

EVALUATION PEDAGOGY: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EVALUATION
INSTRUCTION

by

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(Under the Direction of Nicholas Fuhrman)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to make recommendations for evaluation instruction at the graduate-level. Using qualitative methods, interviews were conducted and teaching strategies were identified. Four over-arching domains were identified. These were evaluation course development, evaluation course content, characteristics of the evaluation instructor, and evaluation pedagogy. This study found that evaluation courses should blend theory and method with practice. It found that adequate preparation is important to an evaluation course, in part due to the variety of competencies needed of evaluators and in part the real-world fieldwork necessary for evaluator training. Evaluation courses should include analytical skills and interpersonal skills. Evaluation instructors should be experienced evaluators and continue evaluation practice concurrently with teaching. Finally, this study found that exemplary evaluation instruction utilizes each of the learning concepts described in Kolb's learning cycle. These findings were used to develop a list of recommendations for evaluation instruction.

INDEX WORDS: Evaluation instruction, evaluation pedagogy, Kolb's learning cycle, flipped classroom, interpersonal skills training

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my son and fellow paratrooper Liam Smith.
Thank you for being the son you are and honoring your family every day.

I hope completing this thesis serves as an example. Never stop learning.
Education is your greatest investment.

Remember to never quit. Always assault through the objective whatever the
mission.

ALL THE WAY!

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Evaluation as a profession depends on well-designed evaluation training (Stevahn et al., 2005, p. 44). Success as an evaluator depends on the development of a myriad of evaluation competencies that include analytical skill, communication skill, and interpersonal skill (Dewey et al., 2008; Dillman, 2013; Ghere et al., 2006; Stevahn et al., 2005). Evaluation training is conducted at the graduate-level and includes coursework, fieldwork, and mentoring.

The development of evaluation into a standalone discipline has been dependent on several developments. First, evaluation evolved from an activity performed by practitioners of other disciplines to a set of theories conceptualized by evaluators and researchers and used to inform other disciplines (Stevahn et al., 2005, p.43). As the discipline of evaluation evolved into the practice of evaluation, practitioners and theorists recognized the need to identify evaluation competencies (Dewey et al., 2008; Ghere et al., 2006; Stevahn et al., 2005). These competencies help to codify the practice based on theories. Having defined what it means to be an evaluator researchers then began to look at evaluation training.

Evaluation training has long focused on the development of incorporating fieldwork into evaluation training programs (Dillman, 2013; Skolits et al., 2012; Trevisan, 2004; Trevisan, 2002). However, while the importance of both didactic coursework and real-world field experience are recognized, no research has defined an ideal balance between these two teaching strategies. The focus has been on how to

provide real-world experience, pros and cons of short vs. long duration real-world experiences, and how to maximize the benefit of real-world experience. In addition, researchers and evaluation instructors alike recognize the importance of mentoring in an evaluation training program (Brown, 1985; Dillman, 2013; Gredler and Johnson, 2001; Levin-Rozalis and Rosenstein, 2003; Trevisan, 2004). However, research should be conducted to define relationship roles of mentor and mentee or to identify specific goals of mentoring in evaluation training (Dillman, 2013; Trevisan, 2004).

As a discipline and a practice, evaluation requires a wide range of competencies. This is reflected in the competency lists that have been developed by researchers. It is for this reason also that such importance is placed on mentoring. The variety of knowledge and skill required to conduct a successful evaluation project demands coaching for the novice practitioner.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to make recommendations for the instruction of program evaluation at the graduate-level. These recommendations will provide graduate-level evaluation instructors additional tools to achieve their goal of producing evaluation professionals ready to begin their evaluation practice and meet client needs. The major evaluation instruction themes identified in this study are: evaluation course development, evaluation course content, characteristics of evaluation instructors, and evaluation pedagogy. Kolb's learning cycle, as described in Merriam and Bierema (2014), will be used to provide pedagogical definition for evaluation teaching methods identified in this study (p. 108). This evaluation-instruction framework may serve as a guide to developing an evaluation course or for reflection on existing courses.

Problem Statement

While the current evaluation-instruction literature discusses analytical, communication, and interpersonal skills, it does not address specific methods for teaching in a pedagogical context. Therefore, “our training of evaluators through graduate programs would benefit from a more detailed deliberate approach that intentionally incorporates a wide variety of educational experiences” (Dillman, 2013, p. 280). This study sought to identify specific teaching methods that are ideal for evaluation competencies. In addition to pedagogy, this study also identified course development and instructor characteristics as important aspects of evaluation instruction. Each of these elements is looked at in this study.

Assumptions

This study makes three main assumptions. First, that exemplary evaluation instruction exists. Second, that exemplary evaluation instruction is currently practiced. Finally, by interviewing exemplary evaluation instructors, we can identify exemplary evaluation teaching strategies. A panel of evaluation experts was asked to recommend three exemplary graduate-level evaluation instructors. Nine evaluation instructors identified by the expert panel were interviewed for this study. These interviews were analyzed and used to develop recommendations for evaluation instruction.

Limitations/Delimitations

This study is limited to the instruction of graduate-level evaluation students. Data used for recommendation in this study are the product of graduate-level college instructors. Therefore this study will aid in developing the evaluation profession through preparation of novice evaluation practitioners. Professional development of evaluation

practitioners is not included in this study. Professional development is not a part of the study design and is therefore outside the scope of this study. However, a thorough understanding of the situation and scope of this study may allow the reader to apply knowledge gained in this study to other situations.

Definitions of Key Terms

Coursework: These learning activities are conducted as part of an instructional design. They are activities not limited to but are inseparable from classroom instruction. Coursework typically focuses on theory and building an evaluation framework from which to begin practice.

Fieldwork: These are projects that occur independent of classroom instruction. They are distinguished from coursework in that they are real-world evaluation experiences. They are intended to provide the student with real-world practice that includes real-world consequences. Fieldwork involves the student in risk and practice in both analytical and interpersonal skills.

Interpersonal skills: Interpersonal skills are those that do not involve analytical processes. They are the communication skills evaluation practitioners need for establishing rapport with stakeholders. These skills include helping stakeholders identify objective, building stakeholder ownership in evaluation projects and communicating evaluation theory and outcomes to stakeholders.

Abstract conceptualization: This is the process whereby the evaluation novice observes evaluation instruction and activities and formalizes that information into evaluation concepts or theories.

Active experimentation: In active experimentation, evaluation student applies theory to evaluation problems. In this way evaluation concepts are synthesized and reinforced through practice.

Concrete experience: The evaluation novice learns by fully engaging in evaluation activities, concepts, and theories in an unbiased way.

Reflective observation: Evaluation students reflect on their evaluation experience in the context of the present situation. This is done through the lenses of their own experience, experience of their instructor and the collective experience of their classmates.

Flipped classroom: This instructional delivery technique, as recommended in this study, involves using distance delivery to provide foundational instruction, such as evaluation theory and strategy, outside of class. This then enables learning activities that involve active engagement to be conducted during class time.

Summary

Evaluations success as a profession depends on well trained evaluation practitioners. Continued research designed to inform evaluation training will contribute significantly to preparing evaluation practitioners as well as the elevation of evaluation as a profession. This research aims to guide future evaluation training and evaluation training research. Chapter two outlines the current focus on evaluation training.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

A review of the literature identified the following themes in evaluation instruction: course work, field work, mentoring, learning tools, and interpersonal skills. Specifically, some have suggested that "...in order to adequately prepare evaluators, training should incorporate coursework, fieldwork, and mentorship" (Dillman, 2013, p. 281). This chapter will summarize these themes and provide a rationale for the current study.

Major themes

Following a comprehensive review of the literature, course work, field work, mentoring, learning tools, and interpersonal skills were major themes identified in articles where evaluation and pedagogy were married. "While there are many articles that explore evaluator competencies or describe evaluation training programs, there is little empirical work explaining how novice evaluators acquire the competencies necessary to practice evaluation effectively" (Dillman, 2013, p. 270). Dillman (2013) further goes on to advocate for the need to strengthen skills in evaluation teaching methods, specifically stating, "If, as a field, we are committed to this notion of evaluator competencies, we need to be more deliberate and intentional about the types of educational experiences provided to students" (Dillman, 2013, p. 280).

Evaluation, as a discipline, has started a discussion regarding the need for a balance between theory and practice in field methods and instructional techniques. The

few articles reviewed by Trevisan (2004) discuss providing practical experience using adult-education theory“(p. 255). However, Skolits et al. (2012) found “a lack of literature capable of informing our efforts to address the challenges encountered, and this suggests the need to develop our own pedagogical response”(p. 128). Balancing theory and method should be the primary objective of evaluation instruction (Dillman, 2013, p. 282). This leads us to the questions posed by Trevisan, “What is the optimum split between didactic course work and practical training? How should practical training be structured” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 270)? A need existed to determine how instructors of university evaluation courses balanced theory and practice through their instruction.

Understanding the optimal balance between instruction on theory and real-world practice involves first an understanding of the current instructional strategies of evaluation instructors. Whatever the optimum split may be evaluators will benefit from didactic programs that achieve the maximum variety of educational experiences (Dillman, 2013, p. 280). “Grounding these experiences in a pedagogical framework, employing strong mentoring, and establishing formative student assessment practices will likely increase the meaningfulness for students as well as increase student achievement and professional competence” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 271). Discussion of current instructional strategies will be divided under the headings coursework, fieldwork, evaluation tools, and mentoring.

