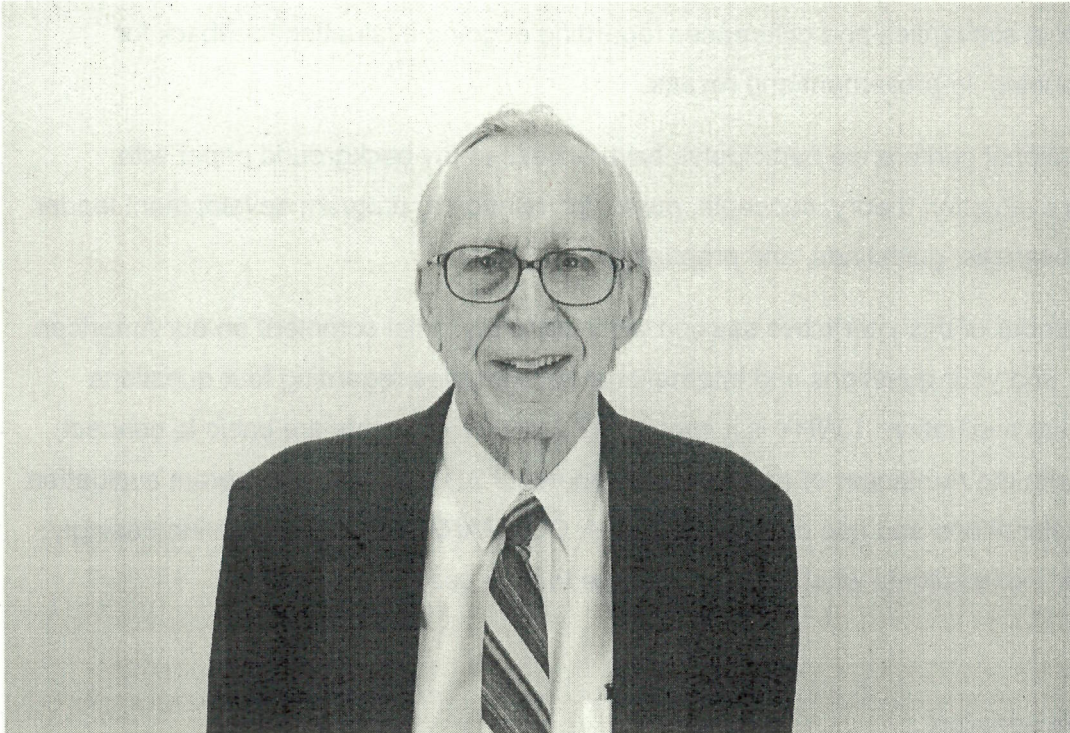


**International conference "Cultures of Program Planning in Adult Education:
Policies, Autonomy, and Innovation"- contents of Alan Knox handouts and
background paper on evaluation**



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Content

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1 Initial comments

1. I appreciate this opportunity to discuss theory and practice of adult education program evaluation.
2. Our interaction and discussion throughout this session is especially welcome, for analysis of international similarities and differences regarding ongoing evaluation feedback for program planning, improvement and results.
3. All international conference participants have access to my background paper with specifics on evaluation theory, concepts, purposes, relation to program development leader tasks, effectiveness, guidelines, and preparation.
4. The remainder of this interactive session will include my initial comment on our American experience, and your questions and international perspectives regarding four questions about program evaluation: 1.WHY is it important? 2.WHAT concepts are basic to connect evaluation with the remainder of program development? 3. HOW should program evaluation enhance explanations and use of conclusions? 4. COMPARATIVE analysis is increasingly important for explanations; what would contribute to their use?

2 Interactive session

ONGOING EVALUATION FEEDBACK: Plan, Improve, Results

A Purpose: To discuss four questions, using a two-page handout to engage participants in thinking about comparative analysis.

1. WHY is it important to have ongoing evaluation of adult education program planning and implementation?
2. WHAT concepts and terms are basic to understanding the program development process and using evaluation conclusions?
3. HOW should inquiry by scholars and practitioners clarify combinations of personal and situational influences, relationships between continuity and innovation, and potential leadership strategies?
4. COMPARATIVE analysis process and conclusions can provide an increasingly valuable source of useful explanations. What could we do to better analyze, exchange, and use such explanations?

B. Interactive session: Following brief examples from an American (USA) perspective related to each question, Hanover conference participants will be encouraged to reflect and comment on similarities and differences related to adult education in other countries.

