Conducting a Program Evaluation
Thesis or Dissertation:
It’s More Than Replacing Research Questions with Evaluation Questions

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6 Key Points of Departure
Consider the evaluation problem
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Understand the program and program context
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Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Consider the evaluation problem
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Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Provide useful findings
Guidance from the Literature
Krathwohl & Smith (2005):

*How to Prepare a Dissertation Proposal: Suggestions for Students in Education and the Social and Behavioral Sciences*
Applied or basic research

Audiences for the evaluation

Stakeholders for the evaluation

How criteria for judging progress or merit will be defined and by whom

Evaluation approach will be used
Willis, Inman, and Valenti (2010):

_Completing a Professional Practice Dissertation: A Guide for Doctoral Students and Faculty_
To evaluate the **universal** effectiveness of a professional practice

To evaluate the **local** effectiveness of a professional practice
Walser & Trevisan (2015):

Evaluability Assessment Thesis and Dissertation Studies in Graduate Professional Degree Programs: Review and Recommendations
Be clear about approach/model

Involve stakeholders

Control for biases and conflict of interest

Provide evidence of trustworthiness

Consider contributions to professional and academic knowledge

Evaluation faculty provide support to professional programs
Department of Educational Leadership

In Practice
6 Key Points of Departure
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
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Provide useful findings
Evaluation Problem

What is an evaluation problem?
## Evaluation Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Problem</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature-focused:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Locally-focused:</strong></td>
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<td>What we know about the need for the program</td>
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Evaluation Problem
Where Does It Go?

Introduction
  Problem Statement
  Evaluation Purpose
  Evaluation Questions

Literature Review

Discussion
Consider the evaluation problem

Understand the program and program context

Involve stakeholders

Choose an evaluation approach

Establish trustworthiness

Provide useful findings
Program and Program Context

Focusing the evaluation
Program and Program Context

Where Does It Go?

Introduction
  Problem Statement
  Overview of program

Literature Review

Methods
  Program Description
  Study Site(s) and Participants
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Provide useful findings
Stakeholders

As data sources AND to support the planning, design, conduct, dissemination, and use of the evaluation
Stakeholders
Where Does It Go?

Methods
Stakeholder Involvement
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Provide useful findings
Evaluation Approach

Or approaches
Evaluation Approach

Where Does It Go?

Methods
Evaluation Approach(es)

Literature Review
Evaluation Approach(es)
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Provide useful findings
Trustworthiness

Resources


The Program Evaluation Standards (Yarbrough, Shulha, Hopson, & Caruthers, 2011)

Trustworthiness

Where Does It Go?

Methods

Trustworthiness
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Provide useful findings
I can't tell you how valuable your program is.

I can.

Researcher

Evaluator
Useful Findings

Useful to the program...

AND

Useful to the field
Useful Findings
Where Does It Go?

Discussion

Recommendations for the program
How recommendations are being used/going to be used
Implications for practice, future evaluation and research
6 Key Points of Departure
Consider the evaluation problem
Understand the program and program context
Involve stakeholders
Choose an evaluation approach
Establish trustworthiness
Provide useful findings
Challenges

Understanding of program evaluation
Challenges

Understanding of program evaluation

The single course in program evaluation
Challenges

Understanding of program evaluation

The single course in program evaluation

Acceptability of a program evaluation dissertation
Opportunities

Building evaluation capacity
Opportunities

Building evaluation capacity

Contributing to knowledge
Opportunities

Building evaluation capacity

Contributing to knowledge

Promoting program evaluation
Thank you!


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