Course work provides the knowledge foundation necessary for evaluation practice. These courses primarily present evaluation theory through lecture-based instruction and practical experience through case-study work or team-based learning with students serving as “evaluation consultants” (McClure & Fuhrman, 2011). “It is clear,

however, that field experience is unproductive when it is not preceded by special academic preparation. It is unwise to send trainees into the field, as we did, at the start of their training” (Daudistel & Hedderson, 1984, p. 170). Evaluation instructors are aware of the importance of course work in evaluation training. “The evaluation training program at WSU has sought to identify foundational knowledge, such as evaluation models and strategies for developing evaluation instruments, as features of didactic course work” (Trevisan, 2002, p.91). While fieldwork, accompanied by mentoring and the use of evaluation tools is, necessary for learning evaluation, course work is the necessary starting point that provides the knowledge base from which to begin.

Research methods courses are often viewed as a complement to courses in program evaluation. Courses taught in other disciplines such as psychology, psychometric theory, and education theory may be used to complement evaluation course work. This may be particularly useful in obtaining knowledge and practice in soft skills such as interpersonal communications skills needed to convey evaluation findings to stakeholders without a background in evaluation. “However, these skills are not emphasized in many evaluator training programs, although courses in communications, counseling, and qualitative research (Dewey et al., 2005; Leviton, 2001) can enhance these skills” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 281). “Communications and working relationships with community agencies are strengthened by a special training curriculum” (Daudistel & Hedderson, 1984, p. 180).

Instruction in methodology and evaluation theory is provided by coursework. How these subjects are incorporated into a program depends on the learning framework of the program (Trevisan, 2004, p.267). “For example, single course projects

unconnected to other courses typically require didactic work in methodology during the course...Practicum experiences uniformly require outside course work in methodology as a prerequisite or complement to practicum” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 267). While both methodology and evaluation theories are incorporated into the pedagogical framework, the literature reflects more emphasis on methodology (Trevisan, 2004, p.267).

Several syntheses of literature were identified which determined gaps in the knowledge-base regarding evaluation training. For example, Trevisan (2004) suggested that how theory and practice are implemented in the evaluation college classroom may depend on the “...amount of authenticity or real-world exposure involved with the approach” (p. 267). Before involving college students in evaluation-related practicum experiences, a foundational layer of coursework may first be required (Trevisan, 2004). However, some earlier works suggested that “The most important step in solving the field placement problem was to delay this phase of the training until the students had completed two semesters of course work” (Daudistel and Hedderson, 1984, p. 172). Earlier foundational courses taken prior to evaluation field experiences often include seminars in research methods, statistics, and evaluation research (Daudistel & Hedderson, 1984).

Experiential training is part of course work. Trevisan (2004) discusses three issues involved in hands-on experiences, including: 1) faculty supervision of students, 2) need for resources, and 3) pedagogy and student achievement. “In contrast [to practical training experiences], while simulating and role-play require significant preparation time, they typically do not require additional resources” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 269). In addition to

these concerns, instructors should consider the desired outcomes when fitting course work and practical experience into program design (Trevisan, 2002).

Fieldwork in evaluation training is needed to provide practical experience. “The argument for this idea is that practical training will provide students real-world experiences needed for preparation as professional evaluators and that these experiences are not possible in didactic course work” (Trevisan, 2002, p. 81). Evaluators need practice in applying their evaluation knowledge, communications, and interpersonal skills. Practice will synthesize these elements so that students can clearly communicate the evaluation strategies they develop to solve a variety of real-world evaluation problems (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 282). Dewey also suggests that, “...real-world experience appears to help evaluators navigate complicated interpersonal relationships, expend possibilities (or acknowledge the limits) of research design and target report writing and presentation of findings to specific audiences” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 283). In his review of practical evaluation training, Trevisan (2004) concluded that learning by doing was the primary pedagogical framework used in evaluation training. Some authors believe that in class evaluation experiences limit learning opportunities. “...classroom projects are usually limited to managing small-scale, low or no budget evaluation” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 282). According to a survey of job seekers and employers conducted by Dewey (2008), “...both the employer and the job seeker survey responses illustrate that relevant experience is paramount” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 283). While some fieldwork experiences are part of a class, others are conducted independent of class. “Trevisan (2004) synthesized the available literature on practical evaluation training, in which simulation; role-play, project work, and practicums were used as modes that might

provide more hands-on experiences” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 283). Simulation, role-play and project work are activities that may be conducted in class. Practicums are typically graduate level courses that are experiential and apply knowledge learned from a previous course. They are of a longer duration and represent more in-depth application of knowledge and skill. Dewey (2008) also suggests practicums, internships and graduate associateships as ways of gaining practical experience.

Real-world practicum experiences force students to be flexible and build stakeholder ownership over the duration of a project. An advantage of long-term evaluation experiences is the greater scope of activities enabled by the longer duration of the project. “These macro-level field experiences naturally help students better situate the various elements of evaluation practice within the broader array of competencies and form a realistic and holistic perspective of the components of an actual evaluation and their interrelationships (Gredler & Johnson, 2001 in Skolits et al., 2012, p. 135). Often this requires an instructor to collaborate with an entity outside of the university to promote students gaining this real-world experience (Dewey et al., 2008).

Despite the emphasis on longer duration practical evaluation training, there is a place for smaller projects. Arnold (2006) said, “The small collaborative projects add to the basic skills gained through individual program evaluation” (Arnold, 2006, p.267). In addition, Skolits and colleagues (2012) suggested that with the use of his field experience tool, “micro-level experiences may also be capable of supporting a meaningful, deeper, real-world experience that maximizes students’ knowledge of specific competencies as well as broader professional practice foundations” (Skolits et al., 2012, p. 135). Irrespective of project duration, Dewey (2008) suggests that experience depends on the

“type of [evaluation] project” and the “level of involvement” in the evaluation project (p. 282).

While fieldwork may be considered the cornerstone of evaluation training, coursework plays a necessary role. Much consideration has been given to each of these in evaluation instruction. However, as Dewey (2008) suggests, “Further research is necessary to determine which types of training are especially suited for preparing new evaluators for job demands” (p. 284). “Also needed is a set of expected outcomes as a result of the hands-on experience” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 268). Training strategies and learning outcomes should be the result of research focused on field learning experiences (Dillman, 2013, p. 282). Trevisan (2002) suggests that long-term funded projects represent one opportunity to adequately assess student-learning outcomes (p.90). “These outcomes might include, for example, both technical and non-technical skills across a variety of contexts and projects” (Trevisan, 2002, p. 90). Another study approach to determining the effectiveness of long-term projects may be to look at field of application, the various factors involved in the project, and the context in which the project is conducted (Trevisan, 2002, p. 91).

Evaluation tools may be used in building a foundation in evaluation knowledge and skill. “The evaluation training program at WSU has sought to identify foundational knowledge, such as evaluation models and strategies for developing evaluation instruments, as features of didactic course work” (Trevisan, 2002, p. 91). These tools may be templates for evaluation tools such as models or surveys. In addition, statistical packages, and assessment tools designed to guide reflection can be useful.

Before an evaluation student can become successful at measuring program outcomes and impacts, some suggest that they must be skilled in statistics (Daudistel & Hedderson, 1984). To assist students, some instructors have acquired the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and incorporated this software into course assignments with evaluation students. McClure (2012) also recommends the use of statistical aides such as the Excel add-in EZAnalyze© as a way to build student skills in evaluation.

McClure et al. (2012) and Ghore et al. (2006) discuss tools that are designed for professional development for evaluators. These two strategies deal with streamlining the evaluation process and reflection respectively. These strategies address assumptions made by Knowles (1980) regarding adult learning in which the student uses relevant tools in a context where they believe they are solving real-world problems that are relevant to others.

Another important evaluation tool mentioned in the literature is the data collection and report writing template. By using templates, part of the evaluation project for students becomes streamlined, thereby allowing the student more time to focus on other tasks in the process. McClure et al. (2012) recommended using templates to enhance the uniformity of impact statements composed by Extension educators. Another tool that is useful in evaluation training is the Essential Competencies for Program Evaluators (ECPE). Ghore et al. (2006) developed this tool for professional development to facilitate self-assessment. While the ECPE was intended for professional development, the micro-level experience tool, designed by Skolits et al. (2012), was intended for evaluation students. This tool was designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice, in short

term field work, by aiding in focusing, situating, grounding, implementing, and reporting on what the authors call micro-level experiences. “While the micro-level field experience tool shows initial promise, it has been developed and applied in only one academic program setting” (Skolits et al, 2012, p. 135). The authors hope that by sharing the tool, its utility will expand (Skolits, 2012). The current study sought to explore whether models such as the ECPE and others were being used by instructors of college-level evaluation courses nationally.

Mentoring was a recurring theme in the discussion of evaluation trainings in the literature. Dillman (2013) tells us that mentoring is second most important in developing all evaluation skills, except methodological knowledge which is third (p. 282). One feature of mentoring is the ability of the faculty member or supervisor to provide conceptualization. “Faculty members reflect on their own practice and attempt to conceptualize what one does spontaneously or intuitively in an evaluation context” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 268).

A second feature of mentoring is the ability of instructors or superiors to adjust the degree of supervision as needed. “A significant feature discussed in all articles is the need for dedicated supervision and planning on the part of the faculty” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 266). Student evaluators, “...usually work with a mentor who guides the student through the management process, with the student’s responsibilities increasing over time” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 282). “Mentors of fledgling evaluators can help their subordinates understand how their research plans were designed to overcome or minimize barriers and control for extraneous variables to the extent feasible” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 282).

However, according to Dillman (2013), mentoring may be underutilized (p.282). In a study conducted by Dillman, “only 53% of respondents indicate participating in mentoring activities as part of their training” (2013, p. 282). “In regard to applied opportunities, professors and other potential mentors in the evaluation field may argue that it is not always practical or advisable to put novice evaluators into design or management roles or assign reports to them to write” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 284). “As in project management, graduate students may have limited opportunities to design real-world research projects” (Dewey et al., 2008, p. 282). Others reported positive outcomes when graduate students served as mentors to stakeholders less versed in evaluation (McClure et al., 2011).