C. Major ideas and sources for each of the four questions

1. Why ongoing evaluation

a. Adult education practitioners and scholars can benefit from increased understanding and explanation of essential relationships that help them reflect on and use conclusions to enhance program goals, activities and benefits. For decades, there have been examples of evaluation on basic education for adult literacy. (Knox,2002, Ch.3: Caffarella & Daffron,2013)

b. Adult education participants and provider organizations evolve over time, and ongoing evaluation feedback to major stakeholders can enable them to strengthen the planning, learning process, participant proficiencies, outcomes, and resources.(Green & Associates,1984; Houle,1992; Cervero & Wilson,2006; Sork,2010; Reischmann,2006).

c. Questions for participants

- 1). Do these comments fit your view of the topic regarding the American context?
- 2). What comparative implications occur to you regarding your national settings?

2. What are basic concepts

a. Most American adult education activity occurs in decentralized permeable open-systems with limited institutionalization [Myrdal,1944; Katz and Kahn,1966; Havelock,1969; Lindquist,1978; Pratt,1998] Because local situational influences are varied and important, an evaluation project should have a focused purpose.(Houle,1980; Davis, Barnes & Fox,2003)

b. As with other countries with complex, decentralized types of educational opportunities for adults, there are multiple stakeholders [limited resources, self-directed learning, diverse participants, session leaders, coordinators, technology assistance, provider administrators, funders, and policymakers; program evaluation can help explain how some of these features influence program topics, methods, and resources. (Fitzgerald ,Sanders & Worthen,2004; Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick,2006).

c. Questions for participants

- 1) Do these comments fit your view of the topic regarding the American context?
- 2) What comparative implications occur to you regarding your national settings?

3. Inquiry can be used to clarify important local program influences, relationships, and strategies

a. Cooperation by scholars and practitioners can guide use of multi-case analysis of how things work, and encourage stakeholder use of conclusions. (Merriam,2002;Stake, 2010; Knox,2015). An innovative diverse neighborhood learning community used external evaluation in addition to ongoing assessment.

b. Evaluation conclusions about strategic relationships can be used to sustain continuity and encourage program innovation, in part through comparative analysis.

c. Questions for participants

1). Do these comments fit your view of the topic regarding the American context?

2). What comparative implications occur to you regarding your national settings?

4. Shared concern about societal influences in a region can prompt meta-evaluation of program similarities and differences, and contextual relationships

a. Especially with educational evaluation for the helping professions, there are examples on multiple program aspects, inquiry stages and methods for cross validation and utilization of conclusions, such as for peer mentoring and motivational interviewing, learning and change regarding Veterans Administration hospital patient-oriented coordinated care [Green,1984, Patton,1997, Knox,2002, Stake,2010; Reischmann,2006]

b. Educational technology can contribute to respondent use of archived, museum and library materials, and cooperative projects. [Burge, Gibson, Gibson,2011;Moore,2013]

c. Questions for participants

1) Do these comments fit your view of the topic regarding the American context?

2) What comparative implications occur to you regarding your national settings?

3 Background paper

Experience Related to Adult Education Program Evaluation



Alan's career long interest has been lifelong learning of adults, in all of its variety, roles, and locations. He has followed this interest as a student, teacher, scholar, and administrator at five universities.

This includes his university preparation, and in a continuing education administrator role at Syracuse University; faculty and research activities at Nebraska and at Columbia Teachers College; associate Vice Chancellor for continuing education and public service at Illinois; and for the past three decades at Wisconsin, with increasing emphasis on international comparative analysis. He has been active for years with the International Society for Comparative Adult Education.

Alan appreciates his active engagement and leadership in various countries and associations of practitioners and scholars in the field. Contributions through publications, presentations and interactions have also been opportunities to learn, such as books on international comparative adult education, on evaluation, and on strategies for improving creative professional learning activities.

His 1993 book on Strengthening Adult and Continuing Education was based on comparative analysis of multiple case studies in more than 30 countries worldwide. Recent keynote sessions and seminars were in Scotland, Hungary, Canada, Turkey, and Taiwan.

Theory and practice of adult education program evaluation has been a major emphasis for half a century. This included evaluating hundreds of educational programs for adults, frequently teaching a graduate course on evaluation, serving as the external evaluator for

national and for international programs, and a 2002 Jossey-Bass book on Evaluation for Continuing Education; and a chapter on evaluation in a book on Improving Professional Learning: 12 strategies to enhance performance, Stylus publishers, November 2, 2015.

He looks forward to continuing to explore ways to help practitioners and scholars in the field to enhance their effectiveness, as they use their understanding of the available knowledge base, to effectively help adults learn and improve their performance and communities.

