



American Evaluation Association

AEA 2001 CONFERENCE EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

Evaluation conducted by the University of Minnesota
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Executive Summary

Introduction

The five-member University of Minnesota Evaluation Team, together with faculty advisor Dr. Jean A. King, worked closely with AEA's Professional Development Committee to design an evaluation plan for the Evaluation 2001 conference that addressed the needs of the committee and provided information that would be useful to stakeholders. This collaboration resulted in an evaluation plan that focused on four questions:

1. To what extent are participants satisfied with their professional development workshop experience?
2. To what extent are participants satisfied with their conference experience?
3. How do we make the conference more receptive and responsive to the needs and expectations of first-time attendees?
4. How and to what extent does the TIG proposal process work?

The following sections detail the team's findings and recommendations.

Findings

Professional Development Workshops

Participants reported a high degree of satisfaction with the 31 Professional Development Workshops held in conjunction with Evaluation 2001. As part of the evaluation, participants were asked to rate workshops in 11 areas using a five-point Likert scale. Possible means for each item and for combined measures range from 1 to 5 with 5 representing the greatest degree of satisfaction. Using these scales, participants expressed the highest degree of satisfaction with gaining understanding of new concepts (mean 4.31), and being taught by facilitators who were well organized (4.20). Though none of the items used to measure participant satisfaction averaged a low level of satisfaction, the items that ranked lowest regarded facilitator ability to make good use of the time available (mean 3.97) and increasing the abilities of participants to use skills being taught (3.98). The range of overall satisfaction for an individual workshop ranged from 3.21 to 4.84. Facilitators were similarly satisfied with their experience with 95% reporting their audience came to the workshop well prepared and 84% interested in presenting another Professional Development Workshop in the future.

While both workshop participants and facilitators were generally satisfied with the quality of the professional development workshops, each group identified ways in which the quality of workshops could be improved. Participants are interested in encouraging AEA and future facilitators to structure workshops around adult learning principles. This means including plenty of interactive exercises along with or instead of lecture, using real-life and interesting examples to promote application of lessons, and providing high quality handouts and other materials to support learning. Facilitators were interested in longer workshop periods, and quiet and comfortable areas in which to provide training. Other recommendations were to match material to the experience level of the audience for which the workshop is advertised, provide room hosts to help start workshops in a friendly and timely manner, and encouraging workshop facilitators to limit content to what can realistically be covered in the time available.

Participant Satisfaction with the Conference Overall Conference Feedback Form

The Overall Conference Feedback Form was used to gather both demographic information and information relevant to participant satisfaction from conference attendees. As a result of successful strategies designed to increase the conference response rate, surveys were collected from 58% of the 1,253 conference registrants. Surveys were collected on site, through the mail, and, post-conference, through an electronic version of the form.

Quantitative Data and Analysis

The largest percentage of conference attendees, 43.9%, were attending for the first time, while only 8.0% had attended more than 10 conferences. More than 79% of the attendees were professional members, while 10.8% were student members, and only 8.1% were non-members. When asked to describe their evaluation knowledge and skills, 73.7% indicated levels that were

intermediate or advanced. More than 66% of the respondents indicated that 51% or more of their workload included evaluation-related duties.

Responses indicated an overall satisfaction with the conference components, proposal submission and selection process, and the conference experience. In regards to the conference components, the overall mean for logistics and organization was 4.18, with Conference Support Staff ranking the highest (4.33) and Conference Information on AEA Website the lowest (3.92). Overall Program Quality had a grand mean of 3.87 with a high of 4.00 (Overall Program Content) and a low of 3.74 (Moderation of Sessions). Those who responded to the questions about the proposal selection process gave each of the two questions a high rating with means of 4.40 and 4.26. The nine items relating to satisfaction with the conference experience received ratings ranging from 3.87 for “The conference met my professional development needs” to 4.33 for “I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.” Newcomers consistently rated items lower than other attendees, and those who had attended more than 10 conferences tended to have the highest ratings.

Responses to the Overall Feedback Form were consistent with the responses of the previous year’s participants. The ratings for Logistics and Organization were only slightly lower than the previous year, while ratings for Overall Program Quality were virtually identical. “Satisfaction with the conference experience” was slightly higher (grand mean of 4.11 as compared to 4.02). “I intend to attend another AEA conference in the future” and “Overall, I enjoyed the conference” remained the top responses.

Qualitative Data and Analysis

Of all the themes generated in response to the open-ended questions, networking was mentioned by far the most often (233 times). In response to Question 4, it was cited as the “single best part of participants’ experience in attending Evaluation 2001.” Sessions, roundtables, and plenaries came in as the second most cited best experience, with 161 responses.

Question 5, “What one thing did you find most disappointing in attending Evaluation 2001?” was most often answered with responses about poor presenters, presentations, or content (168 responses). Nearly as many comments focused on disappointments with the hotel, session rooms, and isolation of the conference locale (159 responses).

In Question 9, participants were offered an opportunity to list their current jobs if they are other than student, manager/administrator, professor/teacher, or consultant. The great majority of write-in position titles contained the words researcher, research, evaluator, or evaluation.

When asked Question 12, “If you attend other professional conferences, what do you find unique about Evaluation 2001?” conference participants replied most often about the variety and multidisciplinaryity of people, topics, and presentation formats of the conference (106 responses). The second most frequent response was participants (75 responses), who were praised for their qualities—such as collective expertise, professionalism, accessibility, experience, diversity, and insight—and the roles they play.

Question 13, “Please share any additional comments we can use to serve you better and fulfill your expectations,” raised many more negative than positive comments. Tied at 101 for the most frequently mentioned theme were requests for more information (session descriptions or abstracts, improvements to the program book, better session titles, and signage) and presentation criticisms and suggestions for presentation improvements. Remember that these could be duplicates: responses made to this question could also have been made to another question by the same person. A significant number of compliments (71 responses) and thank-you notes (18 responses) also came in through this question.

Newcomers

The primary motivation for attending the conference was to get new knowledge, i.e., to learn about evaluation (more than 71% of interview respondents). Networking was also a dominant attraction in the interviews (35%); 21% of newcomers referred to the professional development opportunities.

When the interviewees were asked what they learned/experienced at the conference, the most dominant theme was related to “meeting many people.” The concept of good networking came up in 48% of interviews. Many respondents were very pleased with their experience at the conference (more than 30%). Fifty-two percent of respondents seemed particularly pleased with the process of learning during the AEA meeting. A quarter of interviewees praised the good organization of the conference. Almost 17% of respondents thought that the conference offered great professional development. Professional self-determination and the purpose of self-discovery and exploring were mentioned in 15% of interviews. About 15% of interview participants expressed fascination with the diversity in evaluation at the conference.

Almost 42% of interviewees said that the conference “exceeded their expectations.” The conference “met expectations” of 31.3% or “met expectations in some ways, but needed improvement” for 18.8%.

The newcomer orientation was attended by 46% of respondents. Out of those who did not attend, 50% reported that they had other things to do at that time; 42% did not know about it. About 8% of non-attendees said they could not get to the orientation since the room was full. Over 59% of those who attended believed that the orientation had no impact. More than 27% said that the orientation was not well-prepared; there was not enough room. The orientation was helpful for only 9% and had some impact for 9% of attendees.

About 44% of respondents would want the orientation to have sufficient information about the site, sessions, professional development, and networking. More than 36% suggested better logistics and organization, and more time “for meeting each other,” or “for questions and answers.” “Need for a bigger room” was an issue for almost 32%. More than 20% would like to know more about TIGs. Handouts, an outline of important events, and FAQs for newcomers were suggested by 13% of interviewees.

Ninety-eight percent of interview respondents considered attending future AEA conferences a strong possibility. Only one respondent (2%) had no plans to attend future conferences.

The elements that made the conference good were related to the good organization (54%), the variety of topics, sessions, backgrounds (29%); knowledge and expertise at the conference (21%); the opportunity to network (19%), and the recognition of newcomers (17%).

The majority of complaints were related to a lack of information in the hotel, and shortcomings of the program book and registration (58%). Other concerns were the room arrangements and session scheduling (43%), hotel service (25%), and lack of handouts (23%). Twenty-five percent of respondents were eager for more social activities; 17% desired more “hands-on approach to the workshops and talks,” and 10% of interviewees wanted “better food service options.”

TIGs

This evaluation has found that program chairs follow a similar process for selecting presentations. They receive proposals, they review them in much the same order, nearly all of them use the AEA Criteria Review scale, they rank them, they group the multi-paper sessions (when they want), and they submit their ranked lists and groups to the AEA. However, there are significant differences in what program chairs emphasize as important, and this leads to significant variances in how they perceive the process and how they carry out these common steps. TIG size is another cited reason behind differences.

This evaluation describes many issues about which program chairs are concerned. We will summarize two of the seemingly most noteworthy issues here. The largest issue relates to the challenge of making judgments based on small amounts of information. Half of the program chairs believe that proposals do not provide adequate information to make good judgments. This issue appears to be correlated with proposal alignment with the AEA Review Criteria. Although nearly all program chairs find the AEA Review Criteria quite useful, about half of the program chairs stated that the information in the proposals was not adequately aligned with the criteria.

A large number of program chairs recommended asking proposal authors during the “Call for Proposals” to consider the criteria when writing their proposals.

Another issue that program chairs describe is related to the Presidential Strand. Although many program chairs report that they make decisions not to submit proposals on the basis of clear criteria, others suggest that they are unclear about the criteria and the process – resulting in them not submitting.

Recommendations

Based on data gathered from more than 700 participants in Evaluation 2001, the evaluation team recommends:

Continue the Many Conference Features that Work.

- Continue to place emphasis on what participants say they appreciate:
 - Networking during sessions and breaks, as well as organized evening receptions (meet the author, silent auction, and poster session) and dinners
 - Attending sessions, roundtables, plenaries, and professional development workshops
 - Learning information and gaining skills
 - Being exposed to evaluation experts
 - Enjoying multidisciplinary people, topics, and formats

Fine-tune the Professional Development Workshops.

- Make sure that the level indicator of workshops is defined and adhered to (avoid review of “Evaluation 101” in an advanced session).
- Encourage presenters to carefully match the amount of content to length of time available (don’t promise to fit a full day’s material into a half day; don’t allow introductions to consume one hour of a three-hour session).
- Encourage and support facilitators to be cognizant of adult learning needs, using interactive teaching methods and avoiding excessive lecturing.
- Be aware that 52.5% of newcomers attended profession development sessions. Since the workshops often serve as a first impression of the organization and its conference, they offer opportunities for welcoming and orientation through presenters’ words and actions, receptions, etc.
- Consider assigning a room host for each professional development workshop. They would provide a friendly greeting and facilitate a streamlined but effective introduction activity to include both participants and the facilitator(s).
- Start workshops later in the morning and move lunch from 11:00 to 12:00.

Work to Improve Presentation Quality.

- Work at ensuring more consistent quality of presentation content and style. Consider using guidelines, videos, and/or training sessions to give more direction to presenters, chairs, and discussants about their roles, preparation, timing issues, the necessity of handouts for paper sessions, adult education techniques that engage learners, etc.

Upgrade Conference Information.

- To improve information about sessions and events, make the program book more user friendly and easier to read. Also:
 - Add a daily schedule of times for sessions (no content).
 - Make available one-sentence descriptions of sessions.
 - Help presenters to write more accurate and helpful session titles.
- Strongly encourage multi-paper session presenters to bring copies of their papers. Post papers on the AEA web site or encourage presenters to make them available electronically. Have extra copies of handouts available at a central location.
- Improve signage at registration, sessions, and directing attendees through the hotel.

Enhance the Newcomer Welcome.

- Create a newcomer's packet or a board in the registration area with information pertinent to newcomers' needs (information about the newcomer orientation, social gatherings, opportunities to be involved with AEA, description of TIGs, etc.).
- Revamp the newcomer orientation.
 - To make sure newcomers are aware of the session, highlight it in the conference program, in the newcomer's packet, and through signage in the registration area.
 - Use a spacious room for the session.
 - Designate time for questions and answers and mingling.
 - Have a couple people with different backgrounds in evaluation talk about their experiences with AEA.
 - Use enthusiastic presenters and well prepared content (on AEA structure, TIGs, committee involvement, and newcomer FAQ).
 - Have TIG chairs and the AEA president present and available to meet and talk with newcomers.
 - Hold a newcomer reception with food and the chance to network with leaders in the field, TIG chairs, and fellow newcomers.

- Present strategies for working the conference (e.g., go to TIG sessions, workshops, and Presidential Strand sessions). Perhaps there could be a special handout, geared toward students, on how to attend the conference on a shoestring.
- Consider adding a buddy or adoption system that pairs a newcomer with a conference alum.
- Have roving ambassadors greet solos and newcomers at events.

Optimize Conference Logistics.

- As much as it is in AEA’s control, choose quality hotels with good conference amenities (enough rooms of appropriate size; environmental controls; quiet; proximity to restaurants, sights, and local activities) and personal amenities (room and food quality, handy location).
- As much as it is in AEA’s control, match room size to expected audience size, and reduce concurrent scheduling of related content sessions.
- Increase breaks to more than 10 minutes each.
- Offer better food service options such as box lunches to buy on site. Provide snacks, at least in the afternoon.
- Offer more social activities, to see the city and socialize.

Improve the Proposal Process.

- Include the AEA Review Criteria in the Call for Proposals, to inform proposal writers of the criteria on which their proposals will be judged. This will better align the proposals with the criteria, making it easier for program TIGs to use the criteria.
- Improve clarity regarding the Presidential Strand. Take steps to increase communication of the Presidential Strand theme as part of the proposal submission process.
- Develop a Frequently Asked Questions Sheet to Acknowledge Those Conference Issues that Don’t Go Away.
- AV issues: why no LCDs?
- Why don’t we have food every morning, during breaks, etc.?
- What to do about the evaluation elders who are so visible on the program? Some people like them best of all; others resent the “old [well-known] white guys.”
- Why aren’t more publishers represented?

Consider These Ideas for the Next Evaluation.

- Explore people's preferences for the scheduling of TIG business meetings. There are benefits to scheduling them to overlap and benefits to scheduling them throughout the conference.
- Have evaluation team highly visible throughout the conference. Serendipity of the evaluation table being right in the middle of the main area increased the response rate in 2001 and gave some people a place to hang out ("If you're uncomfortable, you always go and talk to the lowest denominator: the student evaluators.")
- Continue to debate the size issue. Side A says, "Do not increase the size of the conference if it's at the expense of the collegial atmosphere and networking opportunities." Side B says, "Market the conference more broadly and aggressively. Expand outreach to all people doing evaluation, not only academic or governmental. Encourage publicity through grantors, especially since they require evaluation."

Introduction

The five-member University of Minnesota Evaluation Team, together with faculty advisor Dr. Jean A. King, worked closely with AEA's Professional Development Committee to design an evaluation plan that addressed the needs of the committee and provided information that would be useful to stakeholders. This collaboration resulted in an evaluation plan that included four questions:

5. To what extent are participants satisfied with their professional development workshop experience?
6. To what extent are participants satisfied with their conference experience?
7. How do we make the conference more receptive and responsive to the needs and expectations of first-time attendees?
8. How and to what extent does the TIG proposal process work?

See chart on the next page for a summary of evaluation questions and methods. A section of this report is devoted to each of these questions, the methods used for data collection and analysis, and a discussion of the findings. A recommendation section concludes the report narrative.

Framing the Evaluation 2001 Evaluation

Evaluation Questions	Information Needed	Information Source	Proposed Methods/Analysis	Lead Evaluator(s)
To what extent are participants satisfied with their professional development workshop experience?	Feedback on workshops	Participants	Written survey/SPSS and qualitative analysis*	Lesley Lilligren John Smith
		Presenters	Written survey/SPSS and qualitative analysis*	
To what extent are participants satisfied with their conference experience?	Overall "customer satisfaction"	Conference attendees	Written survey/SPSS and qualitative analysis*	Lesley Lilligren John Smith Gwen Willems
How do we make the conference more receptive and responsive to the needs and expectations of first-time attendees?	Customer satisfaction of self-identified first-time attendees	Convenient sample of self-identified first-time attendees (N = 48)	Series of informal interviews with follow-up phone calls in December/Qualitative analysis*	Boris Volkov
		All first-time attendees	Analysis of their responses to general customer satisfaction survey/SPSS and qualitative analysis*	
How and to what extent does the TIG proposal process work?	Information on the TIG program development process	TIG "experts"	Interviews to gather data on issues and concerns for survey development/Qualitative analysis*	Tom Bartholomay
		Existing literature on peer review for conferences	Literature review	
		Current TIG chairs/ program chairs	Electronic survey with telephone follow-up/Qualitative analysis*	

Faculty Coach: Prof. Jean King

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* When appropriate, based on the volume of qualitative responses, NUD•IST software was utilized.

Section I

To what extent are participants satisfied with their professional development workshop experience?

On the two days preceding and the day following the conference, a total of 31 Professional Development Workshops were held. The purpose of these Professional Development Workshops was to provide participants an opportunity to receive training from national experts in evaluation on a wide variety of topics. Nine of the workshops were allotted a full day (seven hours), while the other 21 lasted approximately a half day (three hours). Each workshop was assigned a “level,” with 14 workshops being designated as beginner, 13 as intermediate, three as advanced, and one as intermediate/advanced. These workshops required a separate registration and registration fee and were filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Method of Evaluation

Together with the Professional Development Committee of the American Evaluation Association (AEA), the evaluation team decided to use the same instruments with no revisions as the evaluators of the previous year’s conference used. The forms included: 1) the Participant Feedback Form used by workshop participants to report on their satisfaction with each session; and 2) the Workshop Facilitator Feedback Form, which asked workshop facilitators to report on their satisfaction with the support received from AEA in providing the session, the hotel amenities, and the preparedness and participation of the audience. Using the same forms, which

had been effective in evaluating the Professional Development Workshops for Evaluation 2000, provided the Professional Development Committee an opportunity to gather data that could be compared from year to year.

Participants were asked to respond to a few different types of items when completing the Participant Feedback Form. This included responding to yes/no questions to report up to three motivations for attending each workshop when given a list of six common motivators, and responding to items on a five-point Likert scale regarding their satisfaction with 11 aspects of the workshop. Participants were also invited to add comments under two open-ended questions. The Facilitator Feedback Form included eight items querying each facilitator's satisfaction with the support s/he received and audience participation using a five-point Likert scale, a few additional forced-choice questions to gain information on each facilitator's personal background and interest in facilitating future workshops, and two open-ended questions to solicit additional comments.

The feedback forms were delivered to each facilitator at the beginning of his/her workshop, and the facilitator was allowed to decide when the forms would be distributed. Using the numbers of persons registered for each workshop, the response rate for Workshop Participant Feedback Forms was 71% (602 of 845 participants), and Facilitator Feedback Forms were received from at least one presenter from 25 of the 31 workshops for a response rate of 81%. At one of the larger Professional Development Workshops the facilitator forgot to distribute the participant feedback forms, but three were returned to the evaluation team's table, providing minimal data. This occurrence served to lower the return rate on surveys across all workshops. The range of response rates for individual workshops, with the exception of the outlier above, was 39% to 100%+ (more feedback forms returned than registered participants).

Synopsis of Findings

With few exceptions, the participants in the Professional Development Workshops held in conjunction with Evaluation 2001 reported very positive experiences. Participants rated most workshops very satisfactory both in terms of the content received and the ability of presenters to teach and facilitate workshop activities. In terms of satisfaction, participants rated the workshops slightly lower in most areas as compared with similar workshops held at Evaluation 2000 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Workshop facilitators also were satisfied with their experience at Evaluation

2001. Most felt that participants came to the workshops well prepared to learn and reported they would be interested in presenting other workshops for AEA in the future.

While both participants and facilitators expressed great satisfaction with the Professional Development Workshops, both groups had several suggestions regarding how they could be improved. Participants made several suggestions that can be summarized as a request to AEA and workshop facilitators to attend more closely to the principles of adult learning. Examples include assuring that all workshops include some type of an interactive learning component in addition to didactic lecture, and that facilitators use quality materials, such as overheads and handouts to illustrate and support their points. Many facilitators were interested in having longer sessions affording them more time to instruct, and assurance of comfortable, quiet instructional environments.

Analysis

Both the workshop participant and the facilitator feedback forms were scanned using Remark Office OMR[®] software. This assistance was made available by Principia[®] Products, with scanning done by a company representative on site. The evaluation team greatly appreciates this assistance that assured accuracy in data entry. For both participant and workshop facilitator feedback forms the data from forced choice items were next analyzed using SPSS software. This analysis included determining means for each item across all workshops, and for the Participant Feedback Forms, means were computed by item for each workshop.

In an attempt to interpret workshop participant feedback regarding satisfaction with each session, three summary scores were developed. These summary scores are combined means, and the items comprising each are as follows:

The Satisfaction-Facilitation Summary score is a mean of responses to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2a. The facilitators were well organized. 2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted. 2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience. 2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop. 2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators.
The Satisfaction-Content Summary score is a mean of responses to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2d. The materials provided will be useful to me. 2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic. 2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic. 2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job.
The Satisfaction-Overall Summary score is a mean of responses to all items asked:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2a. The facilitators were well organized. 2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted. 2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience. 2d. The materials provided will be useful to me. 2e. I enjoyed the workshop. 2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop. 2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic. 2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic. 2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job. 2j. I would recommend this workshop to others. 2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators.

The evaluation of Professional Development Workshops additionally gleaned a great deal of qualitative data. Participants were given the opportunity to respond to two open-ended questions, which were: “What one thing would you recommend be done to improve this workshop for future participants?” and “Please share any other comments you have about this workshop.” The qualitative data gained from participant comments were analyzed and grouped into themes for each workshop, and then analyzed across all workshops. Facilitators were asked to respond to the questions: “If you were dissatisfied with any of the above items, please provide a brief explanation,” and “Is there anything else you would like to share with us regarding this workshop?” Both the quantitative and qualitative data gained from facilitators were analyzed across all workshops.

Results

Following is a sampling of results from the evaluation of the 31 professional Development Workshops for which data are available. It represents a broad view of a great deal of data.

Motivations to Attend Workshop

The topic of the workshop was the biggest factor drawing participants to particular sessions, with 96% of those responding saying it was important in their decision to attend. Workshop length (30%), anticipated presentation style (30%), and workshop facilitator (30%) can also be considered somewhat important factors in participants' decisions to attend a workshop. The factor of workshop fees was only cited by 8% of respondents, but this may be misleading since only those who were able to ultimately register and attend were asked. An additional motivator often added by participants was having the presenter and/or topic recommended by a colleague or supervisor. The table below summarizes the responses and provides comparison data from the evaluation of Professional Development Workshops held in conjunction with the last annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association held in Honolulu, Hawaii. Readers will notice that there are no significant differences in the factors attendees used to select workshops between the two conferences.

Table 1. Participant motivations to attend Professional Development Workshops - Evaluation 2000 vs. Evaluation 2001

	Evaluation 2001		Evaluation 2000	
	Percent	n	Percent	N
1.4 Workshop topic	96	578	94	350
1.5 Workshop length	30	180	35	131
1.1 Workshop facilitator	30	180	28	106
1.6 Anticipated presentation style	30	179	30	112
1.3 Workshop date	26	156	26	97
1.2 Workshop fee	8	47	11	39
1.7 Other motivations	7	42	6	21

Satisfaction with Workshops

An initial analysis was done to evaluate participant satisfaction across all of the 33 professional development workshops. Table 2 reports the means (possible range 1 to 5, 1 being “strongly disagree,” 5 being “strongly agree”) and standard deviations for each of the 11 items included on the Workshop Participant Feedback Form. It also compares the means from Evaluation 2001 with responses gained from participants in Professional Development Workshops at Evaluation 2000. It is notable that the rank order of these items in terms of participant satisfaction is nearly identical between the two years, but that all scores dropped a small amount from the 2000 conference to 2001.

Table 2. Summary of Participant Feedback on Professional Development Workshops - Evaluation 2001 vs. Evaluation 2000

	Evaluation 2001			Evaluation 2000		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop.	4.31	1.04	599	4.42	.80	372
2a. The facilitators were well organized.	4.20	1.09	598	4.32	.82	373
2e. I enjoyed the workshop	4.11	1.11	599	4.20	1.00	370
2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic.	4.11	1.14	600	4.22	.92	372
2d. The materials provided will be useful to me.	4.10	1.13	592	4.22	.96	372
2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job.	4.08	1.14	592	4.14	.99	369
2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators.	4.04	1.18	584	4.17	1.09	363
2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience.	4.01	1.13	598	4.16	.94	372
2j. I would recommend this workshop to others.	4.00	1.18	594	4.10	1.05	371
2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted.	3.96	1.16	600	4.04	.96	373
2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic.	3.89	1.15	594	3.94	1.02	371

	Evaluation 2001			Evaluation 2000		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Facilitation	4.10		612	4.22		373
Content	4.05		612	4.13		373
Overall Satisfaction	4.07		612	4.18		373

After the grand means across all workshops were determined, each workshop was analyzed independently. While nearly all workshops scored quite high in most measures, there is variation among the individual workshops in terms of participant satisfaction. Additional detail regarding participant satisfaction with Professional Development Workshops can be found in appendix A to this report.

Qualitative Analysis

Comments from participants to the two open-ended questions were grouped independently for each of the 31 workshops with themes emerging from the comments provided by participants. To understand the broad meaning of participant comments, the themes, along with the accompanying participant comments from which they were derived, were grouped into larger themes across all workshops. These themes, along with the number of workshops in which each theme showed itself strongly, are reported below.

Themes Demonstrating Participant Satisfaction with Workshops

Many participants were very satisfied with the presenter's presentation style.
(14 workshops)

- *Exercises were well designed & thought provoking. Delightful presentation styles. Very worthwhile.*
- *I really enjoyed the presenters & presentation methods.*
- *Both presenters were skilled, articulate, upbeat – a pleasure to listen to.*

Many participants were very satisfied with workshops that provided useful information.
(17 workshops)

- *This has been the most informative workshop/training that I've attended.*
- *Well – done. Very practical & useful.*
- *Great workshop! Really enjoyed it all, especially all the research & documentation of important concepts.*
- *Very practical info that I can pass to members of our team.*

Workshops that include practical examples and activities were well received.
(seven workshops)

- *The anecdotal examples and the “in-class activities” were very helpful!!*
- *Appreciated numerous concrete examples – worth the trip!*
- *Instructor artfully included group participation.*
- *It was great that people brought their experiences/stories to share – thanks for being flexible & allowing this as it's value-added!*

Themes Indicating Areas for Improvement

A common problem was a lack of time and a lack of time management by facilitator.
(16 workshops)

- *This topic could use more time to cover all issues [a common comment across many workshops].*
- *Get through more material instead of dwelling on one or two points excessively. Maybe cut down on the many personal anecdotes.*
- *Do not spend more than 10 minutes on introductions unless it is integral to the goal(s) of the workshop. We lost 40 minutes.*

Many participants requested that handouts, overheads and other materials be upgraded and consistently available.

(11 workshops)

- *Providing handouts would be helpful!*
- *Handout the professional standards which were repeatedly referred to.*
- *Difficult to see overheads. Would like overhead materials printed & distributed.*

- *Make the handouts and visual displays readable.*

Many participants wanted the information presented to be more practical.

(10 workshops)

- *Devote more attention to practical aspects of application of the suggested method. Give more specific examples.*
- *I was very disappointed. Maybe use of a case study would have helped.*
- *More detail on implementation – practical use (examples of real use).*

Participants wanted more “hands-on” activities, led by skilled “facilitators.”

(10 workshops)

- *Needed more interaction during the workshop. The workshop involved too much of him talking and not enough hands on activities or small group interactions.*
- *More interactive presentation style/less PowerPoint.*
- *... has incredible experience and knowledge, but it was exhausting and not very useful to make us sit and listen to a lecture for six hours. Put some time into developing a more interactive workshop that uses adult learning styles.*

In many workshops, participants noted gaps in information.

(10 workshops)

- *How do you work w/populations that are hard to reach?*
- *Get more into the logic behind the logic models.*
- *Eliminate some of the ambiguity and fluidity of the concepts presented.*
- *More focus on how evaluations are planned and executed after the program detail is generate.*

In some workshops, participants felt the material didn’t measure-up to the level at which the workshop was advertised.

(five workshops)

- *This was labeled as an “intermediate” workshop, but the concepts covered seemed very basic – I was disappointed by this.*
- *... but it was so basic that this was not consistent with the workshop level advertised as intermediate. So, please gear presentation to an intermediate not beginner audience.*

Participants complained of a few presenters with poor presentation skills.

(four workshops)

- *Great handouts but poor presentation – not professionally done.*
- *Make your message EXPLICIT!*
- *Presenter very enjoyable, but had very poor skills & understanding of topic.*

Many participants suggested a few logistical refinements and ways the physical environment detracted from their experience.

(14 workshops)

- *Provide water (in every room) & more refreshments.*
- *The room was not well shielded from outside traffic, often making it difficult to hear.*
- *More accurate description in program.*

Facilitator Satisfaction

As noted above, feedback forms were collected from facilitators of 25 of the 31 Professional Development Workshops for which data were collected and, since several workshops had multiple facilitators, a total of 38 workshop facilitator feedback forms were collected and analyzed. Of the 38 facilitators who completed forms, 13 (34%) reported it was the first time they had presented a Professional Development Workshop, and 6 (16 %) reported it was the first time they had attended an AEA annual conference. As with the satisfaction level of workshop participants, the satisfaction level of facilitators was quite high on all items, but dropped from 2000 to 2001 in some areas. The largest drops in facilitator satisfaction came in the areas of workshop date and time, space and room arrangements, and support received from AEA staff. The qualitative comments to be described below indicated some presenters were concerned with the lack of audio-visual equipment and especially LCD projectors at the conference, and overall satisfaction in this area was also a bit lower than last year. The lowest means for facilitator satisfaction came in areas related to the environment of the hotel, and the amount of time available in the workshop. Problems in these areas, although seemingly minor and in some cases beyond the control of AEA, are borne out in qualitative comments from both

participants and facilitators. The chart below reports means and standard deviations for each of the facilitator satisfaction items, as well as comparison information from the evaluation of Professional Development Workshops held at the past year's conference.

Table 4. Summary of Facilitator Feedback, Evaluation 2001 vs. Evaluation 2000

Facilitator Feedback	Evaluation 2001			Evaluation 2000		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Level of participant engagement	4.54	.80	37	4.65	.75	20
Workshop date and time	4.24	.75	38	4.60	.60	20
Level of support from AEA staff	4.11	.94	37	4.55	.69	20
Time allocated for workshop	4.05	1.15	37	4.25	1.12	29
Audio-Visual Equipment	4.03	1.09	32	4.44	.70	18
Room Arrangement	4.03	1.24	38	4.25	1.02	20
Space allocated for workshop	3.78	1.35	36	4.25	1.33	20
Overall Satisfaction	4.44	.77	36	4.42	.52	20

Workshop facilitators were quite pleased with the level of participant engagement in the workshop as exhibited by 95% of workshop facilitators reporting that attendees came to the workshop with the skills and knowledge necessary to participate fully. The great preponderance (84%) of workshop facilitators either agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in presenting Professional Development Workshops at future AEA conferences. Additional detail regarding facilitator satisfaction with Professional Development Workshop arrangements can be found in appendix A to this report.

Qualitative Data

In analyzing and grouping the qualitative comments of facilitators, several themes emerged that add meaning and context to the information above. As with the participant quantitative data, each theme is supported with a small sampling of actual facilitator comments:

Two facilitators were especially pleased with their audience.

(two workshops)

- *A wonderful diverse group of participants, including seven first time attendees. Except for the early start, this was a fine experience. Thanks for asking.*
- *Open, free-flowing discussions, with only some guidance from presentations/discussion starters give participants more opportunity to discuss at “horizontal level” than they get during rest of AEA conference.*

Several facilitators would have appreciated more time.

(seven workshops)

- *Would have preferred more time – four hours or all day.*
- *Needed more time/ a full day.*
- *Requested a full day, would like to have it next year if I am invited back.*

Many facilitators were dissatisfied with their room/ the hotel.

(five workshops)

- *Room seemed very dark and cramped.*
- *Room stuff: table clothes wrinkled, askew, walls marked.*
- *Noise was a problem because we were near the escalators & one wall didn't reach the ceiling.*
- *We were at the back of a large plenary room: poor lighting, cold, horrible acoustics (I'm still hoarse from shouting); overhead not there initially, then badly placed. Noisy space.*
- *Room location was not good.*

Several facilitators complained of problems with the registration process.

(five workshops)

- *List of participants to presenter in advance would be desirable.*
- *We asked for registration to be capped @ 25, (but) we had 33 in the room.*

Some facilitators lack desired AV/other equipment.

(four workshops)

- *Would like to have both flip chart & overhead projector.*
- *No PowerPoint projection – know this is very expensive but it sure is on my wish list.*

A few facilitators suggested moving back the start time and lunch times.

(three workshops)

- *Starting at 8:00 was a disaster – people weren't there! "Lunch" at 11:00 seemed too early. I'd start at 9:00, please!*

As with the feedback from participants, both the quantitative and qualitative data from facilitators indicate the Professional Development Workshops were largely successful in meeting their intent. The qualitative data suggest several minor "tweaks" to the workshop format and structure, rather than major overhauls. It is interesting to note that while both workshop facilitators and participants express great interest in having more time available in Professional Development Workshops, there was virtually no difference between full-day and half-day workshops in participant satisfaction means for the areas of facilitation (mean = 4.12 vs. 4.11), content (mean = 4.05 vs. 4.05), or overall satisfaction (4.09 vs. 4.07).

Section II

**To what extent are participants satisfied with their
conference experience?**

The Evaluation Team worked closely with the Professional Development Committee to design an evaluation that met the needs of AEA and provided information that could be effectively used to assist the organization in achieving its goal of improving its annual conference. With the elimination of individual session evaluations, the Overall Conference Feedback Form became the vehicle for gathering both demographic information and data relevant to participant satisfaction and experiences. Because the form was the major source of data, the Evaluation Team, together with the Professional Development Committee, worked to redesign the form to facilitate completion, as well as developing other strategies to increase the response rate.

Methods of Evaluation

The Overall Conference Feedback Form is a survey designed to gather information from conference participants relevant to their satisfaction with the quality of the conference logistics and organization, the proposal submission and review process, and their conference experiences, as well as providing demographic information about the attendees. The form uses both quantitative and qualitative means to gather this information.

A new Overall Conference Feedback Form had been developed for Evaluation 2000. In 2001, the Professional Development Committee found that some of the questions on the form no longer met their needs and desired to shorten the form to one page (front and back) in order to make it easier for participants to complete. Several questions were removed and others were modified. Some of the questions in the original form had been designed to gather information needed for one time use. Others collected information that was not relevant to the 2001 evaluation. Several questions were kept from the 2000 form, primarily demographic, in order to allow for the collection of longitudinal data. The format of the original form was retained.

The 2001 Evaluation Team developed several strategies to increase the survey response rate. The overall response rate for Evaluation 2000 had been 25%, however, several factors could have contributed to this low response rate. In 2000, evaluation forms were completed for all sessions. Not only could this have created “evaluation burnout” among participants, it also prevented the evaluation team from focusing its energies on the Overall Conference Feedback Form. In addition, the length of the form could have been prohibitive, especially for attendees who had completed several surveys per day.

The strategies developed by the 2001 Evaluation Team to increase the response rate centered around simplicity, access, incentives, and awareness. As discussed earlier, the team worked with the Professional Development Committee to simplify the form itself. The form was shortened to one sheet, front and back, with ratings on the front and qualitative and demographic responses on the back.

To facilitate access, Overall Conference Feedback Forms were not only placed in each participant's information packet, but were constantly available at the evaluation table in the exhibit area. Forms were distributed at the conference's closing session as well. An address was provided on the back of the form for participants to mail the survey if they had not been able to complete it at the conference. Also, the form was made available online, post-conference, and the Evaluation Team notified participants of its availability.

The team felt that it was important to offer incentives to participants in order to encourage them to return the forms. It was decided that offering a small incentive to everyone who completed the form would be more effective than to offer a few larger incentives in a drawing. A button was designed incorporating the AEA logo with the conference location and the phrase "I'm a Real Evaluator." These buttons were displayed throughout the conference, but only given to participants upon completion of the survey. The buttons became popular over the course of the week and served well as an incentive for conference attendees.

Much of the team's energy was devoted to making the conference participants aware of the Overall Conference Feedback Form and maintaining a high level of awareness throughout the conference. Several strategies were employed to achieve this goal. A table was set up along the main aisle of the exhibit area. This table was staffed throughout the conference. Charts and posters were developed to increase participants' awareness of the need for conference evaluation. For example, sayings such as "Real Evaluators Evaluate, Be a Real Evaluator," were taped to the response box, a chart of response rates was displayed, and a poster size reproduction of the Overall Conference Evaluation Form was mounted on a tripod next to the table. The Evaluation Team designed and had made t-shirts with their picture on the back. On Saturday, the team wore these t-shirts in order to increase participants' awareness of the need to return surveys. Also on Saturday, brightly colored signs with quotations designed to remind participants to complete the survey were strategically placed on the hotel floor near high traffic areas and entrances to sessions.

These strategies paid off with a significantly higher survey response rate. The team received a total of 551 forms at the conference and through the mail. An additional 173 responses were received to the online survey. This total of 724 responses was 58% of the 1253 participants registered for the conference, more than doubling the previous year's response rate. (Note: During the analysis of qualitative data, conducted after the quantitative analysis, it was discovered that one form was duplicated. The duplicated form was removed from the qualitative analysis, however, the response rate of 58% was unchanged.)

Part I: Quantitative Data and Analysis

Introduction

The quantitative data were focused in four areas: demographics, ratings on quality of logistics and organization, satisfaction with the proposal submission and review process, and level of satisfaction with the conference experience. Ratings were on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being the lowest and 5, the highest.

The data herein cannot be interpreted as representative of the entire group of conference attendees, but the statistics used here can be illustrative and emphasize trends in the data. More than half (58%) of the conference attendees responded, which assures the team and the committee that these statistics are at least representative of the majority of the participants. Generalization to the larger group is at the discretion of the user.

The following three narrative sections address the data collected in each of the four areas from different perspectives. The first section reports on the analysis of the data as a whole. Section two is a comparative analysis, most often based on the number of AEA conferences attended. Finally, whenever possible, comparisons to data collected for Evaluation 2000 are made. All statistical information on Evaluation 2000 was taken from the AEA Conference Final Report completed by The Ohio State University Evaluation Team.

All the quantitative data reported were collected from the Overall Conference Feedback Form. The forms were scanned using Remark Office OMR[®] software, which was made available to the team by Principia[®] Products, and scanning was done by a company representative. Principia[®] Products made their services available to the Evaluation team at no charge. Data were analyzed using SPSS 10. Means, frequency distributions, modes, and standard deviations were computed for each of the rating areas. Frequencies were computed for the demographic information. Items that were left blank or marked NA were coded as missing responses and were not used in the calculation of the means.

Synopsis of Findings

The largest percentage of conference attendees, 43.9%, were attending for the first time, while only 8.0% had attended more than 10 conferences. Over 79% of the attendees were professional members, while 10.8% were Student members, and only 8.1% were non-members. When asked to describe their evaluation knowledge and skills, 73.7% indicated levels that were Intermediate or Advanced. More than 66% of the respondents indicated that 51% or more of their workload included evaluation – related duties.

Responses indicated an overall satisfaction with the conference components, proposal submission and selection process, and the conference experience. In regards to the conference components, the overall mean for Logistics and Organization was 4.18, with Conference Support Staff ranking the highest (4.33) and Conference information on AEA website the lowest (3.92). Overall Program Quality had a grand mean of 3.87 with a high of 4.00 (Overall Program content) and a low of 3.74 (Moderation of Sessions). Those who responded to the questions about the proposal selection process gave each of the two questions a high rating with means of 4.40 and 4.26. The nine items relating to satisfaction with the conference experience received ratings ranging from 3.87 for The conference met my professional development needs to 4.33 for I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future. Newcomers consistently rated items lower than other attendees and those who had attended more than 10 conferences tended to have the highest ratings.

Responses to the Overall Feedback Form were consistent with the responses of the previous year’s participants. The ratings for Logistics and Organization were only slightly lower than the previous year, while ratings for Overall Program Quality were virtually identical. Satisfaction with the conference experience was slightly higher (grand mean of 4.11 as compared to 4.02) and “I intend to attend another AEA conference in the future” and “Overall, I enjoyed the conference” remained the top responses.

Overall Quantitative Analysis: Demographics

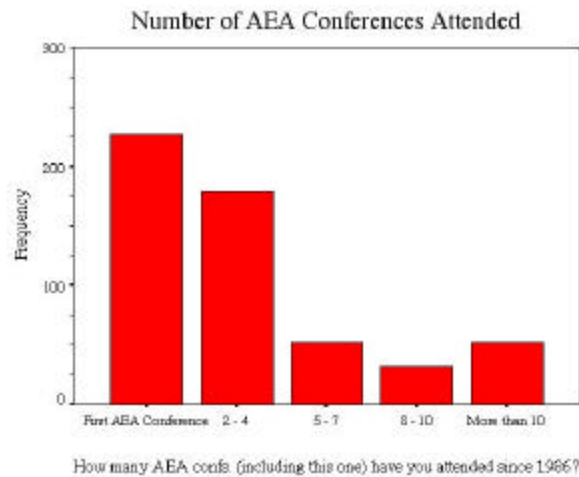
Demographic information collected included information on the number of AEA conferences attended, AEA membership status, position titles of conference attendees, evaluation knowledge and skill levels, and percent of workload including evaluation-related duties of

respondents. Participants were also asked if they had attended professional development sessions and if they had either presented at the conference or submitted a proposal for presentation.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended

Question 7 of the Overall Conference Evaluation Form asked participants how many AEA conferences they had attended (including Evaluation 2001). Of the respondents, 318 (43.9%) were first time attendees, 236 (32.6%) had attended 2 – 4 conferences, 64 (8.8%), 5 – 7 conferences, 36 (5.0%), 8 – 10 conferences, and 58 (8.0%) more than 10. Twelve respondents (1.7%) did not indicate how many conferences they had attended.

Figure 1.

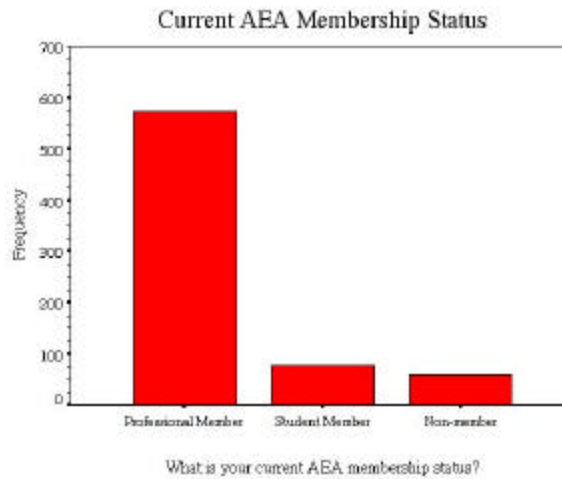


As can be seen in the above figure, the greatest majority of respondents (76.5%) had attended fewer than five AEA conferences. Only 158 respondents (21.8%) had attended five or more.

AEA Membership Status

Of the 724 respondents, 575 (79.4%) were professional members, 78 (10.8%) were student members, and 59 (8.1%) were non-members. Twelve respondents (1.7%) did not indicate their membership status. Percentages of AEA membership status are reflected in the following figure.

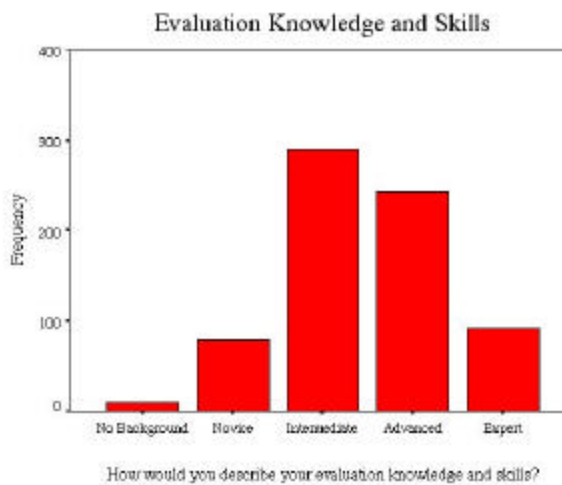
Figure 2.



Evaluation Knowledge and Skills

Respondents were asked to describe their evaluation knowledge and skills on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being no background and 5, expert. The mean response was 3.46 with a standard deviation of .90. Only nine respondents (1.2%) indicated that they had no evaluation background. Seventy-nine (10.9%) described themselves as novice, 290 (40.1%) as intermediate, 243 (33.6%) as advanced, and 92 (12.7%) as expert. There were 11 (1.5%) no responses to this item. Overall, 73.7% indicated that their knowledge and skill level was intermediate or advanced.

Figure 3.

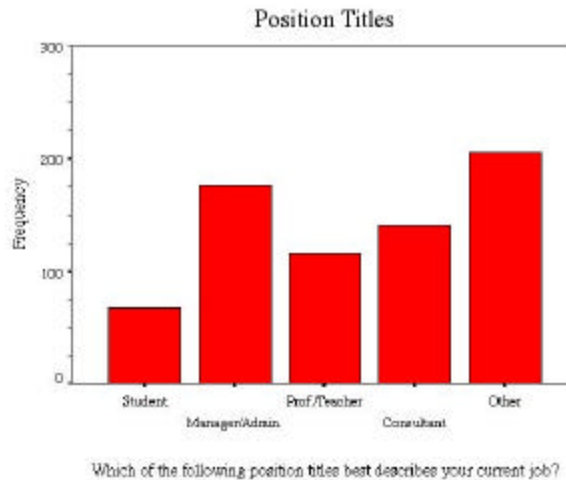


Position Titles

Seven-hundred-four participants responded to the item that asked them to choose the position title which described their current job. Of the 704, 67 (9.3%) described themselves as students, 176 (24.3%) chose manager/administrator, 115 (15.9%) as professor/teacher, and 140 (19.3%), consultant. The category of other was chosen by 206 (28.5%). There were 20 (2.7%) respondents who did not answer the question.

“Other” was the most popular choice. Of those who responded to other, approximately 75% of them indicated titles that contained either “researcher” and “research” or “evaluator” and “evaluation.” The data would support including those two options as choices for subsequent conference surveys.

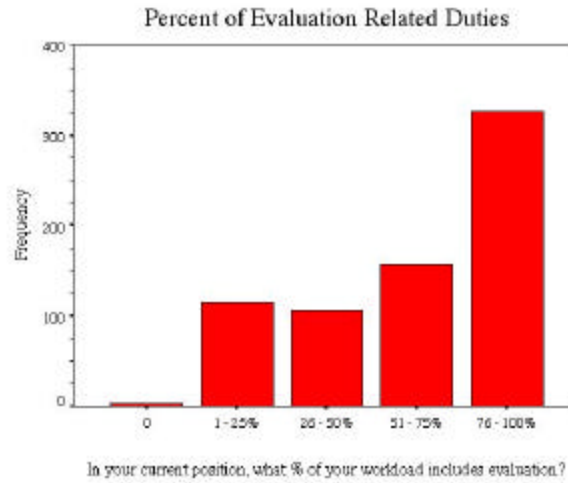
Figure 4.



Percent of Evaluation-Related Duties

For the question, “In your current position, what percent of your workload includes evaluation-related duties?” the mean response was 3.97. The highest response was in the category, 76 – 100% (45.2%) and the lowest response was in the category 0 (.6%). Only 31.3% of respondents indicated that 50% or less of their workload included evaluation-related duties, with 66.7% indicating 51% or higher.

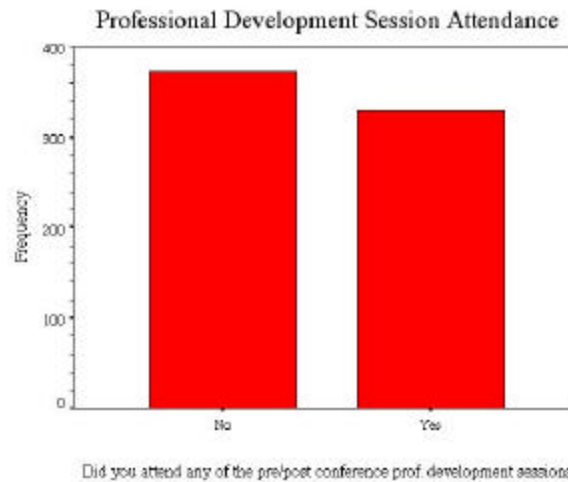
Figure 5.



Professional Development Sessions

A total of 331 (45.7%) of survey respondents indicated that they had attended either a pre- or post-conference professional development session. Three hundred seventy-four (51.7%) did not attend and 19 (2.6%) did not respond to the question.

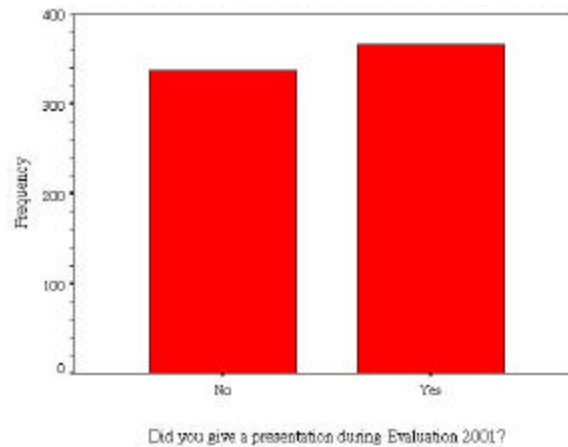
Figure 6.



Presented at Evaluation 2001

Of the 704 respondents to the question, “Did you give a presentation at Evaluation 2001?” 366 (50.6%) answered yes.

Figure 7. Presented at Evaluation 2001



Overall Quantitative Analysis: Satisfaction with Specific Components of the Conference

Section 1 of the Overall Conference Feedback Form provided respondents with the opportunity to rate components of the conference in terms of quality. The ratings were a 5-point Likert scale with 1 - needs a lot of improvement, 3 – acceptable, and 5 – excellent. For purposes of analysis, the components are divided into two groups – Logistics/Organization and Overall Program Quality.

Logistics/Organization

Respondents were asked to rate four areas pertaining to logistics and organization: (1) registration process (pre-conference), (2) registration on-site (help desk), (3) conference support staff, and (4) conference information on AEA website. All areas received ratings that were higher than “acceptable,” with means ranging from 3.92 (conference information on the AEA website) to 4.33 (conference support staff). The grand mean for the four areas was 4.18 with a standard deviation of .69 and an n of 719.

Table 5. Participant Ratings of Logistics/Organization

Logistics/Organization	n	Mean	St.Dev
a. Registration process (pre-conference)	713	4.27	.92
b. Registration on-site (Help desk)	712	4.26	.86
c. Conference support staff	692	4.33	.79
d. Conference information on AEA website	710	3.92	1.01
Grand Mean	719	4.18	.69

Overall Program Quality

Overall program quality was rated on the basis of overall program content, moderation of sessions by chairs, preparation of presenters, and quality of presentations. All areas received scores that were higher than “acceptable,” but lower than the ratings for logistics and operations. Overall program content was rated the highest in this group (mean = 4.00) and moderation of sessions received the lowest rating (3.74). Although respondents found the overall program quality to be higher than “acceptable,” they were not as satisfied with the overall program quality as they were with the logistics and operations.

Table 6. Participant Ratings of Overall Program Quality

Overall Program Quality	n	Mean	St. Dev
e. Overall program content	706	4.00	.83
f. Moderation of sessions by chairs	707	3.74	.85
g. Preparation of presenters	710	3.90	.87
h. Quality of presentations	708	3.84	.84
Grand Mean	715	3.87	.68

Overall Quantitative Analysis: Satisfaction with the Proposal Submission and Review Process

Parts a and b of section 2 of the Overall Conference Feedback Form were designed to collect data pertinent to the satisfaction of presenters and prospective presenters with the proposal submission and review process. Respondents who had answered yes to question 2 were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the (a) call for papers/presentations and (b) paper/presentation selection process. There were 374 valid responses to question 2a and 365 valid responses to 2b. The questions were rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 = very dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, and 5 = very satisfied.

The mean scores for both question 2a and 2b were 4.40 and 4.26, respectively, and the grand mean for the questions was 4.33. The high satisfaction rate of those who presented or submitted a proposal for a presentation indicated that the respondents reported little or no problems with the process.

Table 7. Participant Ratings of Satisfaction with the Proposal Submission and Review Process

Proposal Submission and Review Process	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by Response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. Call for papers/presentations	448	4.40	.75	1/1	3/4	36/5.0	133/18.4	200/27.6	74/10.2
b. Paper/presentation selection process	445	4.26	.86	1/1	13/1.8	56/7.7	116/16.0	179/24.7	80/11.0
Grand Mean	379	4.33	.74						

Overall Quantitative Analysis: Satisfaction with the Conference Experience

The third section of the Overall Conference Feedback Form was designed to measure the level of satisfaction which attendees had with their overall conference experience. The responses were on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, and 5 = strongly agree. Attendees were asked to respond to nine items. The following chart shows the means and frequencies of each of the items.

Table 8. Participant Ratings of Satisfaction with the Conference Experience

Satisfaction with Conference Experience	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by Response				
				1	2	3	4	5
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	716	4.08	.90	6/8	25/3.5	152/21.0	255/35.2	278/38.4
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	717	3.99	.93	8/1.1	56/7.7	95/13.1	336/46.4	222/30.7
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	716	4.11	.88	6/8	43/5.9	78/10.8	327/45.2	262/36.2
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	712	3.87	.95	12/1.7	59/8.1	127/17.5	326/45.0	188/26.0
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	716	4.10	.86	9/1.2	31/4.3	87/12.0	341/47.1	248/34.3
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	713	4.14	.89	8/1.1	25/3.5	115/15.9	277/38.3	288/39.8
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	714	4.33	.87	7/1.0	25/3.5	76/10.5	221/30.5	385/53.2
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	714	4.14	1.03	18/2.5	37/5.1	113/15.6	205/28.3	341/47.1
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	715	4.25	.82	8/1.1	22/3.0	57/7.9	322/44.5	306/42.3
Grand Mean	720	4.11	.70					

The two items with the highest means were “I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future” (4.33) and “Overall, I enjoyed the conference” (4.25). These seem to indicate that, overall, the conference participants were satisfied with Evaluation 2001. The lowest two means were for “Evaluation 2001 met my expectations” (3.99) and “The conference met my professional development needs” (3.87). Although these means still indicate that participants agreed with the statements, they appear not to have been as satisfied with the professional development aspects of the conference.

2001 Comparative Quantitative Analysis

Data were also analyzed comparatively, looking at the differences in respondents based on how many AEA conferences they had attended. Twelve respondents did not indicate how many conferences they had attended and their responses are not represented separately in the following charts, but when valid, are included in the line labeled “All.”

2001 Comparative Quantitative Analysis: Demographics

AEA Membership Status

The table below illustrates the membership status of respondents in relationship to the number of conferences attended.

Table 9. Membership Status of Respondents in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Frequency/Percentage by Response		
		1 Professional Member	2 Student Member	3 Non-member
This is my first AEA conference	316	224/70.4	41/12.9	51/16.0
2 – 4	236	198/83.9	30/12.7	8/3.4
5 – 7	64	58/90.6	6/9.4	0/0
8 – 10	35	35/97.2	0/0	0/0
More than 10	57	57/98.3	0/0	0/0
All	712	575/79.4	78/10.8	59/8.1

The table shows that all of the non-members had attended fewer than five conferences and that most of the non-members were newcomers (87.9%). Of those who had attended eight or more conferences, 100% were professional members. Student members tended to be newcomers (52.5%) or to have attended two - four conferences (38.4%). Only six (7.7%) student members had attended more than four conferences and none had attended eight or more.

Evaluation Knowledge and Skills

A breakdown of responses to this item by number of conferences attended yields the following information.

Table 10. Evaluation Knowledge and Skills in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by Response				
				1 No back - ground	2 Novice	3 Inter- mediate	4 Ad- vanced	5 Expert
This is my first AEA conference	317	3.03	.84	9/2.8	69/21.7	156/49.1	71/22.3	12/3.8
2 – 4	235	3.54	.72	0/0	10/4.2	108/45.8	96/40.7	21/8.9
5 – 7	64	3.98	.68	0/0	0/0	15/23.4	35/54.7	14/21.9
8 – 10	36	4.19	.67	0/0	0/0	5/13.9	19/52.8	12/33.3
More than 10	58	4.52	.60	0/0	0/0	3/5.2	22/37.9	33/56.9
All	713	3.46	.90	9/1.2	79/10.9	290/40.1	243/33.6	92/12.7

Not unexpectedly, newcomers made up all (100%) of the respondents who described themselves as having no background in evaluation and 87.3% of those who considered their knowledge and skills as to be at a novice level. Only 3.8% of newcomers considered themselves to be expert. All of the respondents who had attended five or more conferences described their knowledge and skills at being intermediate or higher. Ninety-one percent of those who described themselves as intermediate had attended four or fewer conferences.

As the number of conferences attended increased, the percentage of respondents who considered themselves to be advanced or expert increased. While only 26.1% of newcomers and 49.6% of those who had attended two – four conferences considered themselves to be advanced or expert, 76.6% of five – seven year attendees and 86.1% of eight - 10 year attendees placed themselves in those two categories. Conversely, the number of intermediate ratings decreased as the number of conferences attended increased. Of those who had attended more than 10 conferences, 94.8% considered themselves advanced or expert, and only 5.2% described themselves as intermediate.

Position Titles

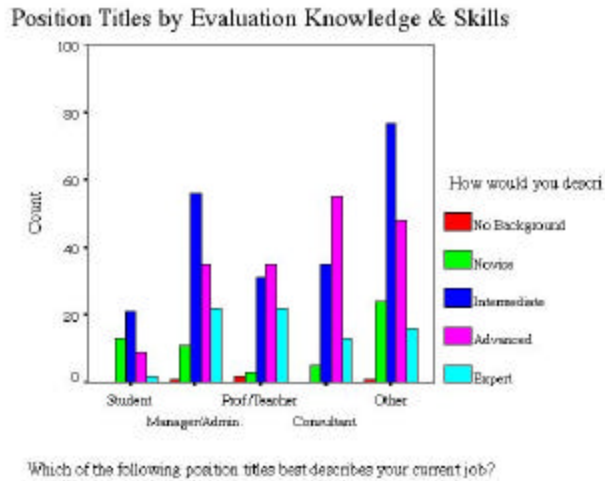
The frequency table below gives a breakdown of position title responses per number of conferences attended. The table shows that the majority (95.5%) of students had attended seven conferences or fewer, while no students had attended eight or more. Those who had attended five – seven conferences were the most equally distributed among the position titles other than student, ranging from 20.3% in the other category to 26.6% identified as professor/teacher. Those who had attended more than 10 conferences were most likely to be professor/teachers (44.8%) and least likely to be consultants (6.9%).

Table 11. Position Titles in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Frequency/Percentage by Response				
		1 Student	2 Manager/Administrator	3 Professor/Teacher	4 Consultant	5 Other
This is my first AEA	314	39/12.3	78/24.5	28/8.8	58/18.2	111/34.9
2 – 4	231	25/10.6	55/23.3	35/14.8	58/24.6	58/24.6
5 – 7	64	3/4.7	15/23.4	17/26.6	16/25.0	13/20.3
8 – 10	36	0	11/30.6	9/25.0	4/11.1	12/33.3
More than 10	57	0	16/27.6	26/44.8	4/6.9	11/19.0
All	704	67/9.3	176/24.3	115/15.9	140/19.3	206/28.5

The following figure provides information on how the knowledge and skill levels of respondents were distributed across the different position titles.

Figure 8.



Students and “other” had the highest number of novices, while students (together with consultants) had the least number of no evaluation background (0). Students also had the least number of intermediate, advanced, and expert selections. Manager/administrator and other were high in the intermediate level. The professor/teacher category was the highest in both no evaluation background and expert, while being the lowest in novice. Consultants were most apt to be advanced. The “other” category was also high in novice and advanced.

Percent of Evaluation-Related Duties

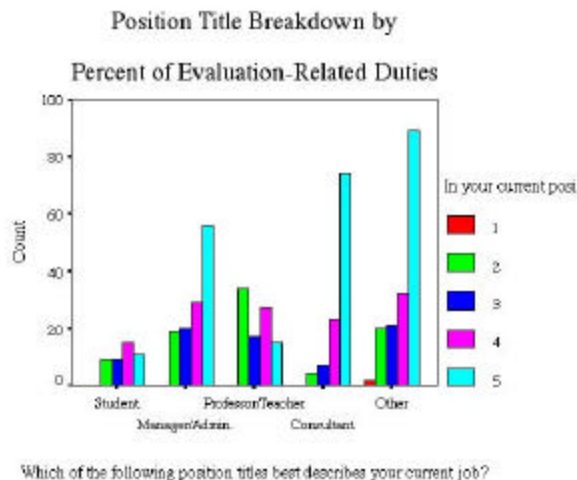
Those who had attended eight – 10 conferences were the most likely (63.9%) to have 76 – 100% of their workload include evaluation-related duties and they had the highest mean (4.35) of those who responded to the number of AEA conferences attended item. Newcomers had the lowest mean (3.84), but those who had attended more than 10 conferences had the lowest percentage of responses in the 76 – 100% category (37.9%). All (100%) of those who reported having no evaluation-related duties had attended four or fewer conferences, as well as 86.9% of those in the 1 – 25% category.

Table 12. Percent of Evaluation Related Duties in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by Response				
				1 0	2 1-25%	3 26-50%	4 51-75%	5 76-100%
This is my first AEA conference	317	3.84	1.21	2/.6	67/21.1	50/15.7	60/18.9	138/43.4
2 – 4	233	4.00	1.13	2/.8	33/14.0	36/15.3	54/22.9	108/45.8
5 – 7	63	4.35	.86	0/0	3/4.7	7/10.9	18/28.1	35/54.7
8 – 10	36	4.22	1.15	0/0	5/13.9	5/13.9	3/8.3	23/63.9
More than 10	58	3.98	1.02	0/0	7/12.1	9/15.5	30/34.5	22/37.9
All	710	3.97	1.14	4/.6	115/15.9	107/14.8	157/21.7	327/45.2

An analysis of percent of evaluation-related duties by position title indicates that those who responded other are most apt to have responded 76 – 100%. This is consistent with the fact that approximately 75% of those who responded other indicated that their position titles included research or evaluation. Consultant and manager/administrator were also high in the 76 – 100% category. Students were least likely to have more than 75% of their workload evaluation-related. Consultants were least likely to have evaluation-related duties of 50% or fewer.

Figure 9.



Professional Development Sessions

Newcomers made up the highest percentage of pre- or post-conference professional development session attendees (50.5%). Those who had attended fewer than five conferences accounted for 82.8% of those attending the sessions. More than half (52.5%) of newcomers attended the sessions while only 27.6% of those who had attended more than 10 conferences did.

Table 13. Percent of Professional Development Attendance in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Frequency/Percentage by Response	
		1 No	2 Yes
This is my first AEA conference	316	149/46.9	167/52.5
2 – 4	232	125/53.0	107/45.3
5 – 7	63	38/59.4	25/39.1
8 – 10	36	21/58.3	15/41.7
More than 10	57	41/70.7	16/27.6
All	705	374/51.7	331/45.7

Presented at Evaluation 2001

Newcomers were least likely to present at Evaluation 2001, while those who had attended five – seven conferences were the most likely, followed closely by those who had attended more than 10. Only 32.1% of the newcomers who responded to the question had presented at Evaluation 2001. This was in sharp contrast to the 75.9% of those who had attended more than 10 conferences and the 76.6% who had attended five – seven conferences. The overall presentation percentage was 50.6.

Table 14. Percent Presenting at Evaluation 2001 in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Frequency/Percentage by Response	
		1 No	2 Yes
This is my first AEA conference	309	207/65.1	102/32.1
2 – 4	233	88/37.3	145/61.4
5 – 7	62	13/20.3	49/76.6
8 – 10	34	11/30.6	23/63.9
More than 10	58	14/24.1	44/75.9
All	704	338/46.7	366/50.6

2001 Comparative Quantitative Analysis: Satisfaction with Specific Components of the Conference

The ratings on Logistics/Organization, as well as Overall Program Quality, were compared based on the number of AEA conferences attended.

Logistics/Organization

Newcomers rated each area the lowest with means ranging from 4.08 for the pre-conference registration process to 3.75 for conference information on the AEA website. Those who had attended more than 10 conferences rated each area the highest from 4.70 for on-site registration to 4.24 for the conference information on the AEA website.

Table 15. Satisfaction with Logistics and Organization in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

No. of AEA Conf. Attended	1a.	1a	1a	1b	1b	1b	1c	1c	1c	1d	1d	1d
	n	Mean	StD	n	Mean	StD	n	Mean	StD	n	Mean	StD
First Conf.	317	4.08	.99	315	4.09	.91	307	4.14	.83	317	3.75	1.04
2 – 4	232	4.33	.85	234	4.28	.83	221	4.35	.80	231	4.03	.97
5 – 7	64	4.46	.91	63	4.38	.81	63	4.58	.66	62	3.97	.95
8 – 10	35	4.58	.75	34	4.67	.68	35	4.53	.62	36	4.12	1.01
More than 10	55	4.63	.69	57	4.70	.55	57	4.76	.51	56	4.24	.95
All	713	4.27	.92	712	4.26	.86	62	4.33	.79	710	3.92	1.01

Overall Program Quality

Those respondents who had attended more than 10 conferences rated the overall program quality areas significantly higher than any other group. They were the only group to have means higher than 4.00 for all four areas. The greatest range of mean scores can be found in the area of moderation of sessions. Mean scores in this area range from 3.54 for those in the eight – 10 conferences group to 4.04 in the more than 10 group. Besides the means of the more than 10 group, the only other mean score in this area that was greater than 4.00 was a 4.03 for the two – four conferences group in the area of overall program content.

Table 16. Satisfaction with Overall Program Quality in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

No. of AEA Conf. Attended	1e	1e	1e	1f	1f	1f	1g	1g	1g	1h	1h	1h
	n	Mean	StD	n	Mean	StD	n	Mean	StD	n	Mean	StD
First Conf.	310	3.95	.88	313	3.67	.83	313	3.87	.94	313	3.81	.87
2 – 4	232	4.03	.82	230	3.74	.87	231	3.96	.79	230	3.86	.83
5 – 7	64	3.98	.75	64	3.89	.76	64	3.80	.99	64	3.80	.89
8 – 10	35	3.91	.78	36	3.54	.98	36	3.91	.74	36	3.86	.88
More than 10	56	4.16	.71	56	4.04	.79	57	4.00	.78	56	4.02	.65
All	706	4.00	.83	707	3.74	.85	710	3.90	.87	708	3.84	.84

2001 Comparative Quantitative Analysis: Satisfaction with the Proposal Submission and Review Process

The means for satisfaction with the process of calling for papers and presentations ranged from a low of 4.25 for newcomers to a high of 4.67 for those who had attended eight – 10 conferences. Those who had attended more than 10 conferences were slightly less satisfied than others who had attended multiple conferences.

Table 17. Satisfaction with the Proposal Submission Process in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by Response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	150	4.25	.77		1/3	17/5.3.	38/11.9	44/13.8	50/15.7
2 – 4	170	4.36	.78	1/4	2/8	12/5.1	62/26.3	75/31.8	18/7.6
5 – 7	52	4.63	.53			1/1.6	16/25.0	31/48.4	4/6.3
8 – 10	24	4.67	.64			2/5.6	4/11.1	18/50.0	
More than 10	48	4.48	.84	1/1.7		4/6.9	12/20.7	29/50.0	2/3.4
All	448	4.40	.75	1/1	3/4	36/5.0	133/18.4	200/27.6	74/10.2

Those who had attended eight – 10 conferences were the most satisfied with the paper/presentation selection process (mean = 4.43). Newcomers were the least satisfied (mean = 4.15). Respondents who had attended 10 or more conferences, those who attended five – seven, and those who had attended two – four had virtually identical means (4.26, 4.27, and 4.28, respectively).

Table 18. Satisfaction with the Proposal Review Process in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by Response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	149	4.15	.79		1/3	21/6.6	38/11.9	38/11.9	51/16.0
2 – 4	168	4.28	.89	1/4	7/3.0	16/6.8	48/20.3	73/30.9	23/9.7
5 – 7	52	4.27	.91		3/4.7	6/9.4	15/23.4	25/39.1	3/4.7
8 – 10	24	4.43	.84			5/13.9	3/8.3	15/41.7	1/2.8
More than 10	48	4.26	.91		2/3.4	8/13.8	12/20.7	24/41.4	2/3.4
All	445	4.26	.86	1/1	13/1.8	56/7.7	116/16.0	179/24.7	80/11.0

Overall, newcomers were the least satisfied with the proposal and submission process, while those who had attended 8 – 10 conferences were the most satisfied.

Table 19. Satisfaction with the Proposal Submission and Review Process in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev
This is my first AEA conference	102	4.20	.73
2 - 4	154	4.31	.79
5 - 7	49	4.45	.62
8 - 10	24	4.54	.64
More than 10	46	4.37	.7486
All	379	4.33	.74

2001 Comparative Quantitative Analysis: Satisfaction with the Conference Experience

A comparison of the grand means for Section 3 shows that the newcomers had the lowest overall satisfaction rating for their conference experience (mean = 3.96) and that those who had attended more than 10 conferences had the highest (4.50). Participants who had attended five – seven conferences had a mean rating of 4.27. Those who had attended two – four conferences had essentially the same level of satisfaction with the conference experience as did those who had attended eight – 10 (4.16, 4.15).

Table 20. Overall Satisfaction with Conference Experience in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev
This is my first AEA conference	318	3.96	.71
2 - 4	235	4.16	.72
5 - 7	64	4.27	.59
8 - 10	36	4.15	.78
More than 10	58	4.50	.42
All	720	4.11	.70

Newcomers had the lowest satisfaction rating for seven of the nine items in the section. The only items that they did not rate the lowest were “The conference met my professional development needs” and “I learned things that will inform my practice.” Those who had attended eight – 10 conferences had the lowest rating for them. For the item, “I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future,” newcomers had a mean of 4.07 compared to 4.83 for those who had attended more than 10 conferences. In addition, newcomers were least likely to “feel welcomed at the conference,” to “have the conference meet their expectations,” to agree that “the conference was worth the time and money,” to “recommend the conference to others,” to hope to “present at a future AEA conference,” and to “enjoy the conference, overall.”

Table 21. Ratings of Individual Satisfaction Items in Relationship to the Number of Conferences Attended

Satisfaction with Conference Experience	Mean 1st Conf.	Mean 2 - 4	Mean 5 - 7	Mean 8 - 10	Mean >10	Mean All
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	3.89	4.14	4.27	4.31	4.53	4.08
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	3.86	3.98	4.03	4.31	4.54	3.99
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	4.00	4.13	4.13	4.22	4.54	4.11
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	3.84	3.89	3.78	3.64	4.12	3.87
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	4.11	4.14	4.09	3.83	4.04	4.10
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	3.97	4.17	4.38	4.25	4.59	4.14
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	4.07	4.45	4.72	4.37	4.83	4.33
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	3.80	4.29	4.61	4.25	4.82	4.14
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	4.15	4.26	4.39	4.19	4.64	4.25

Quantitative Comparison with Evaluation 2000

Whenever possible, data collected from Evaluation 2001's Overall Conference Feedback Form were compared to data from Evaluation 2000. The AEA Conference Evaluation Final Report, completed by the Evaluation Team at The Ohio State University, was used as the source for data from Evaluation 2000.

Quantitative Comparison with Evaluation 2000: Demographics

Number of AEA Conferences Attended

The number of newcomers (43.9%) at Evaluation 2001 was slightly higher than the 40% reported for Evaluation 2000, while the percentage of those attending more than 10 years remained fairly consistent, 8.0% in 2000 compared to 8.8% in 2001 (p.11).

AEA Membership Status

The percentage of members attending Evaluation 2001, 90%, is consistent with the percentage of members attending Evaluation 2000 (more than 90% as reported in the 2000 AEA Conference Evaluation Final Report, p.12).

Evaluation Knowledge and Skills

Overall, 73.7% of respondents indicated that their knowledge and skill level was intermediate or advanced. This is consistent with the approximately 75% reported in these categories at the 2000 conference (p. 12).

Percent of Evaluation Related Duties

Only 31.3% of respondents indicated that 50% or less of their workload included evaluation-related duties, with 66.7% indicating 51% or higher. The 2000 final evaluation report states that 60% of the respondents indicated that at least 50% of their workload included evaluation-related duties (p. 13).

Presented at Evaluation 2001

Of the 704 respondents to the question, “Did you give a presentation at Evaluation 2001?” 366 (50.6%) answered yes. This percentage was slightly lower than the 56% reported for Evaluation 2000 (p.10). Only 32.1% of newcomers gave presentations while 75.9% of those who had attended more than 10 conferences presented. This corresponds closely with the newcomer/returnee attendee percentages of 35 and 73 for Evaluation 2000 (p. 10).

Quantitative Comparison with Evaluation 2000: Satisfaction with Specific Components of the Conference

Logistics/Organization

The means for each of the four logistics and organization areas for the 2001 conference are slightly lower than those for 2000. The mean for conference information on the AEA website is the only one to have dropped below a 4.00 from one year to the next. The small drop in mean scores could be reflective of the larger sample size as opposed to indicating a lower satisfaction with the quality of the conference components.

Table 22. Satisfaction with Logistics and Organization, Evaluation 2001 vs. Evaluation 2000

Logistics/Organization	n 2001	Mean 2001	n 2000	Mean 2000
a. Registration process (Pre-conference)	713	4.27	284	4.37
b. Registration on-site (Help desk)	712	4.26	224	4.47
c. Conference support staff	692	4.33	261	4.51
d. Conference information on AEA website	710	3.92	281	4.11

Overall Program Quality

A comparison of the ratings in the areas of overall program quality between Evaluation 2001 and Evaluation 2000 finds the means to be so similar that they are virtually identical.

Table 23. Satisfaction with Overall Program Quality, Evaluation 2001 vs. Evaluation 2000

Overall Program Quality	n 2001.	Mean 2001	n 2000	Mean 2000
e. Overall program content	706	4.00	301	3.95
f. Moderation of sessions by chairs	707	3.74	291	3.73
g. Preparation of presenters	710	3.90	294	3.89
h. Quality of presentations	708	3.84	292	3.77

Quantitative Comparison with Evaluation 2000: Satisfaction with the Conference Experience

With one exception, the means for the nine items designed to measure participants' overall satisfaction with the conference are slightly higher than those for Evaluation 2000. The means for "The conference was worth the time and money" are virtually identical for the two years (2001 = 4.11, 2000 = 4.12). The grand mean for Evaluation 2001 was 4.11 compared to 4.02 in 2000.

Table 24. Satisfaction with Conference Experience, Evaluation 2001 vs. Evaluation 2000

Satisfaction with Conference Experience	n 2001.	Mean 2001	n 2000	Mean 2000
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	716	4.08	295	4.04
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	717	3.99	296	3.97
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	716	4.11	299	4.12
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	712	3.87	294	3.68
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	716	4.10	294	3.93
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	713	4.14	295	4.03
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	714	4.33	299	4.29
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	714	4.14	298	4.10
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	715	4.25	297	4.16
Grand Mean	720	4.11	302	4.02

The nine items were ranked from highest mean to lowest mean and the rankings from the two years were compared. It is interesting to note that in spite of the changes in means, the top two items (“I intend to attend another AEA conference in the future” and “Overall, I enjoyed the conference”) and the lowest two items (“Evaluation 2001 met my expectations” and “The conference met my professional development needs”) remained the same. “I intend to recommend the conference to others” moved from 6th in 2000 to a tie for 3rd in 2001. “I felt welcomed at the conference” dropped from 5th to 7th.

Table 25. Ranking of Individual Satisfaction Items, Evaluation 2001 vs. Evaluation 2000

Item	2001 Ranking	2000 Ranking
I intend to attend another AEA conference in the future.	1	1
Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	2	2
I intend to recommend the conference to others.	3	6
I intend to present at a future AEA conference.	3	4
The conference was worth the time and money.	5	3
I learned things that will inform my practice.	6	7
I felt welcomed at the conference.	7	5
Evaluation 2001 (2000) met my expectations.	8	8
The conference met my professional development needs.	9	9

Part II of Section II: Qualitative Data and Analysis

Introduction

Almost all of the 723 evaluation respondents filled in hand-written responses to Questions 4, 5, 9, 12, and/or 13. Most of this qualitative data was typed up by two members of the 2001 Evaluation Team, and several weeks after the conference, online evaluation responses from 173 participants were added. Qualitative data were divided into files for each question and imported into NUD•IST software for qualitative data coding and analysis. Each of the textual units, which ranged in size from a word to a phrase to several sentences, was coded one to four times into appropriate categories. Most frequently cited themes are discussed below, and selected quotations from the evaluations are used to illustrate them. A full listing of responses by category (about 250 pages) is available in hard copy and electronically in the AEA office. Note that the coding process of qualitative data is a subjective art both in the category naming and the textual unit coding, but the relative weight and ranking of responses is highly accurate.

Synopsis of Findings

Of all the themes generated in response to the open-ended questions, networking was mentioned by far the most often (233 times). In response to Question 4, it was cited as the “single best part of participants’ experience in attending Evaluation 2001.” Sessions, roundtables, and plenaries came in as second most cited best experience, with 161 responses.

Question 5, “What one thing did you find most disappointing in attending Evaluation 2001?” was most often answered with responses about poor presenters, presentations, or content (168 responses). Nearly as many comments focused on disappointments with the hotel, session rooms, and isolation of the conference locale.

In Question 9, participants were offered an opportunity to list their current jobs if they are other than student, manager/administrator, professor/teacher, or consultant. The majority of write-in position titles contained the words researcher or research or evaluator or evaluation.

When asked Question 12, “If you attend other professional conferences, what do you find unique about Evaluation 2001?” conference participants replied most often about the variety and multidisciplinaryity of people, topics, and presentation formats of the conference (106 responses). The second most frequent response was participants, who were praised for their qualities—such as collective expertise, professionalism, accessibility, experience, diversity, and insight—and the roles they play.

Question 13, “Please share any additional comments we can use to serve you better and fulfill your expectations,” raised many more negative than positive comments. Tied for the most frequently mentioned theme were requests for more information (session descriptions or abstracts, improvements to the program book, better session titles, and signage) and presentation criticisms and suggestions for presentation improvements. Remember that these could be duplicates: responses made to this question could also have been made to another question by the same person. A significant number of compliments (71 responses) and thank-you notes (18 responses) also came in through this question.

Question 4: What was the single best part of your experience in attending Evaluation 2001?

Table 26. Summary of Open-ended Responses to the “Single Best Part” of Attendees’ Experiences

Node	Frequency (Number of Text Units)
Networking	233
Program (sessions, roundtables, plenaries, particular presenters)	161
New learning, information, professional development	83
Professional development workshops	78
Famous people, seniors	66

Networking at the conference was most frequently cited by participants (233 responses, of which 90 were from newcomers) as what they consider the single best part of Evaluation 2001. Considering that slightly less than half of respondents to the Overall Conference Feedback Form were newcomers (43.9%), and anyone could make more than one comment on a topic,

these numbers indicate that roughly the same proportion of newcomer comments as returnee comments expressed appreciation for networking.

It is significant that that many newcomers, who may have known few or no other participants prior to the conference, came away valuing conference networking as the single best part of their experience. Most of the responses in this category expressly used the word “networking.” Participants noted:

- *Networking with folks – particularly meeting people face-to-face that I’ve had only phone or email contact with in the past.*
- *Connecting with colleagues and friends, and maintaining my professional identification with evaluation as a profession.*

This theme was followed closely in popularity by the program (sessions, roundtables, plenaries, and particular presenters) category, with 161 responses (of which 61 were from newcomers). These comments from conference participants praised both the variety of presentations in general, as well as specific sessions and usually well-known presenters.

Selected comments include:

- *The workshops before the conference and the presentations themselves were absolutely outstanding. I’ve been to geography, gerontology, and qualitative research conferences before – they all pale in comparison to this one regarding the amount of take home, truly applicable information and inspiration.*
- *Three Seniors Presidential Strand (Saturday morning 8:00 am).*

Also noteworthy as single best aspects of the conference are the categories of appreciation for new learning, information, and professional development (83 responses), professional development workshops (78 responses), and famous people and senior evaluators (66 responses). Among responses are the following:

- *Being surrounded with other evaluators. Internal evaluation in CBDs can be a lonely pursuit. I learned so much here – wish I had known about AEA before!*
- *The pre- and post-AEA sessions that I attended. Mel Mark!! What great presentations and facilitations.*
- *Getting to hear preeminent evaluators (Patton, Scriven, King, Fetterman).*

Question 5: What one thing did you find most disappointing in attending Evaluation 2001?

Table 27. Summary of Open-ended Responses to the “Most Disappointing” Feature about Attendees’ Experiences

Node	Frequency (Number of Text Units)
Poor presenters, presentations, or content	168
Hotel, session rooms, and isolation	159
Lack of papers and handouts	38
Concurrent sessions	32
Timing and scheduling overall and within sessions	31
Professional development workshops	28
Program book and information	26

The single most disappointing aspect of the conference that attendees noted was poor presenters, presentations, or content (168 responses, of which 75 were from newcomers; see Question 13 for about 100 comments on this topic). Many said that presentation quality varied or that a lot of the presenters/presentations were of low quality; sometimes they suggested AEA be more selective or give guidelines to presenters. Several noted that the sessions focused on the presenters’ studies rather than evaluation. A few also stated that a particular topic (meta-evaluation, child abuse prevention, science, geriatric issues, etc.) was underrepresented, but these were a variety of topics with no consensus. A few mentioned weak or inappropriate discussants or chairs.

- *The wide variability in the quality of presentations – some were very good and others quite weak.*
- *Paper presenters were not accustomed to doing presentations – no handouts, ran over their time, did not engage audience – maybe give out a guideline sheet fall presenters.*

Tallying a close second theme as most disappointing about Evaluation 2001 was the hotel, session rooms, and isolation of the conference. Several aspects of the hotel were criticized (such as elevators, services, staff, conference and sleeping room quality and size), as well as its isolation from a variety of dining options and other highlights of St. Louis. Note the related additional 19 critical comments about food and 14 comments, almost all negative, about St.

Louis. The following are among the 159 responses (of which 56 were from newcomers; see 50 more in Question 13) in this theme:

- *Quality of smaller session rooms was very poor, including the Atrium rooms, and the Millennium board room – terrible!*
- *The hotel, in general, was a bit of a trial – e.g., lifts, ice machines, location of some rooms; lack of access to convenience stores and restaurants, amenities in the surrounding areas. Location close to freeways should be a no-no!!*

Less frequently mentioned, but noteworthy, categories include disappointment due to lack of papers and handouts (38 responses; see also 27 comments under Question 13), concurrent sessions (32 responses), timing and scheduling overall and within sessions with too little time between sessions and too little adherence to the schedule by presenters and chairs (31 responses), the poor quality of content and teaching and lack of applicability of professional development workshops (28 responses), and the program book and information (26 responses; see comments in top theme under Question 13). Related to the last item is the fact that twelve comments focused the mistitling of sessions. Below are some of the written comments.

- *The trend toward no overheads, no paper, just talk. This should be high standards, not musings.*
- *Too many concurrent sessions – I felt I was missing one session for another.*
- *Time – sessions ran long and started late which had a ripple effect for all subsequent session. Ten minutes was inadequate between sessions, esp. if you were in one that ran late in the Jeff. Rooms, for ex., then had to get to the Suite Rooms in the Sheraton for the next – allowing 15 minutes would help this.*
- *The two half-day professional development sessions I attended were a disappointment. Both were short on applicability.*
- *Conference program manages to be both overwhelming and uninformative. Needs summaries of workshops (not only topics) and better user-interaction.*

Question 9: Which of the following position titles best describes your current job? (Select one—student, manager/administrator, professor/teacher, consultant, other.)

Most of the 209 entries were unique titles. However, three-quarters of the “other” titles contain “researcher or research” (72 responses) or “evaluator or evaluation” (101 responses). These two categories could be useful additions to next year’s overall conference evaluation form, but even so, it can be expected that some conference attendees will continue to prefer an “other” to these options.

Question 12: If you attend other professional conferences, what do you find unique about Evaluation 2001?

Table 28. Summary of Open-ended Responses of What Attendees Found Unique about Evaluation 2001

Node	Frequency (Number of Text Units)
Variety, multidisciplinary of people, topics, presentation formats	106
Participants	75
Friendly, welcoming, camaraderie, collegiality	64
Ideas, expertise, information, and skill building	62
Evaluation focus	51
Size	43
Networking	38
NA	28
Presentations	20
Luncheon and evening opportunities (receptions, poster sessions, silent auction, dinners)	20

The unique characteristic of the conference that was most mentioned by attendees was the variety and multidisciplinary of people, topics, and presentation formats (106 responses, of which 43 were from newcomers). Conference participants appreciate the way the AEA conference brings together diverse people representing different disciplines and sectors who have evaluation in common.

- *Typically the people who attend AEA have such varied interests and backgrounds that it makes the conference intellectually engaging and stimulating.*
- *Wide variety of topics, formats, types of information/training.*

With 75 responses, conference participants make up the second most commonly noted unique feature of the AEA conference. Twenty of the 75 responses were from newcomers, a much lower than proportional rate. This could indicate that, although they value the networking (as reported in Question 4), they haven't yet gotten to know many participants or gotten to know them well. Respondents mentioned their qualities—such as collective expertise, professionalism, accessibility, experience, diversity, and insight—and the roles they play, such as presenter, professional, theorist, or leader in the field.

- *The exceptional people who attend AEA – approachable, friendly, knowledgeable, engaged in dialogue and moving the field forward.*
- *Nice mix of academic and independent practitioners and theorists, broad spectrum of experience from grad. students through “seniors.”*

Also noteworthy are several additional characteristics that respondents believe make the conference unique. Sixty-four responses used the words friendly, welcoming, camaraderie, and collegiality to describe the conference atmosphere. About the same number (62 responses) were about ideas, expertise, information, and skill building. Also mentioned were the evaluation focus of the conference (51 responses), size (43 responses), networking (38 responses), presentations (20 responses), and the luncheon and evening opportunities such as receptions, poster sessions, silent auction, and dinners (20 responses). Twenty-eight people bothered to write in “NA.”

- *Friendly, welcoming, variety yet holds together. Great TIGs.*
- *Usually very good for new ideas, pushing my assumptions and adding to my ability to reflect effectively on my practice.*
- *As one would expect, the direct relationship of the sessions to evaluation and its attendant challenges. The high quality of the presentations. . . .*
- *The conference is large enough to attract high-quality presentations but small enough to enable interaction.*
- *Everyone (presenters and members) willing to share and network for the betterment of the profession.*

- *The breadth, scope, and quality of presentations and presenters.*
- *Evening receptions are terrific networking opportunities as well as fun. More time on the auction night would be welcomed. Posters give new evaluators an excellent way to interact and present their work.*

Question 13: Please share any additional comments we can use to serve you better and fulfill your expectations:

Table 29. Summary of Additional Open-ended Comments

Node	Frequency (Number of Text Units)
Want information (description, book changes, abstracts, better session titles, signs)	101
Presentation criticisms, suggestions	101
Compliments, well done	71
Hotel, location poor	50
Change timing, schedule	35
Want papers, handouts at conference and/or on web	27
Food	21
Thanks	18

This last opportunity to write in comments on the Overall Conference Feedback Form raised many more negative than positive comments. Two themes garnered the same numbers of responses. About 100 “additional comments” (of which 48 were from newcomers) focused on a desire for further information. Most of these participants wanted session descriptions or abstracts and improvements to the program book (see more comments under Question 5). A few also mentioned better session titles and signage.

- *I miss the old format of the program which had something like “a day at a glance” or conference at a glance. The typeface was very difficult to read. The session # should be set off so it is easier to spot.*
- *I would like to have access to the session abstracts either in the program or if this is cost prohibitive, on the web site.*

Presentation criticisms and suggestions for improvement made up another large theme (101 responses, of which 50 were from newcomers; see Question 5's top theme for similar comments). Many criticisms were directed at presenters who appeared to be unprepared or used poor teaching style, while other criticisms were aimed at chairs and discussants. Among suggestions for improvement were presenter, chair, or discussant guidelines; the ranking of sessions as novice, intermediate, or advanced; and extension of the poster sessions.

- . . . *Many weak presenters, but good content. Suggestion to have train-the-trainer sessions on presentation skills – including speaking skills, how to clearly present evaluation data and how to engage an audience.*
- *Define and publish protocol for chairs and discussants and distribute to AEA membership. Stufflebeam was a role model discussant. Others should emulate his example.*

A number of other characteristics received enough responses to be noteworthy. Seventy-one responses were compliments about the conference overall or specific parts of it. Participants again criticized the hotel and its location (50 responses; this was also covered among 159 responses to a theme in Question 5). Smaller numbers of comments focused on changes to the timing and schedule (35 responses), negative aspects of the session rooms (34 responses), a desire for papers and handouts at the conference and/or on the web (27 responses; this was mentioned 38 times under Question 5), food (21 responses), and thanks (18 responses). Seventeen people bothered to write in NA.

- *This was the most useful and enjoyable conference I have ever attended.*
- *The poor quality of the hotel and its location within St. Louis detracted from the experience of the conference.*
- *There needs to be a little more time between sessions. It was impossible to get to the bathroom and walk from the main meeting area to Atrium hospitality rooms in 10 minutes!!*
- *Room facilities were very poor. Jefferson A was very noisy (air ducts), Boardroom too light to see screen. Atrium rooms dysfunctional and too small. Some sessions were overflowing.*
- *Recommend enforcing “paper” rule (presenters must bring papers for distribution) as at other conferences. Many presenters did not even provide handouts.*

- *There is almost no time between the sessions to go outside and get wither coffee or soft drinks, therefore would be great if soft drinks and coffee will be available all the time!!*
- *Thank you for continual commitment to evaluation and the pursuit of excellence in the field. See you in DC!!!*

Section III

How do we make the conference more receptive and responsive to the needs and expectations of first-time attendees?

According to the members of the AEA Professional Development Committee, the concern about newcomers is in response to the fact that half of those who attended the Hawaii conference were first time attendees. That means that they had never been to an AEA conference before, and there is little information as to what they hoped to learn/experience, what they thought, what they would like different. The number of new attendees is expected to increase over the years and this could have a significant impact on various things to be done at the conference. It proved to be a very important issue. The focus here is on what it is like to be a first time attendee and would they come back next year.

At the conference, the evaluation team conducted interviews with a number of the conference first time attendees. Hand-written notes were made based on newcomer responses to the interview protocol. Some of the interviews were audio recorded. Data for first time attendees from the Overall Conference Feedback Form were also analyzed in Section II.

Demographics

...I am seeing the scope of evaluation.

The interview sample represented 48 interviews from all over the USA, as well as foreign countries, such as Germany, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Switzerland. In terms of gender representation, 68.7% of respondents were females; males comprised 31.3% of the sample.

There were 318 first time attendees who responded to the Overall Conference Feedback Form. According to the data from Overall Conference Feedback Form, 24.5% of respondents were composed of Managers/Administrators, 18.2% Consultants, 12.3% were Students, 8.8% Professors/Teachers, and Other were responsible for 34.9% of the sample.

Regarding interviewees' positions, consultants comprised 40% of the respondents, students 27%, managers/administrators 16.7%, and professors/educators 16.3%.

When asked a question about percent of workload that included evaluation-related duties, newcomers gave the following answers in the Overall survey: 43.4% of the respondents used evaluation in 76-100% of their work time, 18.9% used evaluation in 51-75% of time at work, 15.7% in 26-50% of their work time, 21.1% in 25% of their work time, and 0.6% did not use evaluation in their work at all. On average, the first time attendees' workload included 51-75% of evaluation-related activities.

Expectations Newcomers Brought to the Conference and the Extent to which the Conference Met Those Expectations

Expectations

*...I hoped to be stretched a bit, to be challenged,
to have a hard time keeping up.*

Table 30. Newcomers' Expectations for the Conference

What were your expectations when you registered for the conference (i.e., why did you decide to come)?	% of Interview Respondents
To acquire new knowledge	71
To network, meet other professionals	35
Professional development	21
Present a paper, co-lead discussions	15
Job Possibilities	6.3

To determine what expectations newcomers brought to the conference and to what extent the conference met those expectations, interviewers asked newcomers about their expectations when they registered for the conference, i.e., why they decided to come.

The primary motivation for attending the conference was to get new knowledge, learn about evaluation, and receive a wide variety of information and perspectives of state-of-the-art evaluation. More than 71% of respondents reported that they came to learn about evaluation process and procedures, to gain further skills for evaluation, to get a better sense of the field in general, to get sense of what people do in evaluation. Many of them felt it offered opportunities to broaden horizons. One participant noted that she wanted to “absorb the knowledge, the changes taking place in the field.”

Some interviewees, new to the conference as well as to evaluation, who “came into evaluation “through the back door,” commented that they were there to “get a better understanding of what it is about, a better sense of the field,” “learn the language of evaluation,” “get a feel for the profession.” First-time attendees, with some experience in evaluation, hoped to hear about state-of-the-art issues under discussion. They wanted to see “the bigger picture of what is

happening in professional world of evaluation.” One participant indicated that he came to encounter “the current thinking in the profession, new thoughts on theory, on handling data.” One newcomer put it well by saying that she hoped to “gain exposure to the larger role of evaluation.” An evaluator from Europe noted that she was expecting “good presentations because Americans usually do a good job, pay attention to the audience.”

Networking was also a dominant theme in the interviews (35%). When asked why they come to the conference, respondents often cited reasons such as to “meet people who have a passion for what I do as well,” “to network with other people.” This was accompanied by a desire to “meet and communicate with the big names in evaluation,” “become known in evaluation field.” As one international participant mentioned, “I wanted to see all the people who develop evaluation, especially the ‘seniors’ I know from literature. I wanted to see them working and teaching, see if my image of the American scene is true – is it a practice emancipated from research?”

Twenty-one percent of newcomers referred to professional development opportunities. They indicated that “professional development sessions were very important.” The first reason to attend the conference for some of them was to “attend the professional development courses to improve some working skills,” to take part in “workshops pertinent to what I’m doing now and in the future.”

More than 15% of respondents indicated that they came to present a paper or co-lead discussions. They noted that “main reason was to present a paper-poster,” “to receive critical feedback on my presentation.” Several interviewees (8.3%) said they wanted to learn about job possibilities: “Because I am on the job market, I wanted to find out about job possibilities.”

Experiences

...Good experience here, which is leading to a desire and interest to come to the conference.

Table 31. What Newcomers Learned at the Conference

What did you learn/experience at the conference?	% of Interview Respondents
Learned a lot of new things	52
Met many people	48
Good experience	29.2
Good organization	25
Great professional development	16.7
Professional self-determination	14.6
Diversity in evaluation	14.6
Job bank	6.3

Many respondents were very pleased with their experience at the conference. Almost thirty percent of participants' comments included statements such as:

- *Good experience here, which is leading to a desire and interest to come to the conference.*
- *I really enjoyed everything.*
- *Keep up the good work!*

Fifty-two percent of respondents seemed particularly pleased with the process of learning during the AEA meeting. They “learned a great deal,” “reinforced knowledge,” “learned about how broad the field is.” One respondent believed that she “learned that the field is committed to changing and growing, it’s not going to be stuck, it’s going to be growing and dynamic.” For another participant, the conference sessions were “simple enough to be understood, but complicated enough to hold your interest.” Among many useful things newcomers learned were “methodological and statistical techniques,” “how to start your own consulting firm,” “strategies in working with community agencies.”

Another dominant theme was related to “meeting many people.” The concept of good networking came up in 48% of interviews with remarks such as:

- *I met a lot of people from all over the world.*
- *I have established some very important contacts.*
- *Close contacts, interactions. I was overwhelmed by accessibility of participants.*

Over 25% of interviewees praised good organization of the conference. It was reflected in their comments, such as:

- *Program was fabulous, well laid out.*
- *Very clear, and smooth.*
- *People at conference were generous with their time.*

Almost 17% of respondents thought that the conference offered great professional development. TIG Business meetings were “strong learning opportunities.” A number of professional development sessions proved to be very useful; they were “excellent because you had so much access to presenters, their case studies; I got the interaction.” One woman commented: “There were a lot of people in the room like me, people who move up into middle management and suddenly find themselves doing evaluations.”

One theme that emerged from the interviews was related to the professional self-determination of the newcomers and the purpose of self-discovery and exploring (15%). It was indicated by one respondent that he received affirmation that what he is doing is “right on the money.” Other people added to that by saying:

- *It's a personal/professional affirmation that I'm in the right field.*
- *Learned that I know a lot more than I thought.*
- *It's interesting to see who other evaluators are — more educated, reflective, thoughtful, friendly, and communicative than I expected.*

About 15% of interview participants expressed their fascination with diversity in evaluation they encountered at the conference. One representative comment from the interviews captures the

ideas of many: “I am seeing the scope of evaluation.” This point of view echoed in a number of interviews:

- *It was exciting to meet different people, see different ways of evaluation.*
- *Didn’t realize it was international, thought it would be more regional. Different cultures, different races, enlightening what you learn about how others live.*
- *I was really impressed by the variety of backgrounds to work in evaluation. Expertise people bring here. Variety of fields.*

A few interviews (6.3%) revealed newcomers’ appreciation of the AEA job bank. According to one manager, it was “fantastic opportunity”: “I have found many prospective staff, I was able to come out with several resumes, and was able to set out copies of my job announcement.”

...I think this conference has gone out of its way to make newcomers feel welcome, and that is unusual.

Table 32. Extent to Which Conference Met Newcomers’ Expectations

To what extent did the conference experience meet your expectations	% of Interview Respondents
Exceeded my expectations	41.7
Met expectations	31.3
Met in some ways, needs improvement	18.8
Did not meet	2

In response to the question, “To what extent did the conference experience meet your expectations?” 41.7% of interviewees said that it exceeded their expectations:

- *It really exceeded my expectations. I realized how broad evaluation is. It opened my eyes to a lot of opportunities that available to help me learn about it.*
- *In a lot of ways. Came looking for new things and new ideas. Found people very willing to share what they know.*
- *Overwhelmed by huge variety of information. Way exceeded any expectation. Kind of had a framework in mind but this was just huge, big, very exciting, liked it a lot!*

The conference met expectations of 31.3%. It met expectations in some ways, but needed improvement for 18.8% of respondents:

- *The conference did meet her expectations in many ways, but it could be improved.*
- *On a scale of 1-5, I would give it a 4, later changed to a 3 disappointed with lack of handouts and quality in presentations.*
- *Some sessions were good and some were not.*

Only one interviewee’s expectations were not met.

Extent to Which Newcomers Found the Newcomer Orientation Session Helpful and Suggestions They have for Improvement

The Newcomer Orientation

Table 33. Extent to Which Newcomers Found Orientation Session Helpful

Did you attend the orientation session for conference newcomers?	% of Interview Respondents
Yes	45.8
No	54.2

According to respondents, 45.8% of them attended and 54.2% did not attend the orientation sessions for first-time attendees.

Table 34. What Influenced Newcomers to Attend the Orientation Session

Did you attend the orientation session for conference newcomers?	% of Interview Respondents
<u>Attended</u>	
Thought it would be helpful; wanted to learn something	55
Convenient time	13.6
Wanted to meet people	9
<u>Did not attend</u>	
Had other things to do	50
Did not know about it	42.3
Tried but it was full	7.72

When asked about the reasons for attending the orientation, 55% of respondents who attended indicated that they thought it would be helpful and wanted to learn something:

- *I thought that some useful information could be there.*
- *Wanted to get a feel about what it was all about. Need to learn what it's about to see if you fit in.*

Convenient time of the orientation was a draw for other 13.6%:

- *It was scheduled at the time when there was nothing better to do anyway.*
- *I debated attending, but it was held at a convenient time.*

Desire to meet people influenced decision to attend of other 9% of attendees: “Yes, I could get all of the information from the program, but I wanted to meet people with whom I shared common professional interest, I did meet such people.” Several people noted that they wanted to “get most out of conference.”

Out of those who did not attend, 50% reported that they had other things to do at that time. Over 42% did not know about it:

- *I had no idea because of lack of information.*

- *I would have gone had I known about it.*
- *I think as I register there should be a flag, there should be something in my newcomer’s packet that says “newcomer orientation,” because I did not see it. It should be stamped somewhere, be very noticeable.*

About 8% of non-attendees could not get to the orientation, since the session room was full: “The room was very crowded; I looked in the door and left,” “I tried to, but it was full.”

Impact of the Orientation

Table 35. Perceived Impact of the Orientation on Newcomers

Evaluation Questions/Topics	% of Interview Respondents
For those who attended: In what ways do you see the session impacting your conference experience?	
No impact	59.1
Was not well-prepared	27.3
Some impact	9
Was helpful	9
For those who did not attend: How do you think your experience might have been different had you attended the orientation session?	
No difference	34.6
Would have had a better overview of the conference	23
Would get more info about TIGs	23
Would meet more new people	7.7

More than 59.1% of the interviewees who attended the orientation replied that it did not impact their conference experience:

- *I found it to be not too informative.*
- *Not at all. I didn’t really get anything out of the orientation. It was sort of bad because it could be potentially done more in terms of providing opportunity for networking.*

- *There was no opportunity for people to move around and meet other people. It was a low point of the conference for me.*

More than 27% said that the orientation was not well-prepared, there was not enough room, “newcomers were standing in the hall,” “it was really rushed,” “person presenting did not seem to have very organized list of things for newcomers to attend to.” The orientation was helpful for 9% and had some impact for 9% of attendees.

Responding to the question, “How do you think your experience might have been different had you attended the orientation session?” 34.6% of non-attendees stated that it would not make much difference:

- *I don’t think so, there is information in the program, when I’ve had questions, I’ve asked and they’ve been answered.*
- *I don’t think it would affect my experiences.*
- *Looking at the length of the orientation – 15 minutes, I don’t think I lost anything by not going.*

Twenty-three percent of newcomers thought that, if they had attended, they would have had a better overview of the conference, “would have been better informed about different aims of the different types of sessions,” “probably would have outlined ways to interpret program – when and where things were happening.” Another 23% felt that they would get more information about TIGs, “might have understood TIGs before going to meetings.” According to almost 8% of respondents, they would have met more new people and made a few contacts.

What Could Be Changed about the Orientation

Table 36. What Newcomers Wanted Changed about the Orientation

What could be changed about and what information could be included in an orientation session to make it valuable to conference newcomers	% of Interview Respondents
Info about the site, sessions, prof. development, networking	43.8
Better organized, different timing	36.4
Use bigger room	31.8
About TIGs; have TIG chairs there	20.1
Handouts/outline for newcomers	12.5
Use as a chance to network	10.6
Places to eat	8.3
Reception for newcomers	6.3

The interviews provided mixed responses concerning information that could be included in an orientation session to make it valuable to conference newcomers. About 44% of respondents would want the orientation to have sufficient information about the site, sessions, professional development and networking. Comments included:

- *Information on how to become more involved. How to become a presenter, how to participate in panels. Some info on some other things available to newcomers: to network, to meet people, to get people together.*
- *Have a couple of people with different backgrounds in evaluation get up and say why they're in AEA and what they get out of it. Good way of giving people a reason to be here.*
- *Designing session so that you're asking people who attend what they want to know; help new attendees figure out how to get the most out of the sessions they are attending; information on types as well as topics.*

More than 36% suggested better organization and different timing: “more organized, more logistics would be helpful,” “it seemed rather scattered, haphazard”; more time “for meeting each other,” “for questions and answers.” “Need for a bigger room” was an issue for almost 32%. More

than 20% percent of interview participants would like to know about TIGs and have TIG chairs be present at the orientation, to talk and to meet people.

Handouts, an outline of important events, and FAQs for newcomers were suggested by 12.5% of interviewees. The orientation could be used as a chance to network, as said by about 16%, who suggested to “have everyone introduce themselves to a neighbor,” “make it a social hour so folks could exchange information,” “maybe a separate reception with food and have TIG chairs there to meet people.”

A concern for about 8% of respondents was information about “places to eat”: “cheap places to eat,” “where to get economical food (such as how far away, etc.),” and materials about going to the conference on a budget.

Newcomers’ Plans to Attend Future Conferences and Things AEA Does or Can Do to Cause Them to Attend Again

Attending Future AEA Conferences

...I hope to see the quality that I saw this time in future conferences.

Table 37. Newcomers’ Plans to Attend Future Conferences

Do you plan to attend future AEA conferences?	% of Interview Respondents
Yes	97.9
No	2.1

Ninety-eight percent of interview respondents considered attending future AEA conferences a strong possibility. Here are some complimentary comments by those participants:

- *I’d like to or if I can’t I will make sure someone on our staff does.*
- *Yes, depending on my financial situation and whether I am working, and on location of conference. The conference showed a good level of professionalism and quality.*

- *I am 100% sure I will, I would come back because I felt welcome at this conference.*

Only one respondent (2%), dissatisfied with hotel and looking for “more intermediate content/robust information,” had no plans to attend future conferences.

Table 38. Extent to Which Newcomers’ Conference Experience Influenced Likelihood of Future Conference Attendance

To what extent did your experience at this conference influence your decision to attend or not attend future conferences?	% of Interview Respondents
To great extent	33.3
Learned a lot	25
Great networking	22.9
No influence	10.4

When questioned about the extent the experience at the conference influenced their decision to attend or not attend future conferences, over 33% said “to great extent,” 25% indicated that they “learned a lot,” “gained tons of information,” “gained enough from this conference to seriously consider coming again.” About 23% referred to great networking. Over 10% of respondents said the conference has had a moderate or no effect on the decision to come again. “Experience was neutral,” stated one first time attendee, “It was the content that brought me here and that is what will bring me back.”

Strong Points of the Conference

Table 39. Perceived Strength of Conference by Newcomers

What did you see as the strengths of the conference as it pertained to newcomers?	% of Interview Respondents
Good organization	54.2%
Variety of topics, sessions, backgrounds	29.2%
Colored ribbons	20.8%
Knowledge, expertise	20.8%
An opportunity to network	18.8%
Recognizing newcomers	16.7%
Professional development	6.3%

By far, the elements that made the conference good, according to interview respondents, related to the good organization of the conference. Over 54% of interviewees commented on that in the following ways:

- *The sessions very well laid out, the choices were good.*
- *It offers support and technical assistance.*
- *It seems well-organized considering incredible size of the conference, a number of people.*
- *It's very welcoming for newcomers to figure out where they might fit in.*

Approximately 21% of responses referred to colored ribbons, which were instrumental in identifying other people of interest and helped with networking.

The next most dominant theme related to the conference positives—respondents noted that they liked variety of topics, sessions, backgrounds (over 29%). “A lot of different topics, sessions, couldn’t find a break,” “broad variety of programs that appeal to all levels,” “exceptional collection of newcomers, all philosophies, interest areas, all areas of evaluation” comprised the collection of complimentary remarks by the first time attendees.

Twenty-one percent of respondents appreciated knowledge and expertise available at the conference. A few representative comments by the interviewees capture the thoughts of many: “very clear presentations, even for people from overseas,” “veteran evaluators are somewhat receptive to sharing their wealth of knowledge and experiences,” “diversity of information, special interests.”

Some respondents highlighted such a benefit as the opportunity to network (18.8%).

Comments included statements such as

- *Evening socials were very good. Poster session combined with the reception which attracted more people, created accepting environment.*
- *Ample opportunities for newcomers to network.*
- *There were many small events to make contacts, such as the president’s lunch. You could meet people; it was a good opportunity for newcomers. I think these social events – authors’ reception, silent auction– are crucial for newcomers.*

Recognizing newcomers was important for and noticed by close to 17% of interviewees. A number of respondents made very complimentary comments about welcoming newcomers:

- *It’s nice to have a newcomer orientation; it’s a smart strategy to treat us well from the get-go.*
- *I think this is one of the best conferences I’ve seen in terms of welcoming newcomers. It is very unusual, I’ve really been surprised by it.*
- *Making effort to help out first timers, most conferences don’t even acknowledge them.*

Several attendees liked professional development activities by stating that “professional development sessions were excellent because you had so much access to presenters, their case studies,” “professional development workshops were helpful for ‘warming you up’ before the main conference.” One participant highlighted “mentoring ability that the professional development presenters have offered to other people in their sessions.”

Things to Be Changed

Table 40. Suggested Changes for the Conference by Newcomers

What would you like to see changed about the conference to make it something that you want to participate in next year?	% of Interview Respondents
Program book, info in the hotel, registration	58.0
Logistics: session rooms, schedule	43.8
More social activities	25.0
Better location, hotel	25.0
Not enough handouts	22.9
Different approaches to workshops and talks	16.7
Better food options	10.4
Poor advertisement/marketing	10.4

The dominant theme for those who were dissatisfied with some aspects of the conference related to a lack of information in the hotel, the shortcomings of the program book, and registration. This seemed to be of particular concern given the large number of complaints (58 %):

- *The signage is horrible. When you come in, there is no indication that even AEA conference is happening. There should be a big sign saying: "You made it. You are at AEA conference. Go this way" with arrows telling where to go.*
- *To have a kind of poster with the skeletal outline of events of the day located in the main area.*
- *Program not easy to read – need general schedule to see times; would like to see something set up for or focusing on federal issues.*
- *You should have a participants' list in the program, not only the presenters' list. So that people could see who is from where to network better.*
- *Program book could be a little more user friendly — maybe tabs, colors in margins.*

Several respondents (8.3%) suggested enlisting more volunteers to provide additional assistance with registration.

The other substantial area of concern was the room arrangements and session scheduling. It was reflected in over 43% of interviews. A number of respondents felt some of the rooms were crowded, too small (Atrium rooms), and some were too big. Several people suggested “better room assignments for sessions devoted to minority issues/discipline.” A couple of the interviewees commented that “some of the time slots have topics that aren’t evenly distributed – making attending impossible,” asked not “to hold TIG meetings concurrently.” There was a suggestion “not to have the plenary as the first session of the morning; have sessions first thing in the morning but not plenary.” For some attendants, “sessions are kind of long, need break in long sessions,” “10 minutes between sessions is too little time; need more time.”

Many respondents commented on their dissatisfaction with the location of the conference, and particularly with the hotel. At least 25% of interviewees criticized the hotel service. Their disappointment was reflected in comments such as:

- *The hotel is horrible, services are really below average, especially for the price they charge for the rooms.*
- *I felt very confined to the hotel due to concerns about the area where the hotel was located*
- *And it’s very dangerous town. So, location did not impress me.*

Twenty-five percent of respondents were eager for more social activities. A variety of suggestions for improvement in this are included such as “to have more retreats to see city and socialize,” “to have a special reception for newcomers, invite the leaders/authors in the field,” “have a social get-together for newcomers to help them meet people.”

Another area of concern across the interviews was the need for printed materials. Disappointment with a lack of handouts was expressed by 23% of interview participants:

- *If you are interested in some of the papers presented at AEA, you can’t get them unless you directly contact the author. It’s especially hard for the foreign conference attendees.*
- *There should be requirement to offer handouts.*
- *Central location to pick up handouts from all sessions. I can’t make every session, would like a way to get information.*

Desire to see “little more hands-on approach to the workshops and talks,” “alternatives to the lecture format — experiential learning such as discussions” could be found in comments of

17% of respondents. They suggested to “have more specialized discussions about some methodological issues,” “repeat popular sessions.” One evaluator suggested to have “a kind of strand for young people who are just entering evaluation as professionals, something focused around that area for people who are just coming in to it, graduating from the school. To help them walk through the steps of becoming a member. How do you build and foster so that people stay in the organization as members?”

The theme of food did not escape attention of 10.4% of interviewees, who wanted “better food service options.” Several people claimed that there was “not enough time or food available to manage through the day,” and that they would be willing to “pay extra money to assure that a snack was provided in the afternoon,” and brought up the idea of “box lunches to buy on site.”

About 11% of interview participants referred to poor advertisement of the conference activities and need for better marketing of the conference itself. According to some of them, “many people missed the poster session,” the conference activities “should have been better advertised.”

Another suggestion was to market the conference more broadly:

- *Very poor advertisement. I had no idea about this wonderful conference until the very last minute.*
- *If there was an outreach to people doing evaluation who are not academic or governmental, it would reach others of us interested. Maybe some publicity through grantors, especially since they require evaluation.*

Section IV

How and to what extent does the TIG proposal selection process work?

Introduction

The evaluation team was commissioned to identify the similarities and differences in TIG proposal selection processes and to identify the extent to which the general process works. This evaluation of the TIG proposal selection process describes the procedure used for collecting and analyzing the information, the sample on which the information is based, a synopsis of the findings, summaries of the answers to each question, and the raw data on which the results are based. As the TIG selection process varies among TIGs, it is recommended that the reader review the *Summaries of Answers to Questions* as a basis for understanding the processes used.

Synopsis of Findings

This evaluation has found that program chairs follow a similar process for selecting presenters. They receive proposals, they review them in much the same order, nearly all of them use the AEA Criteria Review scale, they rank them, they group the multi-paper sessions (when they want), and they submit their ranked lists and groups to the AEA. However, there are significant differences in what program chairs emphasize as important, and this leads to significant variances in how they perceive the process and how they carry out these common steps. TIG size is another cited reason behind differences.

This evaluation describes many issues that program chairs are concerned about. We will summarize two of the seemingly most noteworthy issues here. The largest issue relates to the

challenge of making judgments based on small amounts of information. Half of the program chairs believe that proposals do not provide adequate information to make good judgments. This issue appears to be correlated with proposal alignment with the AEA Review Criteria. Although nearly all program chairs find the AEA Review Criteria quite useful, about half of the program chairs stated that the information in the proposals was not adequately aligned with the criteria. A large number of program chairs recommended asking proposal authors during the “Call for Proposals” to consider the criteria when writing their proposals.

Another issue that program chairs describe is related to the Presidential Strand. Although many program chairs report that they make decisions not to submit proposals on the basis of clear criteria, others suggest that they are unclear about the criteria and the process – resulting in them not submitting.

Method of Evaluation

These findings are the result of the following evaluation procedure: In order to understand the basic steps required of program chairs for proposal selection, we interviewed the program co-chair of the largest TIG (Jean King, Pre-K – 12 Educational Evaluation. It should be noted that Jean King is also a member of our evaluation team.) Using this information, the team constructed a protocol to be used in interviewing five program chairs. The AEA Professional Development Committee selected these program chairs based on an eye toward diversity – the perceived strength of program chair opinions, size of TIGs, and newness of TIGs. The TIGs chosen for interviews are as follow: Research, Technology & Development Evaluation (Jake Hodges), Evaluation Use (Valerie Caracelli), Extension Education Evaluation (Ellen Taylor-Powell), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues (Saumitra Sengupta), and the Pre-K – 12 Educational Evaluation (Jean King). These interviews were conducted face-to-face during the 2001 AEA conference. They provided us with a broader understanding on which to develop a more comprehensive and representative protocol. The new protocol was converted into an online questionnaire, and all TIG program chairs (with the exception of those interviewed) were asked by email to complete it. After the initial request, two prompts were emailed to program chairs over a period of about two weeks.

Program chair protocol responses were individually coded for each question, using NUD*IST software. All responses to each question were then analyzed together, in search of

theme patterns and frequencies. When beneficial, these data sets were sub-coded to make analysis of particular themes easier.

The analysis of results (provided in this document) are reported as descriptive summaries of what program chairs stated in response to each question. The last question of the protocol – “Please provide any information that you think is important about the selection process that we have missed in our questions” – was asked to capture issues that our protocol missed. As the responses to this question are not defined, all responses are provided within our summary below.

TIG Sample

Although four program chairs and one TIG chair were interviewed for the purpose of developing a comprehensive and representative online questionnaire, this analysis and findings are based on the responses to the online questionnaire. These responses represent 17 TIGs, 55% of all 31 TIGs. As indicated in Table 41, this study includes a wide range of TIGs – both in number of proposals received and length of program chair experience.

It should be noted that both of the program chairs for the Independent Consulting TIG submitted responses to the questionnaires (making the total number of responses equaling 18). As the primary objective of this evaluation is to describe the presentation selection process used by TIGs, the responses of both TIG chairs were included in this study.

Table 41. Demographic Data on Program Chair Respondents (Regarding Year 2001)

All numbers are estimates, as several program chairs were not certain of the exact numbers.

TIGs Represented = 17 (55% of All TIGs)	Range	Mode	Mean	Missing
Number of Years as TIG Program Chair	.5 - 16	2	-	2
Proposals Received	0 - 35	-	15	3
Proposals Accepted	6 - 28	-	14	3
Number of Multi-paper Sessions	1 – 15*	2	-	2

*Non-Profit/Foundation reported 15 multi-paper sessions, which is probably an error.

Summaries of Answers to Questions Regarding TIG Selection Process

1. Do you involve others in the proposal review process?

Most program chairs involve others in the selection process; some do not. Those who do describe a variety of reasons for this: 1) It assures better representation of the differences within the TIG, 2) it increases impartiality (especially when the program chair is submitting a proposal), and 3) it divides the workload. Collaboration teams can range from two to eight people, depending on the TIG, and most often involve only TIG members. However, a few TIGs involve non-TIG members, either as judges or as assistants to the program chair. Program chairs generally collaborate with others by sending copies of the proposals (and judging criteria forms) to each collaborator who independently judges them. Then the collaborators send the proposals and/or the judging forms back to the program chair who tallies up the scores and ranks them. An alternative to this most frequently used method is when the program chair has a conference call with the collaborators to discuss judging and ranking.

Program chairs who do not involve others in the proposal selection process cite most often that their reason is the low number of proposals. However, a second reason mentioned is the physical distance between potential collaborators – locations around the world.

2. In what order do you judge the proposals - papers, workshops, roundtables, panels, etc.?

Why do you approach them in this order?

Program chairs approach the reviewing of proposals in a variety of ways. Most of them review proposals in a set order, whereas a significant number of them report that they review them "in no particular order." These include simply reviewing them as they arrive.

Regarding those program chairs who have an ordered approach, there are some similarities:

1. Nearly all program chairs review panels either first or second.
2. Panels (whether first or second on the review list) are often followed by papers, which are described as the most time consuming (as they are judged and reviewed).

3. Roundtables and poster sessions are often the last formats reviewed. One program chair states that he or she puts the round tables last because it is a "less rigorous" or a "different" process and that papers that do not fit with a group may be reassigned to a roundtable.

4. Workshops have no clear pattern. They are sometimes the first, second, or third in the review process. In one case, the workshop is perceived as a platform that sets "the tone for the ground-breaking and innovative work accomplished by members." In another case, the workshop is reviewed along with the panel as the program chair focuses on linking and grouping proposals together. In yet another case, workshops and panels are judged immediately, as there are so few of them.

3. Ideally, what must a proposal have in order to be accepted?

Table 42. Percent of Program Chair Respondents Who Use Each Criterion For Accepting Proposals
Number Possible = 18

Criterion for Acceptance	Number	Percent of Respondents
Be relevant to TIG	18	100%
Be relevant to AEA	15	83%
Be clearly written	14	78%
Be well thought out	14	78%
Presents evaluation methodology	9	50%
Make a clear argument	8	44%
Related to conference theme	8	44%
Presents evaluation results related to your TIG	6	33%
Have a topic that is of interest to the general public	1	.18%
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters and their affiliation • Topic of general interest to both TIG members and AEA members • Speaker with a large draw • Relevant to practice • State-of-the-art contribution to either evaluation methodology or substantive area 	1 each	.18% Each

(Each respondent marked all criteria that applied.)

4. In reference to the above criteria, which do you rely on more and why?

Nearly all TIG program chairs list “relevant to TIG” as their primary criterion for accepting a proposal. Relevance is described as important because it distinguishes one TIG from another and it serves the unique needs of each TIG. Although several TIG program chairs only list TIG relevancy as the criterion they rely on most, many add proposal clarity – in terms of writing and argument. A stated assumption behind this criterion is a belief that a well organized and thought out proposal will probably reflect a likewise presentation. Other primary criteria vary. Some program chairs include relevance to AEA or the AEA conference theme, others include applicability to general population interest, while others want proposals to include “method.”

5. To what degree do proposals provide an adequate amount of information and text from which to make ranking judgments? How does this affect your approach?

About equal numbers of TIG program chairs state that proposals *do* and *do not* provide adequate amounts of information on which to make good ranking judgments. Regarding those that do, statements range from “For the most part, the proposals contain adequate information” to “Info usually provided is more than enough to make an assessment.” However, a few of the program chairs who state that information is adequate follow it up with a description of a problem with the information.

The program chairs who state that the information is inadequate say that this is a source of difficulty. One program chair says, “I often felt that the information was insufficient to make a sound judgment. I often had to guess as to what the real subject matter was.” Another says that “About half of the proposals I have reviewed over the past three years have been terrible in terms of the information provided upon which to make a recommendation.” With this said, only one program chair describes a strategy for compensating for the inadequacy: “If the idea is good and meets the TIG and AEA relevance criteria, I will email the author and ask for more detail.” Others apparently work with this limitation, one stating that “It makes ranking very difficult.”

A few of the program chairs refer to the AEA proposal requirements as related to the problem. One says that the “expanded format of 2001 helped clarify intent of proposal.” Another suggests that “If the program is becoming limited... we ask for a slightly more detailed

proposal from folks.” Another suggests that if the AEA form was improved, it would result in more clarity. However, one program chair states that his/her TIG’s problem has too many proposals that are not adequately relevant to the TIG, and that possible problems may lay in “routing” or “an incomplete understanding” of that TIG.

6. AEA provides you with proposal “Review Criteria.” How do you use them? And to what degree do they influence your ranking of proposals?

Nearly all program chairs state that they use the AEA criteria as their primary scale for judging proposals. Some of them describe the final judgment as based only on the number rankings. This approach allows program chairs to calculate rankings based on totals from multiple reviewers. For one program chair, this approach works up to a point: As the proposal averages are often nearly the same, the TIG ultimately needs to apply other criteria to compare and rank them. Some program chairs emphasize AEA review criteria over others. For example, the Qualitative TIG tends “not to weight F too highly because there can be excellent proposals at each end of the spectrum.” In the case of Quantitative Methods, they de-emphasize criterion G as it is “harder to apply to proposals to the Quant Methods TIG.” Another TIG says that they prioritize the criteria – B, C, D, E, A, F. Another TIG focuses mainly on the “innovation” and “presenting methodologies” criteria while not on “results” and “related to the TIG.”

A few program chairs state that they do not use the AEA Review Criteria as their primary scale. In one case the program chair states that, although they are used, “Free response options are more useful to qualify the assessment.” The other two TIGs for which the AEA Review Criteria are secondary report reasons related to the number of the proposals – either too small or too large. In regards the issue of “too large,” the program chair says:

- *We found these criteria to be very cumbersome to apply to the volume of proposals our TIG receives. Although the criteria have a degree of face validity, we could not take the time to rate each proposal according to all those criteria. Another way that the criteria are cumbersome is that a proposal may rate high on one or two areas, but not all. Using the list of criteria and ratings was not a useful decision-making tool for us.*

7. To what extent are the “Review Criteria” aligned and/or applicable to what is included in proposals?

About equal proportions of program chairs state that the AEA review criteria *are* and *are not* aligned with the proposals they receive. Statements from program chairs who believe there is alignment range from “identical” to “the Review Criteria are very applicable” to “there seemed to be enough information included in the proposals to select them out based on criteria” to, simply, “proposals are reviewed against criteria.” Among them, one program chair suggests that the exception to the congruence is the “conference theme,” which they did not consistently apply. Another suggests that the “publishable” criterion is impossible to determine.

Program chairs who state that the criteria are not aligned with proposals vary in their perception of degree of congruence. In general, the descriptions provided indicate that proposal alignment with criteria is hit or miss – “Not all points are necessarily covered by each proposal.” One program chair simply describes the alignment as “Not much.”

Recommendations are resoundingly focused on clearly informing proposal writers, during the “Call for Proposals,” of the criteria on which their proposals are being judged. For example, one program chair states that “I believe you should include the criteria in the call so people can see what the review committee will be looking for.” To this end, the Multi-site and Multi-level TIG publishes the criteria in their newsletter so their “members know what to write to.” They go on, “I think some kind of white paper or guidelines from AEA home office included in the RFP would be helpful to all TIGs.” To compensate for the incongruency, one program chair states that s/he has sometimes “encouraged proposers to adapt their submissions to better meet the criteria” and has “combined single papers” to better meet criteria.

One program chair refers to an issue related to inconsistent use of the criteria by TIG groups:

- *I know AERA uses such criteria and sends the ratings to the proposal writer. Unless these are used more uniformly by TIG Program Chairs, I do not see the value in them. I believe this should be a topic of discussion at the TIG Chair/Program Chair meeting at the next AEA...*

8. How useful do you find the “Review Criteria,” and do you have any recommendations for change?

All program chairs find the Review Criteria useful. Statements range from “extremely useful” to “very necessary” to, simply, “useful.” It is described as an important tool “to guide reviewers,” and that it helps them “keep from overlooking something.” One TIG recommended that one criterion be added to the Review Criteria: “Contribute to state-of-the-art, either for evaluation methods or substantive findings.”

9. What percentage of proposals do you reject? To what reasons do you attribute this level of acceptance?

Most TIGs reject fewer than 10% of the proposals. One TIG (Multi-site/Multi-level) reported rejecting about 20-30%. About half of the respondents attribute their low rejection levels to low numbers of submission. The other half attributes low rejections to a variety of reasons. The most frequent reason is related to the presence of clear communication of their TIG definition and expectations to TIG members. Other reasons cited are related to “a core group of TIG members preparing proposals every year” and “High quality work from the field.”

10. How do you go about grouping papers into multi-paper sessions? Please include your process, criteria, etc.

In general, program chairs review papers for thematic relationships and build multi-paper sessions out of these themes. However, some TIGs have prescribed focuses around which they want to build multi-paper sessions, focuses such as “method and innovation,” “design feature (e.g., longitudinal) or particular settings (e.g., schools),” “methodology and results process,” “content,” “substantive focus and methodological design,” “international concerns.” If there is a paper or several papers that do not easily group well, program chairs report two strategies. One TIG states that “if we have a handful of strays that need somewhere to be, I’ll see if we can stretch fit a topic that will cover them all.” Another says that they will “make it fit.” Another, however, states that “There should be obvious connections; forcing them really accomplishes nothing.”

This grouping is done by the program chair or by a group of judges. When there is a group involved, email followed by a conference call to discuss grouping is described.

11. To what degree does the process of grouping influence your ranking of a proposal?

About one-third of the respondents stated that grouping influenced their ranking of proposals. Most of these program chairs indicated that it had a major influence. In one case, a program chair states, "If we have one paper that we can't group, we will probably send it back." In another case, a program chair says, "the need to group probably enhances the chances (of acceptance) for a weaker proposal. I try to think of the different presentations in totality ... which affects both the process of ranking and the priority of the different criteria." Another program chair simply states, "A session built around a coherent theme of interest to the members will have a higher rank than a session of unrelated papers."

For the two-thirds of the respondents who say that grouping does not influence ranking, there is a common theme. Proposals are judged first individually, and only those that are accepted go on to be grouped. Several program chairs state that it is better to give papers more time in a session than to complete the session with a weak paper. However, if a paper does not fit, one program chair adds, it will not be recommended.

12. If a paper does not fit with a group, what do you do with it?

Three methods are described by program chairs for responding to papers that are acceptable but do not fit with a group: 1) have it "stand alone," 2) refer it to the roundtable format or a poster session, or 3) refer "it back to the AEA office for... the 'big pot' handled by the overall Program Committee." Nearly all respondents follow the method of suggesting that the paper be moved to a roundtable or poster session. Only some of these program chairs also describe pursuing a "stand-alone session" while about an equal proportion would refer to the AEA office. It should be noted that one program chair states that he or she would "make it fit!!"

13. How frequently do you co-sponsor sessions and what variables influence your decision whether or not to do this?

A few program chairs describe the benefits of co-sponsoring a session as a way of getting more exposure and attracting a more diverse audience. However, there is relatively little co-sponsoring reported by program chairs. Two respondents report having at least one or more co-sponsored sessions annually, while most TIGs report it as quite rare or nonexistent for their

TIGs. The primary condition that influences co-sponsorship is said to be overlap among TIGs. One program chair whose TIG frequently co-sponsors sessions says, “We all belong to other TIGs or are familiar with related ones...” while another program chair whose TIG seldom co-sponsors says his TIG “doesn’t usually have a lot of overlap with others.” But there are other reported influences on co-sponsorship: 1) Proposals and how well they overlap with another TIG, 2) Time for “communication and logistics are a barrier,” and “how early we can connect with other TIGs,” 3) “The process for doing so is not well established,” 4) Lack of contact with other TIG chairs. These are all reported barriers to co-sponsorship of sessions.

14. How frequently do you submit a proposal for the Presidential strand and what variables influence your decision whether or not to do this?

Program chairs report submitting few or none proposals for the Presidential strand. Three variables are generally attributed to the low number of submitted proposals: 1) proposals do not often match the focus of the Presidential strand (conference theme), 2) the quality of proposals is not high enough, and 3) proposals are often not general enough to be of interest to a large AEA audience. One TIG reports that it has not yet had a proposal that meets two or more of these criteria and consequently has not yet submitted a proposal. Program chairs describe other reasons for not submitting for the Presidential strand: 1) Unfamiliarity with the Presidential strand, and 2) Vagueness of the criteria for Presidential strand sessions.

One program chair makes a recommendation:

- *Frankly, the criteria for Presidential strand sessions are pretty vague. If AEA wants more such sessions, you need to advertise this better to Program Chairs and to let us know what you are looking for.*

15. Every panel needs a chair. Please explain when and how you go about identifying a chair.

Program chairs describe three basic ways that they obtain chairs from multi-paper sessions. Some of them will use a combination of these in order to find a chair. The single criterion mentioned is simply a willingness to perform the duty. There is no mention of qualifications.

1. They make a solicitation in a variety of directions, including people who may not be part of their TIG. Some of these program chairs utilize the list of people who checked, on their proposal, a box that indicates that they are willing to chair a session. As one

chair states, “This is a huge time saver.” These program chairs may send out an email to colleagues and advisory board for suggestions, or rely on someone who “indicated a willingness to serve in this capacity.”

2. A second method is to draw on the pool of people who are TIG regulars. In this case, the panel chairs may rotate between a “few long-term members of the TIGs,” or appoint “one of the proposal reviewers.” Another program chair states that s/he tries “to generate interest for the next year from among people attending the business meeting...”
3. The third way is to approach people who are related to the panel session. They may ask one of the paper presenters or a “person who suggests and/or develops the idea” to chair the session.

One program chair reports that his/her TIG sets up their sessions in “presentation format,” making a session chair unnecessary.

16. To what degree do you set up “discussants” for panels and how do you go about this?

About half of the program chairs reported that they enlisted discussants for the conference year 2001. Most of those who did not enlist discussants stated that they simply do not use them. For those who stated that they did use discussants, the degree varies from “I try to have a discussant for every panel” to “grouped paper sessions may or may not have a discussant.”

Panel sessions are reported in most cases as arriving with their own discussant. But many program chairs report searching for one. One program chair states that s/he pursues a discussant when it is warranted – when a panel needs someone to provide “synthesis and additional stimulation of ideas,” or if a panel of three needs a discussant to “fill in the time.” Another program chair describes two objectives regarding selecting a discussant: 1) to find a person who realizes that “this isn’t an opportunity to show what s/he knows,” and 2) that s/he is comfortable

with the topic. Other program chairs reiterate this last criterion. Finding a discussant is reported by a few program chairs as simply putting the word out to appropriate people.

17. How much time did you put into the judging process, from the point you received the proposals to the point you sent the materials back to AEA?

The amount of time that program chairs report putting into the judging process varies greatly, from 3 hours to 40 hours. The mode is 20-30 hours.

Table 43. Estimated Time Contributed to Selection of Proposals

TIG Name	Estimated time put into judging proposals
Business and Industry	Around 40 hours
Qualitative	Maybe 3 hours
Assessment in Higher Education	20-30 hours
International	A good two weeks
State and Local Govt.	20 hours = Main Program Chair 10-15 hours = Co-Chair and TIG Chair
Non-Profit-Foundation	10 hours
Environmental Program Evaluation	12-18 hours
Needs Assessment	20-30 hours
Cluster, Multi-site and Multi-level Evaluation	5-10 hours
Name Not Revealed	15 hours
Graduate Student	A couple of weeks
Quant Methods	Easily add up to 20-30 hours
Health	3-5 days
Independent Consulting	A matter of 4 hours each
Evaluating Services for Special Populations	2-3 hours
Crime and Justice	3 days total for 2 people

18. Do you ever contact people who submit proposals? Please explain.

More than half of the program chairs reported that they contact people who submit proposals. The most frequently described reason for contacting proposal authors is to discuss with them if their topic would be “better presented in a different format.” Three program chairs talk to proposal authors to ask them “if they would be available to chair a paper session.” Other reasons given are as follows:

- *...to discuss grouping/panel possibilities.*
- *If I need more information to make a determination.*
- *...to ask authors to recommend a discussant.*
- *...if a proposal is to be recommended for the business meeting slot... because that usually means they will be expected to expand the proposal.*
- *...to tell them of acceptance and data/time schedule at AEA.*

19. If presentation slots became very competitive in the future – and 40% of your proposals would not be able to be admitted – what implications would this have for your current judging process? How might it change? How might it influence your rejection rate?

Program chairs state a variety of effects that an increase in competition would probably have. About a third of the program chairs stated that they thought an increase in competition would result in a change in their review process. However, only three program chairs explicitly state that it would result in no changes for them. Potential changes that program chairs describe are listed below.

1. Several program chairs refer to changes in the thoroughness of their review process:

“We would become stricter as far as accepting mediocre or borderline paper proposals. We would become more discriminating.” Another program chair says, “I suppose we would judge proposals more intensely...”
2. Several program chairs underline the importance of more than one reviewer “if the stakes are high.” Some of these were program chairs who believe their method would not change, as they already use multiple reviewers. One program chair expounds on the increased importance of review quality:
 - *[It would have a] HUGE impact – would completely change my review process. I think I would want to send proposals out to at least two reviewers (to reduce bias on my part) and ensure that the criteria are more objective/defensible. We’d need “training” as TIG program chairs to ensure some level of reliability – we would, after all, be thinking fundamentally (regardless of areas of interest) about what constitutes a strong or weak proposal.*

3. Several program chairs stated that they thought competition would result in the process of taking “more time in terms of thought and care” or it “may take longer, to ensure consensus on decisions.”
4. One program chair points out that increased competition would make more TIG information on available slots more desirable. “It would be highly desirable to know more precisely, how many slots the TIG has available for paper session, round tables, poster, etc. This makes it easier to make the difficult decisions: Accept, change format, reject.”
5. One program chair states that greater competition might result in their TIG “probably not solicit[ing] proposals as extensively.”
6. A few program chairs said increased competition would result in higher quality presentations.

20. Please provide any information that you think is important about the selection process that we have missed in our questions.

As the responses to this open-ended question are varied and often times specific to events, we have listed them all here.

- *Susan Kistler was an important person in this process. She was very patient with my mistakes and explaining the process. Unfortunately, I could not follow through to the conference as co-chair as I was transferred mid-term and consequently others had to suffer with my selection. Hopefully it was okay!*
- *Sometimes Program Chairs have to contact people to put together Panel Presentations so that the TIG is well represented. At times in the past, I would contact individuals to develop panel presentations, which was quite time consuming. Or I had an idea for a TIG panel but needed several other papers for the panel. The Program Chairs have to be proactive to get a good number of proposals from which to choose.*
- *The multiple choice questions couldn't answer because couldn't figure out how to mark the answer, overall, the process that has been employed has been very easy to work with. As I said before the conference is well organized, Robyn and Susan have done a great job.*

- *One thing that I believe has not been addressed -- is tracking those presenters that are "no-shows". During the past few years it seems that presenters have been more lax in showing up for the conference. Perhaps in 2001 this was understandable considering traveling problems, but still, if someone is not coming to present they should notify the conference staff as soon as possible. It should not be a surprise to the session chair or even the TIG program chair, that someone has not come to present (a surprise at the time of the session!). We did have someone fail to present at a multipaper session in 2001 for our TIG and the word around the conference was that there were many other no-shows. This was particularly the case in 2000 in Hawaii where something went terribly wrong (not talking about our TIG, but the conference in general). One might think that some people blew-off their presentation to go to the beach! Given that timeslots are precious, perhaps no-shows should be penalized somehow, such as being banned from presenting at the next year's conference. Of course, some people might have good excuses, but I feel this has not been the rule, and some people are abusing the system (i.e., they are happy to be on the program, its great for the resume/vitae, they just aren't delivering on their commitment).*
- *Perhaps larger questions regarding the availability of stipends, awards and discounts for presenters using AEA or TIG \$.*
- *It will always be a big fight for larger interest groups to have a larger part of the program and for smaller ones to fight for survival. if we have to reject 40% of our proposals out of hand, we'll end up with only two or three presentations in the whole program--and if that were to happen I'd stop coming to AEA and go to conferences that better fit my interest area.*
- *I think it is very important that presentations at conferences be well thought out and well delivered. Over the years people on the whole have gotten pretty sloppy. No papers, no handouts, not even any overheads. A presentation at a conference ought to be worth the attention to detail. This past conference in St. Louis was the worst in this regard in my opinion. Our TIG in fact discussed proposal and presentation quality at our business meeting, we are concerned believe that stronger quality control is needed. WE are considering a few panels of invited papers, where the papers are written in advance of the meeting. If a proposer can't craft a good page on what they will present and what the learner outcomes are for the session, it shouldn't be offered. I would suggest more detailed guidelines for the writing of proposals, including the questions that should be addressed and the order they are addressed in.*
- *I believe there should be a more critical process of selection for proposals*
- *I would like to be able to complete the yellow sheets online.*

***Appendix A:
Summary of evaluative data regarding
Professional Development Workshops***

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Grand Means – All Professional Development Workshops

Participant Feedback	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9/ Missing
2a. The facilitators were well organized.	598	4.20	1.09	28/5	33/6	41/7	186/31	310/52	4/1
2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted	600	3.96	1.16	26/04	62/10	73/12	189/31	250/42	2/1
2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience	598	4.01	1.13	29/05	46/08	67/11	207/34	249/41	4/1
2d. The materials provided will be useful to me.	592	4.10	1.13	26/4	47/8	53/09	183/30	283/67	10/2
2e. I enjoyed the workshop	599	4.11	1.11	29/5	35/6	61/10	189/31	285/47	3/1
2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop.	599	4.31	1.04	25/4	31/5	17/3	188/31	338/56	3/01
2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic (2 missing)	600	4.11	1.14	34/6	34/6	53/9	193/32	286/48	2/1
2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic. (8 missing)	594	3.89	1.15	29/5	59/10	78/13	209/35	219/36	8/1
2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job. (11missing)	592	4.08	1.14	32/5	37/6	57/10	189/31	277/46	10/2
2j. I would recommend this workshop to others. (9 missing)	594	4.00	1.18	33/5	46/8	78/13	167/28	270/45	8/1.5
2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators (19 missing)	584	4.04	1.18	31/5	44/7	80/13	146/24	283/47	18/3
Facilitation	602	4.10	.98						
Content	600	4.05	1.03						
Overall Satisfaction	602	4.08	.97						

Participant motivations to attend	n	Yes	Percent	StD.
1.1 Workshop facilitator	602	180	30	.46
1.2 Workshop fee	602	47	8	.27
1.3 Workshop date	602	156	26	.44
1.4 Workshop topic	602	578	96	.20
1.5 Workshop length	602	185	31	.46
1.6 Anticipated presentation style	602	179	30	.46
1.7 Other motivations	602	42	7	.25

Grand Means – Beginner-Level Workshops Only

Participant Feedback	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9/ Missing
2a. The facilitators were well organized.	287	4.35	.96	9/3	10/3	16/6	89/31	163/56	3/1
2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted	289	4.17	1.01	6/2	22/7	25/9	100/35	136/47	1/04
2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience	298	4.20	1.03	7/2	21/7	24/8	91/32	146/50	1/3
2d. The materials provided will be useful to me.	289	4.30	1.03	11/04	12/04	20/07	82/29	164/57	1/0.4
2e. I enjoyed the workshop	288	4.28	1.03	11/04	11/4	24/8	82/28	160/55	2/0.7
2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop.	290	4.38	.92	6/2	14/5	10/3	95/32	165/57	
2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic	290	4.32	.97	9/3	11/4	18/6	92/32	160/55	
2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic.	286	4.17	.97	5/2	18/6	30/11	103/36	130/44	4/1
2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job.	285	4.31	.96	8/3	11/4	19/7	93/32	154/53	5/2
2j. I would recommend this workshop to others.	286	4.17	1.17	13/5	15/5	34/12	71/25	153/53	4/1.4
2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators	283	4.17	1.13	11/04	20/07	34/12	63/22	155/54	7/2.4
Facilitation	290	4.25	.87						
Content	290	4.27	.88						
Overall Satisfaction	290	4.26	.86						

Participant motivations to attend	n	Yes	Percent	StD.
1.1 Workshop facilitator	290	101	35	.48
1.2 Workshop fee	290	27	9	.29
1.3 Workshop date	290	83	29	.45
1.4 Workshop topic	290	272	94	.24
1.5 Workshop length	290	90	31	.46
1.6 Anticipated presentation style	290	95	33	.47
1.7 Other motivations	290	24	8	.28

Grand Means - Intermediate Workshops only

Participant Feedback	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9/ Missing
2a. The facilitators were well organized.	228	4.09	1.20	15/7	16/7	15/6	70/31	112/49	1/1
2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted	228	3.80	1.28	17/7	28/12	26/11	69/30	88/38	2/1
2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience	226	3.79	1.24	18/8	22/10	26/11	83/36	77/34	3/1
2d. The materials provided will be useful to me.	226	3.88	1.17	10/4	28/12	24/11	80/35	83/36	4/2
2e. I enjoyed the workshop	228	3.93	1.17	14/6	18/8	27/12	81/35	88/38	1/1
2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop	226	4.28	1.18	17/7	9/4	4/2	60/26	136/59	3/1
2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic	228	3.86	1.23	18/8	16/7	32/14	75/33	87/38	1/1
2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic.	226	3.57	1.22	17/7	32/14	38/17	83/36	56/25	3/1
2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job	226	3.85	1.24	17/7	20/9	29/13	73/32	87/38	3/1
2j. I would recommend this workshop to others	227	3.81	1.21	15/7	22/10	34/15	75/33	81/35	2/1
2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators	222	3.90	1.24	17/7	15/7	36/16	60/26	94/41	7/3
Facilitation	229	3.97	1.09						
Content	228	3.80	1.09						
Overall Satisfaction	229	3.89	1.05						

Participant motivations to attend	n	Yes	Percent	StD.
1.1 Workshop facilitator	229	55	24	.43
1.2 Workshop fee	229	12	5	.22
1.3 Workshop date	229	53	23	.42
1.4 Workshop topic	229	224	98	.15
1.5 Workshop length	229	72	31	.47
1.6 Anticipated presentation style	229	64	28	.45
Other Motivations	229	12	05	.22

Grand Means – Intermediate/Advanced – Advanced Level Workshops

Participant Feedback	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9/ Missing
2a. The facilitators were well organized.	83	3.99	1.15	4/5	7/8	10/12	27/33	35/42	
2b. The facilitators made good use of the time allotted	83	3.65	1.17	3/3	12/15	22/27	20/24	26/31	
2c. The teaching/training methods were appropriate to the audience	83	3.89	1.05	4/5	3/4	17/21	33/40	26/31	
2d. The materials provided will be useful to me (5 missing).	78	3.97	1.24	5/6	7/8	9/11	21/25	36/44	5/6
2e. I enjoyed the workshop	83	4.04	1.14	4/5	6/7	10/12	26/31	37/45	
2f. I understand the concepts presented in the workshop.	83	4.14	1.04	2/2	8/10	3/4	33/40	37/45	
2g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic	82	4.01	1.28	7/8	7/8	3/4	26/31	39/48	1/1
2h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic.	82	3.80	1.31	7/8	9/11	10/12	23/28	33/40	1/1
2i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job.	81	3.93	1.28	7/8	6/7	9/11	23/28	36/43	2/2
2j. I would recommend this workshop to others.	81	3.91	1.26	5/6	9/11	10/12	21/25	36/43	2/2
2k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitators.	79	3.96	1.17	3/4	9/11	10/12	23/28	34/41	4/5
Facilitation	83	3.92	.92						
Content	83	3.92	1.19						
Overall Satisfaction	83	3.93	1.00						

Participant motivations to attend	n	Yes	Percent	StD.
1.1 Workshop facilitator	83	24	29	.46
1.2 Workshop fee	83	8	10	.30
1.3 Workshop date	83	20	24	.43
1.4 Workshop topic	83	82	99	.11
1.5 Workshop length	83	23	28	.45
1.6 Anticipated presentation style	83	20	24	.43
1.7 Other Motivations	83	6	7	.26

Summary of feedback from facilitators of Professional Development Workshops

Facilitator Feedback (General)	n	Mean	St.Dev	1 (NO)	2 (YES)
1. Is this your first AEA conference?	38	1.16	.37	32/84	6/16
2. Is this your first time presenting a Professional Development Workshop	38	1.34	.48	25/66	13/34
3. Will you/have you presented this workshop at any other conferences	36	1.56	.5	16/42	20/53
5. Did the participants come to your workshop with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate.	37	1.97	.16	1 /2.6	36/95

Facilitator Feedback (Satisfaction with session)	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. Date/time of your workshop	38	4.24	.75	0/0	0/0	7/18	15/40	16/42	
b. Amount of time allocated for your workshop (1 blank)	37	4.05	1.15	2/5	3/8	2/05	14/38	16/42	
c. Space allocated for your workshop	36	3.78	1.35	2/5	7/18	4/11	7/18	16/42	
d. Level of support from AEA staff	37	4.11	.94	0/0	1/3	11/29	8/21	17/45	1/03
e. Room arrangement.	38	4.03	1.24	2/5	4/11	4/11	9/24	19/50	
f. Audio-visual equipment	32	4.03	1.09	1/3	3/8	3/8	12/32	13/34	6/.16
g. Level of participant engagement	37	4.54	.80	1/3	0/0	1/3	11/29	24/63	1/3
6. How likely would you be to request this format at future conferences? (2 blank)	36	4.44	.77	0/0	1/3	3/8	11/29	21/55	

***Appendix B:
Descriptive statistics and summaries of
quantitative data from overall conference
feedback form***

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Data summaries from all respondents

Question #1 – Please rate the following Evaluation 2001 conference components in terms of quality.

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. Registration process (pre-conference)	713	4.27	.92	7/1.0	25/3.5	98/13.5	188/26.0	351/48.5	44/6.1
b. Registration on-site (Help desk)	712	4.26	.86	3/4	14/1.9	90/12.4	173/23.9	272/37.6	160/22.1
c. Conference support staff	692	4.33	.79	1/1	14/1.9	78/10.8	214/29.6	311/43.0	74/10.2
d. Conference information on AEA website	710	3.92	1.01	10/1.4	60/8.3	137/18.9	238/32.9	231/31.9	34/4.7
e. Overall program content	706	4.00	.83	4/6	27/3.7	138/19.1	329/45.4	205/28.3	3/4
f. Moderation of sessions by chairs	707	3.74	.85	7/1.0	37/5.1	213/29.4	310/42.8	126/17.4	14/1.9
g. Preparation of presenters	710	3.90	.87	10/1.4	28/3.9	161/22.2	324/44.8	180/24.9	7/1.0
h. Quality of presentations	708	3.84	.84	8/1.1	36/5.0	160/22.1	357/49.3	143/19.8	4/6
Grand Mean	720	4.0165	.5615						

Question #2 – Did you give a presentation during Evaluation 2001

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
	704	1.52	.50	No 338/46.7	Yes 366/50.6				
If you presented, or submitted a presentation, please rate your level of satisfaction with the proposal submission and review process.									
a. Call for papers/ presentations	448	4.40	.75	1/1	3/4	36/5.0	133/18.4	200/27.6	74/10.2
b. Paper/presentation selection process	445	4.26	.86	1/1	13/1.8	56/7.7	116/16.0	179/24.7	80/11.0
<i>Grand Mean</i>	379	4.3259	.7409						

Question #3 – Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	716	4.08	.90	6/8	25/3.5	152/21.0	255/35.2	278/38.4	
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	717	3.99	.93	8/1.1	56/7.7	95/13.1	336/46.4	222/30.7	
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	716	4.11	.88	6/8	43/5.9	78/10.8	327/45.2	262/36.2	
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	712	3.87	.95	12/1.7	59/8.1	127/17.5	326/45.0	188/26.0	
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	716	4.10	.86	9/1.2	31/4.3	87/12.0	341/47.1	248/34.3	
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	713	4.14	.89	8/1.1	25/3.5	115/15.9	277/38.3	288/39.8	
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	714	4.33	.87	7/1.0	25/3.5	76/10.5	221/30.5	385/53.2	
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	714	4.14	1.03	18/2.5	37/5.1	113/15.6	205/28.3	341/47.1	
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	715	4.25	.82	8/1.1	22/3.0	57/7.9	322/44.5	306/42.3	
Grand Mean	720	4.1111	.7016						

Question #6 – What is your current AEA membership status (Select one)

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response		
			1 Professional Member	2 Student Member	3 Non-member
712	1.28	.60	575/79.4	78/10.8	59/8.1

Question #7 – How many AEA conferences (including this one) have you attended since 1986? (Select one)

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 This is my first	2 2-4	3 5-7	4 8-10	5 More than 10
712	1.99	1.21	318/43.9	236/32.6	64/8.8	36/5.0	58/8.0

Question #8 – Did you attend any of the pre or post-conference professional development sessions?

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response	
			1 No	2 Yes
705	1.47	.50	374/51.7	331/45.7

Question #9 – Which of the following position titles best describes your current job? (Select one)

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 Student	2 Manager/ Administrator	3 Professor/ Teacher	4 Consultant	5 Other
704	3.34	1.37	67/9.3	176/24.3	115/15.9	140/19.3	206/28.5

Question #10 – How would you describe your evaluation k knowledge and skills? (Select one)

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 No background	2 Novice	3 Intermediate	4 Advanced	5 Expert
713	3.46	.90	9/1.2	79/10.9	290/40.1	243/33.6	92/12.7

Question #11 – In your current position,, what percent of your workload includes evaluation-related duties? (Select one)

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 0	2 1-25%	3 26- 50%	4 51- 75%	5 76- 100%
710	3.97	1.14	4/6	115/15.9	107/14.8	157/21.7	327/45.2

Data summary by number of conferences attended

Question #1 – Please rate the following Evaluation 2001 conference components in terms of quality.

1a. Registration process (Pre-conference)

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	317	4.08	.99	5/1.6	15/4.7	55/17.3	92/28.9	124/39.0	26/8.2
2 - 4	232	4.33	.85	2/8	5/2.1	28/11.9	69/29.2	118/50.0	10/4.2
5 - 7	64	4.46	.91		4/6.3	5/7.8	11/17.2	41/64.1	3/4.7
8 - 10	35	4.58	.75		1/2.8	2/5.6	7/19.4	23/63.9	2/5.6
More than 10	55	4.63	.69			6/10.3	7/12.1	39/67.2	3/5.2
No Response	10	4.40	.84			2/16.7	2/16.7	6/50.0	
All	713	4.27	.92	7/1.0	25/3.5	98/13.5	188/26.0	351/48.5	44/6.1

1b. Registration on-site (Help desk)

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	315	4.09	.91	2/6	11/3.5	49/15.4	92/28.9	101/31.8	60/18.9
2 - 4	234	4.28	.83	1/4	2/8	30/12.7	55/23.3	86/36.4	60/25.4
5 - 7	63	4.38	.81			9/14.1	10/15.6	26/40.6	18/28.1
8 - 10	34	4.67	.68		1/2.8		6/16.7	20/55.6	7/19.4
More than 10	57	4.70	.55			2/3.4	9/15.5	33/56.9	13/22.4
No Response	9	4.86	.38				1/8.3	6/50.0	2/16.7
All	712	4.26	.86	3/4	14/1.9	90/12.4	173/23.9	272/37.6	160/22.1

1c. Conference support staff

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	307	4.14	.83	0	11/3.5	44/13.8	116/36.5	104/32.7	32/10.1
2 - 4	221	4.35	.80	1/4	3/1.3	25/10.6	62/26.3	102/43.2	28/11.9
5 - 7	63	4.58	.66			5/7.8	13/20.3	37/57.8	8/12.5
8 - 10	35	4.53	.62			2/5.6	11/30.6	19/52.8	3/8.3
More than 10	57	4.76	.51			2/3.4	9/15.5	44/75.9	2/3.4
No Response	9	4.63	.52				3/25.0	5/41.7	1/8.3
All	692	4.33	.79	1/1	14/1.9	78/10.8	214/29.6	311/43.0	74/10.2

1d. Conference information on AEA website

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	317	3.75	1.04	5/1.6	36/11.3	74/23.3	104/32.7	85/26.7	13/4.1
2 - 4	231	4.03	.97	3/1.3	14/5.9	40/16.9	80/33.9	83/35.2	11/4.7
5 - 7	62	3.97	.95	1/1.6	4/6.3	10/15.6	27/42.2	19/29.7	1/1.6
8 - 10	36	4.12	1.01	1/2.8	1/2.8	6/16.7	11/30.6	15/41.7	2/5.6
More than 10	56	4.24	.95		4/6.9	5/8.6	15/25.9	25/43.1	7/12.1
No Response	8	4.00	1.20		1/8.3	2/16.7	1/8.3	4/33.3	
All	710	3.92	1.01	10/1.4	60/8.3	137/18.9	238/32.9	231/31.9	34/4.7

1e. Overall program content

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	310	3.95	.88	2/6	17/5.3	64/20.1	135/42.5	90/28.3	2/6
2 - 4	232	4.03	.82	2/8	6/2.5	44/18.6	112/47.5	68/28.8	
5 - 7	64	3.98	.75		1/1.6	15/23.4	32/50.	16/25	
8 - 10	35	3.91	.78		1/2.8	9/25.0	17/47.2	8/22.2	
More than 10	56	4.16	.71		2/3.4	4/6.9	32/55.2	17/29.3	1/1.7
No Response	9	4.44	.88			2/16.7	1/8.3	6/50.0	
All	706	4.00	.83	4/6	27/3.7	138/19.1	329/45.4	205/28.3	3/4

1f. Moderation of sessions by chairs

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	313	3.67	.83	3/9	16/5.0	104/32.7	134/42.1	46/14.5	10/3.1
2 - 4	230	3.74	.87	2/8	15/6.4	66/28.0	102/43.2	43/18.2	2/8
5 - 7	64	3.89	.76		1/1.6	19/29.7	30/46.9	14/21.9	
8 - 10	36	3.54	.98	1/2.8	3/8.3	13/36.4	12/33.3	6/16.7	1/2.8
More than 10	56	4.04	.79		2/3.4	10/17.2	27/46.6	16/27.6	1/1.7
No Response	8	3.63	1.19	1/8.3		1/8.3	5/41.7	1/8.3	
All	707	3.74	.85	7/1.0	37/5.1	213/29.4	310/42.8	126/17.4	14/1.9

1g. Preparation of presenters

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	313	3.87	.94	7/2.2	15/4.7	73/23.0	131/41.2	83/26.1	4/1.3
2 - 4	231	3.96	.79	1/4	6/2.5	51/21.6	114/48.3	57/24.2	2/.8
5 - 7	64	3.80	.99	2/3.1	4/6.3	15/23.4	27/42.2	16/25.0	
8 - 10	36	3.91	.74			11/30.6	16/44.4	8/22.2	1/2.8
More than 10	57	4.00	.78		2/3.4	11/19.0	29/50.0	15/25.9	
No Response	9	3.56	.88		1/8.3		7/58.3	1/8.3	
All	710	3.90	.87	10/1.4	28/3.9	161/22.2	324/44.8	180/24.9	7/1.0

1h. Quality of presentations

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	313	3.81	.87	6/1.9	14/4.4	75/23.6	153/48.1	62/19.5	3/9
2 - 4	230	3.86	.83	2/.8	12/5.1	49/20.8	121/51.3	46/19.5	
5 - 7	64	3.80	.89		6/9.4	15/23.4	29/45.3	14/21.9	
8 - 10	36	3.86	.88		3/8.3	7/19.4	17/47.2	8/22.2	1/2.8
More than 10	56	4.02	.65			11/19.0	33/56.9	12/20.7	
No Response	9	3.56	.88		1/8.3	3/25.0	4/33.3	1/8.3	
All	708	3.84	.84	8/1.1	36/5.0	160/22.1	357/49.3	143/19.8	4/.6

Grand Means – Question 1

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev
This is my first AEA conference	318	3.9082	.5816
2 - 4	235	4.0568	.5556
5 - 7	64	4.0908	.5193
8 - 10	36	4.1054	.5043
More than 10	57	4.3070	.4016
No Response	10	4.0650	.5457
All	720	4.0165	.5615

Question #2 – Did you give a presentation during Evaluation 2001

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response	
				1 No	2 Yes
This is my first AEA conference	309	1.33	.47	207/65.1	102/32.1
2 – 4	233	1.62	.49	88/37.3	145/61.4
5 – 7	62	1.79	.41	13/20.3	49/76.6
8 – 10	34	1.68	.47	11/30.6	23/63.9
More than 10	58	1.76	.43	14/24.1	44/75.9
No Response	8	1.38	.52	5/41.7	3/25.0
All	704	1.52	.50	338/46.7	366/50.6

If you presented, or submitted a presentation, please rate your level of satisfaction with the proposal submission and review process.

2a. Call for papers/presentations

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	150	4.25	.77		1/3	17/5.3	38/11.9	44/13.8	50/15.7
2 – 4	170	4.36	.78	1/4	2/8	12/5.1	62/26.3	75/31.8	18/7.6
5 – 7	52	4.63	.53			1/1.6	16/25.0	31/48.4	4/6.3
8 – 10	24	4.67	.64			2/5.6	4/11.1	18/50.0	
More than 10	48	4.48	.84	1/1.7		4/6.9	12/20.7	29/50.0	2/3.4
No Response	4	4.75	.50				1/8.3	3/25.0	
All	448	4.40	.75	1/1	3/4	36/5.0	133/18.4	200/27.6	74/10.2

2b. Paper/presentation selection process

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conference	149	4.15	.79		1/3	21/6.6	38/11.9	38/11.9	51/16.0
2 – 4	168	4.28	.89	1/4	7/3.0	16/6.8	48/20.3	73/30.9	23/9.7
5 – 7	52	4.27	.91		3/4.7	6/9.4	15/23.4	25/39.1	3/4.7
8 – 10	24	4.43	.84			5/13.9	3/8.3	15/41.7	1/2.8
More than 10	48	4.26	.91		2/3.4	8/13.8	12/20.7	24/41.4	2/3.4
No Response	4	4.75	.50					4/33.3	
All	445	4.26	.86	1/1	13/1.8	56/7.7	116/16.0	179/24.7	80/11.0

Grand Means – Question 2 a & b

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev
This is my first AEA conference	102	4.2010	.7287
2 - 4	154	4.3084	.7905
5 - 7	49	4.4490	.6229
8 - 10	24	4.5417	.6413
More than 10	46	4.3696	.7486
No Response	4	4.8750	.2500
All	379	4.3259	.7409

Question #3 – Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

3a. I felt welcomed at the conference.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	316	3.89	.90	2/6	19/6.0	78/24.5	129/40.6	88/27.7	
2 - 4	235	4.14	.90	3/1.3	6/2.5	45/19.1	81/34.3	100/42.4	
5 - 7	63	4.27	.83			15/23.4	16/25.0	32/50.0	
8 - 10	36	4.31	.95	1/2.8		6/16.7	9/25.0	20/55.6	
More than 10	57	4.53	.68			6/10.3	15/25.9	36/62.1	
All	716	4.08	.90	6/8	25/3.5	152/21.0	255/35.2	278/38.4	

3b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	317	3.86	.94	4/1.3	28/8.8	55/17.3	150/47.2	80/25.2	
2 - 4	234	3.98	.94	4/1.7	16/6.8	32/13.6	110/46.6	72/30.5	
5 - 7	64	4.03	.94		7/10.9	6/9.4	29/45.3	22/34.4	
8 - 10	36	4.31	.86		3/8.3		16/44.4	17/47.2	
More than 10	57	4.54	.57		2/3.4	1/1.7	26/44.8	28/48.3	
All	717	3.99	.93	8/1.1	56/7.7	95/13.1	336/46.4	222/30.7	

3c. The conference was worth the time and money.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	316	4.00	.91	3/9	21/6.6	49/15.4	143/45.0	100/31.4	
2 - 4	235	4.13	.87	3/1.3	13/5.5	18/7.6	117/49.6	84/35.6	
5 - 7	63	4.13	.96		6/9.4	7/10.9	23/35.9	27/42.2	
8 - 10	36	4.22	.87		3/8.3	1/2.8	17/47.2	15/41.7	
More than 10	57	4.54	.57			2/3.4	22/37.9	33/56.9	
All	716	4.11	.88	6/8	43/5.9	78/10.8	327/45.2	262/36.2	

3d. The conference met my professional development needs.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	316	3.84	.97	7/2.2	26/8.2	55/17.3	149/46.9	79/24.8	
2 - 4	232	3.89	.95	4/1.7	16/6.8	46/19.5	102/43.2	64/27.1	
5 - 7	63	3.78	1.04		10/15.6	12/18.8	23/35.9	18/28.1	
8 - 10	36	3.64	.99	1/2.8	4/11.1	8/22.2	17/47.2	6/16.7	
More than 10	57	4.12	.80		3/5.2	6/10.3	29/50.0	19/32.8	
All	712	3.87	.95	12/1.7	59/8.1	127/17.5	326/45.0	188/26.0	

3e. I learned things that will inform my practice.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	315	4.11	.87	3/9	15/4.7	40/12.6	144/45.3	113/35.5	
2 - 4	235	4.14	.88	5/2.1	9/3.8	20/8.5	114/48.3	87/36.9	
5 - 7	64	4.09	.79		3/4.7	8/12.5	33/51.6	20/31.3	
8 - 10	36	3.83	.81		3/8.3	6/16.7	21/58.3	6/16.7	
More than 10	57	4.04	.89	1/1.7	1/1.7	12/20.7	24/41.4	19/32.8	
No Response	9	4.22	.67				6/50.0	2/16.7	
All	716	4.10	.86	9/1.2	31/4.3	87/12.0	341/47.1	248/34.3	

3f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	315	3.97	.91	3/9	18/5.7	62/19.5	134/42.1	98/30.8	
2 - 4	233	4.17	.89	4/1.7	3/1.3	43/18.2	83/35.2	100/42.4	
5 - 7	63	4.38	.73		1/1.6	6/9.4	24/37.5	32/50.0	
8 - 10	36	4.25	1.08	1/2.8	3/8.3	2/5.6	10/27.8	20/55.6	
More than 10	58	4.59	.56			2/3.4	20/34.5	36/62.1	
All	713	4.14	.89	8/1.1	25/3.5	115/15.9	277/38.3	288/39.8	

3g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	316	4.07	.90	1/3	17/5.3	61/19.2	117/36.8	120/37.7	
2 - 4	232	4.45	.84	4/1.7	5/2.1	14/5.9	68/28.8	141/59.7	
5 - 7	64	4.72	.49			1/1.6	16/25.0	47/73.4	
8 - 10	35	4.37	1.21	2/5.6	3/8.3		5/13.9	25/69.4	
More than 10	58	4.83	.38				10/17.2	48/82.8	
All	714	4.33	.87	7/1.0	25/3.5	76/10.5	221/30.5	385/53.2	

3h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	313	3.80	1.11	14/4.4	24/7.5	74/23.3	101/31.8	100/31.4	
2 - 4	235	4.29	.93	4/1.7	8/3.4	30/12.7	68/28.8	125/53.0	
5 - 7	64	4.61	.61			4/6.3	17/26.6	43/67.2	
8 - 10	36	4.25	1.11		5/13.9	3/8.3	6/16.7	22/61.1	
More than 10	57	4.82	.43			1/1.7	8/13.8	48/82.8	
All	714	4.14	1.03	18/2.5	37/5.1	113/15.6	205/28.3	341/47.1	

3i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
This is my first AEA conf.	315	4.15	.82	3/9	14/4.4	25/7.9	164/51.6	109/34.3	
2 - 4	233	4.26	.83	4/1.7	4/1.7	22/9.3	100/42.4	103/43.6	
5 - 7	64	4.39	.77		1/1.6	8/12.5	20/31.3	35/54.7	
8 - 10	36	4.19	1.04	1/2.8	3/8.3	1/2.8	14/38.9	17/47.2	
More than 10	58	4.64	.52			1/1.7	19/32.8	38/65.5	
All	715	4.25	.82	8/1.1	22/3.0	57/7.9	322/44.5	306/42.3	

Grand Means – Question 3

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev
This is my first AEA	318	3.96	.71
2 - 4	235	4.16	.72
5 - 7	64	4.27	.59
8 - 10	36	4.15	.78
More than 10	58	4.50	.42
All	720	4.11	.70

Question #6 – What is your current AEA membership status (Select one)

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response		
				1 Professional Member	2 Student Member	3 Non-member
This is my first AEA conference	316	1.45	.76	224/70.4	41/12.9	51/16.0
2 – 4	236	1.19	.48	198/83.9	30/12.7	8/3.4
5 – 7	64	1.09	.29	58/90.6	6/9.4	
8 – 10	35	1.00	.00	35/97.2		
More than 10	57	1.00	.00	57/98.3		
No Response	4	1.25	.50	3/25.0	1/8.3	
All	712	1.28	.60	575/79.4	78/10.8	59/8.1

**Question #7 – How many AEA conferences (including this one) have you attended since 1986?
(Select one)**

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
				1 This is my first	2 2-4	3 5-7	4 8-10	5 More than 10
This is my first AEA conference	318	1.00	.00	318/100				
2 – 4	236	2.00	.00		236/100			
5 – 7	64	3.00	.00			64/100		
8 – 10	36	4.00	.00				36/100	
More than 10	58	5.00	.00					58/100
No Response								
All	712	1.99	1.21	318/43.9	236/32.6	64/8.8	36/5.0	58/8.0

Question #8 – Did you attend any of the pre or post-conference professional development sessions?

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response	
				1 No	2 Yes
This is my first AEA conference	316	1.53	.50	149/46.9	167/52.5
2 – 4	232	1.46	.50	125/53.0	107/45.3
5 – 7	63	1.40	.49	38/59.4	25/39.1
8 – 10	36	1.42	.50	21/58.3	15/41.7
More than 10	57	1.28	.45	41/70.7	16/27.6
No Response	1	2.00		1/8.3	
All	705	1.47	.50	374/51.7	331/45.7

Question #9 – Which of the following position titles best describes your current job? (Select one)

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
				1 Student	2 Manager/Admin.	3 Professor/Teacher	4 Consult	5 Other
This is my first AEA conference	314	3.39	1.48	39/12.3	78/24.5	28/8.8	58/18.2	111/34.9
2 – 4	231	3.30	1.36	25/10.6	55/23.3	35/14.8	58/24.6	58/24.6
5 – 7	64	3.33	1.18	3/4.7	15/23.4	17/26.6	16/25.0	13/20.3
8 – 10	36	3.47	1.25		11/30.6	9/25.0	4/11.1	12/33.3
More than 10	57	3.18	1.05		16/27.6	26/44.8	4/6.9	11/19.0
No Response	2	3.50	2.12		1/8.3			1/8.3
All	704	3.34	1.37	67/9.3	176/24.3	115/15.9	140/19.3	206/28.5

Question #10 – How would you describe your evaluation knowledge and skills? (Select one)

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
				1 No back-ground	2 Novice	3 Interm.	4 Advanced	5 Expert
This is my first AEA conference	317	3.03	.84	9/2.8	69/21.7	156/49.1	71/22.3	12/3.8
2 – 4	235	3.54	.72		10/4.2	108/45.8	96/40.7	21/8.9
5 – 7	64	3.98	.68			15/23.4	35/54.7	14/21.9
8 – 10	36	4.19	.67			5/13.9	19/52.8	12/33.3
More than 10	58	4.52	.60			3/5.2	22/37.9	33/56.9
No Response	3	3.00	.00			3/25.0		
All	713	3.46	.90	9/1.2	79/10.9	290/40.1	243/33.6	92/12.7

Question #11 – In your current position, what percent of your workload includes evaluation-related duties? (Select one)

Number of AEA Conferences Attended	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
				1 0	2 1-25%	3 26- 50%	4 51- 75%	5 76- 100%
This is my first AEA conference	317	3.84	1.21	2/.6	67/21.1	50/15.7	60/18.9	138/43.4
2 – 4	233	4.00	1.13	2/.8	33/14.0	36/15.3	54/22.9	108/45.8
5 – 7	63	4.35	.86		3/4.7	7/10.9	18/28.1	35/54.7
8 – 10	36	4.22	1.15		5/13.9	5/13.9	3/8.3	23/63.9
More than 10	58	3.98	1.02		7/12.1	9/15.5	30/34.5	22/37.9
No Response	3	4.33	.58				2/16.7	1/8.3
All	710	3.97	1.14	4/.6	115/15.9	107/14.8	157/21.7	327/45.2

Comparison Charts – Newcomer vs. Return Attendee

Question #1 – Please rate the following Evaluation 2001 conference components in terms of quality.

Newcomers

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. Registration process (pre-conference)	317	4.08	.99	5/1.6	15/4.7	55/17.3	92/28.9	124/39.0	26/8.2
b. Registration on-site (Help desk)	315	4.09	.91	2/6	11/3.5	49/15.4	92/28.9	101/31.8	60/18.9
c. Conference support staff	307	4.14	.83	0	11/3.5	44/13.8	116/36.5	104/32.7	32/10.1
d. Conference information on AEA website	317	3.75	1.04	5/1.6	36/11.3	74/23.3	104/32.7	85/26.7	13/4.1
e. Overall program content	310	3.95	.88	2/6	17/5.3	64/20.1	135/42.5	90/28.3	2/6
f. Moderation of sessions by chairs	313	3.67	.83	3/9	16/5.0	104/32.7	134/42.1	46/14.5	10/3.1
g. Preparation of presenters	313	3.87	.94	7/2.2	15/4.7	73/23.0	131/41.2	83/26.1	4/1.3
h. Quality of presentations	313	3.81	.87	6/1.9	14/4.4	75/23.6	153/48.1	62/19.5	3/9
Grand Mean	318	3.9082	.5816						

Question #1

Return Attendees

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. Registration process (pre-conference)	396	4.42	.83	2/5	10/2.5	43/10.6	96/23.6	227/55.9	18/4.4
b. Registration on-site (Help desk)	397	4.41	.79	1/2	3/7	41/10.1	81/20.0	171/42.1	100/24.6
c. Conference support staff	385	4.48	.73	1/2	3/7	34/8.4	98/24.1	207/51.0	42/10.3
d. Conference information on AEA website	393	4.05	.97	5/1.2	24/5.9	63/15.5	134/33.0	146/36.0	21/5.2
e. Overall program content	396	4.04	.79	2/5	10/2.5	74/18.2	194/47.8	115/28.3	1/2
f. Moderation of sessions by chairs	394	3.79	.87	4/1.0	21/5.2	109/26.8	176/43.3	80/19.7	4/1.0
g. Preparation of presenters	397	3.93	.82	3/7	13/3.2	88/21.7	193/47.5	97/23.9	3/7
h. Quality of presentations	395	3.86	.82	2/5	22/5.4	85/20.9	204/50.2	81/20.0	1/2
Grand Mean	402	4.1023	.5302						

Question #2 – Did you give a presentation during Evaluation 2001

Newcomers

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
	309	1.33	.47	No 207/65.1	Yes 102/32.1				
If you presented, or submitted a presentation, please rate your level of satisfaction with the proposal submission and review process.									
a. Call for papers/presentations	150	4.25	.77	0	1/3	17/5.3	38/11.9	44/13.8	50/15.7
b. Paper/presentation selection process	149	4.15	.79	0	1/3	21/6.6	38/11.9	38/11.9	51/16.0
Grand Mean	102	4.2010	.7287						

Return Attendees

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
	395	1.67	.47	No 131/32.3	Yes 264/65.0				
If you presented, or submitted a presentation, please rate your level of satisfaction with the proposal submission and review process.									
a. Call for papers/presentations	298	4.46	.74	1/2	2/5	19/4.7	95/23.4	156/38.4	24/5.9
b. Paper/presentation selection process	296	4.30	.89	1/2	12/3.0	35/8.6	78/19.2	141/34.7	29/7.1
Grand Mean	277	4.3718	.7414						

**Question #3 – Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.
Newcomers**

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	316	3.89	.90	2/6	19/6.0	78/24.5	129/40.6	88/27.7	
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	317	3.86	.94	4/1.3	28/8.8	55/17.3	150/47.2	80/25.2	
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	316	4.00	.91	3/9	21/6.6	49/15.4	143/45.0	100/31.4	
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	316	3.84	.97	7/2.2	26/8.2	55/17.3	149/46.9	79/24.8	
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	315	4.11	.87	3/9	15/4.7	40/12.6	144/45.3	113/35.5	
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	315	3.97	.91	3/9	18/5.7	62/19.5	134/42.1	98/30.8	
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	316	4.07	.90	1/3	17/5.3	61/19.2	117/36.8	120/37.7	
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	313	3.80	1.11	14/4.4	24/7.5	74/23.3	101/31.8	100/31.4	
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	315	4.15	.82	3/9	14/4.4	25/7.9	164/51.6	109/34.3	
Grand Mean	318	3.9608	.7082						

Question #3

Return Attendees

	n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response					
				1	2	3	4	5	9
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	400	4.23	.87	4/1.0	6/1.5	74/18.2	126/31.0	190/46.8	
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	400	4.09	.91	4/1.0	28/6.9	40/9.9	186/45.8	142/35.0	
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	400	4.20	.85	3/7	22/5.4	29/7.1	184/45.3	162/39.9	
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	396	3.89	.95	5/1.2	33/8.1	72/17.7	177/43.6	109/26.8	
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	401	4.09	.86	6/1.5	16/3.9	47/11.6	197/48.5	135/33.3	
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	398	4.27	.85	5/1.2	7/1.7	53/13.1	143/35.2	190/46.8	
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	398	4.54	.79	6/1.5	8/2.0	15/3.7	104/25.6	265/65.3	
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	401	4.41	.87	4/1.0	13/3.2	39/9.6	104/25.6	241/59.4	
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	400	4.34	.81	5/1.2	8/2.0	32/7.9	158/38.9	197/48.5	
Grand Mean	402	4.2300	.6737						

Question #6 – What is your current AEA membership status (Select one)

Newcomers

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response		
			1 Professional Member	2 Student Member	3 Non-member
316	1.45	.76	224/70.4	41/12.9	51/16.0

Return Attendees

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response		
			1 Professional Member	2 Student Member	3 Non-member
396	1.13	.40	351/86.5	37/9.1	8/2.0

Question #7 – How many AEA conferences (including this one) have you attended since 1986? (Select one)

Newcomers

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 This is my first	2 2-4	3 5-7	4 8-10	5 More than 10
318	1.00	.00	318/100				

Return Attendees

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 This is my first	2 2-4	3 5-7	4 8-10	5 More than 10
394	2.79	1.11		236/58.1	64/15.8	36/8.9	58/14.3

Question #8 – Did you attend any of the pre or post-conference professional development sessions?

Newcomers

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response	
			1 No	2 Yes
316	1.53	.50	149/46.9	167/52.5

Return Attendees

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response	
			1 No	2 Yes
389	1.42	.49	225/55.4	164/40.4

Question #9 – Which of the following position titles best describes your current job? (Select one)

Newcomers

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 Student	2 Manager/ Admin.	3 Professor/ Teacher	4 Consultant	5 Other
314	3.39	1.48	39/12.3	78/24.5	28/8.8	58/18.2	111/34.9

Return Attendees

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 Student	2 Manager/ Admin.	3 Professor/ Teacher	4 Consultant	5 Other
390	3.30	1.28	28/6.9	98/24.1	87/21.4	82/20.2	95/23.4

Question #10 – How would you describe your evaluation k knowledge and skills? (Select one)

Newcomers

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 No background	2 Novice	3 Intermediate	4 Advanced	5 Expert
317	3.03	.84	9/2.8	69/21.7	156/49.1	71/22.3	12/3.8

Return Attendees

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 No background	2 Novice	3 Intermediate	4 Advanced	5 Expert
396	3.81	.78		10/2.5	134/33.0	172/42.4	80/19.7

Question #11 – In your current position,, what percent of your workload includes evaluation-related duties? (Select one)

Newcomers

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 0	2 1-25%	3 26- 50%	4 51- 75%	5 76- 100%
317	3.84	1.21	2/.6	67/21.1	50/15.7	60/18.9	138/43.4

Return Attendees

n	Mean	St.Dev	Frequency/Percentage by response				
			1 0	2 1-25%	3 26- 50%	4 51- 75%	5 76- 100%
393	4.08	1.08	2/.5	48/11.8	57/14.0	97/23.9	189/46.6

Comparison Charts – Evaluation 2001 versus Evaluation 2000

Question #1 – Please rate the following Evaluation 2001 conference components in terms of *quality*.

1a. Registration process (Pre-conference)

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	284	4.37	.96
2001	713	4.27	.92

1b. Registration on-site (Help desk)

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	224	4.47	.68
2001	712	4.26	.86

1c. Conference support staff

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	261	4.51	.69
2001	692	4.33	.79

1d. Conference information on AEA website

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	281	4.11	.93
2001	710	3.92	1.01

1e. Overall program content

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	301	3.95	.83
2001	706	4.00	.83

1f. Moderation of sessions by chairs

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	291	3.73	.94
2001	707	3.74	.85

1g. Preparation of presenters

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	294	3.89	.93
2001	710	3.90	.87

1h. Quality of presentations

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	292	3.77	.83
2001	708	3.84	.84

Question #3 – Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

3a. I felt welcomed at the conference.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	295	4.04	.92
2001	716	4.08	.90

3b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	296	3.87	1.00
2001	717	3.99	.93

3c. The conference was worth the time and money.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	299	4.12	.93
2001	716	4.11	.88

3d. The conference met my professional development needs.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	294	3.68	1.04
2001	712	3.87	.95

3e. I learned things that will inform my practice.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	294	3.93	.96
2001	716	4.10	.86

3f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	295	4.03	.98
2001	713	4.14	.89

3g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	299	4.29	.90
2001	714	4.33	.87

3h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	298	4.10	1.11
2001	714	4.14	1.03

3i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	297	4.16	.83
2001	715	4.25	.82

Grand Means – Question 3

Conference Year	n	Mean	St.Dev
2000	302	4.02	.76
2001	720	4.1111	.7016

Appendix C:
Additional Selected Quotations from Open-ended Responses to the Overall Conference Feedback Form

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Question 4: What was the single best part of your experience in attending Evaluation 2001?

Networking at the conference

- *Networking with folks – particularly meeting people face-to-face that I've had only phone or email contact with in the past.*
- *Connecting with colleagues and friends, and maintaining my professional identification with evaluation as a profession.*
- *Networking with other independent consultants – much better than previous conferences.*
- *Sharing among presenters, experts, students, attendees a very “close” organization – lots of support.*
- *As first-time attendee, it was exciting to be among professional peers and mentors! I really valued the Independent Consultant TIG sessions and exhibit table.*
- *Meeting wicked smart colleagues who imparted invaluable experience and wisdom (social networking).*

The program (sessions, roundtables, plenaries, and particular presenters)

- *The workshops before the conference and the presentations themselves were absolutely outstanding. I've been to geography, gerontology, and qualitative research conferences before – they all pale in comparison to this one regarding the amount of take home, truly applicable information and inspiration.*
- *Three Seniors Presidential Strand (Saturday morning 8:00 am).*
- *The alternative format Resistance session was excellent – in addition to the practice-oriented focus, it was one of the only opportunities I've had at AEA conferences to discuss evaluation practice issues with other attendees.*
- *The variety of panels/presentations/roundtables/alt. format, etc., sessions scheduled for nearly every timeslot was fantastic – I attended something I considered very interesting and/or relevant to my work each session timeslot!*
- *A terrific presentation by Joan LaFrance and her colleagues. Really welcoming TIG.*

- *Patton and Scriven were a good opportunity for me to hear the varying extremes in evaluation philosophy. I also learned that research methods are not absolute. I heard a real variety of approaches to evaluation.*

New learning, information, and professional development

- *Being surrounded with other evaluators. Internal evaluation in CBDs can be a lonely pursuit. I learned so much here – wish I had known about AEA before!*
- *Several sessions that helped me think through solutions to problems I am facing in evaluations I am conducting.*
- *For a first time attendee I was able to find workshops that met my needs and prod me to learn more.*

Professional development workshops

- *The pre- and post-AEA sessions that I attended. Mel Mark!! What great presentations and facilitations.*
- *Professional development – skills, methodological techniques and ideas to improve my evaluation practice – specifically, the pre/post conference workshops.*
- *The pre-conference workshops were 10 times better than the actual conference. The amount of information and the quality seemed to be there, along with the opportunity to generalize the experience to your own organization.*

Famous people and senior evaluators

- *Getting to hear preeminent evaluators (Patton, Scriven, King, Fetterman).*
- *Having the chance to hear senior scholars and learn from field practitioners.*
- *Hearing first-hand from the “legends” in program evaluation and the opportunity to talk to some of them.*

Question 5: What one thing did you find most disappointing in attending Evaluation 2001?

Poor presenters, presentations, or content

- *The wide variability in the quality of presentations – some were very good and others quite weak.*
- *Paper presenters were not accustomed to doing presentations – no handouts, ran over their time, did not engage audience – maybe give out a guideline sheet for all presenters.*

- *The number of presentations that focused on details of the presenter's specific study or context rather than generalized theory/methodology/practice/findings. I liked this a lot in one small session in which I was interested in the program content and we could, as a group, discuss theory and findings. But nine times out of 10 I was in a session for the methods and didn't want to hear a "talking head" presentation of program content and local issues.*
- *Some presenters were disorganized and did not get the concept of adult education.*
- *There is a risk that people just present evaluations they have done, with no general implications for evaluations per se.*
- *The quality of most of the sessions I attended was surprisingly poor. Many presenters had not taken the time to write up their presentations, which meant that they hadn't REALLY thought it all through.*

The hotel, session rooms, and isolation

- *Quality of smaller session rooms was very poor, including the Atrium rooms, and the Millennium board room – terrible!*
- *The hotel, in general, was a bit of a trial – e.g., lifts, ice machines, location of some rooms; lack of access to convenience stores and restaurants, amenities in the surrounding areas. Location close to freeways should be a no-no!!*
- *The hotel – Millennium – North Tower – elevators slow, took the stairs to 11th floor after experiencing 20 minutes on the elevators, too hot or too cold, hard to find Atrium rooms, shabby hotel rooms, poor service.*
- *Hotel facilities were not able to fully support the size of the conference and participant needs. For example, elevators did not have capacity; office center could not fully support copy and material production.*
- *The hotel left a lot to be desired. The rooms for conference sessions were noisy – I could hear sessions from next door almost as well as the session I was attending! The sleeping rooms were also very poor. For \$125 a night I expected a nice, clean room. Instead I was in an old, cramped, and somewhat dilapidated room, with a leaky bathtub.*
- *The hotel facilities – both sleeping rooms and conference rooms were lacking.*

Lack of papers and handouts

- *The trend toward no overheads, no paper, just talk. This should be high standards, not musings.*

- *Not enough time between sessions, too many great sessions to choose between at the same time. Also too few handouts. Should have them all available by e-mail.*
- *That I couldn't stay longer!!! The only substantive concern is the number of ties that presenters indicated that they hadn't really written a paper when the session had been set up as a paper session. I don't expect papers from panel sessions, dialogues, etc., but I do from a paper session!*

Concurrent sessions

- *Too many concurrent sessions – I felt I was missing one sessions for another.*
- *Many of the sessions that I was interested in were held concurrently (especially technology application seminars).*
- *All TIGs meet at the same time; no opportunity to interact across TIGs.*

Timing and scheduling overall and within sessions

- *Time – sessions ran long and started late which had a ripple effect for all subsequent session. Ten minutes was inadequate between sessions, esp. if you were in one that ran late in the Jeff. Rooms, for ex., then had to get to the Suite Rooms in the Sheridan [sic-Gwen, look up] for the next – allowing 15 minutes would help this.*
- *The tight, fast scheduling forced a choice between attending sessions and meeting/networking with fellow evaluators.*
- *I just returned from a paper session – there were four papers, including mine. The session chair also had a paper. She went first and took 40 minutes. She allowed the next presenter to take 25 minutes. Thus the final two groups had to share 25 minutes, with no time for discussion. I spent a lot of time preparing my paper – it was a total waste.*

Professional development workshops

- *The two half-day professional development sessions I attended were a disappointment. Both were short on applicability.*
- *My professional development session was terrible – all lecture! What a waste!*
- *The professional development session, for which I paid extra, was a disappointment. It was unorganized, poorly presented, and had little value for me.*

Program book and information

- *Conference program manages to be both overwhelming and uninformative. Needs summaries of workshops (not only topics) and better user-interaction.*
- *I'd never attended before. It was hard to figure out what was going on and where.*
- *It was very difficult to tell from the agenda what the sessions were about. The titles of the sessions were very difficult to decipher and were at times misleading. The agenda book needs to be made more user friendly!*

Question 12: If you attend other professional conferences, what do you find unique about Evaluation 2001?

Variety and multidisciplinary of people, topics, and presentation formats

- *Typically the people who attend AEA have such varied interests and backgrounds that it makes the conference intellectually engaging and stimulating.*
- *Wide variety of topics, formats, types of information/training.*
- *The opportunity to hear about and exchange ideas and practices with colleagues from a wide variety of evaluation sub-fields, i.e., government, health education, nonprofit.*
- *The high number of sessions to choose from. The length of the conference.*
- *The breadth of attendees – experts, novices, interested people who don't even do evaluation.*
- *The mix of practitioners, consultants, and academics. Also the mix of substantive issues: education, health care, drug prevention, community work, etc.*

Participants

- *The exceptional people who attend AEA – approachable, friendly, knowledgeable, engaged in dialogue and moving the field forward.*
- *Nice mix of academic and independent practitioners and theorists, broad spectrum of experience from grad. students through “seniors.”*
- *Group of people assembled – their collective expertise.*
- *The people at this conference are great – just a wonderful group of professionals – friendly, helpful, and not egotistical!*

- *Unlike other conferences – the experts (Patton, Scriven, Stufflebeam, Stake, etc.) are very accessible – they don't just show up to present or to be on panel, never to be seen again. I enjoy seeing them attend other panel discussions and act as chairs, workshop presenters.*
- *Very professional presenters.*

Friendly, welcoming, camaraderie, and collegiality

- *Friendly, welcoming, variety yet holds together. Great TIGs.*
- *Camaraderie among attendees; a feeling that we're all here to further the same great cause.*
- *Collegiality; opportunity to bring students and junior colleagues into the professional community.*

Ideas, expertise, information, and skill building

- *Usually very good for new ideas, pushing my assumptions and adding to my ability to reflect effectively on my practice.*
- *Extensive practical advice, tips, and insights from fellow conference attendees/presenters.*
- *The focus on skill building, rather than just information dissemination.*

Evaluation focus of the conference

- *As one would expect, the direct relationship of the sessions to evaluation and its attendant challenges. The high quality of the presentations. . . .*
- *Focus on evaluation rather than topic to be evaluated (e.g., education, health).*
- *Not organized around topic/content, but the link is a process.*

Size

- *The conference is large enough to attract high-quality presentations but small enough to enable interaction.*
- *. . . It is small enough to meet the key people in the field.*
- *Like the size of the AEA conference – very manageable.*

Networking

- *Everyone (presenters and members) willing to share and network for the betterment of the profession.*
- *Planned/facilitated opportunities for networking.*
- *Efforts to make people feel welcome and networking opportunities – ribbons on badges, hosted dinners (dinner at BB's was great!), multiple receptions with good food.*

Presentations

- *The breadth, scope, and quality of presentations and presenters.*
- *I particularly appreciated the many varied approaches to presentation. Many academic conferences are simply full of people reading their papers out loud. . . .*
- *The impressive amount of presentations that substantially contribute to my professional development – hardcore methods.*

Luncheon and evening opportunities

- *Evening receptions are terrific networking opportunities as well as fun. More time on the auction night would be welcomed. Posters give new evaluators an excellent way to interact and present their work.*
- *Creation of opportunities for people to meet experts in the field (hosted dinners, meet the author reception, etc.).*
- *The embedding of professional discussion and work in social events like President's Lunch.*

Question 13: Please share any additional comments we can use to serve you better and fulfill your expectations:

Information

- *I miss the old format of the program which had something like “a day at a glance” or conference at a glance. The typeface was very difficult to read. The session # should be set off so it is easier to spot.*

- *I would like to have access to the session abstracts either in the program or if this is cost prohibitive, on the web site.*
- *It would be nice if there were better signage. Perhaps you could put an easel outside of each room with the sessions for that day. Also, for rooms that aren't in the main area, have signs that direct people to those rooms. It's fine that directions are in the book, but making them more visible would really help.*
- *For a first time attendee, the format of the registration booklet is difficult to follow. It wasn't until later that I realized that the vast content of the conference is not included in the booklet and that the content of the booklet is really the peripheral training opportunities.*
- *The conference program book needs to be simplified!! Too many pages with information dispersed made it difficult to use. The yellow pages are helpful. If they can also group together with PD sessions included, then a "quick glance" of the schedule is possible.*
- *Please write a two-sentence synopsis of each presentation. It's too difficult to guess from titles.*

Presentation criticisms and suggestions

- *. . . Many weak presenters, but good content. Suggestion to have train-the-trainer sessions on presentation skills – including speaking skills, how to clearly present evaluation data and how to engage an audience.*
- *Define and publish protocol for chairs and discussants and distribute to AEA membership. Stuffbeam was a role model discussant. Others should emulate his example.*
- *[Need] More stringent requirements for presenters, for papers, for presentation style. Better understanding of the difference between "presenter" and "discussant." More coherence in the workshops. More interactive sessions, more interesting sessions.*
- *Some presenters were great (more interactive, less lecture)! Others were terrible, reading from their notes – a guide or set of expectations is needed.*
- *I think AEA should keep the poster sessions throughout the conference period for viewing. Many of the presentations could have been presented there, giving more time for discussion in the sessions.*
- *Maybe rank presentations like you did for professional development sessions – novice, intermediate, advanced.*

Compliments

- *This was the most useful and enjoyable conference I have ever attended.*
- *Excellent that you added lunch time – and other conference changes. Registration desk folk were extremely helpful with all my pesky questions. My perception was that things ran smoothly (even if organizers may not have shared that perception).*
- *Lunch break is great. Nice to have presidential address apart from luncheon. Nice program layout. Great receptions. Like the soft drinks at break. It gets better every year!*

Hotel and its location

- *The poor quality of the hotel and its location within St. Louis detracted from the experience of the conference.*
- *The hotel was terrible!! The Atrium rooms were not at all conducive to listening to presentations. None of the rooms had enough space for the audience. If you have the conference in smaller cities – it is important to have a good hotel with a real pool and workout room – it gives us something to do.*
- *Hotel (Millennium) was very disappointing and hard to maneuver particularly – problems with elevators, temperature control, and housekeeping staff.*

Changes to the timing and schedule

- *There needs to be a little more time between sessions. It was impossible to get to the bathroom and walk from the main meeting area to Atrium hospitality rooms in 10 minutes!!*
- *Now that the Presidential Address has been removed from the lunch (yeah!) eliminate the lunch as such and 1. Do the awards at the opening session or to open the “auction reception.” If the former, just eliminate the poster award (why should that format be the only one with an award?) or make the award announcement the following year. 2. Use the time for a less costly lunch – boxes like at the TIG lunch – for people to have the same opportunity to get.*

***Appendix D:
Evaluation 2001 Data Collection
Instruments***

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Note: Questionnaires are not actual size, they are slightly compacted to fit report page.

EVALUATION 2001



OVERALL CONFERENCE FEEDBACK FORM

We realize this is a very busy week for everyone, but we'd like to ask you to take a few moments to complete this important survey. This information will allow us to understand your experience of Evaluation 2001 and will be used to improve future AEA conferences.

IMPORTANT! This document will be scanned for data entry. Please fill in the circle next to your selection like this: ●

1. Please rate the following Evaluation 2001 conference components in terms of quality.

	Needs a lot of improvement		Acceptable		Excellent	NA
a. Registration process (Pre-conference)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
b. Registration on-site (Help desk)	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
c. Conference support staff	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
d. Conference information on AEA website	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
e. Overall program content	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
f. Moderation of sessions by chairs	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
g. Preparation of presenters	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
h. Quality of presentations	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

2. Did you give a presentation during Evaluation 2001? ① No ② Yes

If you presented, or submitted a presentation, please rate your level of satisfaction with the proposal submission and review process.

	Very Dissatisfied		Neutral		Very Satisfied	NA
a. Call for papers/presentations	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
b. Paper/presentation selection process	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

3. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree		Neither agree or disagree		Strongly Agree
a. I felt welcomed at the conference.	①	②	③	④	⑤
b. Evaluation 2001 met my expectations.	①	②	③	④	⑤
c. The conference was worth the time and money.	①	②	③	④	⑤
d. The conference met my professional development needs.	①	②	③	④	⑤
e. I learned things that will inform my practice.	①	②	③	④	⑤
f. I intend to recommend the conference to others.	①	②	③	④	⑤
g. I plan to attend another AEA conference in the future.	①	②	③	④	⑤
h. I hope to present at a future AEA conference.	①	②	③	④	⑤
i. Overall, I enjoyed the conference.	①	②	③	④	⑤

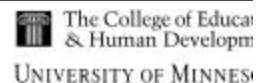
4. What was the single best part of your experience in attending Evaluation 2001?
5. What one thing did you find most disappointing in attending Evaluation 2001?
6. What is your current AEA membership status? (Select one)
 - ① Professional member ② Student member ③ Non-member
7. How many AEA conferences (including this one) have you attended since 1986? (Select one)
 - ① This is my first AEA conference ② 2-4 ③ 5-7 ④ 8-10 ⑤ More than 10
8. Did you attend any of the pre or post-conference professional development sessions?
 - ① No ② Yes
9. Which of the following position titles best describes your current job? (Select one)
 - ① Student ② Manager/Administrator ③ Professor/Teacher ④ Consultant
 - ⑤ Other (please specify) _____
10. How would you describe your evaluation knowledge and skills? (Select one)
 - ① No background ② Novice ③ Intermediate ④ Advanced ⑤ Expert
11. In your current position, what percent of your workload includes evaluation-related duties? (Select one)
 - ① 0 ② 1-25% ③ 26-50% ④ 51-75% ⑤ 76-100%
12. If you attend other professional conferences, what do you find unique about Evaluation 2001?
13. Please share any additional comments we can use to serve you better and fulfill your expectations:

THANK YOU! You can return this survey by dropping it in the box marked "Conference Evaluations" at the display near the registration desk. If you run out of time during the conference, feel free to mail it to: John G. Smith, 204 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Don't forget to stop by the evaluation display near the registration desk to receive a small token of appreciation from the evaluation team for completing this form.



*Conducted for the American Evaluation Association by
Evaluation Studies students from the Department of Educational Policy and
Administration at the University of Minnesota*



Special thanks to Principia® Products Inc., for use of their Remark Office OMR® scanning software!

EVALUATION 2001 WORKSHOP FEEDBACK FORM



Please take a few moments to provide us with some important details about your professional development workshop. This information will be used to improve future workshops and meet the needs of both facilitators and attendees.

IMPORTANT! This document will be scanned for data entry. Please fill in the circle next to your selection like this: ●

Workshop # _____

1. Of the following considerations, please indicate the three (3) that were most important in your decision to attend this workshop.

(Select up to three items)

- ① Person facilitating the workshop
- ② Money (workshop fee)
- ③ Date of workshop
- ④ Workshop topic
- ⑤ Length of the workshop (1/2 day or full day)
- ⑥ Description of teaching/learning methods to be employed
- ⑦ Other (please specify) _____

2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree or Disagree		Strongly Agree	NA
a. The facilitator(s) were well organized.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
b. The facilitator(s) made good use of the time allotted.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
c. The teaching/training methods utilized were appropriate for the audience.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
d. The materials provided will be useful to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
e. I enjoyed the workshop.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
f. I understood the concepts as presented in the workshop.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
g. The workshop improved my understanding of the topic.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
h. The workshop improved my ability to utilize skills related to the topic.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
i. The knowledge and skills I learned will be useful to me in my job.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
j. I would recommend this workshop to others.	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
k. I would attend other workshops offered by these facilitator(s).	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥

3. What one thing would you recommend be done to improve this workshop for future participants.

4. Please share any other comments you have regarding this workshop. (please use the back of this form if necessary)

THANK YOU! Please return this form by placing it in the designated box at the rear of the room or by placing it in the envelope provided to the facilitator. The form may also be returned to the evaluation display near the registration desk.

EVALUATION 2001



WORKSHOP FACILITATOR FEEDBACK FORM

Please take a few moments to provide us with some important details about your professional development workshop. This information will be used to improve future workshops and meet the needs of both facilitators and attendees.

IMPORTANT! This document will be scanned for data entry. Please fill in the circle next to your selection like this: ●

Workshop # _____

1. Is this your first AEA conference? ① No ② Yes
2. Is this your first time presenting a professional development workshop at AEA? ① No ② Yes
3. Will you / have you presented this workshop at any other conferences? ① No ② Yes

4. Indicate the number that best reflects your level of satisfaction with the session:
- | | Very Dissatisfied | Very Satisfied | Neutral | NA | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Date and time of workshop | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |
| b. Time allocated for workshop | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |
| c. Space allocated for workshop | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |
| d. Level of support from AEA staff | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |
| e. Room arrangement | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |
| f. Audio-visual equipment | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |
| g. Level of participant engagement | ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ | ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ |

If you were dissatisfied with any of the above items, please provide a brief explanation.

5. In your opinion, did the participants come to the workshop with the knowledge and skills necessary to fully participate in the workshop?

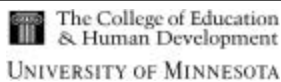
- ① No ② Yes

6. How likely would you be to request this format at future AEA conferences?

	Very Unlikely	Unsure	Very Likely		
	①	②	③	④	⑤

7. Is there anything else you would like to share with us regarding this workshop? (please use the back of this form if necessary)

THANK YOU! Please return this form by placing it in the designated box at the rear of the room or by placing it in the envelope provided to you. The form may also be returned to the evaluation display near the registration desk.



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Newcomer Interview Protocol

Question Area 1: What expectations do newcomers to the AEA annual meeting have, and to what degree is the conference meeting newcomer expectations?

Probes:

What were your expectations at time of registration?

What were your expectations when you arrived?

What have you learned/experienced at the conference?

To what degree has the conference met your expectations?

Question Area 2: To what extent was the newcomer session helpful, and what suggestions do newcomers have for improvements

Probes:

Did you attend, and what influenced your decision?

In what ways has attending this session impacted your conference experience?

How do you think attending the session might have impacted your experience?

What information should be included in a newcomers session?

Question Area 3: Do newcomers intend to return, and how does their current experience influence the decision?

Probes:

Do you intend to return, and how does current experience influence the decision?

What do you see as strengths of the conference as it pertains to newcomers?

What would you like to see changed to increase your interest in returning?

Wrap-up Questions

Do you have any other comments about the conference in general?

Do you have any other comments about newcomer experience?

General Question

1. The package of proposals, instructions, and materials arrive – please tell us what you do first, second, and so on until you're finished with the program development.

- How many times do you cycle through each category of proposals?
- What do you look for during each review cycle? Why do you focus on these things?
- What part of each proposal do you refer to most when evaluating them? (Title, first paragraph, conclusion?) Why?
- Considering the proposal categories of low quality (rank), medium quality (rank), and high quality (rank), which proposals do you expend the most time on? Why? Which proposals do you expend the least amount of time on? Why?
- Do you have specific considerations with proposals of exceptional quality?
- Does this process differ between the types of proposals - Regarding Posters Sessions, Round Table sessions, Panels, