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University-Based Evaluation Training Programs in the United States 1980–2008: An Empirical Examination

John M. LaVelle[1] and Stewart I. Donaldson[1]

Abstract

Evaluation practice has grown in leaps and bounds in recent years. In contrast, the most recent survey data suggest that there has been a sharp decline in the number and strength of preservice evaluation training programs in the United States. In an effort to further understand this curious trend, an alternative methodology was used to examine the current state of university-based evaluation training programs in the United States. An online search and curricular document analysis suggest different trends, including a dramatic increase in the number of evaluation training programs in the United States, specifically within schools of education. The importance of using alternative methodologies for understanding the nature of evaluation training programs is discussed.

Keywords

evaluation, evaluation training, evaluation teaching, university programs

Since its formal inception in the late 1960s, the evaluation profession has undergone significant growth. Informal inquiry suggests that evaluation-related positions are plentiful (LaVelle, 2007/ LaVelle, 2009), the membership of the American Evaluation Association (AEA) is more numerous than ever before with more than 5,500 members (American Evaluation Association [AEA], 2007), and the number of professional evaluation associations worldwide has risen from 5 in 1990 to more than 50 in 2007, with an international alliance to connect these networks (see, Donaldson, 2007/ Donaldson & Christie, 2006). In tandem with the growth of the profession, calls for empirical research on how best to practice contemporary evaluation are plentiful (e.g., Mark, 2007), and studies across various facets of the evaluation profession and discipline continue to mount. For example, scholarly contributions have been made to understand the links between evaluation theory and practice (Fitzpatrick, Christie, & Mark, 2009), what counts as credible evidence (Donaldson, Christie, & Mark, 2008), managing evaluation anxiety and improving relationships between evaluators and

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stakeholders (Donaldson, Gooler, & Scriven, 2003), the development of essential competencies necessary for good evaluation practice (Ghere, King, Stevahn, & Minnema, 2006; Stevahn, King, Ghere, & Minnema, 2005a, 2005b), standards for evaluation practice (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994), guiding principles for evaluators (AEA, 2004), and there is a growing body of literature on how best to train evaluators in modern times (Beywl & Harich, 2007; Engle, Altschuld, & Kim, 2006; Schwandt, 2008). These advances have been critically important as the evaluation discipline seeks to position itself within the professional landscape.

Implicit within these advances is the critical role of preservice education and preservice education programs. Evaluators are made, not born, and an extended period of training is necessary to master the evaluation-specific skills and knowledge necessary to provide quality service to clients, as well as be socialized into the professional frameworks, standards, and ethical guidelines. The importance of this preservice training cannot be overstated. As described by Stufflebeam, ''the evaluation field's future success is dependent on sound evaluation [training] programs that provide a continuing flow of excellently qualified and motivated evaluators'' (Stufflebeam, 2001, p. 445). Training programs play an essential role in the continuation of professions, and therefore this topic has been the subject of much research since the late 1970s.[1]

In 1976, Gephart and Potter published what is believed to be the earliest directory of training programs in evaluation, although the publication is no longer available for study.[2] Subsequently, Conner, Clay, and Hill (1980) solicited nominations of training programs from the Evaluation Research Society (ERS) membership, and contacted those nominated via a mail questionnaire/survey. The study of Conner et al. had a dual effect on the evaluation discipline: first, it suggested that 67 programs were operating in the United States at the time of publication; second, it established an acceptable survey methodology for researching and disseminating information on evaluation training programs.

The survey-only methodology introduced by Conner et al. (1980) changed only slightly over the next 26 years. The next major study was conducted 6 years later by May, Fleischer, Scheirer, and Cox (1986), wherein they solicited nominations from the membership of the ERS, the Evaluation Network (ENet), the American Psychological Association (APA), and the American Sociological Association (ASA), and contacted the nominations with a mailed survey. The study of May et al. was important in two ways: first, it suggested the presence of 44 programs in the United States; second, it was the first study to publish a definition of ''program'' with the results. Eight years later, Altschuld, Engle, Cullen, Kim, and Macce (1994) conducted the next study, and in addition to using the previous directories as a launching point, they solicited nominations from the AEA's membership, the AEA board, the AEA teaching topical interest group (TIG-TOE), the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES), and the American Sociological Association (ASA). The study of Altschuld et al. also marked a change in the research stream. In addition to their identification of 38 programs in the United States, they refined the definition of ''program'' so that it had to include multiple courses, seminars, and so on. Most recently, in 2002, Engle et al. (2006) conducted an update to their 1994 study, which used an identical methodology to their 1994 study, except their sample frame was augmented with an Internet search and their survey was conducted online. The results of the most recent study of Engle et al. suggest only 27 programs in the United States.