As with evaluation tools, mentoring strategies designed for professional development may benefit students as well. In developing evaluation capacity, Arnold (2006) found, “The one-on-one, ‘real-time’ evaluation assistance helped educators gain skill and confidence in program evaluation” (p. 267). McClure et al. (2012) recommended mentoring to help new extension agents learn evaluation skills that are typically gained with experience. “One way to build the dissemination skills of agents is through a mentoring program” (McClure et al., 2012 p. 93). “Serving as a mentor and training new hires in data reporting would likely inspire more seasoned agents to refresh themselves on these skills in the same way a teacher is inspired to review concepts before teaching a lesson” (McClure et al., 2012, p. 93).

The literature suggests that successful mentoring often does not result without clear goals on the part of the mentor and mentee. “As in the case of fieldwork, more specificity in outlining mentorship will help us insure the value of this educational

experience to students” (Dillman 2013, p. 282). “By inference, faculty and students are left to their own devices to negotiate their roles in the context of hands-on learning experiences in evaluation” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 268). Establishing roles for teachers and students will improve mentoring (Trevisan, 2004). “The literature about mentorship in evaluation is largely case study based, and almost makes good mentoring seem serendipitous rather than an intentional and directed activity” (Dillman, 2013, p. 282). “In sum, supervisors and students are in need of structure to guide their roles and relationships” (Trevisan, 2004, p. 268). Providing a structured, protected environment and shared responsibility through mentoring will encourage evaluation students to accept risk and increased project responsibility (Levin-Rozalis & Rosenstein, 2003).

Interpersonal skills or “Soft skills” were mentioned earlier as being essential for those engaging in evaluation, and interpersonal skills represent one essential soft skill. *Interpersonal skills* are competencies that “focus on the people skills used in conducting evaluation studies, such as communication, negotiation, conflict, collaboration, and cross-cultural skills” (Stevahn et al., 2005, p. 52). Dewey et al. (2008) further defined communications skills as both oral and written. “However, these skills are not emphasized in many evaluator training programs, although courses in communications, counseling, and qualitative research (Dewey et al. 2005; Leviton, 2001) can enhance skills” (Dewey et al. 2008 p. 281). The current study examined how soft skills like interpersonal skills were being emphasized (if at all) by collegiate evaluation instructors nationally.

Trevisan (2004) and Gredler and Johnson (2001) suggested real evaluation projects and real stakeholder involvement as being experiences likely to result in students

gaining interpersonal skills. Skills like establishing credibility, scheduling evaluation activities, and anticipating stakeholder reactions to evaluation activities are necessary skills for a successful evaluation practitioner. These skills are learned by practicing them in the field (Gredler & Johnson, 2001, p. 102). Brown stated, “The [developmental approach] framework views students as growing professionals in a field that demands interpersonal skills as well as technical skills” (1985, p. 166). In addition, Skolits et al. (2012), lends practice to interpersonal skills by including the evaluator’s role in their Micro-Level Field Experience Instructional Tool.

Summary

This chapter outlined major themes in the literature on techniques used to teach evaluation skills. Most evaluation courses include the following elements: coursework, fieldwork, and mentoring. In addition, some use evaluation tools and where fieldwork is included there may be a focus on interpersonal skills. However, little is still known about the ideal balance between coursework and fieldwork, the way in which learners acquire evaluation competencies, and the specific application of mentoring as a teaching strategy. The next chapter will provide details on how this study attempted to fill gaps in the literature regarding evaluation pedagogy.

CHAPTER 3

Research Design and Methods

Introduction

A qualitative study was conducted to determine what instructional techniques are being used, at the graduate level, to teach evaluation techniques. One-on-one interviews were conducted with graduate-level instructors who are considered exemplary in their evaluation teaching. These exemplary instructors were identified by recommendations from a panel of nationally recognized evaluation experts. An interview guide, consisting of seven open-ended questions, was used to initiate discussion in the semi-structured interviews. Domain analysis was conducted on the data collected from the interviews to identify and prioritize overarching themes in the raw data. This chapter discusses the rationale for the research design, transferability, validity, instruments and materials, data collection, and data analysis.

Rationale for the Research Design

We begin with the assumption that exemplary instructional methods exist and are being used in graduate-level evaluation educational experiences. This base of evaluation instruction knowledge can be used to construct a theory of instruction from which recommendations can be made. To facilitate the exploration of real-world evaluation instruction techniques and gain in-depth understanding, a qualitative study design was used. "A central characteristic of qualitative research is that individuals construct reality

in interaction with their social worlds” (Merriam, 2009, p. 22). This study seeks to construct evaluation pedagogy from interviews of exemplary evaluation instructors. These questions allowed the researcher to uncover and interpret teaching techniques used by exemplary instructors in the context of graduate-level instruction.

Transferability

The goal of this study was to expand the knowledge of evaluation teaching methods which are perceived to be exemplary in developing evaluation practice by expert evaluation practitioners. The findings are helpful in informing recommendations for enhanced teaching practices in evaluation and research methods-related courses. Practitioners (those teaching evaluation) must be able to extrapolate findings from this study in order to transfer and apply them to other situations. This requires a thorough understanding of the situation in which this study was conducted. To this end, rich descriptions detailing the situation and the research are provided for the benefit of the reader who wishes to apply the knowledge gained in this study to other situations. In accordance with Lincoln and Guba’s recommendations, the researcher provided, “sufficient descriptive data to make transferability possible” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 225).

Situation

Interview Sites. Interviews were conducted one-on-one. These semi-structured interviews were conducted over the phone with no need for face to face meetings. Participants were encouraged to be in a place that was quiet and free from distractions while participating in the interviews.

Researcher Subjectivity. As the primary instrument of analysis, the researcher's relevant background and training is primarily quantitative analysis, program development, and the use of nonformal teaching methods as an Extension agent. Relevant experience in qualitative research is limited to techniques such as the nominal-group technique. The researcher began professional Extension work in a laboratory environment where duties included field work, data collection, and data analysis. As a Research Coordinator, the researcher worked with colleagues and landowners explaining field procedures and results on a variety of water and soil quality related projects.

The researcher then moved to County Extension delivery and became a local Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent. This position involved working with local stakeholders to develop, implement, and evaluate local needs-based educational programs. The majority of these needs assessments and evaluation efforts utilized quantitative techniques. However, the nominal-group technique has been used with success. The nominal-group technique is a qualitative strategy that is used to prioritize themes that are identified during group discussions. This technique was used to identify and prioritize needs which informed objectives from which local issue programming was developed for cattle producers.

As a student in the Master of Agricultural Leadership program at the University of Georgia, the researcher had an emphasis on evaluation in their graduate program of study. Courses such as Program Evaluation and Advanced Program Evaluation were completed by the researcher and were relevant when conducting participant interviews and asking probing questions during the data collection phase of this study.

The researcher values the role of Extension Agents as educational agents of change. An Extension Agent's craft is education and education is where professional emphasis should be placed. As such, program development should be evaluation driven. For this to occur, agents must be evaluators first as they engage in needs assessment procedures. According to this researcher, effective instruction is not only the foundation of the evaluation profession, but extension education as well. Given the researcher's subjectivity, specific measures were taken to ensure the validity of the research findings.

Research Procedures

Participant Selection. Graduate-level evaluation instructors represent a small population spread over a wide geographic range with specific qualifications. In order to identify exemplars in this field, a panel of experts was selected. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) inform us that qualitative researchers purposefully select nonrandom data sources that will yield the most information about the research topic. Panel member criteria were chosen to provide qualified recommendations for identifying exemplary evaluation instructors. Inclusion in this panel group was purposive and based on the following criteria:

- Members have a Doctoral Degree in a program evaluation related field;
- Membership in the American Evaluation Association; and
- At least five years of experience as a professional evaluator.

A membership list from the American Evaluation Association was consulted and a member of the researcher's committee with evaluation expertise and situational awareness through professional networking helped identify potential panel members. This expert panel was used to select the study sample group.

Each member of the expert panel was asked for three recommendations of exemplary graduate-level evaluation instructors from across the United States and beyond. The following question was asked, “of graduate-level evaluation instructors world-wide (teaching face-to-face or online), who do you believe to be exemplary in their mastery of evaluation teaching methodologies? Please rank the top three instructors (1 indicating most effective).” A total of 9 graduate-level evaluation instructors were interviewed. Inclusion in this group was based on recommendations provided by the expert panel and limited to a maximum of 15 participants. Criteria were established by the question presented to the expert panel; specifically graduate-level instructors, world-wide, with mastery in evaluation teaching methodologies.

Instruments and Materials. A request for study participant recommendations was drafted for the expert panel members (Appendix A). This request was drafted in email format. The request explained the scope of the study and potential outcomes. Social exchange theory was used to encourage a response by acknowledging the expertise of panel members and the importance of their thoughts to the field of evaluation (Blau, 1964; Dillman, 2009).

An invitation email to participate in this study was drafted (Appendix B). The invitation explained the scope of the study and rationale for pursuing this topic. Social exchange theory was used to encourage participation by telling the participants they were recommended and by whom (Blau, 1964; Dillman, 2009). Participants who were recommended by the panel of experts were informed that the interview would be conducted by phone and take approximately 45 minutes, thus indicating the requested level of commitment.

An interview guide was drafted to ensure adequate coverage of the interview topic (Appendix C). The interview guide followed a semi-structured format consisting of open-ended and semi-specific questions and was developed based on findings from the literature review (Chapter 2). In addition, participants were asked to share course materials (i.e. syllabus and assignments) at the conclusion of the interview and these materials were used as a separate data set for triangulation purposes. The guide was followed for all interviews.

