

DESIGNING THE EVALUATION PLAN

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Adapted for use by the faculty and staff of College of DuPage.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS

Every proposal should have an evaluation section that varies with the complexity of the project. At minimum, the evaluation section must address the following two types:

Formative evaluation—To gain direction for improving projects as they are developing

- Include implementation and process components
- May lead to changes in the way the project is structured and carried out

Summative evaluation—To determine project effectiveness after sufficient time to produce results

- Also called outcome or impact evaluation
- Determine what the project has actually accomplished in terms of its stated goals

The following five steps can help you develop an effective evaluation section for your project.

Step 1 Determine what is to be evaluated: Generally there are evaluation activities related to each project objective.

Step 2 Determine what type of evaluation is appropriate: In general, there are five types that vary in the complexity, amount of funds invested in evaluation, and who will conduct the evaluation (See next page for list of evaluation types).

Step 3 Determine who will conduct the evaluation: The project staff or an external evaluator.

Step 4 Establish an evaluation budget: As a general rule, small projects devote 3 – 5%; large, multi-year, complex projects devote up to 10%.

Step 5 Describe the products of the evaluation: At a minimum it is part of the final project report, but a separate evaluation report may be a project deliverable.

Type of Evaluation	Relative Complexity	Types of Activities
Descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplest form • Least expensive • Conducted by project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of services • How services were operated • How program was administered • Resources consumed • Characteristics of those impacted by project • Describe any outcomes
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly more involved • Low expense • Conducted by project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of descriptive evaluation activities • Goals and objectives • Describe project components (start-up, recruitment, partnerships, etc.) • Explain short-term and intermediate outcomes • Explain project completion or institutionalization
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly more involved • Moderate expense • Conducted by professional evaluator (may be staff or consultant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on service delivery and administrative processes • Suggests causal relationships between what was done and outcomes • Generalize your experiences more broadly by providing insights into effectiveness • Look at efficacy of program in terms of outcomes or costs • Investigate operational features against results
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complex • Moderate expense • Conducted by professional evaluator (may be staff or consultant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use exacting data collection and statistical methods for data analysis • Requires database and analysis software • Focuses on qualitative and quantitative analysis of data
Impact Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term, involved • Most expensive • Requires third-party evaluator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often contains experimental and control groups • Proves statistical significance • Requires large sample sizes • Long-term analysis of outcomes
Source: U.S. Department of Labor Grant Management Handbook, 2001		

QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

Quantitative and qualitative data must be collected to form the basis of sound decision-making for both formative and summative evaluations. Based upon the evaluation literature, quantitative and qualitative data is best collected through a mixed methods approach. The following is a summary of the common methods.

Surveys and questionnaires (using Likert scales, forced choices, gap analysis, and open-ended responses).

Focus groups and interviews (of participants in pilot studies).

Document studies (extracting data from other on-going College of DuPage evaluation methods such as enrollment reports, student surveys, etc.).

Fiscal evidence (purchase orders, performance testing of new hardware/software systems, constituent evaluation of new systems).

MENU OF COMMON DATA COLLECTION METHODS	
Data Collection Methods	Place check if you can use on your project
Quantitative	
Pre-test/post-test with control group	
Pre-test/post-test	
Existing databases (example: student records)	
Interview—forced choice	
Description statistics on participants (numbers, gender, ethnicity, etc.)	
Fiscal review	
Survey/questionnaire—forced choice, mail, phone, point of service	
Qualitative	
Fiscal review	
Survey/questionnaire—open ended questions, mail, phone, point of service	
Focus groups	
Observation	
Student journals	
Interviews-open-ended questions staff, participants, other stakeholders	
Document studies	
Case studies	
Work product	
Key informant/expert opinion	