When examined longitudinally, the published research on evaluation training programs in the United States suggest that the number of university-based evaluation training programs has steadily declined since 1980 (see Figure 1), with the most pronounced drop in the number of programs housed in schools of psychology (see Figure 2). This raises significant concerns about where current and future generations of evaluators will receive their training. However, it must be noted that previous research used inconsistent definitions of evaluation training programs (see Table 1) and relied exclusively on survey methodologies with follow-up procedures for nonrespondents, such as phone calls and e-mails. These surveys took the form of either a mailed survey (e.g., Altschuld et al., 1994;

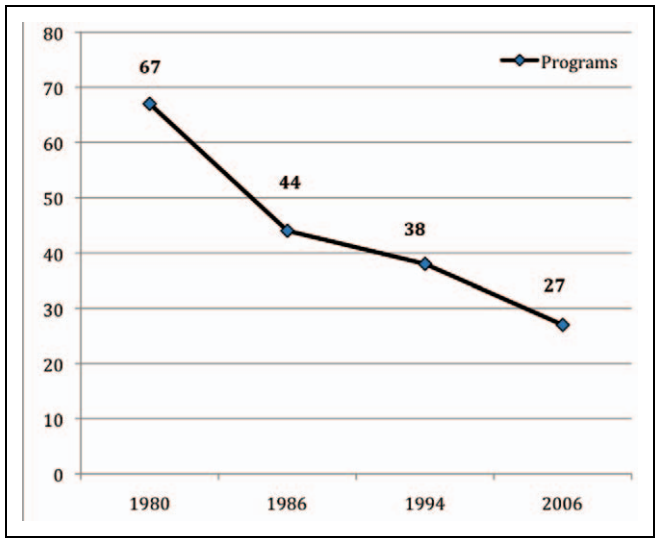

Figure 1. Reported trends in U.S. university-based evaluation training programs 1980–2006.

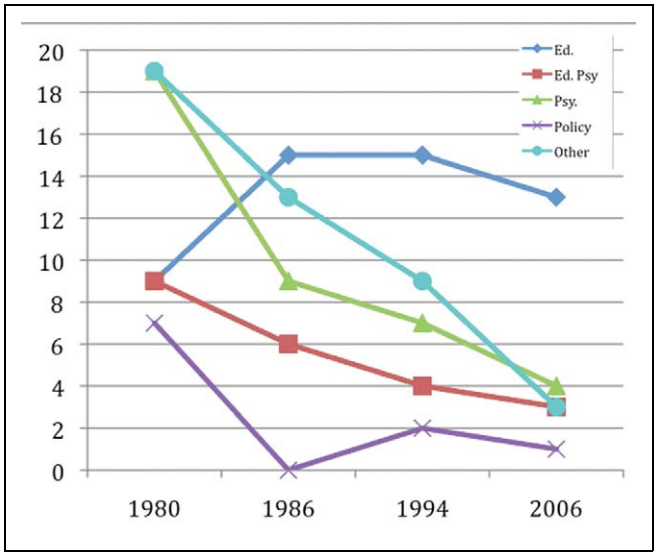

Figure 2. Trends in U.S. university-based evaluation training programs 1980–2006 by discipline.

Conner et al., 1980; May et al., 1986) or an electronically delivered online survey (e.g., Engle et al., 2006).

There have been significant technological advances since the publication of the last official directory in 1994. One technology that may be used to help better understand the phenomenon of evaluation training programs is the World Wide Web (WWW), which has become particularly well ingrained into American society. At the macro level, the WWW is partitioned into six distinct top-level domains: .com, .org, .net, .gov, .mil, and .edu (Generic Top-Level Domain [gTLD], n.d.). The next lower step is the second-level domains, also known as Web *sites*, which are registered and owned by an organization (Second-Level Domain [SLD], n.d.), and are composed of groups of