Data Collection. Panel members were sent the email recommendation request. No study participant was recommended more than once by the expert panel. An email invitation was then sent to each recommended study participant explaining the study and requesting an interview. Phone interviews were conducted with each participant. A basic qualitative research design was ideal for asking the following questions of each study participant:

- What led you to evaluation as a discipline?
- What teaching methods are most effective in developing evaluation competencies?
- What teaching methods are least effective in developing evaluation competencies?
- What evaluation competencies do you give emphasis?
- What teaching methods do you use for those competencies?
- How has your teaching of evaluation evolved?
- What advice would you give to a new instructor of evaluation?

Interviews were digitally recorded to ensure accuracy of data collection. Transcripts were then made of each digital recording verbatim and audio recordings were destroyed

following transcription. To protect the identity of participants, only a basic demographic description was provided in Table 1.

Following data analysis, preliminary findings and a transcript of their interview was sent to some of the study participants for member checking (Merriam, 2009). The process involved in member checks is to take your preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation “rings true” (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). Participants asked to review the transcripts and the researcher’s domains and sub-domains resulting from the interview and verified the researcher’s interpretation of their interview responses.

Data Analysis. Domain analysis (Merriam, 2009) was used to identify and code teaching methods and teaching concepts regarding evaluation instruction found in each interview transcript. A master list of evaluation teaching methods and concepts was created. The master list was analyzed for frequency and variety. Domain analysis was conducted by the researcher and two other Extension professionals to ensure internal validity and credibility of the findings. Domains resulting from each of these Extension professionals’ analysis of the same transcription were compared with the researchers’ interpretation for consistency.

Validity in the research design. The following triangulation measures were included in the research design to ensure validity and credibility of the study findings in accordance with recommendations by Merriam (2009). Participants shared documents related to their course instruction for review. These included course syllabi and assignments. These documents were cross referenced with themes revealed following domain analysis to verify evaluation instruction concepts which may have emerged from

the raw interview data. Domain analysis was conducted by three individual investigators for comparison using the same participants' transcribed interview. These individuals were selected to interpret this data because they had previous exposure to evaluation terminology and experience implementing program evaluation techniques in their place of work. All investigators were graduates of the Master Evaluator Certification Program delivered by the University of Georgia, Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communication Department and their domain findings were compared to build a case for trustworthiness (internal validity) in the data. Study participants provided feedback on the preliminary findings and the interpretation of their interview through member checks. Member checks are commonly used to verify credibility of data interpretation (Merriam, 2009). The data set included a total of 9 interviews. The Thesis committee reviewed procedures, raw data and preliminary findings to ensure consistency between the research question and interpretations. Finally, a reflective journal was maintained by the researcher detailing the execution of procedures, reflections, questions, and decisions made throughout the course of the study (Merriam, 2009).

CHAPTER 4

Findings

Results of this study are organized into three broad headings, evaluation course development, evaluation instructor characteristics, and evaluation pedagogy (teaching methods). The intention of this study was to focus on evaluation pedagogy. However, the results revealed how inseparable pedagogy is from course development and instructor characteristics in understanding exemplary instruction.

Evaluation Course Development

Program evaluation courses are designed with a *blend of theory and application*. Our evaluation instructors in this study did this by dividing course time between lecture and application experience. Five instructors described this division of instruction technique. Three spend 40% of their course in lecture and 60% providing experiential opportunities. “Probably about, maybe about 40% focus on the content whether it was lecture or it was discussion, or you know, and maybe about 60% on coaching them as they went through the process” (Participant 5).

If I can sort of quantify it for you but you know I’m probably 60% experiences. And you know sometimes you have a plan and you just sort of see the feedback that nothing’s working. It’s sort of like not making sense and you adjust so it’s not unusual for me to deviate from a plan based on feedback, non-verbal questions – whatever. But if I would say for quantification purposes at least 60% of what we do in the classes and in the courses have some experiential basis – either their

experiential basis or my experiential basis (Participant 6).

One instructor indicated time spent with experiential application was a minimum of one quarter to one half of the course depending on the size of the project during a semester long graduate course. “I would say you want to have something close to between a fourth and a half experiential no matter what and sometimes it can be more depending on the size of the project” (Participant 4). One instructor split the class 50:50 between lecture and experiential application. “It was probably 50/50” (Participant 3). All instructors stressed the importance of experiential training as the primary component of evaluation instruction.

Preparation was another important aspect of evaluation course development. Instructors indicated the need for more time invested in preparation than will be spent in class. Typical preparation time is two to three hours for every hour of class time. “on topics I’ve taught for 30 years, I still spend two to the three hours in preparation for every hour of instruction” (Participant 9). Participant 9 indicated having spent as many as sixty hours in preparation for one ninety minute class. This time is spent designing activities, finding and or creating experiential opportunities, and creating a course outline. One instructor considers the course outline an important tool and used it to account for every minute of class time.

For credit courses I always prepare a ‘teacher outline’ that is not shared with students, but that helps me visualize the classroom experience. In this outline I plan every minute of the class and outline the key points of every topic (Participant 9).

Instructors in this study were in agreement that all teaching methods have some value.

I think you have learners who learn in different ways and so when we deliver the information through online asynchronous learning methods I think there are people who thrive on that because they have to dig into it and kind of figure it out for themselves. And there are others who for them that is the worst way to learn in the world. Vice versa you can put some people in a classroom and those who thrive on it. They like that experiential hands on activity that they'll get in that workshop and the opportunity to discuss with others. And then you have those who would just as soon be at home because they don't like the small or the large group. So I think all teaching methods have value. It just depends on the learner (Participant 1).

Each instructor expressed the need for multiple techniques due to the diverse nature of evaluation.

And you know sometimes you have a plan and you just sort of see the feedback that nothing's working. It's sort of like not making sense and you adjust so it's not unusual for me to deviate from a plan based on feedback, non-verbal questions – whatever (Participant 6).

They also stated this as a reason for the importance of experiential learning. There is no single approach to evaluation instruction.

I never had any critical moment I think it was slow evolution as I developed more knowledge and skills and realized that you need a multiple set of approaches and methods and concepts to accomplish evaluation to work in the evaluation area (Participant4).

According to participants of this study, teaching methods depend on the learner; therefore methods should change with feedback from the student. Course design is student centered not knowledge or teacher centered.

And these are adults that we're teaching, and I teach graduate level classes and many of them have experiences as formal or non-formal educators. They are already self- directed learners. This is not about opening up the top of their head and pouring knowledge in. This is about discussing information and understanding information and making application (Participant 6).

Evaluation instructors build a scaffold for learning. This scaffold is built with methods for delivering information and core knowledge necessary for evaluation practice. It is also built with flexibility so that multiple delivery methods may be employed and changed as needed. This scaffold is intended to provide a meaningful logical sequence for a subject that most evaluation instructors would describe as very messy. Participants in this study shared that a focus on competencies should come at the end of units, modules, or the entire semester. The heart of learning program evaluation is in practice.

...they are not big theory people. They are students who love to learn by doing.

And then I integrated this application theory, and application theory, and application action then action reflection, action reflection, action reflection. I feel

that is the way to quality learning. Retention of what you learn. So it enhances skill building and retention (Participant 8).

“The most critical competencies can be learned, but cannot be taught. Students learn by...practice....” (Participant 9) Participant 3 believes that by using the “experiential learning model they are going to learn better when they can practice doing what they are learning about. Their retention is a lot better, too.” “Let your students practice, practice, practice. And give good feedback” (Participant 3).

Evaluation Course Content

Purpose of evaluation. Two participants said it is important that students understand the importance of evaluation. They described the need for using evaluation to demonstrate program impact; the worth of a program to the stakeholder. One participant included the use of evaluation to improve programs. “Probably the biggest thing is the need for accountability. I think we are being called at every level in the organization these days to prove our worth to our stakeholders and the people who fund us.” (Participant 3)

I think the idea got out there that evaluation has a purpose rather than just collecting data to send to the state or send to the federal government that we can use this information locally to think seriously about where we’re going, where we’ve been, and whether it’s having some influence or impact on lives (Participant 6).

“There were no courses and people were running around doing evaluations what they called evaluations and they were sort of what XXXX would call “warm seat index measures.”” (Participant 6) And I always viewed evaluation the purpose was to improve

programs or to verify that what you're doing makes some sense rather than getting goods on people" (Participant 6).

Evaluation theory. Participant 1 discussed the importance of change theory as a basis for program design. Satisfactory program design is an imperative for evaluation. "I'm interested in theory of change in terms of being able to statistically show that a change in this is related to a change in that and so I'm seeing that we do not have well designed programs. So the idea that we are going then evaluate those less than well designed programs it means that we are not ready for evaluation. We don't have the programs developed yet" (Participant 1).

Evaluation skills. Participants in this study described two types of evaluation skills. Analytical skills are necessary to conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis of research data. However, equally important to the role of evaluator, are what is described as soft skills. This is the ability of the evaluator to communicate with groups and individuals in order to perform tasks such as, identifying client objectives, conducting interviews and explaining results,

For analytical, of course, you want to have thinking skills and analogical skills – math, statistics, qualitative, looking for patterns over time when you're doing sorting – chunking, verbatim, quotations of text. You are looking for people who are able to triangulate and basically pull a lot of these tools together to analyze data, collect data and analyze it so that's a heavy emphasis. The other half however, has nothing to do with those in their own right but if you don't have the sensitivity in terms of working with people to try to understand their insiders' perspective and be culturally sensitive to their concerns you get garbage instead of

data and it will be worthless. And you won't know how to communicate it as well back to them or to others if you don't have that lens. So to answer your questions kind of simply I look for 2 basic competencies and that's really their analytical abilities and their sensitivity. Obviously that turns into many, many sub competencies... (Participant 4)

Participant 9 included using the knowledge of others, "...then what is most important is how to tap into the expertise of others." "It is like social intelligence. Many evaluators work with colleagues in a team and they often don't have any skills in working with others. Other competencies are integrity, reliability, keeping on schedule, and effective communication skills" (Participant 9).

