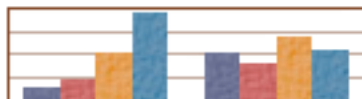


Arkansas Evaluation Center

2007 Progress Report



The Arkansas Evaluation Center



Fetterman & Associates
Dr. David Fetterman
Ms. Linda Delaney
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Introduction

The Arkansas Evaluation Center is a functional reality. It is well on its way to launching its first initiative. This brief progress report provides a summary of activities conducted to-date to create the Center. It also presents a brief list of next steps required to fully actualize the Center, including the first initiative: The Arkansas Evaluation Institute Workshop.

Legislation

The Center was a joint vision of the MISRGO office, grantees, evaluators, and Fetterman & Associates. MISRGO grantees and evaluators have been receiving evaluation training as part of their technical assistance activities. However, the evaluation stakeholders came to a common conclusion in the course of completing their own tobacco prevention training and data collection activities. There was a need across the State to build additional evaluation capacity. Too often efforts to secure related data from relevant agencies resulted in inadequate data, poorly collected data, irrelevant data, and/or no data related to the task at hand. This problem ran across agencies and organizations at pivotal points during the MISRGO evaluation. Legislators agreed with this conclusion about the state of evaluation in Arkansas. The need was considered pressing and the time appeared appropriate to build state-wide evaluation capacity.

A presentation to create the Arkansas Evaluation Center was made to the Black Caucus and enthusiastically received.

Then, it was presented to the House by Representatives Brown and Flowers. Senator Wilkins proposed the Senate Bill (951). The act to create the Arkansas Evaluation Center was passed in both the House and Senate in 2007 and signed by the Governor.

State of Arkansas
86th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2007

A Bill

SENATE BILL 951

By: Senator Wilkins
By: Representatives E. Brown, Flowers

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS EVALUATION CENTER;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The \$200,000 appropriations accompanying the bill also passed. However, due to the manner in which funding is allocated the Center did not receive any funding. MISRGO has provided the initial funding and efforts are underway to solicit additional funds, specifically matching funds to meet operational expenses.

Building Blocks or Steps Taken to Launch Center Initiatives

A Center of this nature and scope requires thought and careful deliberation. However, the need is sufficiently apparent, specific steps are being taken to launch modest but

important efforts already, including a blog and an Arkansas Evaluation Center Institute Workshop.

Specific steps have been taken to bring the Center to a point in which it can launch meaningful initiatives. These steps are organized into three categories: 1) curricular design and development; 2) funding; and 3) marketing. These steps are outlined below:

Curricular Design

One of the primary Center activities is the development of evaluation training. Training will include: professional development workshops, a certificate program, and a masters program in evaluation. The key steps taken to develop a curricular design and instructional plan include:

- Reviewing existing programs throughout the world – focusing on courses taught, length of the program, and cost
- Surveying MISRGO evaluators concerning desired evaluation topics – which included: ethics and/or guidelines, empowerment evaluation, survey design, qualitative methods, statistics (light).
- Piloted WebCT part of curricular plan - designing virtual classrooms, implementing specific folders, and testing the curricular space (needed to launch distance learning portion of the program)

WebCT - Distance Learning

The screenshot displays the WebCT interface for the Arkansas Evaluation Center. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'myWebCT', 'Return Course', 'Course Map', 'Check Browser', 'Log Out', and 'Help'. Below this is a 'Control Panel' with 'View' and 'Designer Options' tabs. A 'Course Menu' is visible on the left, listing various resources such as 'Homepage', 'Course Content', 'Syllabus', 'Calendar', 'Content Module', 'Glossary', 'Search', 'Compile', 'Communication', 'Mail', 'Discussions', 'Chat', 'Whiteboard', 'Study Tools', 'Homepages', 'Presentations', 'My Progress', 'Evaluation Tools', 'Assignments', 'Self Test', 'My Grades', and 'Quiz'. The main content area features the University of Arkansas logo and the text: 'The Arkansas Evaluation Center. Welcome to the Arkansas Evaluation Center Certificate Program. This is a place for us to learn, engage in dialogue about evaluation, and help others in the process. Please follow the online instructions to participate in the program and enjoy. Dr. David Fetterman'. Below this are two icons: 'Course Content and Related Materials' (a stack of books) and 'Communication Tools' (a person at a computer).


- Created two blogs to serve as educational hubs for Center and educational activity
- Consulted with colleagues in evaluation to shape the curricular design (program requirements)
- Developing Institute Workshop design (including appropriate speakers and curricular material)

Funding


Funding is a fundamental component of any Center or educational endeavor. One of the funding streams will be MISRGO, another may be the legislature (depending on the result of our efforts in this area to tap the surplus in the budget), and a third will be from other funding sources such as foundations, private industry, and/or government sectors.

