Evaluation capacity in school mental health: Lessons from school counseling

Overview

▶ Why school counselors?

▶ Community science

▶ Evaluation Capacity Building
  ◦ "**Evaluation capacity building** is the intentional work to continuously create and sustain overall **organizational processes** that make **quality evaluation and its uses routine**" (Stockdill, Baizerman, & Compton, 2002: 14)

Getting to outcomes in school counseling: Examining state-wide practices to support evaluative practice

Melissa Maras, Ph.D.; Stephanie Coleman, M.A.; Norm Gysbers, Ph.D.; Bragg Stanley, Ph.D.; Keith Herman, Ph.D.

Discussant: Paul Flaspohler, Ph.D.

University of Missouri

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO)

MO Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program

- Developed at the University of Missouri in early 1970s
- Adopted by the state of Missouri in 1984
- Training for school counselors and administrators began in 1984 and continues today
- National framework (American School Counselors Association) based on MO model
- Additional MO resources available at:
  - Missouri Center for Career Education (http://www.mcce.org)

MO Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program: Evaluation Model

Program + Personnel = Results

Evaluation capacity in School Counseling

- History of evaluation in School Counseling
  - Recent innovations
  - Shift in emphasis

- Efforts to define, build, and measure evaluation capacity must be interwoven and reflect the unique disciplinary context of the profession
  - Disciplinary context differs across and within states
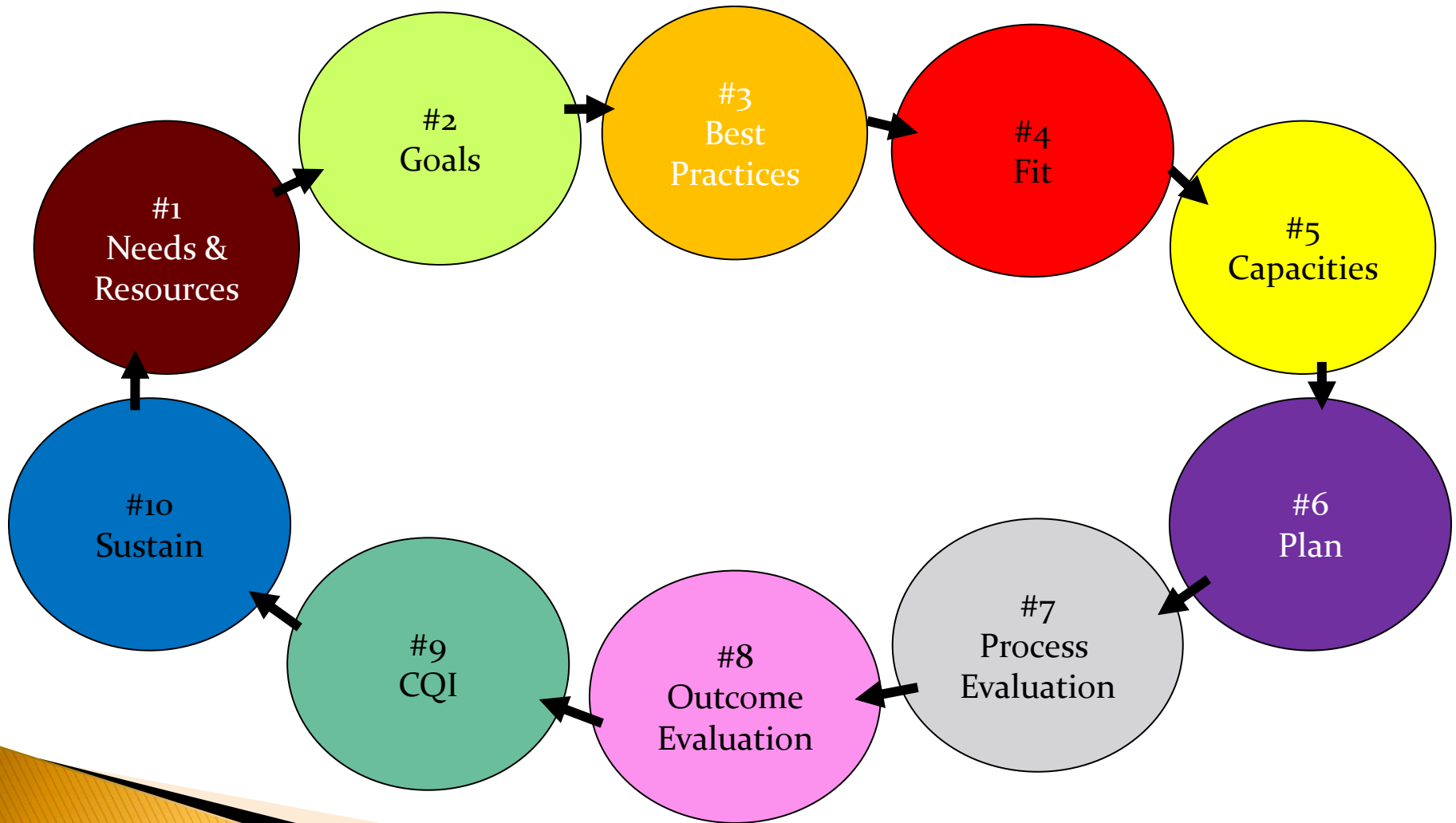
Missouri's Context

- Rich history of School Counseling in the state
- Significant existing capacity
  - Professional School Counselors are the primary school mental health professionals in the state
  - Strong state stakeholder supports (department of education, professional organization, counselor educators)
  - Statewide mentoring program
  - Evaluation tools:
    - Specific to MO Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling Program
    - Personnel evaluation
    - Building/District Needs & Resource Assessment
    - Implementation Measure

# Statewide resource: To what extent is MCGP implemented?

Section 4-6.9.4-Responsive Services					
Element	4- Full Implementation	3- Substantial Implementation	2- Moderate Implementation	1- Minimal/No Implementation	Score for Element
A. Students who are experiencing problems that might be interfering with their healthy development can readily access professional school counselors.	All students who are experiencing problems that might be interfering with their healthy development can readily access professional school counselors.	Most students who are experiencing problems that might be interfering with their healthy development can readily access professional school counselors.	A few students who are experiencing problems that might be interfering with their healthy development can readily access professional school counselors.	Students who are experiencing problems that might be interfering with their healthy development cannot readily access professional school counselors.	_____
B. Counseling services are available within school to all students experiencing problems that might be interfering with their personal/social, academic or career development.	All of the following counseling services are available within school to students experiencing problems that might be interfering with their personal/social, academic or career development: 1. Individual counseling 2. Small group counseling 3. Crisis Counseling	Two of the following counseling services are available within school to students experiencing problems that might be interfering with their personal/social, academic or career development: 1. Individual counseling 2. Small group counseling 3. Crisis Counseling	One of the following counseling services is available within school to students experiencing problems that might be interfering with their personal/social, academic or career development: 1. Individual counseling 2. Small group counseling 3. Crisis Counseling	None of the following counseling services are available within school to students experiencing problems that might be interfering with their personal/social, academic or career development: 1. Individual counseling 2. Small group counseling 3. Crisis Counseling	_____

Internal Improvement Review

Getting to Outcomes

MO Guidance Planning Surveys

#1 Needs & Resources

#2 Goals

#3 Best Practices

#4 Fit

#5 Capacities

#6 Plan
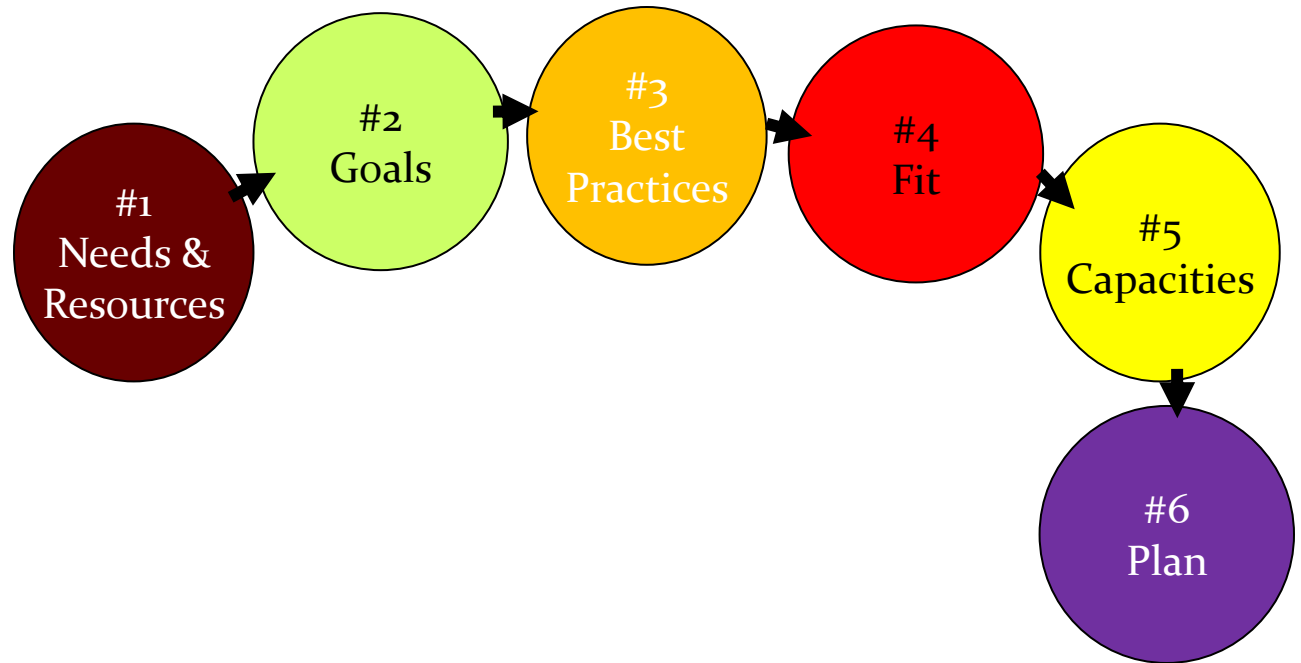
Missouri Guidance Planning Surveys (MOGPS)