Characteristics of Evaluation Instructors

Characteristics of evaluation instructors fell into two categories, evaluation experience and instructors understanding of the students.

Evaluation instructor experience. A good evaluation instructor needs experience, a sense of humor, persistence, and resilience.

A combination of experience, good sense of humor, to be able to sort of roll with the crazy things that can happen and does happen like when you're negotiating contracts and when you're trying to conduct evaluations, and appreciate the things that do and often go wrong, that you then have to readjust and rethink (Participant 4).

Instructors should be experienced in the practice of evaluation and never quit doing evaluation.

Never quit doing evaluation. Like don't just become a teacher. You've got to do it

day to day. You know, I mean that's the biggest thing that has helped me. Is that so many times you become teachers of something you are no longer a practitioner of it yourself (Participant 2).

They should plan to learn for the rest of their lives. "You don't know it all now and you will be a lifelong learner" (Participant 6). Evaluation is a diverse and varied field and cannot be learned by one class or one experience. It takes multiple experiences and extensive practice to be an effective evaluator as well as evaluation instructor. Participant 4 explained it this way:

The more experience you have the better teacher you are because every evaluation is different. The more you accumulate the repertoire of these things – I mean it would take you 15-20 years before you have that one case that's very unusual but very effective as a technique that you wouldn't even know about, wouldn't even have a clue about – you wouldn't teach about it if you didn't have years of experience of what could happen when you have to report all this legislative bodies and stuff. You may not get that on a routine basis but over the years you will have given enough to different kinds of audiences that you will be able to tell the students what to know and why they have to prepare very different kinds of presentations and audiences because you've done it yourself. But only happens through experience.

Participant 2 emphasis the importance of diversity in evaluation experiences over time spent conducting evaluation.

...for me it was the diversity and the nature of projects that I worked on because I didn't just work on because when I first learned these skills I was not with

extension and so I worked on projects as an evaluator that ranged from USDA to Volunteers of America to the US Department of Justice. I mean I had a range of projects that wasn't just agriculture, that wasn't just SDS, or wasn't just one way or another. And so it wasn't just necessarily the quantity of time I had spent, it was just the diversity in those experiences themselves (Participant 2).

Participant 9 makes this recommendation; “don't teach alone until you have completed 6+ evaluations on different topics and using different methodologies.”

Instructors recommend the simultaneous practice and teaching of evaluation in order to be effective as an instructor.

So you can't just teach it, you have to do it. You have to get real clients and get out there in the field and do the work. And so I did the work simultaneously while teaching and I had my students get real clients (Participant 7).

An evaluation instructor should have practical experience with conducting actual evaluations.

Practical experience and actually conducting evaluations. I am troubled when young PhD's are asked to teach a topic, like program evaluation and who have had limited practical experience. So much of evaluation is being able to adapt to a changing environment and you don't learn that by lectures, textbooks or by sitting in class. You learn it by real-world experiences (Participant 9).

Participant 4 advises staying engaged with your own projects as well as students. This enables instructors to continually give back what they are learning.

The instructors understanding of students. Evaluation instructors must know their students in several ways. They must be aware of the extent of their students'

understanding of evaluation. “Understanding the audience and where they’re at. Because to me success is founded on that – I mean if you don’t understand your audience, you don’t know where to start. You almost need some kind of needs assessment. Not necessarily formal needs assessment, because when I’ve tried that in program evaluation, what I find is people overestimate their skills and don’t recognize things they need to learn. So having almost an intuitive sense of what it is they need, be able to then structure what is taught” (Participant 1).

Instructors must also have the skill to respond to student feedback in order to effectively deliver information and provide experiential opportunities. “And you know sometimes you have a plan and you just sort of see the feedback that nothing’s working. It’s sort of like not making sense and you adjust so it’s not unusual for me to deviate from a plan based on feedback, non-verbal questions – whatever” (Participant 6).

Evaluation Pedagogy

To organize emerging themes, educational theory was employed. Kolb’s experiential learning cycle, as seen in Figure 1, was used for this purpose. Identified themes were placed in the following learning strategy groups: abstract conceptualization, active experimentation, concrete experiences, and reflective observation.

Abstract conceptualization.

Lecture. Lecture is used to create a framework from which to build evaluation knowledge. Participant 2 said that “...students didn’t know the difference between outcome evaluation, process evaluation, and impact evaluation...So there was lecture to set up what this type of evaluation means.” It was also used to reinforce information shared by other means. For example, participant 3 “...lectured on the topic and then ...

had discussion.” While lecture serves to establish an evaluation framework and delivery of evaluation subject matter, its role is one of support; “so any idealized form, possibly for an introductory lecture to give some coherence and other things but never by itself” (Participant 4).

According to participants in this study, lecture alone is considered the least effective teaching method. While all participants conduct lectures to varying degrees, all agree that lecture alone is not a recommended practice. Participant 2 stated, “...the least effective was to only lecture. I mean I felt like I needed some of that time because I needed to help them understand some conceptual differences between the levels of evaluation and the different types of evaluation. But if I was to stop there... it just flopped.” “Pure lecture is the absolute minimum. There are times when it’s useful but you have to really minimize lecture, which is true of most education, obviously, but definitely for evaluation” (Participant 4). According to participant 9, lengthy lectures on theoretical or philosophical topics have the most negative teaching impact. Participant 4 put lecture in the context of evaluation instruction by saying, “evaluation is “about interaction, participation, dealing with people and or data so to have only a lecture is probably the most barren approach to try to communicate what it’s about and to be effective, that’s for sure.”

Analogy. One method of explaining the evaluation process is to create an analogy between evaluation and something familiar. Participant 5 uses the recipe analogy. “I’ll say, ‘Look at this. As soon as I put this [recipe] up on the board, you started thinking about what? Whether it would be something you might like to eat or something you might like to cook. And you do it by looking at the ingredients and looking at the process.

And you do it every time you see a recipe.”” By relating evaluation to familiar everyday situations, Participant 5 eases students fear over the unfamiliar evaluation process.

Video. Video provides a versatile medium for observing both lectures and demonstrations of evaluation activities such as interviews and group needs-assessment activities. These videos can be watched multiple times and at the convenience of the student. Content is chosen to support other learning activities designed by the instructor. Participant 3 described how videos would be assigned. The class lecture covered the video subject matter and class discussion followed.

Active experimentation.

Video. In addition to instructional videos, videotaping experiential activities is used to enable feedback and analysis of the students’ performance. Video recording experiential activities enables reflection on both analytical and soft skills. “And that’s not just their presentation skills but once again their analytical abilities and their abilities to also be sensitive to the audience, and to the sensitivity of the data itself and how it will affect people” (Participant 4). Participant 4 further stressed the importance of soft skills by saying, “Because it’s one thing to be just generally sensitive but it’s nice to be sensitive in a way that helps people listen to the data and then the biggest problem with evaluation in general is the knowledge utilization or the lack of use of evaluation.” Value only exists in evaluation if the evaluation is used. If students do not learn to exercise interpersonal skills and be sensitive to their audience, they will not gain the buy-in necessary for their evaluation product to be utilized.

Problem solving exercises. A typical teaching experience that participants will create for their students is to apply problem solving skills to their evaluation knowledge

and produce deliverables based on sample evaluation projects. Evaluation reports are foundational and a part of any evaluation project. “I will give them a dummy set of data that’s already been analyzed but they have to take the analysis and interpret it and use it to write an impact report” (Participant 1). Similarly, students often use their own real-world data brought from their work projects. Participant 7 said, “So I start off with the foundation skills – collecting data, analyzing data, writing the report.”

This experience is also included in an evaluation project. No evaluation project is complete without some form of deliverables like a report. “They collect data, they analyze data, and they write a report. So it is all experiential learning; learning evaluation by doing some mini evaluation projects” (Participant 8).

Presentations. Mock presentations allow students an opportunity to practice communication skills without the pressure of real client demands. They also enable feedback from both instructors and peers. Instructors use this technique for assessment of both analytical skills and interpersonal skills. Mock presentations can be especially effective when video recordings are used. This enables self-assessment of interpersonal skills. “...very often I will ask them also to do a mock presentation and that comes out as to how sensitive they are about the language they’re using, terms, the level of abstraction, how they tailor it to different audiences” (Participant4).

Projects. Evaluation projects, whether group or individual, seem to be the cornerstone of exemplary evaluation instruction. These may be internships, practicums or class projects but they are all real evaluation projects for real clients. “I always have a practicum or internship where I would link up all my students with existing evaluation projects. Either at local research corporations I’ve worked at or at the foundations...”

(Participant 4). Participant 5 said, “we would use other students in the class, sometimes other professors, or extension specialists who had the program that we were evaluating. But we tried to do a lot of actual program evaluations in that class.”

Participants believe real-world evaluation projects are necessary for the learning process because of the diverse nature and application of program evaluation. Participant 6, in discussing lecture, explained how evaluation is messy and complicated and mastery requires the variety of experiences that come with exposure to real-world situations. Risk is also counted as valuable in the learning process. “Get them out with real people. Throw them into risky situations. You know a lot of teachers try to protect their students and coddle them” (Participant 7). Participant 7 believes that teachers should be practitioners as well; a philosophy that translates to students. “You have to get real clients and get out there in the field and do the work. And so I did the work simultaneously while teaching and I had my students get real clients” (Participant 7).

While participants agree that real-world application of evaluation practice is necessary, there is flexibility in the size and scope of these evaluation projects. Some projects are paid while others are not. Some students conducted the entire project while others implemented a portion of the project. “...so that they actually had paid evaluative projects that could be from a whole evaluation project to typically maybe a section of a survey that they implement or analyze” (Participant 4). Some project work is performed locally. “And they implement the evaluation plan in the campus or in the neighborhood or the nearby communities” (Participant 8). Some were performed for corporations. In addition, some participants like Participant 6, used internet technology to “connect with various people across the state.”

