

Evaluation of the NFLRC Summer Institute 2007: Developing Useful Evaluation Practices in College Foreign Language Programs



May 28–June 6, 2007

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Report on the NFLRC Summer Institute 2007

“Developing Useful Evaluation Practices in College Foreign Language Programs”

INTRODUCTION

Twenty four faculty members from diverse college foreign language programs participated in the 2007 Summer Institute (SI) of the National Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC) at the University of Hawai‘i from May 28 through June 6, 2007. The theme of this nine-day institute was *Developing Useful Evaluation Practices in College Foreign Language Programs*. Sponsored by the NFLRC (<http://www.nflrc.hawaii.edu>), in collaboration with Dr. John Norris’s federally funded Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project (<http://www.nflrc.hawaii.edu/evaluation>), the goal of the institute was to help college foreign language administrators and faculty engage in useful, practical, and effective program evaluations to meet a variety of purposes. A secondary goal was to elevate the discourse about assessment and evaluation in higher education, and to engender nationwide improvements in the contributions made by foreign language education. In an era of zealous accountability testing, and in light of inevitable changes in the educational and societal roles being played by the foreign languages, the hope was to develop and support a cadre of foreign language professionals to lead the way towards a rationale and useful evaluation practice. Over the nine-day workshop, the SI participants participated in a series of lectures, discussions, projects, and other activities designed to introduce them to a user-oriented approach to developing evaluations that maximize benefits for language learners and teachers, while minimizing potential negative consequences. Immediately following the SI, participants participated in an open house session at the Summer Seminar West meeting of the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (June 6th-10th, 2007), showcasing the individual program evaluation projects they developed during the institute and leading discussions on evaluation topics during subsequent working group sessions.

The current report describes the planning and design of SI 2007 workshop activities, summarizes the mid-term formative and follow-up summative evaluations of the institute, and reports on participants’ immediate outcomes from participation in the institute.

SECTION 1: SUMMER INSTITUTE PLANNING

Summer Institute Staff



Staff for the SI consisted of a director, assistant director, two workshop mentors, guest speakers, and NFLRC organizers. The SI was run by Dr. John M. Norris (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Department of Second Language Studies), an expert in language program evaluation and assessment, and assistant director Yukiko Watanabe (Ph.D. candidate in SLS with extensive experience conducting program evaluation). Additional personnel included evaluation mentors, who assisted participants with their individual program evaluation projects: Weiwei Yang and Dennis Koyama (advanced graduate students in the M.A. in SLS program). Four guest facilitators provided an array of experiences and expertise in the form of short invited lectures: Dr. James Dean Brown (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa), Dr. Mary Church (Pacific Resources for Education and Learning), Dr. Thom Hudson (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa), and Dr. Ronald Mackay (Concordia University). Note that Dr. Ronald Mackay also served as an external evaluator for the Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project. Last but not least, Jim Yoshioka (NFLRC) was the SI coordinator, with key logistical duties for running the SI, and Deborah Masterson provided important publications support.

Participant Selection

In early spring of 2007, announcements of the summer institute were disseminated to a variety of email listservs and posted to related forums, and potential participants completed a web-based application form on the NFLRC website (see Appendix A). The applications were rated by three SI organizers on a holistic scale and utilizing the following criteria: (a) clear and relevant purpose statement, (b) strong potential for making an impact within and outside home institution, (c) role and responsibility in home language program to make changes, and (d) interest in language program evaluation. In an effort to reflect something of the diversity in foreign language programs across the United States, efforts were also made at balancing institution type, size, location, and target languages represented by selected applicants' programs. Although organizers hoped to receive applications from the full spectrum of higher education institutions, applications came in the main from four-year or advanced-degree-granting settings (and there were no community colleges represented in the applications). Out of 50 total applicants, 24 were

selected. A partial stipend (\$800) was awarded to participants to help defray the travel and accommodations expenses incurred.

Participants' Profiles

Participants were all tertiary foreign language educators, either acting as department chairs, curriculum coordinators, or language program supervisors. Among the 24 participants, most were from medium to large public and private universities, though four were from small liberal arts colleges. Participants' evaluation projects focused on their particular concerns and challenges arising in diverse educational programs, including departments or schools of modern languages (e.g., Department of Modern Languages, Department of Asian and African Languages, Center for Language and Culture), as well as language area or single-language departments (e.g., Romance Languages, German Department). In all, individual participants represented nine different languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Spanish.

Participant Needs

In addition to meeting selection purposes, the extensive application materials (between 3-4 pages of text from each applicant) provided useful information for determining participants' perceived needs for program evaluation capacity building. In the application form, participants were asked to state their current practices of program evaluation, concerns, purpose and uses of evaluation, and their purposes for attending the SI. The most recurring interest expressed by the participants was student learning outcomes assessment, reflecting the current climate of accreditation pressures in higher education. Additional priority interests/needs related to evaluation included: program improvement, general knowledge about evaluation, program review, curriculum development, personnel evaluation, and study abroad evaluation.

Program Overview

The Summer Institute was scheduled from May 28-June 6. This time frame allowed for participants to complete teaching and related duties at their home institutions prior to the institute. It also enabled overlap with the Summer Seminar West of the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (ADFL), hosted June 7-10 at the University of Hawai'i. This overlapping of the two events was planned as a means of maximizing the outcomes of the summer institute through further dissemination of ideas and awareness-raising at the ADFL event. In particular, it allowed for SI participants to showcase their work at an open house during the ADFL event and to lead working group sessions on program evaluation topics with the ADFL participants.

With a focus on helping participants develop meaningful evaluations that actually get used, throughout the SI, directors, lecturers and mentors emphasized that evaluation purpose and use should be governed by the intended users of evaluation—that is, by the individuals who can actually do something on the basis of evaluation findings and learn from the process. In order to progressively build upon this essential notion, the first day was devoted to generating an understanding of the who, what, and why of program evaluation, and by the last day of the institute, participants had developed full-scale evaluation projects for use in their home institutions. From the second day, sessions was organized around four activity types (two in the morning and two in the afternoon): (a) a topical discussion of progressive steps and concepts in evaluation planning; (b) application exercises utilizing the previously introduced evaluation concepts in context; (c) an overview of different methodologies for data collection, analysis, and use in program evaluation; and (d) individual evaluation project work, when the participants developed their specific evaluation plans with one-on-one assistance from the institute staff. (Appendix B shows the full institute schedule.)

