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ABSTRACT
Title XX funds are used at the state level to develop, expand and improve the training of social service workers. Evaluation of programs receiving this funding must provide information on the effectiveness of the program in meeting specifically stated objectives, a complete description of the program for the purpose of replication, and recommendations for program improvement. Two core evaluation procedures are the development and use of behavioral objectives or goal statements and the development of a detailed description or chronicle of all procedures used or events occurring during the course of the grant period. Additional evaluation procedures used either to supplement or validate the core procedures are criterion referenced pre- and post-testing, self reporting of skills, use of attitude change scales, behavioral observation and participants' subjective ratings. Recommendations for the format in summarizing the collected information are given. Questionnaires are appended. (BH)

# An Eclectic Approach to the Evaluation of Training Programs for Title XX



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## Introduction

The evaluation of any program receiving Title XX training funds through the coordinating office at the University of Connecticut must serve three purposes. The evaluation must provide information pertaining to the effectiveness of the program in meeting specifically stated objectives, it must provide a complete description of the program for the purposes of replication, and finally, the evaluation must include recommendations for program improvement.

To accomplish these three goals of evaluation on a variety of conceptually and procedurally different projects, an eclectic approach to evaluation needed to be developed. This paper presents a description of the types of combinations of procedures which were found to be useful in securing the data required to meet the expressed goals of Title XX evaluations. A discussion of those procedures tried and found unsatisfactory will also be included so that others may benefit from this evaluator's mistakes.

## Background

Title XX is an amendment to the Social Security Act of 1947. The objectives of Title XX sponsored grants are to work at the state level to develop, expand, and improve the training of social service workers. The goal of Title XX funding is to provide an opportunity for each state to design and improve social service programs in order to best fit the needs of the communities served. To accomplish these objectives, Title XX funding has been made available to encourage three types of projects: 1) needs assessment and curriculum development; 2) classroom instruction; and 3) field instruction.

Any written products which result from Title XX funding need to be prepared with a dual level audience in mind. Most information must be presented in a fashion which is appropriate for both the content expert or academician implementing the program(s) as well as for the current and future participants, the Title XX service providers.

A wide variety of social service agencies and social service providers are served under the auspices of Title XX. Within the state of Connecticut there are over 500 individual Title XX eligible social service agencies. These agencies include day care centers, prisons, senior citizens centers, regional welfare and health centers, probation departments, halfway houses, financial counseling services, alcohol rehabilitation and job placement agencies, and visiting nurse services in addition to various other agencies. The over 6,000 social service providers employed by these agencies come from a wide range of educational backgrounds. Approximately 15 percent of the employees have not completed the equivalent of a high school education, 53 percent have a high school diploma, 19 percent have completed an under-graduate college degree program, and about 13 percent have a graduate degree (figures based upon 1977 estimates).

Bearing in mind the scope of training funded through Title XX monies and the heterogeneous nature of the population served, it is clear that various evaluation procedures need to be implemented to chronicle the development and effectiveness of training programs. Rather than relying on a single formula for evaluation, many types of evaluation techniques are used in concert. The different evaluative procedures provide meaningful data for social service agencies, program developers, program participants, and for the funding office itself. In constructing the evaluations, the needs of each data recipient are critical in determining the types of procedures used. Social service agencies need data describing what skills each of their employees have and will have as the result of training. Program participants need information regarding what training is or will be available and how such training can fit with their job related needs. The program developers and funding office need to know how effective a program has been, how to improve effectiveness, and how to replicate the desirable outcomes. The procedures described in the rest of this document are a sample of the types of methods used to meet the expressed evaluation needs of Title XX grants.

Core Procedures

Many of the specific evaluation procedures implemented on Title XX grants are "individualized" to fit needs and goals of the different grants, but there are two procedures which are constant throughout all grants funded. These two core procedures are the development and use of behavioral objectives or goal statements and the development of a detailed description or chronicle of all procedures used or events occurring during the course of the grant period. These two core procedures provide the backbone for all subsequent evaluation procedures. They have been found to be invaluable when attempting to provide information for agencies and participants as well as for dissemination and replication.

Statement of Goals

While not necessarily thought of as a traditional method of evaluation, behavioral objectives, or specific goal statements, have been found to play a critical part in Title XX grant evaluations. The importance of specific objectives are best summarized by Robert Mager (1975) "....if you're not sure where you're going, you're liable to end up someplace else (preface)." In the case of Title XX grants, if principal investigators (academics in most cases), agency personnel (both administrative and direct service providers), and the evaluator(s) do not know the specific intent or goals of a given grant, each party may end up in a different place and with a different degree of satisfaction as a result of having original impressions of goals met or unmet at the conclusion of a grant. It is not uncommon for an academic acting as a principal investigator on a grant for a first time to assume that his audience will easily understand content specific jargon or broad, sweeping statements describing potential outcomes. It is similarly likely that administrative personnel and service providers in agencies enter training programs provided as a result of a grant with preconceived expectations which may be independent of actual training content. Hence it is imperative to generate specific descriptions of what outcomes will result from the implementation of each grant.