Interpretive Guide

Assessment Resource Center | The University of Missouri

Table of Contents

Assessing evaluation capacity: The development and results of a survey on school counselors' skills in evaluative practice

Stephanie Coleman, M.A.; Melissa Maras, Ph.D.; Bragg Stanley, Ph.D.; Keith Herman, Ph.D.; Norm Gysbers, Ph.D.

University of Missouri

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO)

Effective Practices Survey

- Need model for evaluation capacity building in MO
  - Define, build, & **measure** evaluation capacity

- Developed to determine state-wide needs and resources related to evaluation
  - Collaboration with major stakeholders in the state
  - Simultaneous survey development and use

- Focused on the assessment of the mentoring program
  - Used a pre/post design to determine how effective the program is in increasing evaluation capacity/use

Effective Practices Survey: Development

- Initial survey items taken from existing tool (Dimmitt, Carey & Hatch, 2007), MO competencies for school counselors, & other resources from evaluation literature
- Modified to fit Missouri context
- Reviewed by expert panel
- 19 survey items, 6 point likert scale of confidence, collected online (November, 2009; May, 2010)

Effective Practices Survey: Results

- Decent response rate ($N = 212$, 30 - 40% response rate)
  - 1st year protégé ($N = 45$)
  - 2nd year protégé ($N = 68$)
  - Mentors ($N = 99$)
- Scale is reliable

Effective Practices Survey: Results

- 4-factor structure
  - Evaluation Self-Efficacy (7 items)
    - I can access research and other professional support (e.g. conference presentations, professional development) that affects my practice.
    - I can use school data (such as attendance, discipline referrals, etc.) to identify student strengths and needs.
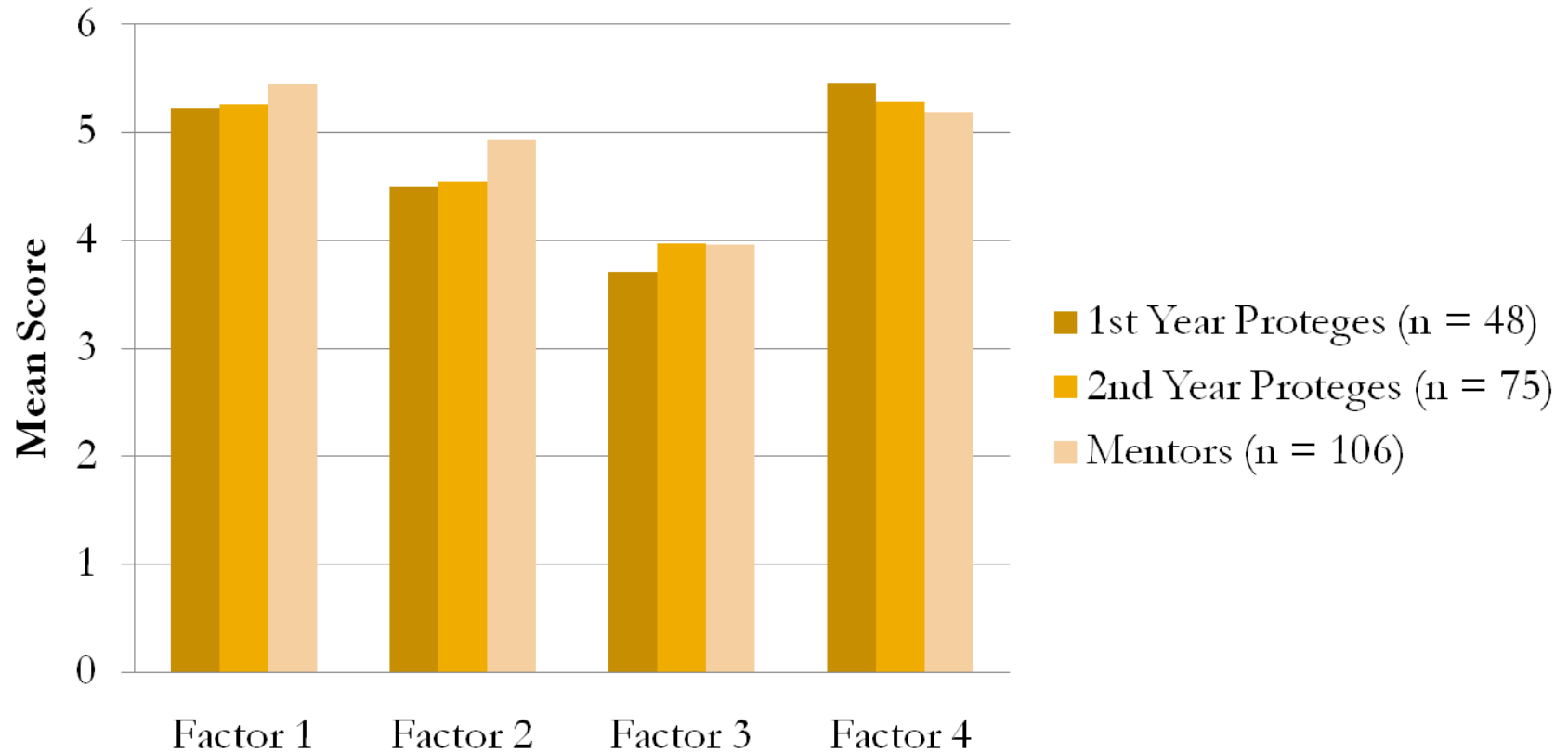 - Guidance Program (6 items)
    - I can describe how my guidance program and its activities connect to my district's CSIP (Comprehensive School Improvement Plan) goals.
    - I can use data to help plan interventions (e.g. in conjunction with student assistance teams).

Effective Practices Survey: Results

◦ Statistics (4 items)
- I can use descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, percentages) to evaluate my guidance program activities.
- I know how to use technology (e.g. EZ Analyze, Excel) to manage and use data (e.g. create graphs, create databases).