Morning sessions

- *Day 1: Why evaluation?*—Roles and responsibilities in program evaluation, intended users for evaluation, prioritizing intended users and evaluation focus, internal and external evaluations
- *Day 2: Program*—Program elements and indicators, illuminating programs and problems, subprograms within programs
- *Day 3: Learner*—Learner backgrounds, needs, attitudes, and dispositions; understanding individual goals, needs, and challenges
- *Day 4: Curriculum*—Mission, goals, objectives, scope & sequence; developing and improving curriculum
- *Day 5: Instruction*—Materials, courses, teachers, graduate teaching assistants; feedback on instruction and learning
- *Day 6: Student learning outcomes*—Internal assessment (formative), informing curriculum and instruction via assessment
- *Day 7: Student learning outcomes*—External assessment (summative, accreditation, accountability), demonstrating and judging effectiveness via assessment.
- *Day 8: Evaluation culture*—Professional development, getting buy-in, planning and strategizing evaluation, transforming professional culture in FL programs and disciplines
- *Day 9: Wrap-up*—Remaining issues and challenges



The afternoon methodology workshops introduced steps involved in applying data collection methodologies and showcasing example tools and available online resources.

Afternoon methodology sessions

- *Day 2: Using interviews*
- *Day 3: Using focus groups and meetings*
- *Day 4: Survey questionnaires*
- *Day 5: Observation, document analysis, data management and tracking*
- *Day 6: Assessment instruments and procedures*
- *Day 7: Outcomes assessment framework and uses*
- *Day 8: Reporting and using evaluation findings*



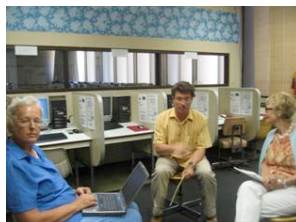
For the last session of the day, the individual project work session, participants received worksheets with guiding questions and tasks to help them advance their own evaluation projects, and they were mentored through the process.

Afternoon individual work sessions

- *Day 1: Specifying goals, participants (intended users), purpose of the evaluation project*
- *Day 2: Building evaluation framework, mapping projects to programs and context*
- *Day 3: Getting specific, seeking meaningful indicators*
- *Day 4: Eliciting good data, matching methods to information needs*
- *Day 5: Eliciting good data, making sure data are accurate and worthwhile*
- *Day 6: Analyzing data and interpreting evidence*
- *Day 7: Developing a timeline and plan of action*
- *Day 8: Reporting and using findings*



Note that in order to respond to participants' evolving needs, SI staff conducted a mid-term evaluation and made content and schedule adjustments. Related findings and modifications are described in section two of this report.



Facilities

The SI took place primarily in a classroom building on the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa campus. The UHM Language Learning Center provided access to a technology-enhanced meeting room, equipped with 22 computer stations and an LCD projector, thereby greatly facilitating display of information and simultaneous efficiency of work by the participants. The opening lunch reception and a closing reception were held at the UHM Student Services Center and at the NFLRC offices, respectively.



At the opening reception

At work



SECTION 2: MID-TERM EVALUATION

Half-way through the Summer Institute, staff conducted a mid-term formative evaluation of the workshop content and activities, in order to maximize benefits for the participants. Twenty-three out of 24 participants responded to an anonymous online survey seeking feedback on topics in need of clarification, any support necessary to advance their individual work, and desired formatting of products for the ADFL showcase session. The results were discussed with the participants, and plans were modified for the rest of the sessions.

Content Clarification

Figure 1 displays a summary of comments by participants regarding evaluation topics in need of further in-depth attention. Most frequent were comments on how to develop “buy-in” and “evaluation culture” in order to engage intended users and especially other faculty in participants’ home institutions. Based on this finding, time was allocated for related discussion, and participants were also given the task of developing public statements on the value of evaluation and the development of program evaluation culture. These statements were included in the ADFL showcase session booklet. Other comments reflected that participants sought more hands-on experience with data analysis, creating surveys and focus group questions, coming up with student learning outcomes and indicators, and reviewing more concrete examples of evaluation implementation and timing. These topics were incorporated into subsequent sessions.

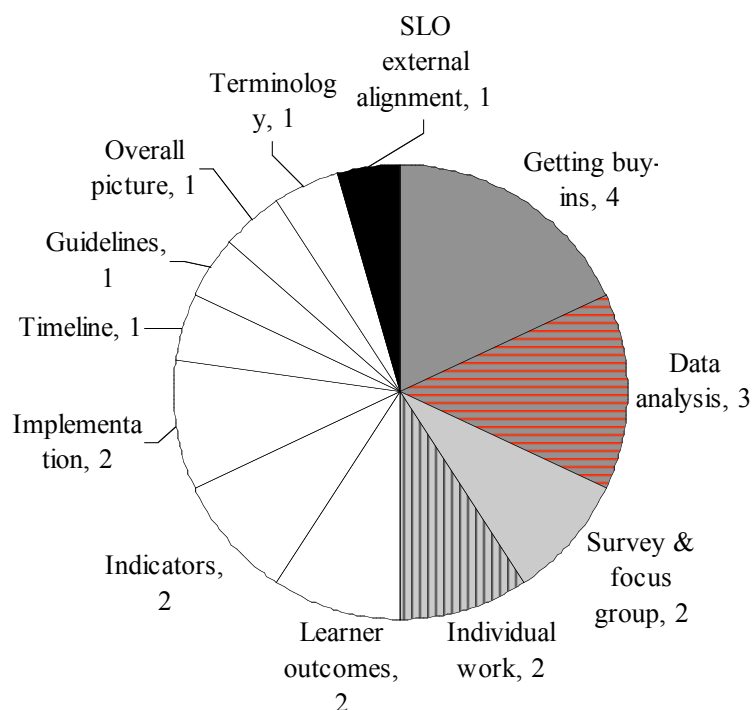


Figure 1. Evaluation topics that need clarification

Support Necessary to Develop Individual Projects

As shown in Figure 2, many participants felt that they needed to spend more time working to produce what was expected by the end of the SI. More individual attention, and expert and peer input were deemed necessary in order to further develop their individual evaluation projects. In discussing these results, participants also pointed out that input on evaluation methods and concepts was equally important, and that they did not wish to miss any of the other planned content (e.g., learning outcomes, evaluation culture) addressed in the second half of the workshop. It was agreed that the classroom/workspace would be kept open during lunch time so that individuals could continue to work on their projects. Furthermore, staff created a list of participants with similar topics, in order to facilitate dialogue, and additional one-on-one meeting sessions were scheduled with the director for the final days of the workshop.

