape school reform efforts across this country.

In the coming year we will complete three major projects (Advanced Technological Education evaluation, Project MTS, and Rural Systemic Initiatives study). All three have provided sustenance for our study of evaluation theory and practice and produced exemplary products ranging from how-to materials to major evaluation reports and substantive research. As I write this we are awaiting word on several new projects, which will certainly take us down new pathways and afford us new and different opportunities to study and improve the theory and practice of evaluation. Hopefully, these projects will also open new avenues for collaborations with many of you.

This newsletter will update you on what's been happening at the Center in the past year. Please visit our Web site to learn more, and we invite you to drop us a note to let us know about your work, too.

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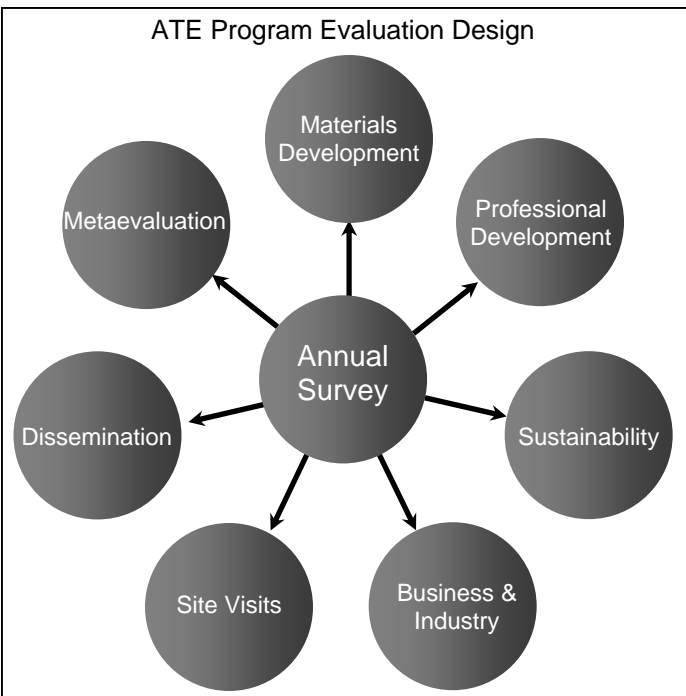
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Project Spotlight: ATE Program Evaluation

The Evaluation Center has been evaluating the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program for the past 5 years. The program, a result of the 1992 Scientific and Advanced Technology Act, is designed to improve technological education, especially at 2-year colleges. With a focus on technician education in strategic fields such as information technology, manufacturing, engineering, telecommunications, biotechnology, and nanotechnology, the ATE program plays an important role in enhancing our nation's productivity and competitiveness.

In 2005, NSF expects to allocate \$38 million to ATE projects and centers around the country. There are currently about 250 ATE-funded projects and centers, primarily at community colleges and other 2-year institutions. Funded projects may focus on program improvement; materials for national dissemination; professional development, including internships and field experiences for faculty, teachers, and students; articulation partnerships that provide educational pathways from 2- to 4-year programs. ATE-funded centers are larger scale efforts that usually involve collaboration between 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, secondary schools, business, industry, and government.



The 6-year evaluation of the ATE program is using a “hub and spoke” methodology—the hub is an annual survey of all ATE grantees and the spokes are in-depth studies in areas of special interest, such as the program's impact

on business and industry, quality of curriculum materials developed under the program, impact and effectiveness of the program's professional development initiatives, and program sustainability. In addition to an annual report of the survey results, survey data are used to inform the spoke studies by helping evaluators refine study questions and sample projects and centers for in-depth examination. In this way, evaluation findings are integrated and presented in a consistent manner. The evaluation's principal investigators are Dr. Arlen Gullickson, Director of The Evaluation Center; Dr. Frances Lawrenz of the University of Minnesota; and Dr. Carl Hanssen, Senior Research Associate at The Evaluation Center. This team directs the work of more than 20 students and 30 consultants, including a 7-member advisory panel. This panel includes an economist, community college expert, manufacturing executive, a technology education expert, former engineering technology professor and administrator, education professor with specialization in technology education, and 2 evaluation specialists. This panel monitors the evaluation's progress, reviews findings, and makes recommendations regarding the direction of the evaluation.