The specifically stated objectives also provide a base from which an evaluator should build all subsequent evaluation procedures. The statement of objectives should provide a description of the behaviors, attitude changes, service changes or permanent products which should be evident at the conclusion of the grant if the grant staff has been effective in meeting stated goals. In other words, statements of the objectives of a given grant should provide the basic framework for the evaluation. They should identify all components of the grant which warrant inspection to determine effectiveness as well as suggesting a means for evaluation of the degree of effectiveness. For example, a specific objective of a grant funded for the development of training films may state that eight color videotapes will be produced. In that case, it would be clear that the first step in the evaluation would be to determine if all eight films were produced by the conclusion of the grant period. If fewer than eight were produced, or if some were produced in black and white rather than color, then the grant has been less than 100% effective in meeting stated goals. It is then clear that certain recommendations (i.e., a revision in filming schedule) are necessary before replication may be considered.

This very straightforward example may seem even to obvious to bother to state, but that has not been found to be the case. It is possible for grant proposals to include vaguely stated goals as "appropriate training tapes will be developed." In such an instance it is unclear how many and what kind of tapes will be developed, how long the tapes will be, etc. The specific objectives help eliminate any inappropriate expectations.

A second example of the usefulness of objective goal statements is illustrated by a proposal to train agency personnel in the area of consumer rights and responsibilities. One of the original goals of a proposed grant had been stated "to provide training for service providers in the area of Food Stamps and Food Issues." As stated, that goal was subject to a wide range of interpretations. As finally described in a more specific goal statement, the intent of the training was identified as "to prepare the service provider to explain to clients, (1) new regulations regarding the Revised Food Stamp Eligibility Formula, (2) eligibility requirements for Food Stamps, (3) procedures involved in securing Food Stamps,..." The specific restatement of the training goal helped eliminate any agency misunderstandings of what skills staff workers would develop as a result of training. Logical evaluation procedures (for example, observe participants explain regulations, eligibility requirements, procedures, etc. to clients) were also implied by the goal statements.

Aside from establishing specific and accurate expectations for the results of funded proposals and providing a framdwork for subsequent evaluation procedures, objective goal statements facilitate publicity efforts in recruitment of participants and ease dissemination efforts. If well stated, instructional objectives may be included in brochures and flyers used to publicize classes and workshops. When used in this way the objectives are effective and efficient tools for communicating expected instructional outcomes to both the direct service providers and administrative personnel in Title XX agencies. Upon completion of any grant these same objectives may be used to communicate to Title XX agencies in other states the types of goals which have been achieved through funding efforts. In that way, agencies in other states may capitalize upon the national nature of Title XX funding. An agency in California, seeing the stated objectives of a grant funded in Connecticut may decide that those objectives fit existing training needs. At that point, time and effort may be saved and effectiveness may be improved by replicating the grant as it was funded in Connecticut and implementing any recommendations from the original grant. Hence, dissemenation and replication of Title XX grants are enhanced by the use of objective goal statements.

Detailed Description of Procedures and Events

The second core procedure implemented on all grants is the requirement of a detailed chronicle of the development of the grant and any instruction funded through the grant. The parts or requirements of these chronicles are adapted to the nature of the grant receiving funding. In the case of a needs assessment and curriculum development grant, a description of the development of any assessment questionnaires used, a copy of questionnaires used, a written description of the procedures used in interviews, dates of all interviews or mailings, a list of agencies and individuals contacted, a list of agencies and individuals responding, an estimate of the response rate (as a percentage of the targeted population for the assessment), a description of the stratification of the sample responding to an assessment and a summary of the results of an assessment are required. The descriptions pertaining specifically to the curriculum development portion of a grant must include an identification of any existing curriculum similar to the one developed and where the existing one(s) may be found, any curriculum observed during the course of developing the new one, any references used during the course of curriculum development, the materials (tapes, journals, audiovisual equipment, etc.) which would be required to implement the new curriculum, the names of any persons known to be skilled in that particular content area and prepared to implement the curriculum, and a description of the audience for whom the curriculum was developed. When classroom or field instruction are the goals of the grant, descriptions should include the names and affiliations of all instructors and guest speakers, the names, agency affiliation and general demographic information pertaining to all participants, the time and location at which the class or workshop was conducted and an annotated course outline as actually implemented (including all handouts and overheads used, a list of reference materials used, a bibliography of related readings and reference materials, a description of all activities used, etc.). In all cases, be it assessment and curriculum development or any kind of instruction, the names, agency affiliation and job description of any personnel involved in the actual grant itself must be included.

These descriptions serve two purposes. First they provide all information necessary for a replication of the grant. The appropriate audience has been defined and the technical workings of the grant are identified. From these descriptions interested Title XX funding agencies in other states or other Title XX coordinating offices should be able to implement similar programs with predictable results. In addition, the descriptions provide data for accountability purposes, identifying who was responsible for what and what actually occurred as a result of funding.

The second use of the descriptions is to provide names and agencies served for the potential user of the programs developed. The potential user, either another Title XX coordinating office, an agency, or an individual service provider, should have sufficient information from these descriptions to evaluate program procedures for appropriateness in meeting existing needs. The names of both grant staff and program participants should also give the potential user a head start if he or she wishes to get additional impressions from those directly involved in the grant. If one has any questions remaining following reading of an evaluation report, these detailed descriptions should provide direction as to whom should be contacted to secure answers to questions.

A caution to the reader is necessary at this point. It has been the experience of this evaluator to find it difficult to secure detailed instructional outlines. This has been found to be the case in particular when well known content experts have been invited to address a group of service providers during a workshop or workshop series. Unless contingencies are arranged in advance, workshop leaders may be reluctant to submit revised outlines of material actually covered during instruction. It appears that one of the failings of human nature is to assume that once payment for instruction is received, no further responsibilities exist. In light of past experiences, the Title XX office at the University of Connecticut is experimenting with modified contingency contracts. In some cases, particularly when national experts or invited speakers are included in classes or workshops, contracts are written with receipt of payment contingent upon the principal investigator or coordinating office receiving certain documents. For example, an expert may receive 25 percent of his total honorarium following submission of specific behavioral objectives for a given instructional unit, another 25 percent following provision of a proposed instructional outline, 25 percent following actual instruction and the final 25 percent upon receipt of a revised, annotated instructional outline. Again, this procedure is currently being explored, so its effectiveness and limitations are not yet clear.

Additional Procedures

In almost all cases additional evaluation procedures are used to either supplement or validate the core procedures. The most appropriate procedures to include on each separate grant are chosen from a group or pool of methods to be discussed in this section. Selection of procedures is based upon the specific behavioral objectives stated for each project.

Criterion-Referenced Tests

Whenever possible, a pre- and post- instructional administration of an objective, content based test is used to assess change in knowledge or skills evidenced by participants. Criterion referenced tests are used for this purpose. As suggested by Popham (1978) criterion-referenced tests are probably the best tools available to secure specific information describing what a person can or cannot do. The use of criterion-referenced tests also makes it possible to closely match test content with actual instruction in classes, seminars or workshops.

The use of criterion-referenced pre- and post-testing directly serves two of the three purposes underlying the evaluation of Title XX funded projects. First, by comparing pre- to post-tests scores, it is easy to discern a change in knowledge or skill level. This information pertains directly to determining the effectiveness of instructionally oriented grants in meeting objectives. A related benefit of such testing is that if the criterion-referenced tests are appropriately developed to give good content sampling of the entire instructional domain, post-tests may serve to provide evidence of skills participants have following instruction.

The second use of scores from pre- and post-testing is for instructional improvement. If we refer to Bloom's (1976) basic model of instruction, it is clear that training is most effective when teachers have a good sense of the entering abilities of course or workshop participants. Knowledge of the characteristics of the audience allows for instruction to be adjusted to the most appropriate level for participant understanding. Unfortunately, we cannot all sense audience needs a priori. The use of a pre-test allows for a systematic collection of data describing the entering abilities of participants. If these data are collected in advance, changes in planned instructional techniques or content may be made to best fit audience needs.

But data are not always collected in sufficient time to allow for revisions in instruction before implementation. In those instances, it is the post-test data which provide the information for improving the effectiveness of instruction. Through the use of item analysis, content which was made understandable to only a portion of the audience or content which was misunderstood by all the participants is identified. Based upon the combined results of pre-and post-test administrations of criterion referenced tests, specific revisions in instructional content for an explicitly defined audience can and should be derived. These recommendations are provided for agencies considering requesting a replication of the program, for principal investigators responsible for a replication, and for other coordinating offices reviewing training efforts.

Self Report of Skills

A procedure often used in conjunction with criterion-referenced tests is participant self report of skill levels. When coupled with criterion-referenced tests, self report may be used to cross validate post-test scores as well as to generalize estimates of knowledge gained in broad content domains through the use of a limited number of questions. The use of self report without a criterion-referenced test, while less preferable than an objective evaluation, has been turned to in some specific instances. In some workshops the content presented does not fit easily into an objective testing model. For example, when presenting training to human service providers in areas such as how to influence "staff burnout" in mental institutions, or how to deal with clients problems in the emotional areas of death and dying, content based objective tests seem awkward and potentially offensive. In those instances the self report measures, while clearly not as systematic, objective or unbiased and valid as criterion-referenced tests, do help provide information about participants' sense of knowledge gained.

A quite different instance when self report of knowledge or skills gained appears appropriate is where a needs assessment has been conducted prior to training. Potential participants of Title XX training programs are typically asked to report on their "present" and "desired" skill level in a given domain as part of a needs assessment to determine training priorities (see Appendix A for an illustration of such an instrument ). In those situations, a logical conclusion to training efforts is to ask the audience to again rate their "present" and "desired" skill levels in specific content domains. If post-instructional self ratings of skills are of the same level as the pre-instructional needs assessment, then training has been less than effective. On the other hand, if "present" and "desired" levels of skills are approaching the same ratings following participation, the training has probably been appropriate.

Attitude Change Scales

While a change in skills or an increase in knowledge of content by service providers is the primary goal of most Title XX training, other subsidiary and often less tangible goals are also pursued. Given the nature of the job performed by the Title XX employee, to provide human services to clients, a change in attitude is often critical to insuring optimal grant effectiveness. Illustrations pertaining to client concern for death and dying and how to deal with "staff burnout" or decrease in motivation on the part of the direct care provider have already been mentioned. Another area when attitude change may have a critical impact on the effectiveness of training is marital and family therapy. In order to be an effective family or marital counselor, it is imperative to understand multiple possible solutions to family and/or marital problems. In order to understand those possible solutions, it seems important to approach the alternatives with an open and unbiased attitude. In other words, Title XX providers must often put aside preconceived attitudes in order to be effective learners and/or human service providers. Thus, attitude change is often a goal of Title XX funded projects.

The area of measuring attitudes and attitude change is the most difficult domain within the Title XX evaluation system. Attitudes, by nature of being a construct, are difficult to define and measure. When possible, previously developed attitude scales are used. Two references which have been of great help in locating scales amenable to measuring anticipated changes in participants' attitudes are Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes (Robinson and Shaver, 1978) and Measures of Occupational Attitudes and Occupational Characteristics (Robinson, Athanasiou, and Head, 1976). These two volumes present descriptions of the intent, development, validity and reliability evidence and samples of items from a large number of established instruments used to measure constructs. These books have often been found to provide enough information to allow for the selection of a scale or scales to measure intended outcomes. When it is clear that no appropriate scale exists to serve the purposes of a given grant evaluation, the Robinson et al. references have been useful in providing item and test formats which have been appropriate for measuring related constructs, thereby helping to establish a basis or format for a scale to be developed within the course of a particular grant.

Development of Criterion-Referenced Tests and Attitude Scales

When attitude change scales or criterion-referenced tests are developed for use on a grant, a semi-structured instrument development process is employed. First, specific hypotheses or expectations are stated describing what change in attitudes, skills or knowledge of content is anticipated. Once a domain is specified by the hypotheses or expectancy statements, items which reflect a representative sampling of the domain are developed. The items are then reviewed by at least two experts, one content expert to determine the face validity of the item, the second reviewer to determine if the item format is appropriate (if all grammar is correct, if there is any obvious influence of a testwiseness cue within the item, etc.). Following the revision of any items or scales which show evidence of problems during the first review, the items are combined into a test or scale and, if time permits, piloted with a group representative of the anticipated audience. When the instrument being developed is a criterion-referenced test, responses are submitted to an item analysis. Based upon the difficulty and discrimination indices resulting from the item analysis, individual items are again revised when necessary and put into final form. When the scale in question is being developed to measure attitudes, a factor analyses of the pilot data is conducted. Deletion of items, incorporation of new or additional items is then based upon the factors which emerge from the analysis.

The major problems encountered in scale development for Title XX evaluations pertain to item writing and piloting of scales. Development of good items is contingent upon at least two factors - knowledge of the boundaries of the domain to be sampled and an understanding of item writing procedures. As alluded to previously, it is sometimes difficult to secure specific outlines of content and goal statements from workshop presenters or classroom instructors well in advance of actual training. This difficulty has led to experimentation with established contingencies (for example, 25 percent of total payment is released following receipt of either an in-depth outline or some sample test items for a criterion-referenced instrument) within contract agreements with content experts. The other problem, that of securing well written items or persons with good item writing skills, remains unresolved. It appears that item writing is as much of an art as a science and that expertise comes with practice. These skills are generally absent from the large repertoire of skills of trainers and field instructors on grants, as well may be expected. The content experts employed by Title XX projects are primarily concerned with imparting skills and knowledge to direct care providers. These experts have little time to concern themselves with how to write a multiple choice item, what descriptors to include in a semantic differential, or how to limit the influence of social desirability in responses. Unfortunately, this problem has meant that in most cases an item writing expert is either forced to work closely and for many hours with the content expert or to become a content expert himself. Again, this problem remains unsatisfactorily resolved at this point.

The other major problem, piloting newly developed instruments, is more time consuming and mechanically frustrating than procedurally difficult. The time of service providers is often at a premium - they are loaded and overloaded with responsibilities to clients. It is difficult and takes many phone calls and hours to secure a representative audience in advance of actual training. Response rate to pilot tests disseminated through the mail or directly to agencies is dishearteningly low. Because of problems evident in trying to secure a truely representative sample, an alternative chosen in many cases is to pilot items on captive audiences which are readily available (for example, intact college classes, workshop or training groups of Title XX providers, etc.) This alternative is unsatisfactory and efforts are still being made to find other more representative audiences to serve as samples for instrument development.

The problems described above are the major contributors to delays in an instrument development process. Ideally, an item pool is developed well enough in advance to allow for necessary reviews, revisions, piloting, analysis, and final revisions of items. Frequently time runs too short to allow for the full and recommended procedures of instrument development. In reality, corners sometimes need to be cut on Title XX instrument development ventures. There is no set pattern by which the corners are cut. Judgemental decisions are made by the Title XX coordinating office staff in concert with individual grant staff about what procedures may be eliminated with the least amount of threat to the validity and integrity of those instruments developed.