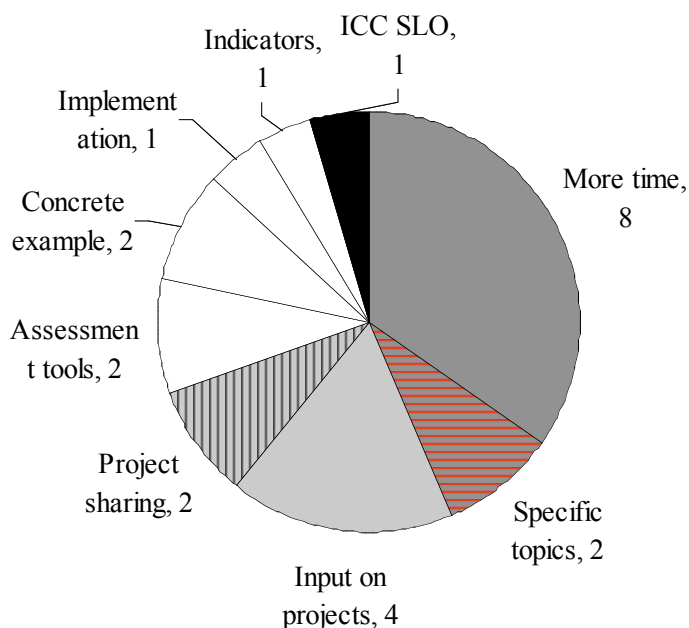


Figure 2. Needed support to develop individual project during SI

Suggestions for Participants' Products

Participants decided that a one-page handout with an overview of their evaluation projects, as well as supplemental materials (example instrument, goal statements, etc.) on a power point, would provide appropriate materials for their ADFL showcase sessions. The SI participants' short summaries of their evaluation purposes, uses, questions, methods, and added value of evaluation were compiled and produced in a booklet form, which was distributed at the program

evaluation showcase session at the 2007 ADFL Summer Seminar West (the booklet is attached to this document).

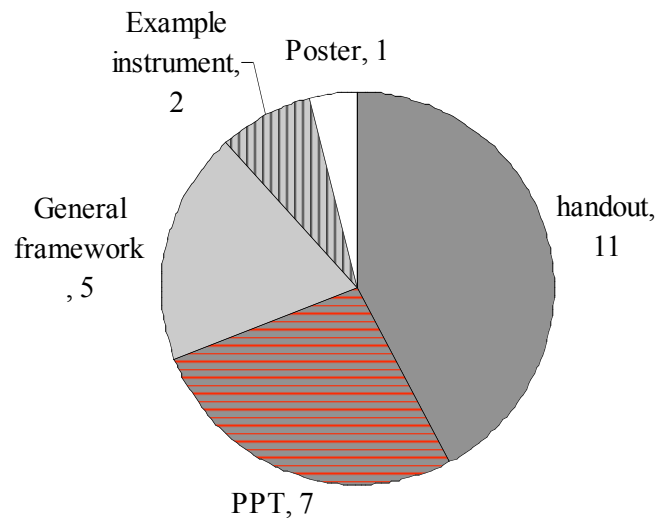


Figure 3. Suggested format of SI participants' products

Willingness to Engage in Outreach

At the mid-term, 87% of the participants said they would be willing to deliver a workshop to disseminate evaluative thinking, and 77% felt that they would be prepared to do so (see Table 2). In order to find what would help them become further prepared to do outreach work, follow-up input was sought regarding the kinds of resource they would find most useful (see next section).

Table 2. *Willingness to Disseminate Program Evaluation*

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Not really	A little	Some-what	A lot
a. be willing to deliver a short workshop	23	3.39	0.72	0%	13%	35%	52%
b. feel prepared to deliver a short workshop	22	3.05	0.72	0%	23%	50%	27%

Necessary Resources for Outreach

As shown in figure 4, participants provided a variety of suggestions for outreach resources. Three suggested they would like to continue to be in contact with the evaluation mentors from the institute, and two also articulated the importance of having an evaluation support system. In

response to this request, institute staff created an evaluation listserv for the SI participants, and hosted by NFLRC, in order to keep in touch about upcoming dissemination opportunities, collaboration, and consultation. Sharing of strategies and more concrete examples was also planned for hosting via the FLPEP website, once SI participants began implementing their evaluation plans and reporting back on their efforts.