Table 1. Comparison of Previous Evaluation Training Directories and Summaries

Year study conducted	1979	1984	1993	2002
Year study reported	1980	1986	1994	2006
Researchers	Conner, Clay, and Hill	May, Fleischer, Scheirer, and Cox	Altschuld, Engle, Cullen, Kim, and Macce	Engle, Altschuld, and Kim
Operational definition of "program"	None specified	"A program shall prepare students to conduct independently a program evaluation"	"Multiple courses, seminars, practicums, offerings, and so on designed to teach evaluation principles and concepts"	"Multiple courses, seminars, practicums, offerings, and so on designed to teach evaluation principles and concepts"
Method	Mail survey: 106 invitations sent	Mail survey: 117 invitations sent	Mail survey: 93 invitations sent	Online survey: 84 invitations sent
Response rate	69% response rate: Number of U.S. candidates not available	33% response rate: Number of U.S. candidates not available	83% response rate: 65 U.S. candidates	45% response rate: 27 U.S. candidates
Number of U.S. programs listed	67	44	38	27

Web *pages*. When information is posted on a Web page, it is discoverable via a search engine, such as Google™, which reduces the overwhelming number of Web pages on the WWW into a list of ''hits''—Web pages that contain the search term—organized by relevance to the search term. Most search engines allow for advanced search commands so that only those Web pages that meet specific criteria are visible (i.e., search terms within a specific top-level domain).

Owning and maintaining a Web site is a major indicator that an organization is established and ready for business, and most, if not all, organizations use Web pages as a 24/7 self-service marketing/information-gathering tool (Biech, 2007). In this regard, universities are not wholly different from their counterparts in other sectors of the economy. Middleton, McConnell, and Davidson (1999) suggest that a major function of university Web sites is the marketing and promotion of the institution to a wide range of external users, such as prospective staff and other academics, as well as prospective students. Given that the use of Web sites has become an important method of students' learning about universities and programs (Abrahamson, 2000), it would be disadvantageous, as well as unlikely, for an academic program with a specialization in evaluation to exist in the United States and not have its own Web pages nested within a university Web site. Aligned with its potential as a marketing tool, the information on the academic specialization page would likely include (a) title of the program, (b) the degrees awarded on completion of the curriculum, (c) the curriculum itself, (d) specializations within the program, (e) information about professors, (f) the required criteria and standards for applicants, and (g) information about the application procedures. These publicly available data very closely reflect the information that is routinely reported in evaluation training program directories.

In an effort to further understand the discordance between the rise of evaluation practice and the reported decline in evaluation training programs, an alternative methodology was used to examine the current state of university-based evaluation training programs in the United States. Using an Internet-based Web page/document analysis technique, this project sought to answer two key questions:

- Has there indeed been a decline in university-based evaluation training programs in the United States, as suggested by the recent survey published in *American Journal of Evaluation* (AJE) documenting university training programs in the United States (Engle et al., 2006)?
- What is the current state of university-based evaluation training programs in the United States?
  - Which U.S. universities are offering evaluation training programs in 2008?
  - In which academic schools/departments are evaluation training programs housed?
  - What kinds of degrees are being offered?
  - What kinds of courses are being offered?

Method

Sample

This study used a combination of archival research techniques augmented with current Web site search methodologies. The research team developed a sample frame by creating an Excel™ spreadsheet of all university-based evaluation training programs located in the United States, which had ever been listed in a directory since 1980. This database was supplemented with the sampling frame used in the study of Engle et al. (2006), as well as the U.S. programs listed on the AEA's *Training Opportunities* Web page (AEA, 2008). This process resulted in the identification of 89 potential sites in the United States. The sample frame database was then augmented with additional sites located through an intensive Web site search process conducted between January and February 2008.

The research team used the Firefox Web page browser to query the WWW via the Google™ search engine's advanced search capabilities and used the search term "MA OR MS OR Ph.D. 'program evaluation' site:.edu." This command string told the search engine to only look in Web sites ending in ".edu," thereby limiting the search to colleges and universities in the United States. Because the researchers were looking for evaluation training programs that offer academic degrees and not just workshops, professional development, or certificates, the search was linked to pages that contain both a degree (MA or MS or PhD) and the term "program evaluation." The query resulted in over 68,000 hits. Early in the search, it became apparent that many of the Web pages contained the keywords multiple times (e.g., multiple evaluation reports would be listed on a single Web page), thereby raising the number of reported hits. The research team specified a priori that when (if) 60 sequential Web pages were examined, which did not produce any new training programs, the search would be considered compete. The search ended with the examination of approximately 1,400 Web pages, and the identification of an additional 31 potential programs in the United States alone, bringing the total sample frame up to 120 sites for in-depth analysis.