One statement summarizes the need for evaluation projects effectively. “There’s not a lot of theory in evaluation, other than methodological theory, but the field is a skill. It’s a practice” (Participant 7). Evaluation projects are the only way to practice.

Concrete experience.

Case study. Two participants discussed using case studies. Case studies are used to create involvement with students. “I want them to be active participants in the learning process and so I do not give exams. We use case studies...things like that” (Participant 6). Participant 6 likes to , “find out how they’ve been involved [with evaluation], use those like mini case studies as you introduce various concepts and so forth.”

Case studies are also used to reinforce lecture topics. “But then following the lecture, I always used practical examples that kind of drove it home that made them apply what they were learning. So there were a lot of case studies used in class” (Participant 2).

Participant 4 mentioned case studies in the following comment. “But the primary focus of the experience training is a real world job setting not necessarily a case study or some data that you hand out and tell them to do something with” (Participant 4). Case studies are a useful teaching method but our study participants tend to go straight to the real-world project experience.

Demonstration. One participant, number 3, used demonstration to teach various evaluation data gathering activities.

So I exposed them to some different things. Like, we did online surveys. We did photo language. We did card sorting activities. We did nominal group techniques. We did all those kinds of things that I would show them how they actually worked and we would demonstrate some of those and we would play with some

of those.

Reflective observation.

Reflection. Four participants discussed how they used reflection, in general, to reinforce subject matter. Participant 8 says the learning process for many students follows the formula of theory, action, and reflection. "...they are not big theory people. They are students who love to learn by doing. And then I integrated this application theory, and application theory, and application action then action reflection..." (Participant 8). Participant 7 made a similar statement. "So I used the apprenticeship model where they practice then they reflected on their practice and how it related to the theory." One participant used a reflection activity each week during an evaluation course. "And then they have an individual reflection question every week related to whatever the topic is that week, then they have short quiz – a ten item quiz" (Participant 3). Finally, Participant 6 described coaching students through the reflection process in the following way, "Here's what we wanted to accomplish, here's what you ought to be able to do now. And we'll talk about are there any questions, are there any issues, and sometimes someone will say, "I don't think I understand this." And we'll go back and talk about it a little" (Participant 6).

Three Participants discussed using reflection to reinforce learning through specific experiential activities such as readings, case studies, and real-world field work. Participant 7 uses an article on competencies to reflect on throughout the semester. Participant 2 includes reflection in small-group activities and case study exercises. "...we also had small group discussions as well when they – and times for reflection – for example when they did their case studies..." (Participant 2). Participants stress real-world

experience and expect students to make mistakes. “Sometimes students mess up. They don’t get a full cooperation when they go to the field. They are ready to go to the field or they think they are ready. But the field is not ready. So, yes, in my class what I use then is a teachable moment. What went wrong? Why did it go wrong? You know. I discuss that in the class” (Participant 8).

Teaching strategies.

Two teaching strategies were referred to in interviews including: inquiry teaching and the apprenticeship model.

And so it starts with identifying an issue, getting some idea of what the context is where that issue surfaces, get some information about how to go about solving the issue or problem and then trying to make application. One of the things I really try and do is think about strategies, examples, activities that are meaningful for the students... today they call it inquiry teaching- it was problem solving. At the time I was going it was common sense thinking (Participant 6).

Participant 7 used the apprenticeship model to provide real –world experience with evaluation. “So I used the apprenticeship model where they practice then they reflected on their practice and how it related to the theory” (Participant 7).

Coaching/mentoring.

Participants see evaluation instruction as teaching a diverse field to a diverse group of students, often with little overlap. “So each person’s situation tends to be so individualized that if you’re presenting a cross section of ideas about evaluation they’re so very foreign to what they are familiar with that they just cannot take it and unpack it for their own use. It’s like that scaffolding is just not dense enough. They need the denser

scaffolding of one on one” (Participant 1).

“The other thing that I think is important in evaluation is, and this is so very time consuming, is to give feedback and then allow them to make revisions and resubmit. So my entire course was built on kind of a scaffolding type methodology where they would submit the situation statement, I would give them feedback on the situation statement. The next thing they did, they had to build on that situation statement and add the new part to it. I’d give them feedback on that combined one. Then the next assignment they’d do the same thing. They kept adding until they got to the very end and they had an entire logic model with an evaluation plan. So that’s how they ended” (Participant 3).

Some participants view themselves as coach. This is expressed in how Participant 5 discusses a recommended balance between content lecture and experiential learning. “...and maybe about 60% on coaching them as they went through the process” (Participant 5).

“The most effective and what I really think works is working one on one with people has had the most effect – in terms of the teaching methods. Something where a person has a project they are passionate about. And it’s kind of a guided tour through – here’s what you have and here’s what you can do to evaluate this. And this is how you can improve it in the future” (Participant 1).

“I think I see the greatest change in terms of understanding evaluation and applying evaluation principals in those people who I have worked with one on one” (Participant 1).

Participant 3 describes how students appreciate the coaching received during their evaluation course. “It takes a lot of coaching, I think. I’ve had several students who

come back to me afterwards working on an evaluation project and saying, ‘I need some input. I need some help on this’ (Participant 3).

“The most critical competencies can be learned but cannot be taught. Students learn by observing, by practice, by mentoring, by coaching and by discussion” (Participant 9).

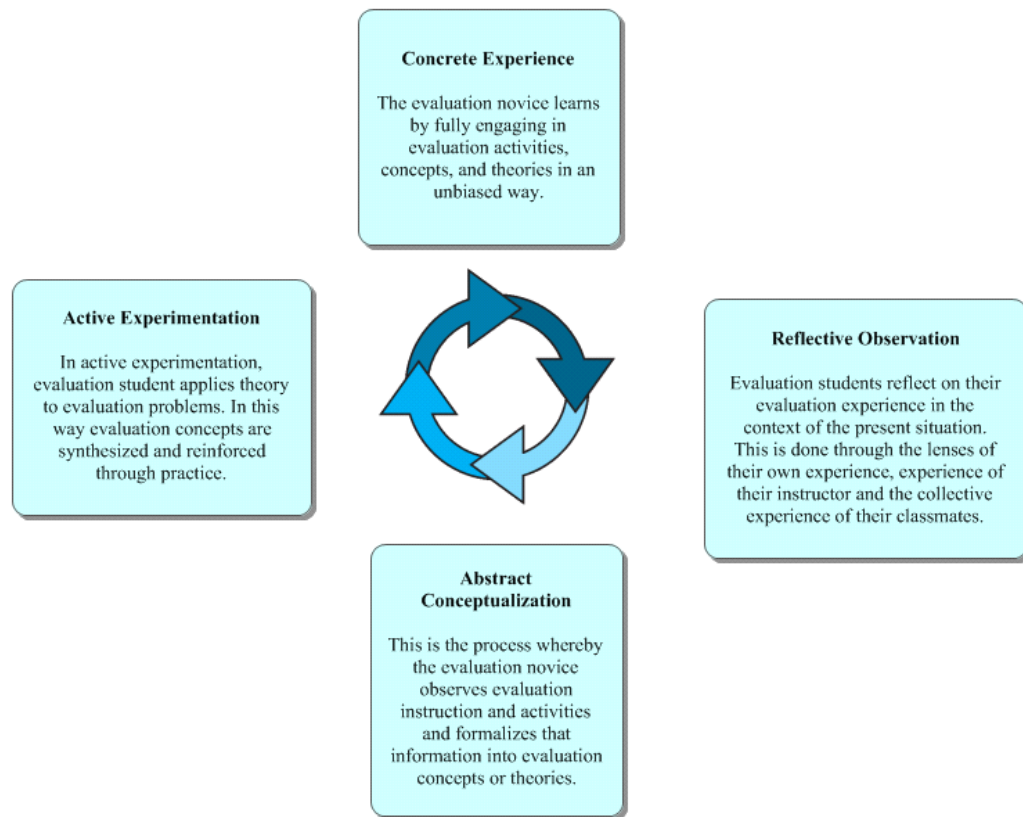


Figure 1. Kolb's Learning Cycle

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Evaluation is a subject that pulls from a wide variety of disciplines. The skills necessary to be an effective evaluator reflect this variety. Likewise, evaluation instructors should possess a high level of variety in the evaluation skills they command. All participants in this study believed instructors should have evaluation experience. This experience should represent diversity in the nature of past work. In addition, this experience depends on continued evaluation work beyond that of being an instructor. Evaluation instructors should never quit working in evaluation and should conduct evaluation practice simultaneously with instruction.

Evaluation requires a lot of training and extensive experience. Instructors should be dedicated to the practice to be successful. This dedication also applies to teaching. To be successful in class, instructors must prepare outside of class. This preparation may require extra time considering the complex nature of evaluation and the activities needed to train new and unfamiliar concepts. Based on the results of this study, an evaluation instructor should exhibit dedication to the course through adequate preparation. Participant 9 has spent as many as sixty hours designing activities, finding experiential opportunities and creating course outlines for a single ninety minute class.

In addition to dedication to the practice, evaluation instructors must know their students. Participant 1 described how important it is to know the students in order to know their previous experience with and knowledge of evaluation. "...if you don't know

your audience, you don't know where to start.” In order to effectively assess where students are with their evaluation knowledge, instructors must be able to establish a rapport. This depends on instructors earning students' trust. According to Levin-Rozalis and Rosenstein (2003), effective teachers are those who team work among teachers and students that evolves from mutual respect. The same soft skills required of evaluators are required of evaluation instructors.

Summary of evaluation teaching techniques.