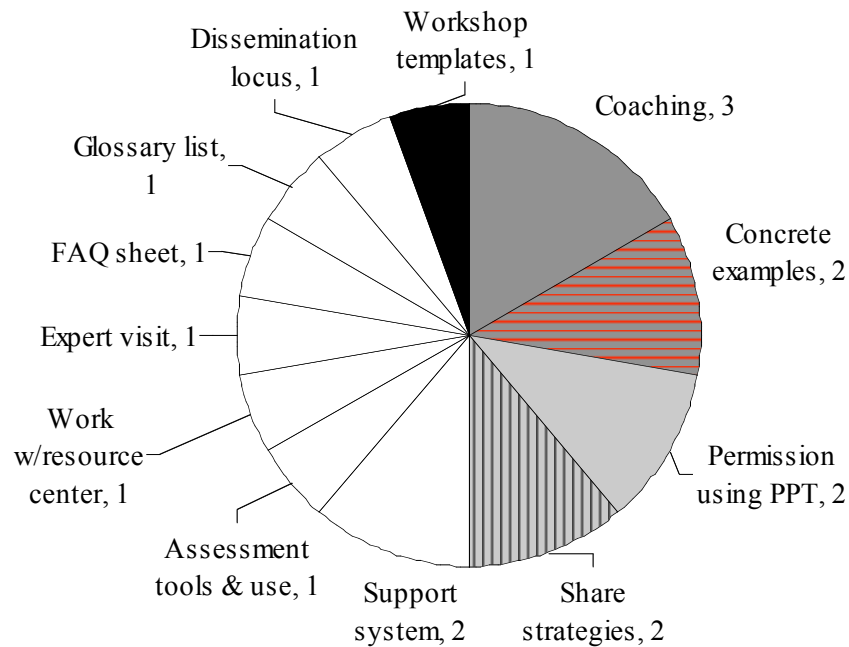


Figure 4. Helpful resources for disseminating program evaluation

SECTION 3: POST-INSTITUTE EVALUATION

In the week following the SI, participants were asked to respond to an online post-institute evaluation survey. The purpose of this evaluation was to get feedback on the effectiveness of and any necessary improvements in the delivery, content, and organization of the SI. In addition, guidance was sought in identifying the types of support participants might need in order to continue with their projects and other evaluation outreach efforts. The survey consisted of scale response questions and open-ended questions under four sections (academic content and delivery, non-academic organization and support, knowledge and understanding of program evaluation, and outreach). Sixteen out of 24 participants responded to the survey, resulting in a 66.7% response rate. It is possible that several of the participants may have not been able to access to email and the survey, due to the timing of the evaluation in the month of June (summer vacation for most college faculty).

Academic Content and Delivery

Participants were asked to rate the usefulness of the academic portion of the SI. Except for one participant who rated “somewhat useful,” 15 participants (94%) rated that the academic content of the SI was very useful. Their perception of the SI experience was further examined in detail through open-ended questions. The open-ended responses were categorized into themes and are illustrated below with representative quotes.

Table 3. *Overall Usefulness of the Academic Portion*

<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Not useful	A little useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
16	3.94	0.25	0%	0%	6%	94%

Strength of the Academic Content

The following question was asked to identify the positive aspects of the academic content and delivery: “*Please consider the academic content (evaluation topics and methods) and its delivery (materials and activities). What were the strengths (if any) of the academic portion of the Summer Institute?*”

(a) Delivery of the academic content (N = 8)

Eight participants praised the delivery and overall format of the institute. They thought that the topics and materials were delivered “*systematically*,” “*effectively*,” and “*concisely*” with good balance between theoretical and practical work (“*immediate application to [participants’] own projects*”) and with “*lots of opportunities for questions and interaction*.”

(b) Task-based approach (N=2)

Many questions, worksheets, and application tasks were provided to the participants to guide their evaluation projects. Two participants mentioned that the task-based approach was an effective way to apply theory/concepts to participants' own educational context (*"What helped me process the material as we moved along were the exercises in between: write about your project this or that way, chart it now this way, etc."*).

(c) Lectures

The PowerPoint presentations were received very positively (N = 4). One person also mentioned that the guest lecture by Dr. James Dean Brown delivered via teleconference format was *"great"*. The topics covered in the presentations seemed to meet participants' needs (N = 3, *"the topics were appropriate, engaging and intellectually challenging"*).

(d) Concept and application sequence

The first session of the day started by providing concepts related to important program evaluation topics, followed by application session. The first afternoon session introduced methodology, and the rest of the time was spent on participants' individual projects. Two participants mentioned that this order of presentation and application sessions worked very well (*"the order of presentation was well thought out"*).

(e) Discussion

There were pros and cons for the amount of discussion. While three of the participants thought that the discussions were *"thought provoking,"* one participant thought that *"about half the time, there was too much discussion, and it was diffuse and off-target,"* and suggested to *"allow less time for discussion or put the bulk of the discussion at the end of the lecture and PowerPoint."*

(f) Materials

Many commented positively about the workshop materials, including the PowerPoint presentations, worksheets, and reading packet. PowerPoints were perceived as *"illustrative," "lucid, helpful, gorgeous," "clear, and instructive,"* and with *"perfect organization."* The self-guiding worksheets for participants helped them build their evaluation plans (*"The worksheets you created for each day were extremely helpful in guiding our projects and thoughts."*). The reading packet was *"very comprehensive with tons of links, articles"* to some participants, but there were also many suggestions on how to improve the choice and use of the readings (see next section).

(g) Outcomes

During and after the SI, participants repeatedly reported how their perception of program evaluation had changed drastically over the institute. In the follow-up survey, those comments were reiterated. Many participants seemed to be satisfied in their theoretical understanding and underlying rationales for “*why things [program evaluations] are done in a particular way.*” An illustrative comment, “*came to see assessment as, perhaps, the most actionable way in which to facilitate improvements in programs and learning outcomes,*” suggests how participants reconceptualized the purpose and use of assessment, one of the topic covered in the SI.

Overall, participants articulated very positive comments as indicated in the overall rating of their SI academic content experience. Following are some of the positive comments:

- **the best* workshop/short course I have ever attended. Felicidades!*
- *I did not have even one hour of inattention for the whole 9 days. Everything was superb.*
- *The workshop leaders did a splendid job of accommodating our needs.*
- *I think you did a great job of making it accessible in a relatively short time!!*
- *I really thought this was as close to perfect as one can expect. I enjoyed the variety of presenters and I thought they all did an excellent job.*
- *It really was a wonderful, interactive workshop. I don't think more could have been done in the allotted time.*
- *This is the best professional development activity I've done in many years.*

Suggested improvements on academic content

Fifteen respondents provided suggestions for SI logistics and academic content improvement. Suggestions are summarized under each component of the SI program.

(a) Evaluation topics and activities

Because we accommodated participants' immediate needs, the evaluation of curriculum was less emphasized than originally intended. Two participants wished that evaluation of curriculum had been pursued in depth. Others ($N=2$) also suggested more emphasis on student learning outcomes (definition and assessment), since some had more pressing needs to come up with student learning outcomes for their program. Two participants suggested that it “*could have been more informative (and useful in the long run) if we had had the chance to examine and create questions for surveys, questionnaires, etc.*” and do “*exercises on survey development and data analysis.*” Participants also suggested a variety of detailed adjustments in the schedule to cover both theoretical and practical application in more depth.

(b) Scheduling

Four respondents suggested a full two-week session with a weekend down time, instead of a 10-day session with one day off in the middle. Of course, changes in the schedule would depend on the logistics and feasibility of hosting a two-week institute and any other impinging events (like the ADFL Summer Seminar).

(c) Invited lectures

Two mentioned the “*cut-and-dried*” tone and content of the invited lectures. Since the invited lecturers were not immersed into the continued discussion participants had in the institute, it may have been better if questions from participants had been collected ahead of time and sent to the invited speakers, so that they would have had a better idea of how to address participants’ concerns.

(d) Concrete evaluation study

One participant proposed that it would have been useful to explore “*an [example] evaluation project from the planning stage to the end product with successful results. An example from Georgetown University could be used in the future.*”

(e) Reading packet and additional resource

Many suggestions were received on the reading packet. One participant requested more readings on “*the concepts and philosophy of the evaluation theories.*” Another respondent wished a list of related articles. The annotated bibliography on the Foreign Language Program Evaluation website can be a good place to start for these participants, in order to further explore the area. In addition, providing some of the key articles before the SI was proposed, so that participants could keep up with the reading along with all of the other activities. In order to resolve some initial terminological confusion, one participant suggested a reference sheet of definitions on key evaluation concepts along with some concrete example.

Non-academic Organization and Support (N = 16)

Respondents also were asked to rate the organization and support side of the SI. Most participants were very satisfied with all aspects of the SI organizing (refreshments, receptions, accommodations, SI venue, and logistical staff support before and during SI (see Table 4).

Table 4. *Non-academic Organization and Support (in mean rank order)*

Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Not satisfied	A little satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
1. Morning and afternoon refreshments	4.00	0.00	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
2. Receptions	4.00	0.00	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
5. Logistical support during summer institute	4.00	0.00	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
3. Institute venue (computer labs)	3.94	0.25	0%	0%	6%	94%	0%
4. Logistical support before summer institute	3.94	0.25	0%	0%	6%	94%	0%
6. Accommodations	3.93	0.27	0%	0%	7%	93%	13%

Note. Two respondents did not stay at the accommodations NFLRC provided; they chose “not applicable.”

There were a few suggestions made by the respondents for future NFLRC SI institute organizing. One participant thought that afternoon refreshments can be skipped, since many had heavy lunches and dinners. Generally, participants were satisfied with pre-institute information (“*There was plenty of advance information, all of it relevant.*”); however, one participant suggested to forewarn the participants that on-campus housing (e.g., Lincoln Hall) is not within easy walking distance of shops and restaurants. From one participant, the “Sands Villa Hotel” was recommended as inexpensive alternative with free internet access at a good location. An additional recommendation was made on the environmental side of organizing: “*It would be great if there could be more recycling.*”

Many praising comments were expressed for SI coordinator, Jim Yoshioka, indicating the success of the logistics side of SI organizing:

- *Everything was great! (N = 4)*
- *Jim did an excellent job as a coordinator.*
- *Outstanding!*
- *It was all splendidly done. All who made us feel welcome -- and even spoiled -- particularly Jim and the entire academic staff deserve rich kudos all around!*
- *It could not have been any better. Jim did a wonderful job attending to all our needs. Thanks very much!*
- *I have never worked with a group of such helpful, well-informed, fun people. I've never had better food at an institute! Accolades to you all!!*
- *I have only praise for everything. Jim did a fabulous job with the non-academic infrastructure, taking exquisite care with every aspect of our experience.*
- *Jim fed us wonderfully and was incredibly receptive about providing additional*

information to make the stay as pleasant as possible. Yukiko, Dennis, and Weiwei were always very gracious and helpful. Great team.

Knowledge and Understanding of Evaluation (N = 16)

Respondents also rated to what degree the SI helped them in building capacity towards six targeted learning outcomes (see Table 5). Participants unanimously agreed that the SI helped them understand the value of evaluation in FL programs “a lot,” as exemplified in the following comment: *“In this institute I felt I was learning or solidifying learning every minute.”* In addition, the SI assisted most respondents (15 out of 16) in understanding the methods of evaluation, and in familiarizing them with evaluation resources (*“I will/can certainly point others to useful resourced on program evaluation.”*).

In terms of preparation for further evaluation work, on one hand, over 50% of the participants felt that the SI helped them become a pro-active agent (*“I will use my knowledge to conduct further evaluations in my own program and I hope to be an active participant in this discussion on our campus.”*). One participant already reported that her/his team had *“started to send around basic information about [their] attendance at the workshop and have offered to conduct activities focused on assessment to other departments.”*

On the other hand, some participants rated their capacity to “carry out an evaluation” and “educate others about evaluation” slightly lower (“somewhat”) than other items. Three participants expressed their anticipation for institutional constraints in carrying out an evaluation: (a) *“it is challenging to educate others;”* (b) *“Executing an evaluation in my FL program (unless mandated like a program review) is a big challenge;”* and (c) *“it remains to be seen how successful the evaluation and my presentations to the faculty will be”*. In addition, two expressed that they need a little more confidence to carry out evaluation and educate others (*“need the time, and to practice a few times to gain a little more confidence.”* *“I’ve learned a lot, but I still have to see whether I will be able to convey my enthusiasm for program evaluation to others.”*).

In line with the six outcomes, two participants added that the SI helped them change their perspectives towards evaluation:

- *My new and enhanced "evaluation perspective," thanks to the Institute.*
- *A whole new way of thinking-- it will help me to become a better teacher, better planner, better colleague in my Department. I am ready to share my new understanding with colleagues not only in my Department, but also with other FL programs in my university.*

Suggestions for helping the participants continue their professional development in program

evaluation were received. One requested a “*refresher workshop led by John Norris or Ronald Mackay.*” Another recommended “*a certification procedure as an evaluation trainer.*”

Table 5. *Helpfulness of SI in Achieving the Outcomes*

Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot
1. Understand the value of evaluation in FL programs.	4.00	0.00	0%	0%	0%	100%
2. Understand the methods for evaluation in FL programs.	3.88	0.34	0%	0%	13%	88%
3. Become familiar with evaluation resources.	3.88	0.34	0%	0%	13%	88%
4. Plan an evaluation in your FL program.	3.88	0.34	0%	0%	13%	88%
5. Carry out an evaluation in your FL program.	3.69	0.48	0%	0%	31%	69%
6. Educate others about evaluation.	3.56	0.51	0%	0%	44%	56%

Prospectives for Outreach

A final section of the survey asked for input regarding future capacity-building and support activities or resources that might be provided by the FLPEP project or the NFLRC.

(a) Suggestions for future events and activities

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for future events or activities that would help them engage in evaluation at their institution. Below is a summary of their suggestions.

- **Support from the SI facilitators and SI participants**
 - Presentations by SI participants at other institutions ($N = 3$)
 - SI director as an expert visitor or as an external evaluator ($N = 2$)
 - Workshops by SI facilitators at other institutions
 - Continued feedback on the evaluation process from SI facilitators
- **Workshops and (online) conferences**
 - Assessing cultural learning and critical thinking
 - Evaluation case studies
 - Methods of evaluation
- **Resource building**
 - Frequently asked Q & A sheets
 - A website that would function as a library of assessment tools
- **Journal articles**
 - Documentation of successful program evaluation examples and models
- **Support network**
 - Updating on the details of ongoing FL evaluation projects (tips and hints)

(b) Utilizing the listserv

Many participants suggested utilizing the listserv as a medium to: (a) exchange ideas, problems and solutions, example instruments used, and documentation of the evaluation projects carried out by the members; (b) stimulate the evaluation process by asking questions; (c) keep members informed on publications, resources, and events related to evaluation; and (d) build a community of professionals with understanding of the importance of evaluation in FL education (create partnerships).

The listserv can potentially be a broader listserv on the topic of FL program evaluation to stimulate dialogue on evaluative thinking in FL education. In order to motivate the members to carry out their evaluation projects, one participant recommended setting a certain date with a template to provide relevant information on the progress of the project they planned during SI, which is planned for spring 2008.

(c) Suggested strategies for future events

In the final open-ended question, respondents offered suggestions for increasing evaluation awareness and capacity in FL education. Participants provided some strategies for scaling out to various educational sectors. Below are related ideas categorized by different venues and educational sectors.

- **Professional organizations**
 - Have MLA and ACTFL lobby for funding to develop resources for evaluation training.
 - Prepare a position paper led by MLA.
 - Invite NCATE to attend an evaluation workshop.
- **Institution**
 - Utilize institutional newsletters, publications, and presentations to raise awareness.
 - Present what evaluation is, and what it can do for FL programs and faculty members.
- **State, regional, and national conferences**
 - Ask ADFL to reserve 1-2 of its presentation sessions at MLA for evaluation.
 - Present at regional FL teacher (e.g., AATF/SP/G) conferences and at the NorthEast Conference.
 - Have a panel session on program evaluation at ACTFL and MLA.
 - Suggest pre-conference workshops on FL program evaluation.
- **Professional journals**
 - Show positive examples of how evaluation genuinely contributes to FL education.

- **Bottom-up capacity building for FL educators as a whole**
 - Continue similar SI workshops for FL educators.

SECTION 4: IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

One of the key targeted outcomes for the NFLRC 2007 Summer Institute was to initiate the development and implementation of useful practices for program evaluation in college foreign language education. Throughout the SI, participants were encouraged to translate and apply evaluation ideas to their own contexts and challenges; in particular, they developed extended plans for the use of evaluation in response to unique questions in their particular language programs. Participants were also provided with the opportunity to present their evaluation work at an open house session during the Summer Seminar West of the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages, which was hosted between June 7th and 10th, 2007, following the SI.

Individual evaluation work

Twenty program evaluation projects in various program contexts were developed by the summer institute participants in response to diverse evaluation needs. Below are summaries of the 20 projects categorized by evaluation focus and by language.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Developing and improving study abroad programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Russian: University of Washington- Multiple languages: Linfield College | 6. Program alignment with external benchmarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">- French: University of Oregon- Multiple languages: Central Michigan University |
| 2. Effectiveness of innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Korean: Yale University- Spanish: University of Missouri St. Louis | 7. Program development and advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Spanish: California State University Monterey Bay- Multiple languages, Japanese: California State University Los Angeles |
| 3. Understanding program value <ul style="list-style-type: none">- German: Georgetown University, and Hunter College, CUNY | 8. Assessing student learning outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Spanish: University of Iowa- Multiple languages: Duke University, University of Evansville, University of Florida, and University of Maryland Baltimore |
| 4. Institutional program review <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Multiple languages: Mount Saint Mary's College | 9. Teacher and GTA development <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Arabic: University of Arizona- Italian: Johns Hopkins University |
| 5. Learner needs and curriculum improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Arabic summer program: Georgetown University- Spanish: University of South Carolina Beaufort | |

A brief summary of each program evaluation project can be found at the following URL:

<http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/prodev/si07d/ADFLshowcaseBooklet.pdf>

ADFL Summer Seminar West: Evaluation working group sessions

At the Summer Seminar West meeting of the ADFL, the SI participants led discussion sessions on the following topics: (a) approaches to useful student learning outcomes assessment, (b) determining learners' needs, (c) evaluating teaching and teachers, and (d) evaluation for curricular improvement. Each group prepared discussion questions and shared their ideas on these topics in an effort to raise awareness and generate interest among professional colleagues. Note that attendants at the ADFL were all chairs of foreign language departments from diverse



tertiary education settings across the U.S.

Statements by SI participants on foreign language program evaluation

Beyond the planned institute activities and expected outcomes, participants also engaged in extensive discussions on the climate and value of language education in the U.S. They even adopted a name for themselves: the *Faculty Working Group on Foreign Language Program Evaluation*. In an effort to further enhance the impact of SI workshop learning and their own contributions, the working group produced several short statements for dissemination at the ADFL seminar and via the FLPEP web site. In the statement, “Value of Evaluative Thinking and Action in Foreign Language Programs”, they articulated how evaluative thinking and action can help build consensus among language professionals and help realize the contributions that FL education can make to society. In a second statement, they discussed how to go about building program evaluation culture in FL program contexts: “Strategies for Culture Change in Program Evaluation”. These statements were the result of the collective and bottom-up efforts of the faculty members, with an eye towards reaching out to the professional organizations and colleagues and a goal of helping them to recognize the key roles program evaluation can play in raising program quality and professionalism. Both statements are copied below.

The Value of Evaluative Thinking and Action in Foreign Language Programs

A joint statement by the

Faculty Working Group on Foreign Language Program Evaluation

This statement is the result of discussions among the participants in the NFLRC Summer Institute 2007. The intent is to articulate the value of evaluative thinking and action to foreign language education.