Members of the ATE evaluation team (left to right): Arlen Gullickson,

The ATE evaluators have made a special effort to disseminate tools, findings, and other resources related to the evaluation. An array of materials related to the evaluation are available from the ATE program evaluation Web site, www.wmich.edu/evalctr/ate/, including survey results, evaluation tools, issue papers, a site visit guide, advisory panel study reports, presentation slides on the evaluation's methodologies and results, a rubric for evaluating ATE materials, and more. In addition, the evaluation has provided the basis for two doctoral dissertations, several journal articles, and multiple conference presentations, including a panel session at the 2004 American Evaluation Association conference.

Ph.D. program going strong

The Fall 2004 semester just began at WMU, marking the one-year anniversary of the launch of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Evaluation.



Michael Scriven

We are pleased to welcome Michael Scriven to the evaluation faculty. Dr. Scriven is the new director of the Ph.D. program and also serves as the Associate Director of the Center. "This is the only free-standing evaluation Ph.D program in the world," noted Scriven. "Not being embedded in any one academic department puts us in a strategic position to advance the evaluation field as the distinct discipline that it is—a 'transdiscipline,' much like statistics."

This fall a new cohort of 8 students join 6 students who entered the program in its inaugural year. The second-year students are already making great strides in their evaluation education and experience. Students Chris Coryn and Daniela Schroeter won a contract from ETS to evaluate its discourse software in classrooms in Burkina Faso, India, the Philippines, Senegal, and Uganda. Coryn and Schroeter, along with fellow student John Risley, also evaluated a middle school enrichment program for Kalamazoo Public Schools over the summer. "These projects extended our experience beyond classroom theory," said Schroeter. "Specifically with regard to project management, we learned a lot."

Second-year student Thomaz Chianca's studies are being funded by the Kellogg Foundation, where he is a Visiting Professor. Chianca was a leader in establishing the Brazilian Evaluation Network. Chianca and Coryn both won travel awards from the American Evaluation Association to attend the AEA conference this year.



Ph.D. students John Risley, Cristian Gugu, and Chris Coryn with former program director Jane Davidson on a field trip to the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation at the University of Illinois in February.

Project MTS hosts final summer evaluation institute

The Evaluation Center's Project MTS (Materials development, Training, and Support services) held its ninth and final summer evaluation institute this past June. The project began with a 2-year grant from the National Science Foundation in 1996. Continuation grants enabled the project to extend through 2004.

The overall goal of Project MTS is to develop the nation's evaluation capacity for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. A major focus of MTS is training STEM professionals in evaluation knowledge and skills via two main instructional options: annual 3-week summer institutes for direct instruction in evaluation and financially supported 6-month internships that provide authentic, follow-up evaluation experiences. During the 9 summer institutes, 147 professionals from 42 states were trained in evaluation fundamentals. Fifty-one of these individuals also had internship experiences.

Although the list of institute presenters and topics varied somewhat from year to year, the institute generally provided instruction in the fundamentals of evaluation such as the study and use of the evaluation standards; review and analysis of several evaluation models; evaluation methodology; and project planning, staffing, management, budgeting, and reporting. The curriculum evolved to keep up with the times—early institutes included a session on the use of the World Wide Web!



2004 MTS Summer Institute participants

Nationally recognized evaluators and Center evaluators served as the faculty for the institutes. Daniel Stufflebeam, Michael Scriven, Robert Stake, Michael Quinn Patton, and Yvonna Lincoln are a few of the renowned guest evaluators who provided instruction to institute participants.

Project Highlights

The Center's current grants and contracts are valued at \$5.5 million. The following projects are continuing from 2003:

- evaluation of the Partnership for Science Literacy Project for the American Association for the Advancement of Science
- evaluation of two regional educational labs: SERVE and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory
- evaluation of NSF's Advanced Technological Education program
- development of assessment and monitoring activities for eight extension education programs for Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii
- pilot study and evaluation for the Kamehameha Schools' Preschool Program
- Project MTS, funded by NSF
- evaluation of NASA's Aerospace Education Services Program for Oklahoma State University
- evaluation of NSF's Rural Systemic Initiatives program
- research on the correlates of success in American charter schools for the U.S. Department of Education
- evaluation of the Target PLUS literacy project for St. Clair Intermediate School District

The Center acquired five new projects in the past year:

Kamehameha Schools. Dr. Gary Miron is leading two new projects under contract with Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii. The Preschool and Beyond evaluation is a longitudinal study that follows a cohort of children as they move through preschool and into elementary school. The Pauahi Keike Scholars program evaluation is examining a voucher program for preschool students of Hawaiian descent.

Kalamazoo Public Schools. Closer to home, the Evaluation Center is conducting an evaluation of the 21st Century Learning Community Centers Program, operated by the Kalamazoo Community in Schools Foundation in collaboration with the Kalamazoo Public School. The program seeks to help at-risk students through homework assistance, tutoring, arts and sciences enrichment activities, and drug abuse prevention. Dr. Carolyn Sullins is leading the evaluation.

University of Montana. Dr. Jerry Horn is evaluating the University of Montana's Partnership for Comprehensive Equity, an alliance of central administrators, deans, department heads/chairs, and faculty to bring about lasting change in the status and role of women faculty in science and mathematics.

Delaware Charter Schools. Dr. Gary Miron is leading a comprehensive evaluation of the charter school initiative in Delaware. The critical questions to be addressed concern impact, innovation, comparison with public schools, relationships between schools and authorizers, management structure, factors linked to success in achieving school mission and improving learning, and how best to strengthen the initiative.

Staff Updates

Gary Miron was appointed Chief of Staff of The Evaluation Center in September 2003. Dr. Miron has been a lead evaluator with the Center since 1997.

Carl Hanssen completed his Ph.D. in Evaluation, Measurement, and Research Design from the College of Education. Dr. Hanssen is a Senior Research Associate at the Center.

Barbara Wygant rejoined the Center after four years with the WMU Environmental Institute. Ms. Wygant is a Project Manager for two Center evaluations led by Gary Miron.

The Evaluation Center welcomed back office associate **Christine Hummel** after a year of military duty in Iraq. She is a sergeant with the National Guard.

After 2½ years as the Center's Associate Director, **Jane Davidson** returned to her native New Zealand. She continues to be involved with the Center as a consultant.

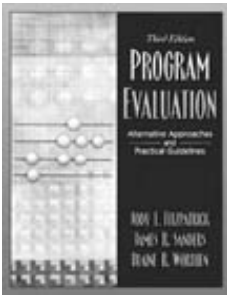
Christopher Nelson is now a Political Scientist at the RAND Corporation and Associate Director for Research at its Pittsburgh office. He remains part of the Center's vast network of friends and collaborators.

Web Highlights

The Evaluation Center's Web site is constantly being updated to reflect the latest information about the Center and the Ph.D. program. Here is a sampling of what you can find on our site:

- **Glossaries** of more than 640 evaluation terms
- **Profiles of students** in the new interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in evaluation. You may also read their comments about the program
- Summaries of the **Joint Committee Standards** for program, personnel, and student evaluation
- **Links** to more than 300 evaluation-related sites on the Web
- Michael Scriven's "**Logic and Methodology of Checklists**," a comprehensive exposition on the nature, types, and uses of checklists in evaluation

Publications



James Sanders, with Jody Fitzpatrick and Blaine Worthen, published the third edition of *Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*, a leading evaluation textbook. Dr. Sanders also edited (with J. Jackson Barnette) the Fall 2003 issue of *New Directions for Evaluation*, which focused on mainstreaming evaluation.

Chris Coryn published two articles based on his master's thesis, *Nationalism and Justice for Arab Americans*, for which he received the 2004 Indiana University South Bend Award for Excellence in Graduate Research. One article will appear in *Social Justice Research*. Another, coauthored by fellow Ph.D. student **Daniela Schroeter**, will appear in *The Qualitative Report*. Coryn's research on America's response to September 11 was published in *Current Research in Social Psychology*.

Carolyn Sullins published an article in the *American Journal of Evaluation* based on her use of the empowerment evaluation at mental health drop-in center.