Behavioral Observation

Another procedure used as a validity check for instruments employed in Title XX evaluations is behavioral observation. Actual on the job implementation of newly developed skills offers a handy criterion to be used as evidence of the concurrent validity of content and attitude tests. The most easily implemented forms of behavioral observation have been found to be diaries or logs and supervisor or cohort reports.

Diaries or logs have been a convenient way for Title XX employees to keep track of typical problems raised by their clients during the course of participation in training programs. The information in these logs may be used for many evaluative purposes. It can provide examples for trainers to use which closely reflect typical problems dealt with by Title XX service providers. Records of proposed solutions to client problems reflect an understanding or lack of understanding of material presented in training. The incidents recorded in logs and changes in proposed solutions provide evidence of implementation of skills learned through participation in programs funded through Title XX funds, the final goal of training efforts. Finally, information from logs is used to make revisions in training curricula and recommendations for improvements in instruction.

Log or diary entries are subject to influences of social desirability and image management. Supervisor or cohort observations of procedures used or behaviors exhibited by grant participants have been found helpful in adding external checks of the validity of self reports in logs and diaries. The major difficulty in securing observations by others has been the time restrictions faced by most Title XX employees. As previously stated, Title XX employees are commonly overloaded with client cases and paperwork and do not look favorably upon additional chores. Keeping requests for supervisor or cohort ratings short, specific and to the point has been found to be most advantageous in collecting such data. For example, it is far preferable to ask the cohort of a participant if the participant shared skills learned in training, has used more group rather than individual therapy with clients, or simply responds quicker to messages than before participation rather than asking cohorts "Have you noticed any changes in your fellow worker?"

More structured behavioral observations have been used on various grants with variable degrees of success. When conducting field instruction in behavioral techniques with the staff at a residential institution for mentally retarded clients, structured behavioral observations of participants' interactions with clients has been found a successful evaluation tool. When a similar technique was attempted in a day care setting, following instruction, the procedure failed. While found unobstrusive in the institutional setting, observers were found to be too disruptive to be maintained in the day care facility.

In other instances, videotapes of classes on individual participants during the first and final weeks of training have provided behavioral evidence of change following instruction. The videotape method has been found particularly worthwhile for use in sign language classes taught for social service providers working with deaf clients. The tapes illustrate change in behaviors of signing following instruction as well as giving participants a look at their own effectiveness in non-lingual communication.

A final form of behavoral observation experimented with and found effective in Title XX grant evaluation is the use of observation through a one-way mirror. Following training in group facilitation and group therapy techniques, Title XX participants were put in simulated group therapy situations. Unobtrusive observation through a one-way mirror of the methods employed by Title XX participants in structuring and leading the groups provided evidence of skills developed following instruction. The observations also helped identify skill areas which still needed practice, thus identifying recommendations for improvements in training content.

A summary of the use of behavioral observation as an evaluation tool must stress its unparalleled value in providing a criterion for estimating the concurrent and construct validity of any other evaluation techniques employed. Paper and pencil measures, interviews and self reports are unquestionably more efficient methods of evaluation than is behavioral observation. Efficiency of evaluation, however, must be carefully weighed against the validity of observation. Perhaps the problem is best summarized by Scheirer (1978) when she suggests, "When looking for evidence of behavioral change toward program goals, don't believe anyone's...impressions, including your own. Behavioral changes require behavioral evidence (p. 67)."

If the final goal of Title XX funding is to improve service to clients, then the behaviors to be observed following training are services to and interactions with clients.

But behavioral observations are probably the most difficult form of evaluation data to collect. Behavioral observation is costly. Title XX agencies are frequently reluctant to open their doors to outside observers. Cohort and supervisor ratings are not nearly so structured or systematic as would be hoped for in observation data. It is frequently difficult to target specific behaviors to observe in natural settings. It is difficult to know how valid a generalization from a simulated situation to an on the job setting may be. The list of problems tied to behavioral observations goes on and on.

So how may we balance the benefits of behavioral observation as an evaluation tool with its practical limitations evident in reality? This question, as the one pertaining to good item writing and securing representative participant samples remains unresolved. At present, the policy of the Title XX office at the University of Connecticut is to continue to collect as much observation data as possible and explore any new, unobtrusive, economic and feasible procedures which may be devised.

Participants' Subjective Ratings

Participant satisfaction questionnaires are used on all grants funding field or classroom instruction. These instruments are generally very straightforward, asking for participants ratings of the physical arrangements of the training, materials used during training, scheduling, etc. Such questionnaires have well documented limitations, the greatest of which is the tendancy for participants to give inflated and unjustly positive responses (Scheirer, 1978). In recognition of the limitations of these questionnaires efforts to determine the concurrent and construct validity of responses are made. Typically, these procedures employ multiple regression techniques. Change scores in knowledge of content (pre-test scores on criterion-referenced tests are subtracted from post-test scores to determine a change score), post-test scores on criterion-referenced tests, indices of attitudes and attitude changes in related areas, attendance at classes, completion of assignments, etc. are commonly used to predict participant ratings on satisfaction questionnaires. The extent to which participant satisfaction can be accurately predicted and the apparent logic of the predictors (for example, high post-test scores and large change scores with regard to knowledge of content would intuitively show a positive correlation with satisfaction scores) give support to or refute the construct validity of satisfaction questionnaire responses.

Usefulness ratings by participants are treated in much the same way as are the responses to satisfaction questionnaires. Rather than asking participants for their ratings of the comfort of the setting of instruction, whether they felt that a class was scheduled at an appropriate time or if a class was too large or too long, usefulness questionnaires attempt to determine how relevant training was to actual and anticipated job requirements. Whenever possible an investigation of the validity of responses to usefulness questionnaires is conducted by comparing the relationship between usefulness ratings and other evidence of grant effectiveness. The usefulness ratings are primarily for program revisions and as a source of recommendations for improvements. Such rating instruments commonly require participants to identify aspects of the training which were most and least beneficial, endeavors which were most applicable to job demands and those least relevant to job demands. These aspects of the ratings help capture specific feedback to individualize training activities to fit specific job and agency demands.

A participant rating form which was developed for use in the evaluation of training programs, particularly those programs conducted in a classroom setting, is included in Appendix B. This questionnaire has gone through a series of revisions and instrument development procedures. There are five factors underlying the version of the scale presented. The factors were derived from a principal components analyses of the data describing ratings from 120 participants in more than 20 instructional programs. The five factors pertain to course materials, course content, course scheduling, the use and uniqueness of the information presented, and the audiovisual aids and course length. The average alpha estimate of the reliability of the factors is .69. The items defining each of the factors are identified in Appendix C.

The primary use of ratings from the scale has been to provide feedback to instructors for the purpose of instructional improvement. Procedures to compare ratings of instruction following feedback of ratings are now being explored. The use of the rating instrument as part of a formative as well as a summative evaluation procedure is also being investigated.

Conclusion

The information collected through the use of any or all of the procedures described above must be summarized upon the completion of each grant. Again, the three purposes of the evaluation must be brought to mind. In addition, the potential audience reading the evaluation must be remembered. Title XX agency personnel, the staff of other Title XX coordinating offices and other principal investigators must all be able to comprehend the evaluation. For this reason, evaluation reports divided into sections are recommended. Conceptual descriptions should be included in the text of the report, technical descriptions included in appendices. The sections should speak directly to the purposes of the evaluation as well as being understandable to the entire audience.

The first section should restate the goals of the project in as simple terms as possible. These terms are expanded upon and elaborated in the specific goal statements which should follow. Next, a description of the particular evaluation procedures used on that grant should be given. Such a description should remain nontechnical in the text. A more detailed, elaborate, technical description (including such things as specific computer programs employed, evidence of all pilot and revised instruments used, etc.) should be included in an appendix. Following the description of the evaluation scheme, a chronicle of the program should be included. All specific names and job descriptions as well as annotated content outlines, references, etc., may be included in an appendix. Following the program description, results from the evaluation procedures should be summarized. Finally, recommendations for program improvements, generalization of training efforts and logical follow-up training programs should be described. By presenting the material in such a way, the interested reader may be able to understand the conceptual framework of what occurred during the course of a grant, determine whether the grant was effective in meeting stated goals, and identify how to improve the grant. The more interested or critical reader should be able to make use of the more technical appendices to answer any questions remaining following a reading of the text.

It was the intent of this evaluator to present some of the procedures found effective in constructing evaluations for a broad range of grants. It was also my intent to share with others my mistakes and frustrations in implementing evaluation procedures. I hope that this document may serve as a description to save someone from encountering similar problems, and to spur others to explore areas and possible solutions they otherwise might have ignored. If any reader should have thoughts to share in this domain which is continually being explored, I would greatly and sincerely appreciate sharing them.

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Appendix A

Appendix A

TITLE XX NEEDS ASSESSMENT - UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

TO: Agency Personnel

Job Title ________________

Agency ________________

Title XX Agency ___Yes ___No

Number of years of school completed ________

Number of clients dealt with in an average day ________

All replies will be treated as confidential.

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The following are areas which are currently being considered as topics for in-depth training sessions to be conducted in your agency. Could you indicate for each topic your PRESENT level of knowledge and your DESIRED level of knowledge. It may be helpful to think about how important each topic is to your job responsibilities and job demands when you rate your DESIRED level of knowledge. Remember, you will need to rate each topic twice, once for PRESENT knowledge, once for DESIRED knowledge.

| | | Little Knowledge | | | | Much Knowledge |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Car Repair . . . . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Consumer Agencies . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Consumer Credit . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Door to Door Selling . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | Little Knowledge | | | | Much Knowledge |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Food Issues . . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Food Stamps . . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Funerals . . . . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Mail Order . . . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Purchase of Medical Services | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Tenant/Landlord. . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Warranties . . . . . . . . . | Present | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Desired | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Additional areas for training ______________________________

______________________________

What time would you prefer to have the training sessions? ___a.m. ___p.m.

How often would you prefer to have these training sessions? ___daily ___weekly ___monthly

How long do you feel each session should be for you to derive the most benefit?

_____ 2 hours _____ 4 hours _____ 1 day

What day of the week do you prefer to have training? ______________________

Would it be better for you to have the training in your own agency or at a separate site? ______own agency ______separate site

Do you need job released time in order to participate in this type of training? ___ yes ___no

Please give the primary language of your clients:

_________% English

_________% Spanish

_________% Other (Specify_______)

100% Total

Appendix B

# Appendix B

COURSE TITLE ____ COURSE NUMBER ____ CREDITS ____

DEPARTMENT ____ INSTRUCTOR ____ YOUR TITLE OR JOB DESCRIPTION ____

(1) WAS THE CONTENT COVERED IN THIS COURSE RELEVANT TO YOUR PRESENT JOB ROLE?

___ a. Always relevant
___ b. Relevant most of the time
___ c. Relevant half of the time
___ d. Occasionally relevant
___ e. Rarely relevant

(2) WAS THE CONTENT COVERED IN THIS COURSE RELEVANT TO FUTURE REQUIREMENTS WHICH YOU FORESEE AS BEING INVOLVED IN YOUR JOB ROLE?

___ a. Always relevant
___ b. Relevant most of the time
___ c. Relevant half of the time
___ d. Occasionally relevant
___ e. Rarely relevant

(3) DO YOU FEEL THAT THE CONTENT COVERED IN THIS COURSE WILL BE HELPFUL IN EXPANDING YOUR JOB ROLE OR INSTITUTING NEW PROGRAMS OR SERVICES RELATED TO YOUR JOB?

___ a. Extremely helpful
___ b. Moderately helpful
___ c. A bit helpful
___ d. Not very helpful
___ e. Not at all helpful

(4) DO YOU FEEL THAT THE CONTENT COVERED IN THIS COURSE WILL HELP YOU IN DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER?

___ a. Extremely helpful
___ b. Moderately helpful
___ c. A bit helpful
___ d. Not very helpful
___ e. Not at all helpful

(5) WAS THE INFORMATION COVERED IN THIS COURSE NEW TO YOU?

___ a. Yes, all of the information was new
___ b. Yes, most of the information was new
___ c. Some of the information was new
___ d. No, most of the information was old
___ e. No, all of the information was old

(6) DO YOU THINK THAT YOU WOULD HAVE ENCOUNTERED THE INFORMATION COVERED IN THIS COURSE IF YOU HAD NOT TAKEN THE COURSE?

___ a. Yes, all of the information
___ b. Yes, most of the information
___ c. Some of the information
___ d. Very little of the information
___ e. Probably none of the information

(7) WAS ADEQUATE TIME ALLOWED DURING THE COURSE TO ASK QUESTIONS THAT WERE PERTINENT TO COURSE CONTENT AS IT RELATED TO YOUR JOB REQUIREMENTS?

___ a. Yes, all of the time
___ b. Yes, most of the time
___ c. Usually
___ d. No, hardly ever
___ e. No, none of the time

(8) WAS MOST OF THIS COURSE A REPEAT OF THE INFORMATION WHICH YOU HAD ENCOUNTERED IN OTHER COURSES?

___ a. Yes IF YES, WHAT COURSE OVERLAPPED WITH THE CONTENT OF THIS COURSE? ____
___ b. No

(9) WAS THE CLASS TOO LARGE?

___ a. Yes
___ b. No

(10) WAS THE COURSE SCHEDULED AT A TIME CONVENIENT TO YOUR NEEDS?

___ a. Yes
___ b. No

(11) WAS THE COURSE SCHEDULED TOO LATE IN THE DAY?

___ a. Yes
___ b. No

(12) WAS THE COURSE SCHEDULED TOO EARLY IN THE DAY?

___ a. Yes
___ b. No

(13) SHOULD THE COURSE MEET FOR A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME?

___ a. Yes
___ b. No

(14) SHOULD THE COURSE MEET FOR A SHORTER PERIOD OF TIME?

___ a. Yes
___ b. No

(15) WERE THE COURSE MATERIALS TOO EXPENSIVE?

___ a. Yes IF YES, GIVE APPROXIMATE COST OF MATERIALS ___________
___ b. No

(16) WERE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR JOB RELATED NEEDS?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BOOKS | Yes ______ | No ______ |
| ASSIGNMENTS | Yes ______ | No ______ |
| AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS | Yes ______ | No ______ |

(17) WERE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS APPROPRIATE FOR THE INFORMATION COVERED IN THE COURSE?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BOOKS | Yes ______ | No ______ |
| ASSIGNMENTS | Yes ______ | No ______ |
| AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS | Yes ______ | No ______ |

(18) IN GENERAL, THIS COURSE WAS:

___ a. Excellent
___ b. Above average
___ c. Average
___ d. Not very good
___ e. Not worth taking

## Appendix C

Appendix C

Summary of Principal Components Analysis of Participant Questionnaire

| Items | Loading | Alpha Estimate |
|---|---|---|
| Factor 1: Materials | | .82 |
| (16) Were the following materials appropriate for your job related needs? | | |
| BOOKS Yes ___ No ___ | .779 | |
| ASSIGNMENTS Yes ___ No ___ | .764 | |
| AUDIOVISUAL AIDS Yes ___ No ___ | .450 | |
| (17) Were the following materials appropriate for the information covered in the course? | | |
| BOOKS Yes ___ No ___ | .772 | |
| ASSIGNMENTS Yes ___ No ___ | .743 | |
| AUDIOVISUAL AIDS Yes ___ No ___ | .473 | |
| (15) Were the course materials too expensive? | | |
| ___a. YES, GIVE APPROXIMATE COST OF MATERIALS ______ | .464 | |
| ___b. NO | | |
| (14) Should the course meet for a shorter period of time? | .330 | |
| ___a. YES | | |
| ___b. NO | | |

| Items | Loading | Alpha Estimate |
|---|---|---|
| Factor 2: Course Content | | .77 |
| (2) Was the content covered in this course relevant to future requirements which you foresee as being involved in your job role? | .821 | |
| ___ a. Always relevant | | |
| ___ b. Relevant most of the time | | |
| ___ c. Relevant half of the time | | |
| ___ d. Occasionally relevant | | |
| ___ e. Rarely relevant | | |
| (3) Do you feel that the content covered in this course will be helpful in expanding your job role or instituting new programs or services related to your job? | .750 | |
| ___ a. Extremely helpful | | |
| ___ b. Moderately helpful | | |
| ___ c. A bit helpful | | |
| ___ d. Not very helpful | | |
| ___ e. Not at all helpful | | |
| (1) Was the content covered in this course relevant to your present job role? | .742 | |
| ___ a. Always relevant | | |
| ___ b. Relevant most of the time | | |
| ___ c. Relevant half of the time | | |
| ___ d. Occasionally relevant | | |
| ___ e. Rarely relevant | | |
| (4) Do you feel that the content covered in this course will help you in developing your career? | .692 | |
| ___ a. Extremely helpful | | |
| ___ b. Moderately helpful | | |
| ___ c. A bit helpful | | |
| ___ d. Not very helpful | | |
| ___ e. Not at all helpful | | |

(7) Was adequate time allowed during the course to ask questions that were pertinent to course content as it related to your job requirements? .355

___ a. Yes, all of the time

___ b. Yes, most of the time

___ c. Usually

___ d. No, hardly ever

___ e. No, none of the time

| Items | Loading | Alpha Estimate |
|---|---|---|
| Factor 3: Course Scheduling | | .65 |
| (12) Was the course scheduled too early in the day?<br>____ a. Yes<br>____ b. No | .847 | |
| (11) Was the course scheduled too late in the day?<br>____ a. Yes<br>____ b. No | .769 | |
| (14) Should the course meet for a shorter period of time?<br>____ a. Yes<br>____ b. No | .618 | |
| (10) Was the course scheduled at a time convenient to your needs?<br>____ a. Yes<br>____ b. No | .536 | |
| (13) Should the course meet for a longer period of time?<br>____ a. Yes<br>____ b. No | .497 | |

| Items | Loading | Alpha Estimate |
|---|---|---|
| Factor 4: Use and Uniqueness of the Information Presented | | .68 |
| (5) Was the information covered in this course new to you? | .847 | |
| ___ a. Yes, all of the information was new | | |
| ___ b. Yes, most of the information was new | | |
| ___ c. Some of the information was new | | |
| ___ d. No, most of the information was old | | |
| ___ e. No, all of the information was old | | |
| (6) Do you think that you would have encountered the information covered in this course if you had not taken the course? | .807 | |
| ___ a. Yes, all of the information | | |
| ___ b. Yes, most of the information | | |
| ___ c. Some of the information | | |
| ___ d. Very little of the information | | |
| ___ e. Probably none of the information | | |
| (8) Was most of this course a repeat of the information which you had encountered in other courses? | .545 | |
| ___ a. Yes If Yes, what course overlapped with the content of this course? | | |
| ___ b. No | | |
| (4) Do you feel ~~that the~~ content covered in this course will help you in developing your career? | .392 | |
| ___ a. Extremely helpful | | |
| ___ b. Moderately helpful | | |
| ___ c. A bit helpful | | |
| ___ d. Not very helpful | | |
| ___ e. Not at all helpful | | |

| Items | Loading | Alpha Estimate |
|---|---|---|
| Factor 5: Audiovisual Aids and Course Length | | .56 |
| (17) Were the following materials appropriate for the information covered in the course?<br>AUDIOVISUAL AIDS ___ Yes ___ No | .778 | |
| (16) Were the following materials appropriate for your job related needs?<br>AUDIOVISUAL AIDS ___ Yes ___ No | .764 | |
| (10) Was the course scheduled at a time convenient to your needs?<br>___ a. Yes<br>___ b. No | .390 | |
| (13) Should the course meet for a longer period of time?<br>___ a. Yes<br>___ b. No | .387 | |