Program Definition

It is critical that a consistent definition of *program* be used so that the data collected at different points in time might be appropriately compared. For this project, the researchers used the same definition of *program* as Altschuld et al. (1994, p. 72) and Engle et al. (2006, p. 354): "a 'program' consists of multiple courses, seminars, practicums, offerings, and so on designed to teach evaluation principles and concepts." Because this study utilized publicly available data from program Web pages, and because course syllabi/learning objectives are not always available on program Web pages, the researchers specified a priori that an acceptable proxy for evaluation content would be found in the course titles. Therefore, to satisfy our inclusion criterion, programs would have to offer two or more courses with the word "evaluation" in the course title.

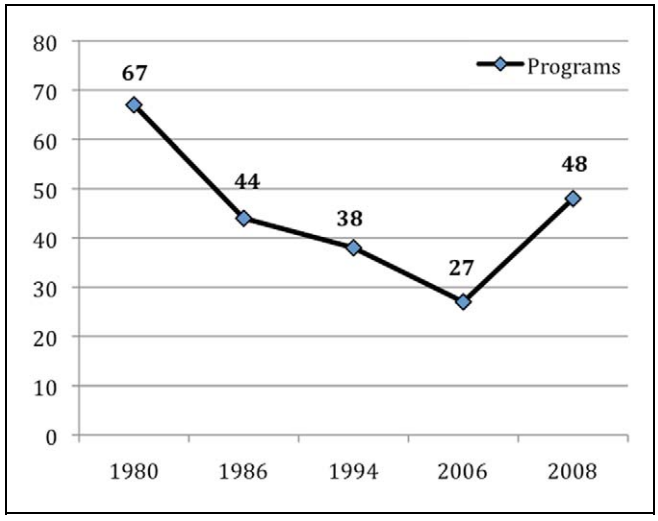

Figure 3. Trends in U.S. evaluation training programs with new data.

Data Collection

First, the researchers examined the Web page where the keywords were found. If the Web page was linked to a college or university listed in a previous directory, the researcher went to the Web page of the department that housed the program (e.g., education, psychology, educational psychology, sociology, etc.) and looked for a description of the current programs. If no evaluation program/specialization could be found, the researcher accessed the Office of the Registrar's Web page and examined the comprehensive list of degrees and specializations. A final strategy was to locate and examine the most current academic catalog searching for the term "evaluation." If a program was located, the following data were cut directly from the Web page and pasted into the database: program/concentration name, department, program Web page URL, program goals/objectives, evaluation course titles, research methods course titles, and specialization chair/key contact. As an additional method of capturing the data, the Web pages describing the program and curricula were printed and subsequently saved electronically as Portable Data Files (.PDFs) for later verification and document analysis.

Analysis

The data collected from program Web pages were analyzed by deductively analyzing the course titles to determine appropriateness for inclusion in the study. When a program was included, it was analyzed by finding its academic location in the university and by creating a list of all evaluation courses offered through the program. The list was then analyzed using simple descriptive statistics. Additionally, the researchers kept a list of sites where single evaluation courses were being offered but not as a part of an evaluation-specific curriculum.

Results

Number of University-based Evaluation Training Programs in the United States

This study identified 48 sites that offered a graduate-level degree along with two or more courses with the term "evaluation" in the course title. That is, almost twice as many programs were

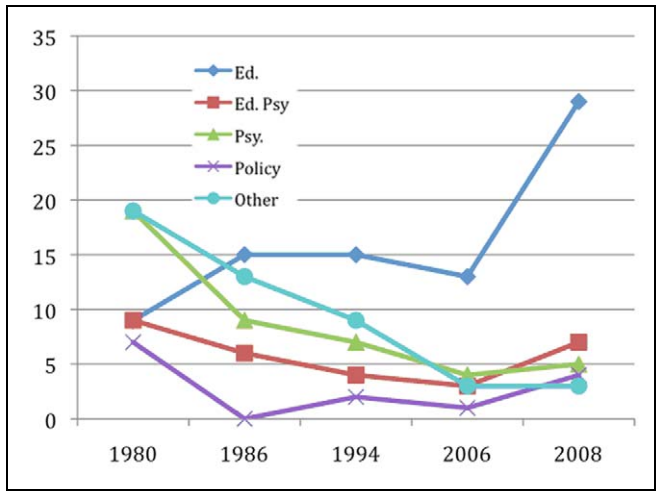

Figure 4. Trends in U.S. evaluation training programs by discipline with new data.