Steps taken to achieve fiscal stability include:

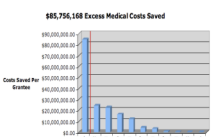

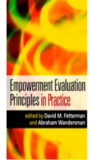



- Developed a poster and related materials depicting the Center



The Arkansas Evaluation Center University of Arkansas Pine Bluff



Director: Dr. David Fetterman
Dean of Education: Dr. Calvin Johnson

Mission	Academic Program	Research	Workshops	Funding
<p>EFFECTIVE EVALUATION SERVES TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF EXISTING AND NEW PROGRAMS:</p> <p>1) ENSURES ACCOUNTABILITY FOR FUNDS AND SERVICES USED</p> <p>2) "RAISES THE BAR" CONCERNING PROGRAMMATIC STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS</p> <p>3) INCREASES THE USE OF DATA TO INFORM DECISION MAKING AND OPERATIONS.</p> <p>EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION IS USEFUL IN COLLABORATIVE ENDEAVORS REQUIRING COMPLEX SYSTEMS AND DIVERSE GROUPS.</p> <p>EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION IS DESIGNED TO HELP GROUPS ACCOMPLISH THEIR OBJECTIVES.</p> <p>FOCUS:</p> <p>Assist nonprofits as they report to their boards Extend the service of evaluation to nonprofits in the Delta regions</p> <p>Assist the General Assembly of Arkansas by evaluating the impact of potential and existing legislation</p> <p>Fulfill a commitment to fiscal and philosophical accountability with the people of Arkansas by empowering the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff to provide nationally-recognized evaluation training</p>	<p>ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (SHORT AND LONG TERM)</p> <p>TWO (2) TYPES OF PROGRAMS</p> <p>CERTIFICATE PROGRAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -LECTURES -SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS -CLASSES -WORKSHOPS -HANDS-ON EXERCISES -2 WEEK INTENSIVE PROGRAM -MONTH LONG PROGRAM  <p>MASTERS PROGRAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -COURSES -RESEARCH DESIGN -STATISTICS -QUALITATIVE METHODS -EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION -ONE (1) YEAR PROGRAM <p>PRACTICUM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WORKSHOPS <p>OPTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FACE-TO-FACE DISTANCE LEARNING NIGHT AND WEEKEND CLASSES 	<p>INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION SCHOLARSHIP</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -INVITED SPEAKERS  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -COLLOQUIUM -CONFERENCES -PUBLICATIONS  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WEB VIDEOS -WEB PAGES <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">For additional information contact:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dr. David Fetterman ProfDaviddf@yahoo.com (650)-269-5689</p> <p style="text-align: center;">And Dr. Calvin Johnson johnsonc@uapb.edu (870)-575-7011</p> </div>	<p>EVALUATION WORKSHOPS TO BUILD CAPACITY</p> <p>AUDIENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STUDENT TRAINING (IN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS) • FACULTY DEVELOPMENT (CURRENT FACULTY) • PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELD)  <p>TECH TOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SKYPE (TELEPHONY) • ZOOMERANG (SURVEY SOFTWARE)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IVISIT (VIDEOCONFERENCING SOFTWARE) 	<p>MULTIPLE FUNDING STREAMS</p> <p>SOURCES OF FUNDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TUITION • INCREASED ENROLLMENT IN EXISTING COURSES • DISTANCE LEARNING • RESEARCH GRANTS • LEGISLATURE <p style="text-align: center;">State of Arkansas 86th General Assembly Regular Session, 2007</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS EVALUATION CENTER</p>

- Presented the Evaluation Center concept paper before the Black Caucus
- Presented the Evaluation Center proposal before the legislature
- House and Senate approval

- Governor passed legislation
- Emailed and called legislators to follow-up concerning funding or appropriations (since the Center did not received the approved appropriations)
- Interviewed a Center supporter to identify possible funding sources (resulted in a valuable list of potential funding sources)

Marketing

Marketing the program, including recruiting workshop participants as well as prospective certificate and masters students, is equal to designing the curriculum and developing funding streams at this point in the evolution of the Center. Marketing is needed to fulfill the purpose of the Center – to teach and train. Steps taken to date include:

- Submitting an abstract to present a presentation about the Center at the American Evaluation Association (this is an opportunity to solicit input about the design of the Center and its curricular program and simultaneously an opportunity to provide the Center with world-wide exposure)
- Preparing for the AEA Center presentation (since it was accepted)
- Contacting evaluators to ask them about what type of training they would like to receive is a form of training because it brings this resource to their attention while inquiring about their preferences
- Similarly, consulting with colleagues about the design of the curriculum is a form of marketing because it brings this new initiative to their attention as well
- Requests for funding (from foundations as well as legislators) also represents a form of marketing, since it bring the Center to their attention as well (and places it on their radar screen to recommend to others).

This is a brief summary of steps taken to date to fully actualize the potential of the Center. The next section of the report highlights planned steps to move forward in the immediate future to more fully realize the Center’s potential.

Next Steps

It will be necessary to focus on and act on all three initiatives simultaneously to achieve our objectives. In this spirit, our work plan is outlined below:

Curriculum

- Complete design of Institute workshop curriculum (2 to 5 day workshop)
- Complete review of prospective faculty (inside and outside UAPB)
- Identify faculty speakers and lecturers
- Establish date for Institute workshop
- Provide Institute workshop
- Design and develop certificate and masters programs (pending additional funding)

Funding

- Send letters out to potential funders (on UAPB stationery)
- Follow up on funding prospects
- Continue to work with legislators to secure funding (surplus funds through the Governor)

Marketing

- Create brochures to be used at evaluation and related meetings
- Highlight program in various presentations

Conclusion

The Center is an ambitious and much needed initiative. It will build evaluation capacity throughout the State of Arkansas. The first steps were difficult but rewarding. The next steps will be equally challenging and equally rewarding. The first initiative, the Institute workshop, is within our grasp and will be implemented this academic year. The rest of the plan will unfold as the funding falls into place, because the commitment and resolve are already firmly in place and the importance of the mission to the State.