Speaking Program Participants' Truth Using Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practices

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Audience Poll

Do you currently incorporate culturally responsive practices into your project evaluations?

A) **Yes**

B) **No/Unsure**

Office of Educational Innovation & Evaluation

- **Founded in 2000**, affiliated with Kansas State University's College of Education

- Team-based structure: **19 full-time staff** + 4 Undergraduate and 4 Graduate Research Assistants

- Staff have **varied backgrounds**: adult learning, curriculum & instruction, psychology, sociology, evaluation, computer science, math, public administration, political science, communication, education

- Over **350 projects evaluated**, valued at over **$400 million**

- **Over 50 active evaluation projects** funded by NSF, USDA/NIFA, NIH, DoDEA, FtF, USDE, DOL, and state government agencies

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Speaking Truth to Power: Key Ideas

<u>Goal</u>: to represent participants' perspectives and experiences accurately

- ▶ Whose **truth**?
  - ▶ Program participants' true perspectives and experiences with a program
- ▶ Who has **power**?
  - ▶ <u>Program participants/stakeholders</u> – to share their honest/true perspectives
  - ▶ <u>Program leadership</u>
    - ▶ To share knowledge about their program and its stakeholders
    - ▶ To make changes to the program
  - ▶ <u>Evaluation team</u> – to use methods that are a good fit for the program and the inclusion of all stakeholders

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What is culture?

▶ "the shared experiences of people, including their languages, values, customs, beliefs, and mores. It also includes worldviews, ways of knowing, and ways of communicating."

> ▶ Taken from AEA Cultural Competence Statement (2011)

▶ What are examples of culturally significant factors/dimensions?

What are some cultural dimensions?

Culturally significant factors and contextual dimensions encompass, but are not limited to:	
race/ethnicity	sexual orientation
religion	age
social class	gender
language	geographic region
disability	socioeconomic circumstances

Taken from AEA Cultural Competence Statement (2011)

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Culturally Responsive Evaluation: Key Ideas

▶ Goal: Represent participants' perspectives and experiences accurately

▶ Each project is different

▶ The PI can be a valuable asset to learning about cultural context

▶ Reflect on cultural differences and value diversity/inclusion

▶ Maintain awareness and consideration throughout the evaluation - to enhance understanding and respect/trust

▶ Be open, flexible, willing to learn

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Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practices: Design

▶ Work with the PI to identify:

- ▶ Key stakeholder groups, including cultural backgrounds & contexts
- ▶ Evaluation questions, including outcomes that define success
- ▶ Methods and timing for data collections with each group

▶ Coordinate with the PI related to research/internal evaluation efforts

▶ Include team members who share aspects of participants' cultural background

▶ Seek IRB approval

Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practices: Instrument Development

▶ Tie items to evaluation questions/logic model

▶ Consider language, length, layout, order

▶ Include compliance/consent statements and relevance to participants

▶ Explain reason for collecting potentially sensitive data (e.g., demographics), reiterate that it is voluntary, and share plans for the data

▶ Incorporate open-ended questions to allow participants to share their experiences in their own words

▶ Include an open-ended question that allows participants to share any other comments/questions about the program or the evaluation

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Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practices: Data Collection

- ▶ Ask the PI or another trusted team member to send a pre-notice to participants
- ▶ Use locations participants are familiar with and have easy access to
- ▶ Consider how you dress
- ▶ Define roles of evaluators (to learn) and participants (experts)
- ▶ Use ground rules that promote inclusion/respect, and gain verbal agreement
- ▶ Be prepared to rephrase questions or present questions in multiple ways
- ▶ Capture responses using:
  - ▶ Participants' own words/phrases
  - ▶ A method that allows participants to know that you are capturing their ideas accurately/thoroughly
  - ▶ A method that allows for anonymous feedback
- ▶ Provide contact information for follow-up comments

Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practices: Analysis/Reporting

▶ Describe evaluation methods clearly and thoroughly

▶ Describe results/findings in participants' words

▶ Share full results with PI, when possible (remove identifying information)

▶ Have others review analysis/report to identify other possible interpretations

▶ Provide observations to guide interpretation of results and recommendations for moving forward – framed as a potential way forward

▶ Provide reports in timely fashion, so participant feedback is received/can be used

▶ Meet with PI to discuss findings and answer questions

▶ Encourage PI to share results/next steps with participants (consider format)

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Discussion Question

▶ *What additional culturally responsive practices are you incorporating into your evaluations?*