identified using the online methods in contrast to the latest survey findings published in 2006 (again, only 27 programs were found in 2006; see Figure 3). Of those 48 programs, 35 specifically called attention to the evaluation specialization through their program title. The research team identified an additional 13 sites whose Web pages suggest they offer an evaluation specialization, although specific curricular information was not accessible. For the programs on which we found complete data, most were located in schools of Education ($n = 29$; 60.4%), with others offered in schools of educational psychology ($n = 7$; 14.5%), psychology ($n = 5$; 10.5%), public policy ($n = 4$; 8.3%), criminal justice ($n = 1$; 2%), applied sociology ($n = 1$; 2%), and interdisciplinary studies ($n = 1$; 2%; see Figure 4). Of the sites identified that had curricular information available, 12 offered a master's specialization only (18.7 %), 16 offered a doctoral specialization only (29.2 %), and 25 offered the specialization at both the master's and doctoral level (52.1 %).

United States Universities Offering Evaluation Training Programs in 2008

To more fully understand evaluation training programs, it is important for researchers to have open access to information about program data, such as degree and course offerings. Table 2 presents information on each program that was identified as meeting the inclusion criteria. Column 1 identifies the institution that houses the program, and column 2 identifies the department that houses the program. Column 3 describes the degrees offered and department specialization. Column 4 lists all courses offered with the term "evaluation" in the title. As illustrated in Table 2, a wide range of courses with evaluation in the title are being offered at universities across the United States. Additionally, we identified 13 institutions that reported offering an evaluation emphasis but were unable to locate enough curricular information for an appropriate classification.

Program Size

The number of evaluation-specific courses provides insight into the emphasis given to evaluation preparation, and so we have used the same ranking system utilized in the study of Engle et al. (2006). In this ranking taxonomy, a small program offers 2–3 evaluation-specific courses, a medium program offers 4–6, and a large program offers 7+. The current study suggested that in 2008 there were 30 small programs, 14 medium programs, and 3 large programs.

Table 2. Preservice Programs With an Evaluation Emphasis

School Name	School/ Department	Degrees Offered; Emphasis	Courses With Evaluation in Title
Boston College	Education	MEd, PhD; Educational research, measurement and evaluation	Models of curriculum and program evaluation; practicums aspects of curriculum and program evaluation
Brigham Young University	Education	MS, PhD; Research and evaluation	Introduction to evaluation in education; Advanced evaluation in education
California State University–Los Angeles	Education	MA; Research and evaluation	Program evaluation theory and design; Evaluation of state and federal programs; Field experience in evaluation
Columbia University	Education	EdM, EdD, PhD; Measurement and evaluation	Evaluation methods 1; Evaluation methods 2; Practicum in research and evaluation
Florida State University	Education	MS, PhD; Program evaluation	Introduction to evaluation; Evaluation of new educational programs and practice; Qualitative methods for program evaluation; Economic evaluation
Hofstra University	Education	MS; Program evaluation	Measurement and evaluation in education; Theory and models of program evaluation research
Indiana University	Education	PhD; Inquiry methodology	Evaluation models and techniques; Methodology of educational evaluation
Kent State University	Education	MA; Evaluation and assessment	Evaluation in education; Research in evaluation and measurement; Practicum
Northern Illinois University	Education	MS; Educational research and evaluation	Seminar in educational research and evaluation; Internship in educational research and evaluation; Practicum in educational research and evaluation; Program evaluation in education
Nova Southeastern University	Education	PhD; Organizational leadership	Program evaluation and policy analysis; Advanced program evaluation
Ohio State University	Education	MA, PhD; Quantitative research, evaluation, and measurement	Introduction to evaluation; Formative evaluation of instructional systems; Evaluation methods (needs assessment 1); Evaluation methods (personnel); Seminar in Quantitative Research, Evaluation, and Measurement; Evaluation methods (evaluation of teachers)
Oklahoma State University	Education	MA, PhD; Research and evaluation	Program evaluation; Evaluation practicum
Syracuse University	Education	MS, PhD; Instructional design, development, and evaluation	Techniques for educational evaluation; Capstone practicum in evaluation; Concepts and issues in educational evaluation; Cost effectiveness in instruction and training
Tennessee Technological University	Education	PhD.; Program planning and evaluation	Advanced program planning and evaluation methods 1; Advanced program planning and evaluation methods 2; Practicum in planning and evaluation (taken 3 times); Program planning and proposal development