Presentations

Evaluation Center staff and Ph.D. students were active at the 2003 American Evaluation Association conference in Reno. **Thomaz Chianca, Jane Davidson, Dale Farland, Arlen Gullickson, Carl Hanssen, Gary Miron, John Risley, James Sanders, and Daniel Stufflebeam** were involved in 13 presentations at the Reno conference. Four students and 6 staff members will represent the Center in 21 presentations at the AEA conference in Atlanta this November.

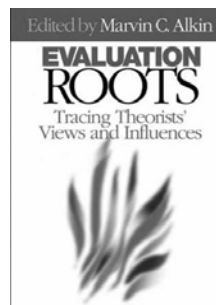
Thomaz Chianca gave two presentations in Brazil in August—a lecture at the meeting of the Brazilian Evaluation Network and half-day course for the University of Sao Paulo's evaluation certification program.

Jerry Horn and **Arlen Gullickson** participated in the 2004 CREATE Evaluation Institute. Dr. Horn presented a session on evaluation capacity building in the Mississippi Delta. Dr. Gullickson gave four presentations on the Joint Committee Standards, as well as one on student achievement research in Mississippi.

Arlen Gullickson gave a presentation on *The Student Evaluation Standards* for the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency and another for the Independent Schools Association in Dearborn, Michigan.

Gary Miron's review of a book comparing local education policies in Sweden and Britain appeared in the journal *Comparative Education Review*. He also published an article on the charter school movement in *The State Education Standard*, the journal of the National Association of State Boards of Education.

The Student Evaluation Standards, by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, was named an Outstanding Academic Title by *CHOICE*, the review journal of the Association of College and Research Libraries. **Arlen Gullickson** is chair of the Joint Committee.



Daniel Stufflebeam published an article on the purposes, development, and applicability of the Joint Committee Evaluation Standards in the *American Journal of Evaluation*. He also contributed a chapter on the CIPP Evaluation Model to Marvin Alkin's new book *Evaluation Roots: Tracing Theorists' Views and Influences*.

Gary Miron gave three presentations on various aspects of charter school evaluation at the 2004 American Educational Research Association meeting in April.

James Sanders gave the keynote address, "Enhancing Evaluations to Effect Change," at the Fall 2003 Training Conference of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society in East Lansing, Michigan.

Daniela Schroeter led two seminars on "Negotiation Training and Presentation Techniques" at Schiller University in Germany in December and April.

Daniel Stufflebeam delivered the Mary Corcoran Lecture at the Minnesota Evaluation Society Institute in March. At the 2003 meeting of Oregon Program Evaluators, Dr. Stufflebeam gave two lectures, including the keynote address on the CIPP Model.

Lori Wingate led two workshops on evaluation checklists at the Centers for Disease Control Summer Evaluation Institute in Atlanta.

Pamela Zeller participated in the Michigan Reading Association Conference meeting in March. She presented the results of her evaluation of the use of literacy coaches in the TARGET PLUS program.

NSF official visits The Evaluation Center

Former WMU Vice President for Research and Graduate College Dean Donald Thompson was a special guest of The Evaluation Center on June 14. Dr. Thompson, now Deputy Assistant Director for Education and Human Resources at the National Science Foundation, gave an insider's perspective on NSF and discussed funding issues during a talk at WMU's College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Eighty individuals from about 30 departments from across the University attended the Evaluation Center-sponsored event. Prior to the public presentation, Dr. Thompson had lunch with MTS Institute participants and met with Center staff.

The National Science Foundation is an important source of funding for The Evaluation Center. Our current grants and contracts include three from NSF, totalling \$3.7 million. Two of these are evaluations of major NSF initiatives: the Advanced Technological Education program (see page 2) and the Rural Systemic Initiative program. The third, Project MTS (see page 3) is a Center-led effort to build the nation's evaluation capacity for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education.



Clockwise from left: Arlen Gullickson, Sally Veeder, Carl Hanssen, Dale Farland, Gary Miron, Donald Thompson

The Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Evaluation is launching a new online journal:
***The Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, edited by Michael Scriven and Jane Davidson. Visit the journal's Web page for more information: evaluation.wmich.edu/jmde/**

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