4 Evaluation guidelines and bibliography

Each of the following guidelines for effective program evaluation is intended to encourage conference participants to consider two questions about theory and research regarding program evaluation:

- A. To what extent does the guideline fit your view of effective evaluation of this aspect of American adult education program assessment?
- B. What are comparative implications for this aspect in your national settings?

This list of 33 guidelines for adult education program evaluation were based on secondary analysis of multiple evaluation reports. One or several applicable guidelines can be useful for planning or interpreting future program evaluations.

1. **DECENTRALIZED**- Recognize the extent and types of diverse segments of American adult education (providers, content, participants, methods) to decide the evaluation focus on one or a few similar program segments, versus a standard evaluation approach across many diverse segments.
2. **REPORTS**- Specify who are the main users of a program evaluation report, to guide responsive answers to their questions.
3. **FOCUS**- Agree early in the evaluation planning process, the main focus regarding the purpose and evaluation approach, and the intended use of a program evaluation effort.
4. **SCOPE**- Decide on the extent of the program evaluation effort, including both the intended explanation and the selection of specific instances on which to base conclusions.
5. **COMPLEXITY**- Consider a systemic model of the basic program features related to the evaluation focus, and help decide on evaluation focus and reports.
6. **EXPLANATION**- Understand that a major purpose of useful program evaluation is to help stakeholders better understand important educational program dynamics.
7. **EXEMPLARY**- The purpose of some evaluation is to better understand and specify aspects to help account for excellent educational programs.
8. **IMPROVE**- An intended result from evaluation of many educational programs that may not be outstanding, is to identify promising ways to plan the next program.
9. **EXPLICIT**- Program evaluation procedures and conclusions should contribute to explicit evaluative judgments, because informal assessments by various program stakeholders are seldom shared nor based on explicit criteria.

10 PERFORMANCE- Clarify examples of benefits and performance improvement which an adult education program is intended to contribute.

11. GUIDE- Identify and assess performance of desirable tasks by coordinators and session leaders who plan and conduct effective adult education activities.

12. ACTIVE- Analyze indicators of the extent of active adult learning, from the perspective of participants in adult education activities, and other stakeholders such as coordinators and session leaders, for the purpose of using conclusions to enhance the interactive learning process and to improve performance.

13. READINESS- Estimate participants' unmet learning needs, and readiness to benefit from adult education activities.

14. ALIGNMENT- Assess the fit between expectations of participants and the program objectives of session leaders, as a basis for guiding a mutually beneficial exchange.

15. LINKAGE- Assess interactions between the participants and beneficiaries of the educational program, and the people who help them learn and improve performance, and thus use evaluation conclusions to sustain and enhance this interaction.

16 ACTIVITY- Include ongoing formative evaluation of the educational process to provide conclusions to improve the sequence of effective learning activities.

17. OUTCOMES- Use summative evaluation procedures to assess the impact and results of the educational program.

18. INFLUENCES- Evaluate the combination of personal and situational influences on the educational program and enhanced performance, and use the conclusions for planning future efforts to achieve substantial improvements.

19. EXPERIENCE- Reconstruct and monitor highlights of participants' experience related to the purpose of the educational program and related performance, based on participant self assessments and external perspectives.

20. INNOVATION- Emphasize creative features of educational program development and of ongoing educational evaluation.

21. RESISTENCE- Include evaluation information about reasons why potential participants or other stakeholders may not want, or be able to, be part of the educational program, to enable use of the conclusions to reduce deterrents and increase access and relevance.

22. CONCEPTS- Consider which of the basic evaluation and program aspects are relevant for a proposed evaluation project (context, staffing, expectations, objectives, activities, exchanges, progress, materials, feedback, outcomes, benefits).

23. **STAKEHOLDERS-** Select the types of program stakeholders who should be centrally involved in conducting the educational program, and using the evaluation conclusions.
24. **MEDIA-** Decide on the features and combination of educational technology and face-to-face communication, to include as part of a specific evaluation.
25. **FEEDBACK-** Explore with program stakeholders the extent and types of ongoing evaluation feedback that they prefer, and the form of reporting.
26. **DISCOVERY-** Use analysis of multiple cases or narratives, to discover unanticipated and valuable relationships.
27. **VALIDATION-** Include cross validation based on several types of evaluation data collection and analysis of important inquiry questions and relationships.
28. **UTILIZATION-** Provide opportunities for stakeholders whose use of evaluation conclusions is important to future program effectiveness, to participate in planning and conducting the evaluation process in ways that they welcome, in order to increase use of conclusions.
29. **LONGITUDINAL-** For answering evaluation questions about personal or organizational continuity and change over time, include time-series data analysis or follow up.
30. **COST/BENEFIT-** Analyze the combination of costs and benefits for the program or for program evaluation, as a basis for planning regarding likely future returns on investments of time, money, and effort.
31. **REFLECTION-** Encourage participants and other stakeholders to use the evaluation process and conclusions to facilitate reflection on program related values, assumptions, priorities, expectations, and implications.
32. **PREPARATION-** Provide opportunities and assistance to increase expertise and people who can contribute to sound program evaluation, by use of staff development opportunities for stakeholders or syllabi for courses and workshops.
33. **PUBLICATIONS-** Encourage use of concepts from publications on adult education program evaluation, by people who plan and conduct such evaluations. (Publications such as the attached bibliography)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Reischmann, Jost (2006) Weiterbildung-Evaluation. Augsburg: Ziel-Verlag.