◦ Evaluation beliefs/values (2 items)
- I believe evaluation is an important ongoing activity for school counselors.
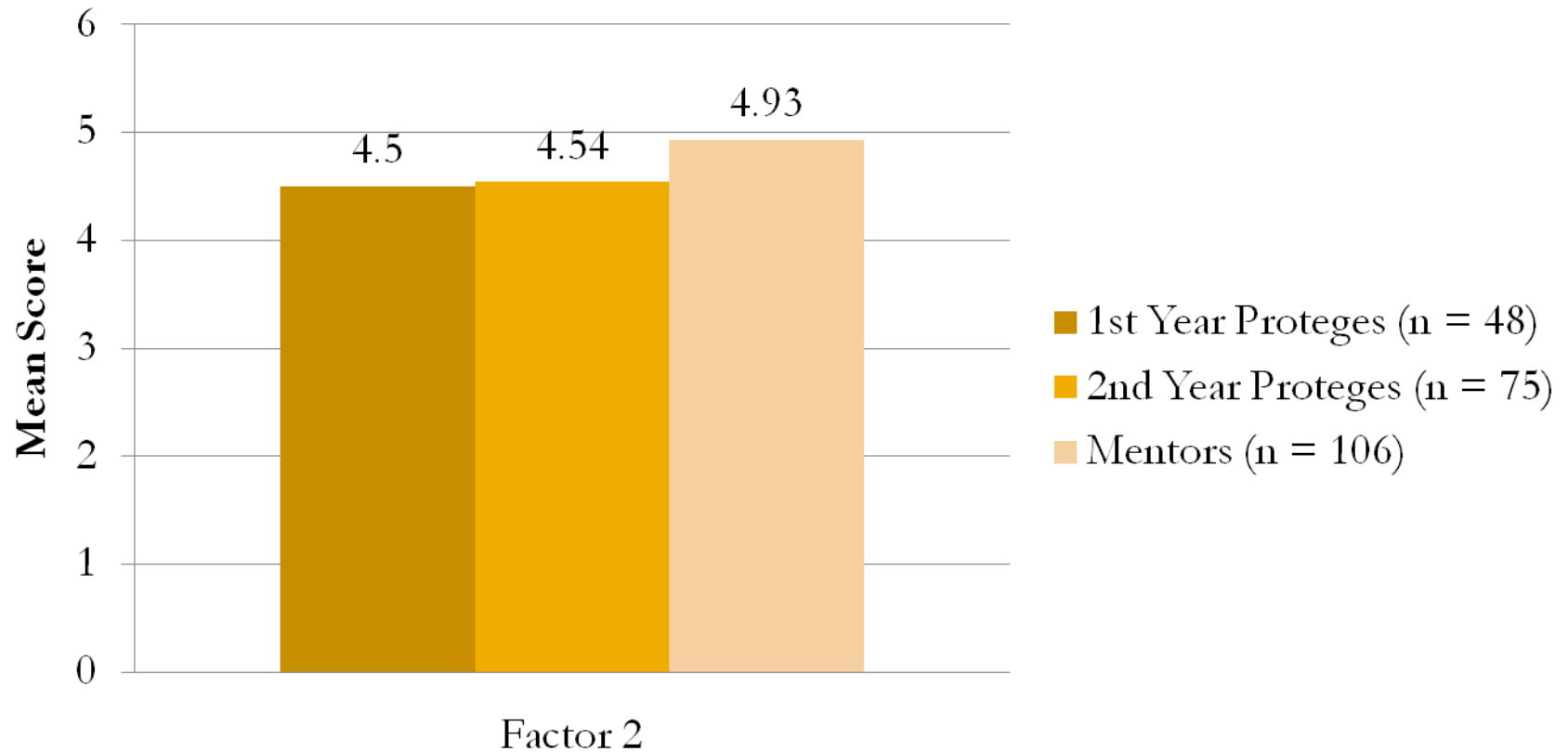- I believe evaluation leads to better student outcomes.

Results

Mean Scores by Mentor Role

Results: Factor 2
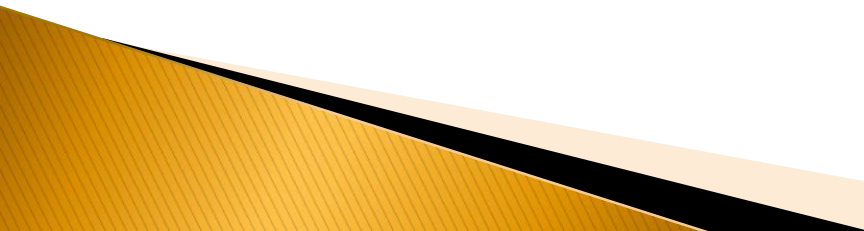

Mean Scores by Mentor Role

Results

▶ Significant difference in Factor 2 (Guidance Program) between groups (χ^2 (2, N =224) = 9.16, p = .01)
  ◦ Mentors > 1st year protégés, 2nd year protégés
▶ Consistent differences between factors for all mentor groups
  ◦ Similar patterns across groups
▶ For pre/post participants, significant increase in Factor 3 (Statistics) at post-assessment (F(1,80) = 9.23, p < .01, η_p = .103).
  ◦ Significant changes for 1st year protégés, 2nd year protégés

Next steps...

- Continued use and development of the survey
- Use in project to build evaluation capacity in one group of school counselors
- Continued collaboration with state leaders, school counselor educators

Possible Impacts

- MO Department of Education
  - Advocating for school counselors, connecting with PBS/RTI
- MO Counselor Educators
  - Renewed focus on pre-service training, alignment
- State Mentoring Program
  - Engaged regional mentoring chairs, improvement and other uses
- Identification of overlapping measures & projects
- Professional development project (2010-2011)
  - Developing in-service TA process & materials
- Course assessment data used in accreditation process

Conclusions & Lessons Learned

- Limitations
- EPS is a first step at measuring evaluation capacity in Missouri
  - Successful in initiating and stimulating conversations
  - "we don't need to create more stuff, we need to go deeper"
- Project illustrates connection between local context and efforts to promote evaluation capacity
  - Efforts to define, measure, and build evaluation capacity must be considered simultaneously

Melissa Maras, Ph.D.

» marasme@missouri.edu