In this study, we have used Kolb's experiential learning cycle to give organization to educational terminology and concepts. Each of the techniques gleaned from our study interviews has been categorized according to the following terms: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. (see Table 1) As stated previously, evaluation is a complex discipline. Appropriate teaching strategies reflect this complexity. The following recommendations summarize the study findings in the context of Kolb's learning cycle.

Abstract conceptualization. Abstract conceptualization is the process of conceptualizing logical theories in the context of concrete observations. Learners must be able to, “create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 108). This study identifies three abstract conceptualization techniques that may be recommended for evaluation instruction. They are lecture, allegory, and video presentation.

Lecture of some form was used by each of the participants. There is a basic level of evaluation knowledge that can be delivered by lecture. While not the most valuable learning experience, lecture still has a place in the process. Lecture is useful for providing

introductory information and giving coherence to experiences. Lecture is used to create a framework and set up a knowledge base which will be used during experiential learning. However, lecture alone is not a recommended practice. It is insufficient for practicing skills, especially soft skill.

Allegory should be used to provide examples that demonstrate the use of complex evaluation concepts. Participant 5 uses analogies that relate evaluation to familiar, every day, situations, thereby providing explanation and making known what was unknown. While some instructors will put students straight into real-world situations, others will use techniques like allegory to allow students an opportunity to make evaluation concepts more concrete. This choice of strategy reflects on the need of the instructor to have a clear vision of where the students are in their understanding of evaluation.

Video can be used to present lectures and demonstrations. Although students may not be able to engage the instructor with questions, video lectures can be watched repeatedly and at the convenience of the student. Videos also may be used to demonstrate skills that are necessary for the student to learn. For example, students may observe an evaluator conducting activities such as individual interviews or the nominal group technique. While the concept of interviewing may be straight forward, descriptions of practices such as the nominal group technique may be significantly aided by observation and strengthened when followed by active reflection that is guided by the instructor.

Active experimentation. Active experimentation involves experience that uses evaluation theories to deal with real-world problem solving and decision making. Students, “must be able use these theories to make decisions and solve problems” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 108). This study identified four active experimentation

techniques that should be recommended for evaluation instruction. They are video, problem solving exercises, presentations, and projects. Others have also advocated for active experimentation when teaching adults (Daudistel and Hedderson, 1984, p.170; Dillman, 2013, 280; Gredler and Johnson, 2001, p. 103).

Video can be used to provide feedback on interpersonal skills. Many data collection techniques as well as reporting techniques require soft skills that can only be learned by practice. These soft skills are practiced and reviewed using video recordings of student training activities. These activities represent student interactions with clients or study subjects. Evaluation students are trained to be sensitive to their audience as well as their data and how it will affect people. It is important to refine these soft skills so that evaluators learn to communicate the data to people in a way that facilitates knowledge utilization.

Problem solving exercises may be assigned that include identifying problems with a mock data set. A more complex problem that may be assigned is the problem of how to reach a particular audience. The use of problem solving exercises allows the instructor to isolate the problem so the student focuses on the given problem and not the complexity of problems generally represented by real-world projects. Before conducting real-world projects, students may be given problem solving exercises to further refine their evaluation skills. This technique is used for working with data sets and report writing. “I will give them a dummy set of data that’s already been analyzed but they have to take the analysis and interpret it and use it to write an impact report” (Participant 1). Another use of data sets may be identifying errors in the data set or in the given analysis.

Evaluators must be able to communicate their findings to stakeholders. Without sharing the results or conclusions of an evaluation, there is little purpose to the effort. Therefore, students should be given opportunities to make final-report presentations in class. Class presentations provide an opportunity for students to practice before making presentations to clients. Opportunity for feedback from instructors and peers as well as self-reflection, helps students identify areas that need improvement in the safety of the classroom environment. Feedback is one element often cited as essential for impactful teaching with both youth and adults (Rosenshine & Furst, 1971).

Projects are the cornerstone of evaluation instruction. Evaluation projects may range in size and scope, but according to participants in this study, the one thing all student evaluation projects should have in common is real-world experience. “Get them out with real people. Throw them into risky situations” (Participant 7). All participants in this study used projects to synthesize the skills needed and used by practicing evaluators. Evaluation is messy and complicated and mastery requires a variety of experiences (Participant 6). “There’s a lot of theory in evaluation, other than methodological theory, but the field is a skill. It’s a practice” (Participant 7). Evaluation projects are the only way to practice.

Concrete experiences. Concrete experiences are those where the goal is involvement in the experience rather than the problem solving aspect of the experience. “That is they must be able to involve themselves fully, openly and without bias in new experiences” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p.108). In this study, participants described using case studies and demonstrations to involve students in evaluation experiences.

Case studies should be used to facilitate student involvement. Participant 6 described wanting active participants in learning. So, rather than tests, case studies are used to introduce and work with various concepts. Participant 2 uses case studies to reinforce lecture topics. While case studies are used, some instructors prefer moving on with real-world projects. As stated before, this choice may reflect the need for the instructors understanding of where the students are with their evaluation skill set. Some students may be ready to move on while others may benefit from a case study or two. Another determining factor may be the complexity of the available real-world project. An instructor may decide to prepare a student for a particular project with a similar case study.

Demonstration. Some practices, such as data gathering activities, used by evaluators are more easily learned by demonstration. Observing a demonstration makes it easier to concretize the concepts involved in the activity. Some examples of activities suitable for demonstration are online survey design, card sorting activities, photo language and the nominal group technique. Participant 3 teaches these necessary skills by demonstration.

Reflective observation. Reflective observation is necessary for the student to assess their learning progress and synthesize the information and skills they have acquired. “They must be able to reflect on and observe their experiences from many perspectives” (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 108). Two common themes throughout this study were discussion and reflection. In fact, adult learning theory suggests that past experience can be link to, and inform, current learning and future learning allowing life

experience to improve the learning process (Merriam & Bierema, 2014, p. 112). These learning techniques should be incorporated into evaluation instruction.

Discussion involves several reinforcing strategies. First, students give thought to their discussion contribution prior to the discussion. This means synthesis of information and consideration as to how it will be presented. The student then gets practice with interpersonal skills during the discussion as well as immediate feedback to both their ideas and communication technique.

Reflection is used by our participants in two ways and is a key component of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model. First, reflection is used in general. Class may include a daily or weekly reflection on the material covered. This is a time to synthesize the information presented or used. Then reflection is applied to projects. Every activity involves reflection, giving the student an opportunity to consider the activity in the context of theory. "So I used the apprenticeship model where they practice then they reflected on their practice and how it related to the theory" (Participant 7).

Due to the complexity of evaluation as a subject and the variety of experience and knowledge of students, participants in this study believed coaching is an important part of the training process. They emphasize the need for one-on-one interaction in order to adequately address concepts for the student. The most critical competencies can be learned but cannot be taught. Students learn by observing, by practice, by mentoring, by coaching and by discussion. While Kolb's learning theory provides a place holder for the various techniques appropriate for evaluation, coaching and mentoring should be applied at each point on the learning circle.

Implications for distance learning

Distance learning was not a recurring theme in this study. However, because of its use in graduate education, we will address some implications of our findings for distance learning. A review of the teaching strategies recommended for evaluations shows some features that would be conducive to distance learning and others that are not practical.

Techniques that fall into the category of abstract conceptualization are suitable for distance learning. In fact, in some ways distance learning may have an advantage. The techniques used here are lecture, allegory, and video presentation, or what we might in this situation refer to as asynchronous delivery. It can be said that little is lost by delivery of lecture through distance learning. Online tools enable this delivery in a way that students are able to interact with the professor as well as one another. In addition, an advantage is to be had by the ability to record sessions and observe them multiple times.

The application of concrete experience in evaluation instruction is recommended primarily by case studies and demonstrations. Again, little should be lost in the application of these techniques through distance delivery. Demonstrations may be observed in the same way lectures are observed and students may do so multiple times by re-watching the recorded archives of a distance-delivered lecture. Case studies may be reviewed by students with ample opportunities for discussion, review, and reflection with peers and professors through distance applications satisfying the reflective observation construct.

However, this study recommends four strategies as a part of active experimentation that may be problematic for distance learning. The use of video applies to face-to-face encounters with either individuals or groups. For this technique to be

effective, students must occupy the same room as the study subjects or stakeholders with whom they are interacting. While presentations may be practiced through distance delivery, this probably does not represent the real-world experience desired by our study participants. Distance communication may be a useful tool for an evaluator but a final stakeholder report needs to be in person and involve those all so important interpersonal soft skills. This also provides for an opportunity for live dialogue through question and answer conversations.

The final challenge that distance learning holds for active experimentation is the coaching and mentoring that is so important to the student working on problem solving exercises or real-world evaluation projects. Distance creates a barrier to understanding and knowing the students as well as where they are with their evaluation knowledge. It also is an obstacle to instructor access. These challenges may be met with varying degrees of success; however, they certainly do not exist in a traditional, face-to-face learning environment.

Flipped classroom

The flipped classroom may be one way to ameliorate some of the challenges presented by distance learning. In the flipped classroom, students observe lecture at home and work on assignments in class (Rotellar and Cain, 2016, p. 1). In evaluation distance learning students would participate in abstract conceptualization and concrete experience while not in class. Active experimentation, such as working through problem solving activities making class presentations would be conducted during class. Class time may also be set aside for students to receive coaching on their real-world projects. Of course, reflection and discussion should always be a part of class time whether distance or not.

Evaluation instruction outcomes

Evaluation training should instill in the student the importance of accountability. Evaluation is needed to demonstrate program impact to stakeholders. "...we can use this information locally to think seriously about where we're going, where we've been and whether it's having some influence or impact on our lives" (Participant 6). Students should understand the use and application of change theory. Understanding that what is evaluated is the change theory means that we must have well designed programs. Consideration should be made as to whether or not a program is ready to be evaluated through an evaluability assessment

Evaluation students should possess the core analytical skills and interpersonal skills necessary for carrying out an evaluation project. They should understand the importance of each and where they fit into the evaluation process.