Sork (2010) Ch.14 on Planning and delivering of programs, Kasworm, Rose, Ross-Gordon (eds) Handbook of Adult and continuing Education.

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NOTE: University librarians who handle interlibrary loans can typically obtain open access published reports on adult education program development and evaluation, that are archived in the ERIC system for all topics related to all aspects of education, that for years have been

processed by Clearinghouses in the United States and contributed to the ERIC system, to supplement published copyrighted books and other materials.

5. Course syllabus

ASSISTANCE- Scholars as well as practitioners are sometimes reluctant to conduct program evaluation. Fortunately, there are several resources that can contribute to a team effort, such as: increased awareness of publications that provide concepts, guidelines, and examples; Journal clubs and planning sessions for evaluators to share perspectives; along with workshops and courses on program evaluation. The following summary of a course on program evaluation theory and practice illustrates some of the ingredients that can be selected and adapted for local domestic and international situations.

Evaluation course syllabus

(Note: this summary is based on a recent hybrid University of Wisconsin graduate course, which allowed full and part-time students anywhere the state to participate in any combination of face-to-face and online sessions, using a printed and electronic syllabus. This course on theory and practice of adult and continuing education program evaluation is similar in format to other courses on adults as learners and administrators. The format of another similar course on program development includes a unit on evaluation in the middle of the academic term which follows units on process, influences, goals, and development; and the unit on evaluation is followed by units on providers, directors, and leadership.)

1. COURSE (title, number, Department, weekly dates, two-hour evening time period)
2. INSTRUCTOR (name, office location, phone, FAX, email, Department webpage for details, website to log into electronic connections, group location for face-to-face participation in the evening session)
3. TABLE OF CONTENTS for syllabus, print and electronic
4. OBJECTIVES (course objectives for students to achieve (review basic concepts, explore evaluation rationales, data collection and analysis, including stakeholders, ethical and other issues, apply evaluation concepts to a setting of interest, ways to conduct evaluation projects, connections between practice and scholarship)
5. INDIVIDUALIZATION (options for each student, accommodations for students with disabilities, writing center available for assistance)
6. READINGS (sources of textbooks for purchase, and extensive electronic reserves of basic readings that students can download)

7. RESOURCE PERSONS (encouraging students to suggest guests with special contributions)

8. PROGRESS REPORTS (weekly progress reports to all participants through online threaded discussion [blog], reports to drop box for instructor's reply only)

9. STUDENT REPORTS (four reports during the academic term on: critique, literature review, analysis of an evaluation report, major report on a proposed inquiry case example. Highlights could be shared with course participants. Guidelines for each type of report include: purpose, due date, length, aspects to consider, relative emphasis within the course)

10. INSTRUCTOR CRITERIA (Instructor's six criteria at outset for four level ratings and comments that allow rapid response to reports when received in the drop-box: focus and purpose, importance of content, identification of course related concepts and writings, depth of analysis, evidence of reflection, implications for practice or research)

11. SURVEY (anonymous responses from students with four-level ratings and comments midway through the term, with summary to all students for discussion the following week (syllabus, readings, content, interaction, active learning, instructor contributions, instructional technology, general value and benefits, most beneficial aspects, could be strengthened) Anonymous departmental student course assessment.

12. UNITS (for each: date, topic, readings including basic from text for all students, supplemental from Electronic-reserves, additional for student reports; study and discussion questions)

a. Introduction and first course session

b. Overview (two sessions)

c. Rationale

d. Context

e. Design (two sessions)

f. Focus

g. Outcomes

h. Use

i. Issues

j. Remaining sessions on applications, including sharing of excerpts from student reports

13. TECHNOLOGY (explanations and guidelines for students with limited experience with educational technology, including audio conferencing details)

14. BIBLIOGRAPHY (full bibliographic citations of course related readings, sources noted in each unit are identified by author and date)