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

School Name	School/ Department	Degrees Offered; Emphasis	Courses With Evaluation in Title
University of California Berkeley	Education	EdD.; two concentrations: Quantitative methods and evaluation; Program evaluation and assessment	Models and methods of evaluation 1; Models and methods of evaluation 2; Evaluation theory; Evaluation procedures
University of California–Los Angeles	Education	MA, PhD; Social research methods: Evaluation	Evaluation theory; Evaluation procedures; Cost-benefit analysis
University of Central Florida	Education	MA; Program evaluation	Measurement and evaluation in education; Evaluation of school programs; Curriculum evaluation
University of Connecticut	Education	MA, PhD; Measurement, evaluation, and assessment	Construction of evaluation instruments; Program evaluation; Evaluation workshop 1
University of Denver	Education	MA, PhD; Quantitative research methods	Program development and needs assessment; Child, family, and school psych program development and evaluation; Practicum in program evaluation
University of Iowa	Education	PhD; Educational measurement and evaluation	Introduction to program evaluation; Program evaluation; Seminar in evaluation; Practicum in program evaluation
University of Kentucky	Education	MEd, EdD, PhD; Educational policy and evaluation	Special topics in educational policy and evaluation; Topics and methods of evaluation; Advanced topics and methods of evaluation; Multiple measures in education and evaluation; Independent study in policy studies and evaluation; Internship in policy studies and evaluation
University of Louisville	Education	PhD; Educational leadership and organizational development, evaluation emphasis	Evaluation of educational processes; Internship in educational evaluation; Seminar in evaluation; Policy analysis and program evaluation; Program evaluation and impact analysis; Evaluation and measurement in education; Program development and evaluation in student affairs
University of Minnesota–Twin Cities	Education	M.A., Ph.D.; Evaluation studies	Foundations of evaluation; Evaluation theory; Internship in evaluation; Economic analysis in evaluation; plus range of electives
University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill	Education	PhD; Educational psychology, measurement, and evaluation	Program evaluation; Evaluation of social interventions
University of North Carolina–Greensboro	Education	MS, PhD; Educational research methodology	Evaluation of educational programs; Applied educational evaluation; Practicum in educational research and evaluation; Advanced topics in evaluation of educational programs; Educational measurement and evaluation

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

School Name	School/ Department	Degrees Offered; Emphasis	Courses With Evaluation in Title
University of Pennsylvania	Education	MS, PhD; Education policy	Program evaluation and policy analysis; Qualitative approaches to program evaluation in urban schools
University of South Florida	Education	MEd, EdS, PhD; Applied evaluation	Theory and practice of applied evaluation 1; Practicum in applied evaluation; Consulting and project management skills for evaluators; Meta-evaluation
University of Virginia	Education	MA, EdD, PhD; Research, statistics, and evaluation	Introduction to program evaluation; Program evaluation design; Advanced seminar in evaluation
Western Michigan University	Education	MA, PhD; Evaluation, measurement and research	Fundamentals of evaluation, measurement, and research; Program evaluation; Personnel evaluation; Evaluation practicum
Ball State University	Educational Psychology	MA, PhD	Evaluation of educational programs; Research and evaluation in educational technology
University of Illinois–Champaign Urbana	Educational Psychology	PhD; Queries, emphasis evaluation research	Introduction to evaluation theory; Advanced theory of educational evaluation; Evaluation of educational programs; Introduction to evaluation methods; Program evaluation
University of Northern Colorado	Educational Psychology	PhD; Research, statistics, and measurement	Evaluation models and designs; Advanced methods in evaluation
University of Tennessee–Knoxville	Educational Psychology	PhD; Evaluation and assessment	Program evaluation in education; Seminar in assessment and evaluation; Application of evaluation and assessment; Designing and implementing personnel evaluation assessments; Designing project evaluations; Internship in evaluation
University of Texas–Austin	Educational Psychology	MA, PhD; Program evaluation	Evaluation models and techniques; Practicum in evaluation
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee	Educational Psychology	MS, PhD; Research methodology	Program evaluation in education; Seminar in measurement and evaluation
Washington State University	Educational Psychology	MA, EdM, PhD; Research, evaluation, measurement	Introduction to program evaluation; Advanced program evaluation
Claremont Graduate University	Psychology	MA, PhD; Evaluation and applied research methods	Evaluation foundations; Comparative evaluation theory; Evaluation procedures; Theory-driven evaluation; Current issues in evaluation; plus range of evaluation electives
San Diego State University	Psychology	MS; Program development, implementation, and evaluation	Seminar in program evaluation; Advanced seminar in evaluation; Internship in evaluation
University of Alaska–Fairbanks	Psychology	PhD; Clinical-community psychology	Program evaluation and community consultation 1; Program evaluation and community consultation 2
University of Wisconsin–Stout	Psychology	MS; Program evaluation	Program evaluation 1; Program evaluation 2; Current issues in evaluation