Analytical skills are those necessary for working with data. These skills are necessary and can be taught using abstract conceptualization techniques and active experimentation. These skills represent what might be considered the middle ground of an evaluation project. They are the skills required to analyze and interpret data.

Interpersonal skills are the skills that enable an evaluator to communicate with groups and individuals in order perform tasks such as, identifying client objectives, conducting interviews, and explaining results. "It is like social intelligence. Many evaluators work with colleagues in a team and they often don't have any skills in working with others. Other competencies are integrity, reliability, keeping on schedule, and effective communication skills" (Participant 9). The more refined skills, which typically are soft

skills require practice and are the primary reason instructors place so much emphasis on real-world experiences.

Summary

Students in graduate-level evaluation course are typically new to evaluation. They need a theoretical background from which to begin their evaluation study and practice. As students begin to formalize evaluation theory they must begin to put it into practice. The level of involvement in evaluation practice should depend on the continual assessment of the evaluation instructor. The instructor may focus on practice with specific evaluation techniques, small-scope evaluation projects, or full involvement in real-world evaluation projects. The outcome of any evaluation course should be to involve student in real-world evaluation projects where they experience all aspects of the evaluation process.

Recommendations for Research

Researchers have called for further defining how we train evaluation professionals. Dewey et al. (2008) suggested research be conducted to identify types of evaluation training (p. 284). While Dillman (2013) recommends identifying the ways in which evaluation students learn evaluation competencies (p.270).

While this study does not match specific competencies with specific teaching or learning methods, it does specify teaching methods ideal for evaluation instruction. The following questions may be used to guide future research:

- What is the optimum balance of coursework and fieldwork in evaluation instruction if there is one?

- How are evaluation competencies acquired? How are specific evaluation skills learned? What teaching methods should be applied?
- How does the application of Kolb's learning cycle, to evaluation instruction, impact student attitude toward evaluation?
- How can graduate-level evaluation instruction be transferred to professional development for evaluation practitioners?

Recommendations for Practice

Evaluation instructors. Evaluation instructors should continue to practice evaluation outside of instruction. In doing so they should seek a variety of evaluation projects on which to hone their skills. In addition, effective evaluation instructors will mentor students, establishing rapport and trust with their students just as they would evaluation clients. Finally, flexibility combined with an awareness of students evaluation knowledge enables the instructor to respond to student needs and provide the most effective learning experience.

Evaluation course development/content. Courses should ensure students know the purpose of evaluation. A combination of evaluation theory and evaluation practice, including real-world experiences, is necessary preparation for novice practitioners. Competencies necessary for a practicing evaluator include both analytical and interpersonal skills. Evaluation students should begin with coursework in program development followed by program evaluation. These will primarily develop analytical skills. Real-world practice may be gained through real-world projects conducted during an advanced evaluation course or a practicum following evaluation coursework. Real-world practice contributes to the development of interpersonal skills. In addition students

may benefit from coursework in communication, conflict resolution, and courses titled interpersonal skills or people management skills.

Evaluation pedagogy. There are four techniques described in this study that are recommended for evaluation instruction. These are abstract conceptualization, active experimentation, concrete experience, and reflective observation. Use of these teaching strategies will build a base of knowledge for evaluation students, provide experiences that synthesize evaluation principles and techniques for the student as well as provide learning effective opportunities that meet the learning compliment a variety of learning styles.

Abstract conceptualization. Abstract conceptualization techniques should be used to build a base of evaluation knowledge. Evaluation is a subject that is not typically covered at the undergraduate level. Most graduate students entering an evaluation course have very little evaluation knowledge or experience. Learning opportunities where the student build evaluation theory creates a base of knowledge from which they can begin to practice evaluation. Lecture, allegory, and video should be used for this purpose.

Lecture informs students of the material on which they should be knowledgeable and studying. Allegory is an effective way to present evaluation activities. Students use these examples to formalize evaluation theory. Finally, video can used to present these lectures and demonstrations. By using video, instructors may make more effective use of class time as in the flipped-classroom strategy.

Active experimentation. Once students have begun to formalize evaluation theories, instructors may then begin to utilize active experimentation to answer realistic evaluation questions. This recommendation should not be interpreted to mean all theorizing should occur before practice begins as to create a clear division for an

evaluation course. Abstract conceptualization should be an ongoing process throughout the evaluation course with students being given opportunities for active experimentation as the course progresses and evaluation theories are presented. The issue of blending these two strategies in an evaluation course may be viewed as more art than science and depends on the instructor's ability to continually assess class progress with course objectives.

Practice in applying evaluation theory should be achieved using problem solving exercises, evaluation projects, and video. Problem solving exercises and evaluation projects represent a progression of complexity in the use of evaluation. Problem solving exercises may involve example data sets or creating a survey for a fictional situation. Students should also practice concretizing evaluation theory by real-world evaluation projects. This allows the students to synthesize evaluation knowledge and practice evaluation techniques while being fully invested in the entire evaluation process from helping the client focus on objectives to evaluating the objectives impact.

Concrete experiences. Case studies are a valuable tool for students to become involved in the evaluation process without the risk that comes with a real-world evaluation project. Although this is a recommended practice, some study subjects recommend putting student straight into the real-world evaluation project risk and all. A common theme may be used to justify both of these strategies. Instructors should know their students and have the ability to continually assess class progress. Again, this represents what may be called the art of teaching. This instructor awareness should be used to make decisions regarding the use of projects and case studies.

Reflective observation. Reflective observation should be in evaluation courses in two ways. Students should reflect individually on course activities. This reflection should be more involved than just consideration. Written summaries or after action reviews of course activities demonstrate the students process of reflection as well as their assessment of the activity outcome. In addition to individual reflection student should reflect on course activities in a group setting. This gives students the opportunity to practice providing feedback. Student also may receive feedback they would not have thought of on their own. Finally, reflection in the form of feedback from the instructor followed by discussion provides expert opinion based on education, teaching and the evaluation practice of the instructor. The use of all three reflective observation techniques provides a range of views giving the student a number of windows from which to view the learning experience.

Distance learning and the Flipped-Classroom. Distance learning and the flipped-classroom may be recommended to facilitate delivery of evaluation course material and increase efficiency of instruction time. By delivering learning opportunities that are primarily passive through technology and distance, instructors should gain a time advantage in the classroom that may be used to engage students. Student engagement means more time spent answering student questions in more detail. It also means instructors are able to get to know students and better assess where they are in their evaluation knowledge. Chih-Yuan Sun and Wu (2016), in their research looking at combining online delivery and flipped classroom strategies, found increase achievement and no significant reduction in instructor-student engagement (p. 94). Using these

delivery methods in concert also will provide instructors more time to assist student in their evaluation learning activities, most importantly their real-world evaluation projects.

Table 1. Application of Kolb's learning cycle to evaluation instruction methods.

Learning Concept	Teaching Technique	Learning Outcome
Abstract conceptualization	Lecture, Allegory, and video	Theoretical knowledge base
Active experimentation	Video, problem solving, and projects	Practical application of theory
Concrete experiences	Case studies and demonstration	Open, unbiased involvement with new evaluation activities
Reflective observation	Discussion and reflection	Synthesize evaluation activities in the context of past and present experience.

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APPENDIX A

Hello!

My name is Rick Smith and I am working on a Master's degree at the University of Georgia with Dr. Nick Fuhrman. You have been identified as someone with advanced knowledge of program evaluation and who could potentially indicate individuals who you believe are exemplary teachers of evaluation. My thesis study will examine the teaching methods used by college instructors who teach graduate-level program evaluation courses. Knowledge of these teaching methods will aid in enhancing current teaching efforts in other evaluation courses and elevate the quality of evaluation professionals in the discipline.

Please take a minute or two to respond to this question:

- Of graduate-level evaluation instructors worldwide (teaching face-to-face or online), who do you believe to be exemplary in their mastery of evaluation teaching methodologies? Please rank the top three instructors (with #1 indicating the most "effective" instructor).

Please send your response back to me at wpsmith@uga.edu. Your response by [insert date] is most appreciated. I will then contact each of these individuals and invite them to participate in an interview with me on the teaching techniques they use in their evaluation courses.

Thanks so much for your help!

Rick Smith

APPENDIX B

Email to Interviewees (Exemplary Evaluation Instructors)

May 1, 2014

Dear <<Name>>:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Nick Fuhrman in the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Communication at The University of Georgia. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study entitled Evaluation Pedagogy: Recommendations for improving instruction in evaluation.

This study will be an examination of teaching methods used by college instructors who teach graduate-level program evaluation courses. Knowledge of these teaching methods will aid in enhancing current teaching efforts in other evaluation courses and elevate the quality of evaluation professionals in the discipline.

You were recommended by Dr. _____ as an exemplar among graduate-level evaluation instructors. Your input on this project will help identify those teaching methods most effective in achieving our goal of elevating the quality of professionals in our discipline.

Your participation will be one phone interview that will take approximately 45 minutes.

If you have any questions please call me, Rick Smith, at 706-595-1815 or reply to wpsmith@uga.edu.

I appreciate your consideration to participate in this study and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rick

Rick Smith

McDuffie County Coordinator

UGA Cooperative Extension

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APPENDIX C

Interview Guide

Evaluation pedagogy: Recommendations for improving evaluation instruction

1. What is your motivation for teaching evaluation?
2. What teaching methods do you believe produce a positive impact?
3. What teaching methods do you believe produce a negative impact?
4. How has your approach to teaching evaluation evolved?
5. Would you be willing to share any course materials, (i.e. syllabus, assignments)?
6. What evaluation competencies do you feel are most important for the development of the profession?
7. What teaching methods do you believe are most effective in building the evaluation competencies you mentioned previously?