Individual or Small Group Reflections
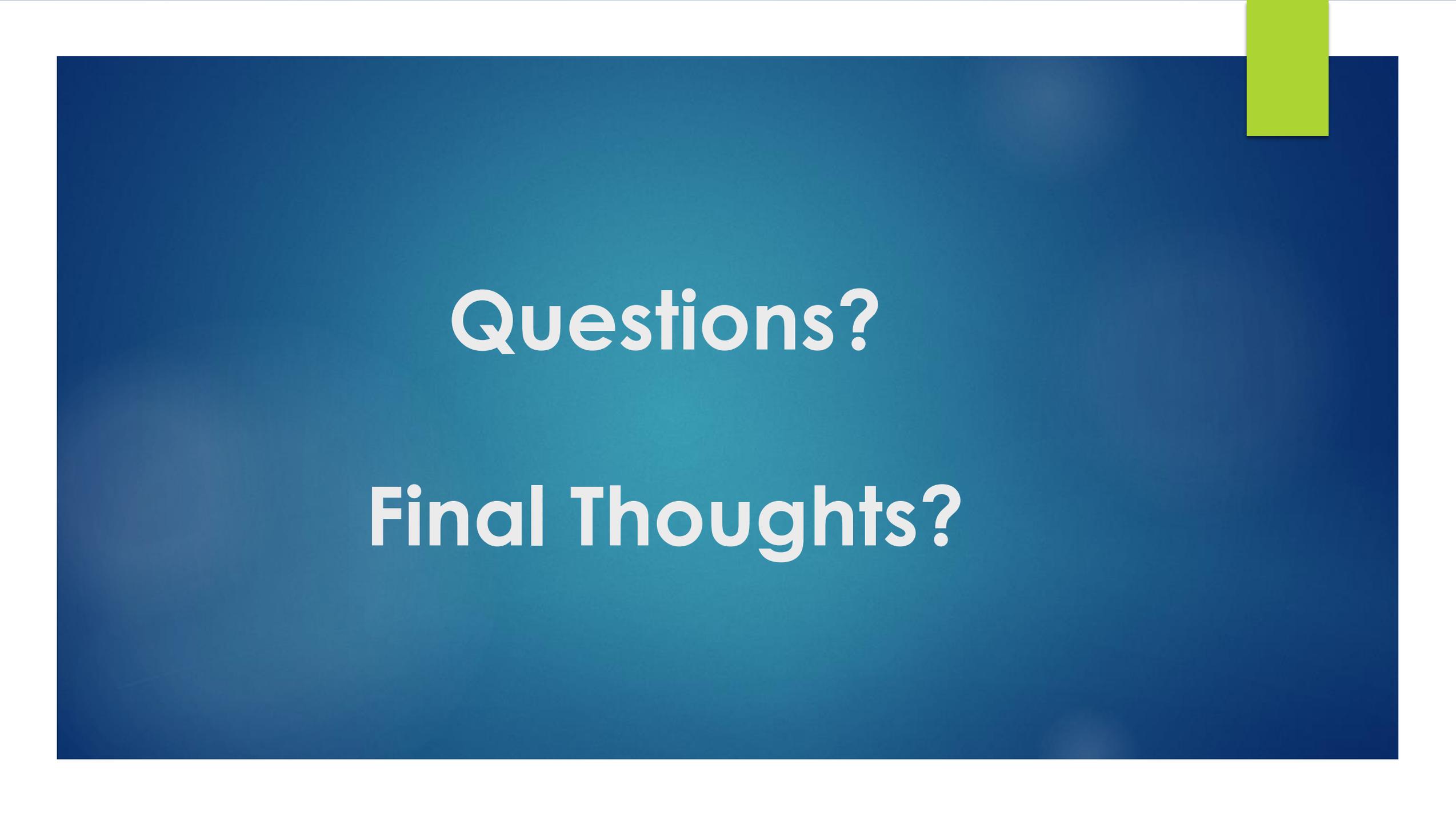
Reflect on one or more of the following scenarios:

1) You are evaluating a program focused on educating secondary students with disabilities (e.g., mobility, vision, learning, etc.) on a military installation

2) You are evaluating a program focused on recruiting and retaining women, and specifically women of color, in STEM majors at a southern university

3) Select your own evaluation scenario/project

- *How can you incorporate culturally responsive practices into the evaluation design, instrumentation, data collection, analysis, and/or reporting?*

- *Consider: If you modify specific aspects of the scenario (e.g., population, location), how might this affect your approach?*

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Culturally Responsive Evaluation: Key Take-Aways

▶ The PI can be a valuable resource/asset to the evaluation

▶ Maintain reflection/awareness of cultural context and incorporate culturally responsive practices throughout the evaluation process

▶ Doing so will enhance:

  ▶ Inclusion of stakeholders' voices

  ▶ Understanding and trust/respect between the evaluators and project stakeholders

  ▶ The evaluators' ability to accurately report on participants' experiences

Culturally Responsive Evaluation: Select Resources

▶ American Evaluation Association. (2011). *Public Statement on Cultural Competence in Evaluation*. Fairhaven, MA: Author. Retrieved from www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=92.

▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). *Practical Strategies for Culturally Competent Evaluation*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/cultural_competence_guide.pdf.

▶ Frierson, H.T., Hood, S., Hughes, G.B., & Thomas, V.G. (2010). *A Guide to Conducting Culturally Responsive Evaluations, in The 2010 User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation (pp. 75-96)*. Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation. Retrieved from: http://www.informalscience.org/sites/default/files/TheUserFriendlyGuide.pdf.

▶ Learning for Action. *Cultural Humility Checklists: Tools for Designing and Implementing Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Evaluations*. Retrieved from www.learningforaction.com/lfa-blogpost/culturally-responsive-evaluation.

▶ Sulewski, J.S., & Gothberg, J. (2013). *Universal Design for Evaluation Checklist* (4th ed.). Retrieved from http://comm.eval.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=8afd48c6-39c3-4dad-9629-1ed7c2654f3f&forceDialog=0.

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Questions?

Final Thoughts?