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

School Name	School/ Department	Degrees Offered; Emphasis	Courses With Evaluation in Title
Utah State University	Psychology	MA, PhD; Research and evaluation methodology	Program evaluation; Advanced evaluation methods and techniques
American University	Public Policy	MPP; Social policy	Public program evaluation; Cost-benefit analysis
Georgia State University	Public Policy	MPA, PhD; Policy and program evaluation	Policy and program evaluation; Evaluation research design and practice; Advanced topics in policy analysis and evaluation
University of Delaware	Public Policy	PhD; Social and urban policy	Qualitative methods for program evaluation; Program evaluation for health and social services; Program and project analysis
University of Illinois–Chicago	Public Policy	MS, health policy and administration	Health evaluation methods; Organization theory applied to health programs; U.S. mental health policy
Northeastern University	Criminal Justice	PhD	Research and evaluation methods; Research and evaluation methods lab; Advanced research and evaluation methods
University of Maryland–Baltimore County	Sociology	MA; Applied sociology	Evaluation of educational policy; Advanced research and evaluation techniques; Performance assessment and program evaluation
Western Michigan University	Interdisciplinary	PhD; Evaluation	Foundations of evaluation; Seminar in evaluation; Evaluation of HR; Program evaluation; Topics in Public Administration: Program evaluation; Evaluation research; Evaluation of social work practice; Evaluation practicum; plus range of evaluation electives

Single-Course Offering in Evaluation

Morris (1994) has offered insights into the importance of the single course in evaluation, and the importance of monitoring these single-course offerings cannot be overstated. Single-course offerings are not the main focus of the project, but it is interesting to note the number of colleges and universities that offer such courses, and one might extrapolate the number of students being exposed to evaluation concepts and processes. Twenty-two sites were identified, which promoted themselves as having an evaluation training program with an evaluation emphasis, but only offered one course with "evaluation" in the title. An additional 65 sites were identified where a single program evaluation course is offered outside an evaluation specialization in service of another degree.

Discussion

The results of this study suggest there are many more university-based evaluation training programs in the United States than have been previously found using survey methods to locate programs.

Using Internet-based Web page/document analysis methods, we found evidence of 48 university-based evaluation training programs in the United States, almost twice as many as were reported by Engle et al. (2006). In addition, we found evidence of an additional 13 programs that report training evaluators, but for which we could not find curricular information, and so were not included in our analysis. In contrast to the findings of Engle et al., we found evidence of roughly double the number of medium-to-large programs (17 compared with 10), and approximately double the number of small programs as well (31 compared with 17). Although it is likely that several of the programs were implemented or enhanced recently and therefore would not have been included in the publication of Engle et al., it seems equally likely that many of the programs identified in the current study were missed in earlier studies or did not respond to invitations to participate in previous studies.

The results of this study seem to provide a more consistent picture of the discipline and profession of evaluation. That is, university programs do not appear to be in decline, and appear to be training evaluators for the growing demands of evaluation practice. These data also suggest that the evaluation discipline is gradually becoming distinct, although it is still strongly tied to its sister disciplines and often integrated with research methods and data analysis. For example, only 12 of the programs offered courses with the terms "evaluation models" or "evaluation theory" in the title although many of the training programs reflected evaluation's applied focus by requiring a practicum, internship, or field placement. It is interesting to note how few programs offered coursework—required or elective—in cost-benefit analysis, needs assessment, or meta-evaluation. These maybe some of the areas where programs could do more to prepare the current and future generations of evaluators. We also note that although many programs espoused goals relating to the development of evaluation practitioners, relatively few included verbiage about developing evaluation thought leaders or researchers of evaluation. These findings are consistent with the study of Engle et al. (2006) where evaluation practice and conceptual understanding received greater emphasis than conducting research on evaluation or teaching of evaluation.

With the advent and subsequent societal integration of the WWW, researchers of training programs would be advised to adopt a sequential multiple-method strategy (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), integrating the strengths of survey research while using other methods to offset survey's limitations. For example, as illustrated through the current study, a researcher might conduct a preliminary search and analysis of program Web pages. Subsequently, the researcher could then use a survey to follow-up with the identified programs to verify the discovered information. This would limit the burden placed on the survey respondents and would help researchers better understand a program's reason for nonresponse rather than assuming that it was because "they do not have a program" (e.g., Altschuld, Engle, Cullen, Kim, & Macce, 1994; Engle, Altschuld, & Kim, 2006; Conner et al., 1980; May, et al., 1986). The follow-up with nominated sites is a crucial element in this area of study, for understanding both nonresponses and verifying the information gleaned from Web pages.

It must be recognized that the analysis of university Web pages is not without its limitations. First, the identification of Web pages to be examined is dependent on the search terms used, and it is possible that different search terms (e.g., policy evaluation, personnel evaluation, and product evaluation) might discover slightly different lists of potential programs. A brief replication inquiry using the term "policy evaluation" did not discover additional programs, but it is possible that a more in-depth replication would paint a slightly different picture. Second, Web pages are dependent on university staff to provide updates and correct mistakes. A further difficulty is that the programs have a vested interest in appearing attractive to potential applicants, and may unintentionally be misleading as program strengths are emphasized and program limitations are minimized. For example, it might be difficult to ascertain the regularity with which courses are offered, who is teaching the course, or average student enrollment. Finally, although curricular information may often be found easily, sometimes the information sought is very difficult to locate. Program directors would be advised to have their Web sites tested regularly to make the curricular information easy to access for people that are not familiar with the site (e.g., potential students, donors, job applicants, etc.).

Additional steps must be taken to better understand the phenomenon of evaluation training programs. First, although the study used online document analysis to identify training programs, using course titles alone is not the best way to draw firm conclusions about the strength of a program. For example, one might call a course "research and evaluation methods," but it is unclear whether the students are learning research methods, evaluation procedures, or something else entirely. It is possible that a course title might have been modified to include the term "evaluation" to give it a broader appeal without truly integrating evaluation concepts or principles. Second, it is probable that there are courses offered at various universities that cover evaluation principles and concepts that do not use the term "evaluation" in the course title. Perhaps evaluation skills and concepts have been integrated at a deeper level than the course title would allow. For example, one might imagine a course where the title is focused on applied social psychology, program development, or grant writing might include evaluation principles and concepts without ever using the term "evaluation" in the title, whereby it would have been missed in the current study. Further steps in this research stream might call for the acquisition and analysis of course syllabi and textbooks, as well as interviews with program chairs and full-time equivalents (FTEs), which would help expand our understanding of a program's stability.

Another measure of the strength of a program might be found at the student level of analysis. One might extrapolate a proxy of the program's strength from the number of master's and doctoral level graduates from the program per annum, or from following up with the graduates to learn how they are using their training. The programs listed herein are described as training evaluators, but future studies might explore the actual effects of the training programs. It would be useful information to know whether the alumni are working as research technicians, evaluation consultants, program planners, or evaluation thought leaders, and to contrast that with the societal needs for evaluation services and evaluation thought leaders.

This study also serves as a launching point for research on the sustainability of individual university-based evaluation training programs. A future area of study will be to examine which programs have been consistently training evaluators the longest, and to learn what characteristics have contributed to their longevity. Similarly, future studies ought to also study programs that were included in earlier directories but subsequently faded to learn about what kinds of factors lead to the decline and gradual elimination of programs and curricula. Additional studies might also examine the trends in the disciplinary area in which evaluators have been trained to understand why evaluation seems to have grown in schools of education but have declined in schools of psychology. Subsequent research might also endeavor to show the degree to which the programs address the Essential Program Evaluation Competencies (Stevahn et al. 2005a, 2005b), as well as our other tools of the trade. In spite of the work ahead, the take-home message is clear: by all measures, evaluation is a growing profession and many universities are now involved in the preservice training of evaluators. Perhaps our concern may shift from "*where* will the next generation be trained" to "*how* can we best prepare the next generation for the challenges they will face?"

Notes:

1. It must be recognized that there is always a time delay between when a study is conducted and when it is published. The data have been referenced based on the date of publication.
2. The *Evaluation training directory* of Gephart and Potter (1976) was not available for examination and has been excluded from all analyses presented in this article.

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