Evaluative thinking and action provides a framework for discussion in programs or departments about fundamental questions of program effectiveness. These discussions can have a democratizing and unifying effect—democratizing because all voices are heard, and unifying because the process leads to communication and consensus building. Collaborative discussion and action that involves all stakeholders results in a heightened commitment of all participants to the vitality of the program, thus contributing to a sense of academic community.

The evaluation process allows faculty members to understand the program as a whole and to articulate to themselves and others what they want students to achieve in the areas of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. By identifying strengths and weaknesses, they formulate a plan (or plans) of action to increase program effectiveness and maximize student learning. The goal is to make the learning process more efficient and to create a well-articulated curriculum that is responsive to changing circumstances, all within a cyclical process of innovation and evaluation.

Evaluative thinking and action has further benefits. It enables departments to address in action-oriented ways common problems at the program level, such as low enrollments in some languages, attrition at various levels, and difficulties in the curricular transition from lower-division to upper-division courses. It offers opportunities for individual faculty members to engage in professional development activities, such as scholarship in teaching and learning and improving teaching practices through ongoing reflection. It can increase communication across departments, leading to cross-pollination between disciplines and opportunities for collaboration with colleagues on evaluation projects, as well as professional activities in other areas.

Beyond the department level, evaluative thinking and action enables faculty members to enhance the profile of their program or department within the institution by establishing themselves as leaders in evaluation initiatives and showcasing the accomplishments of their evaluation-related projects. Such leadership activities position the program or department well in requests for support (e.g., funding, faculty lines). Finally, the ability to demonstrate cycles of innovation and evaluation empowers foreign language professionals, enabling them to make a strong case for the unique contributions of language studies in a pluralist and globalized world.

Strategies for Culture Change in Program Evaluation

A joint statement
by the

Faculty Working Group on Foreign Language Program Evaluation

This statement is the result of discussions among participants in the NFLRC Summer Institute 2007. The intent is to encourage the foreign language field to recognize program evaluation as indispensable for enhancing student learning and program quality, and to enable the field to articulate and demonstrate—internally and externally—the unique contributions of language studies in a pluralist and globalized world.

Strategies for changing perceptions of evaluation and enhancing value of evaluation

- Focus on program improvement as a goal of program evaluation.
- Emphasize the usefulness of evaluation for: (1) student learning, (2) program articulation, (3) departmental collaboration, and (4) academic community.
- Highlight the public, participatory, and inclusive nature of the evaluation process.
- Link evaluation goals to stated institutional priorities.

Strategies for encouraging faculty-led evaluation

- Build on program information (curriculum, syllabi, final exams, papers, etc.) and systematize evaluation work already conducted in the department.
- Lead institutional evaluation efforts by example; forge alliances across the institution; draw on available institutional resources.
- Appropriately recognize and incentivize evaluation work within the department and the institution.
- Integrate evaluation into standard administrative, curricular, and teaching practices.
- Pursue professional development opportunities and external funding.
- Generate and showcase successful examples of evaluation.

Strategies for professional organizations to enhance useful evaluation

- Recognize and disseminate successful models of program evaluation.
- Develop policy statements on useful program evaluation.
- Organize professional development events focusing on program evaluation.
- Facilitate the establishment of professional networks supporting program evaluation efforts.

APPENDIX A: Pre-Institute Questionnaire

This summer institute is intended for **foreign language administrators and teachers who are directly responsible for program evaluations in U.S. college foreign language departments**. It assumes no prior grounding in program evaluation theory or methods, only a sincere commitment to engage in useful evaluation practices. *Participants will also be asked to share their work at the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages summer seminar (directly following the summer institute) and on the Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project web site.*

Please take the time to **completely fill out and proofread all 4 sections of the application form** before submitting it. *Whether or not you are selected for participation will depend on the quality of your application.* The deadline for applications is February 15, 2007. We will send you an email confirmation after we have received your application. (Please be patient - it may take several business days to reply). Mahalo for your interest in participating in the 2007 NFLRC *Developing Useful Evaluation Practices in College Foreign Language Programs* Summer Institute!

Summer Institute Application Form

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Language Program Information

1. Please describe your language program, including information about degrees offered, number of students and faculty, size and type of institution, etc.
 2. What is your role in your language program and/or institution, in terms of administration, teaching, coordination, etc.?
 3. How would you characterize the curriculum, instruction, and assessment that occurs in your language program? Please describe.
-

Evaluation information

1. What aspects of your program are currently evaluated, and what methods are used to do so?
 2. What are the major concerns, problems, or difficulties with evaluation in your language program?
 3. What roles, purposes, uses would you like to see for evaluation in the future of your program?
-

Your background

1. What are your main areas of scholarly interest?
 2. Do you have any formal training in program evaluation, language testing, or related area? If so, please describe.
 3. What would you like to learn about program evaluation?
-

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

In the space provided, please write a short essay (maximum 500 words) describing:

- **Your role in making evaluation happen in your college foreign language program**
 - The major evaluation needs that you perceive in your program
 - Your goals for this institute and how you will apply your learning following the institute
 - Your plans to further disseminate program evaluation ideas
-

APPENDIX B: Summer Institute Schedule

	Mon 5/28	Tues 5/29	Wed 5/30	Thurs 5/31	Fri 6/1	Sat 6/2	Mon 6/4	Tues 6/5	Wed 6/6
	<i>theme:</i> Why evaluation?	<i>theme:</i> Program	<i>theme:</i> Learner	<i>theme:</i> Curriculum	<i>theme:</i> Instruction	<i>theme:</i> Student learning outcomes–1	<i>theme:</i> Student learning outcomes–2	<i>theme:</i> Evaluation culture	<i>theme:</i> Wrap-up
8:30 – 9:00	continental breakfast (hallway outside PC lab, Moore Hall 153A)								
9:00 – 10:30 <i>topical discussion →</i>	Roles and responsibilities in program evaluation	Program elements and indicators (<i>guest facilitator:</i> <i>Ronald Mackay,</i> <i>Concordia</i> <i>University</i>)	Learner backgrounds, needs, attitudes, and dispositions	Mission, goals, objectives, scope & sequence	Materials, courses, teachers, GTAs	Internal (formative) assessment	External (summative, accreditation, accountability) assessment	Professional development, buy-in, planning, and strategizing (<i>guest facilitator:</i> <i>Mary Church,</i> <i>Pacific Resources</i> <i>for Education and</i> <i>Learning</i>)	Remaining issues and challenges
10:45 –12:00 <i>practical application →</i>	Intended uses for evaluation	Illuminating programs and problems; subprograms within programs	Understanding individual goals, needs, and challenges	Developing and improving curriculum	Feedback on instruction and learning	Informing curriculum and instruction via assessment	Demonstrating and judging effectiveness via assessment	Transforming professional culture in FL programs and disciplines	Planning ADFL breakout groups
12:00 – 1:30	welcome reception	lunch and email access							
1:30 – 2:45 <i>methods discussion →</i>	Prioritizing intended uses and evaluation focus; internal and external evaluations	Using interviews	Using focus groups and meetings	Survey questionnaires (<i>guest facilitator:</i> <i>James Dean</i> <i>Brown,</i> <i>UH Mānoa</i>)	Observation, document analysis, data management, and tracking	Assessment instruments and procedures (<i>guest facilitator:</i> <i>Thom Hudson,</i> <i>UH Mānoa</i>)	Outcomes assessment frameworks and uses	Reporting and using evaluation findings	Preparing for ADFL presentations
2:45 – 3:00	afternoon snacks (hallway outside PC lab, Moore Hall 153A)								
3:00 – 4:00 <i>individual project work →</i>	Specifying a goal for the project: Intended use and users, evaluation purpose, participation	Building an evaluation framework, mapping projects to programs and contexts	Project methods: Designing, piloting, and revising procedures and instruments. Planning for analysis and use. Ensuring data quality.					Next steps: Project time line and action plan	Project presentation; plans for dissemination
4:00 – 5:00	optional work time, email access								

APPENDIX C: Mid-term Evaluation Survey

Summer Institute 2007

Quick feedback on your project work

Please take a few minutes to complete the five questions below. Your answers will help us to help you get maximally useful outcomes from your individual evaluation work.

1. You have been thinking about and designing your own program evaluations for several days now. Briefly describe the "muddiest point" in your evaluation project. What one aspect of your evaluation are you most uncertain about at this point?

2. There are four days remaining in the summer institute (plus one day off!). What would help you the most in advancing your own program evaluation work over those four days? Please provide one suggestion.

3. The attendees at the ADFL conference will visit an open house of this summer institute from 10:30 - 11:30 on Friday, June 8. In order to demonstrate your evaluation work to this audience, what kinds of PRODUCTS do you think would be most useful?

4. One of Ron Mackay's suggestions for extending the impact of this summer institute would be for each participant to deliver a short workshop on language program evaluation at their home institution (or at a conference).

Summer Institute 2007

To what extent would you...

	not really	a little	somewhat	a lot
a. be willing to deliver a short workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. feel prepared to deliver a short workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. What additional resources might help you in further disseminating information about program evaluation to your colleagues or peers?

MAHALO for your responses! We will make every effort to respond to your suggestions and maximize the contribution of the summer institute to your own program evaluation work.

APPENDIX D: Follow-up Evaluation Survey

NFLRC Summer Institute 2007: Follow-up Questionnaire

Aloha!

Welcome to the NFLRC Summer Institute 2007 follow-up questionnaire.

As we announced on the last day, we would like to get some feedback from you on the institute.

Please take a few minutes to tell us about: (a) *your impressions of the academic content of the Summer Institute*; (b) *your satisfaction with the venue, support staff, and other services*; (c) *the extent to which our workshops have helped increase your evaluation capacity*; and (d) *any suggestions on ways of improving our Summer Institute (and related) programs*.

The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept completely anonymous. There are four sections in total. Your answers will help us plan for future events to support college FL educators in their evaluation work.

John M. Norris and Yukiko Watanabe
University of Hawaii at Manoa, Second Language Studies

SECTION 1/4. Academic content and delivery

I. Please consider the academic content (evaluation topics and methods) and its delivery (materials and activities). What were the strengths (if any) of the academic portion of the Summer Institute?

II. What suggestions (if any) would you make for improving the academic content and its delivery?

III. Please rate the overall usefulness of the academic portion of the Summer Institute.

	Not useful	A little useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Overall, the academic portion of the Summer Institute was...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION 2/4. Non-academic organization and support**I. Please rate your satisfaction with the following services and events.**

	Not satisfied	A little satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
1. Morning and afternoon refreshments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Receptions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Institute venue (computer labs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Logistical support before summer institute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Logistical support during summer institute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Accommodations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

II. Do you have any suggestions or comments regarding support staff, food service, receptions, and venue?

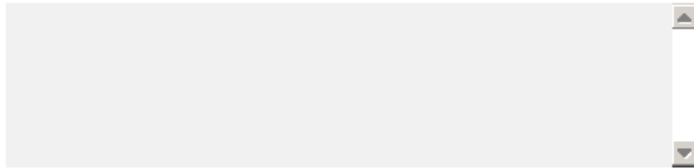
SECTION 3/4. Knowledge and understanding of program evaluation**I. To what extent did the Summer Institute help you to:**

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot
1. Understand the value of evaluation in FL programs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Understand the methods for evaluation in FL programs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Become familiar with evaluation resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Plan an evaluation in your FL program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Carry out an evaluation in your FL program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Educate others about evaluation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

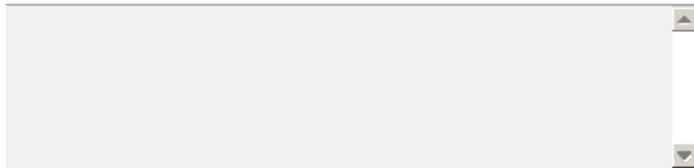
II. Please clarify any of your responses and/or add further comments.

SECTION 4/4. Outreach

I. Do you have any suggestions for future events or activities that would help you to engage in evaluation at your institution?

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II. What uses do you have in mind for the "progeval-I" listserv? How can we best utilize the listserv?

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III. Lastly, do you have any additional suggestions for increasing evaluation awareness and capacity in FL education?

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Finished!

BIG MAHALO for your responses and your time!

We will incorporate your suggestions to improve our outreach efforts. In addition, we will be following up with you on your evaluation projects in the near future. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or ideas, please feel free to utilize the listserv or contact us. We will also let you know as we make updates to our FLPEP website.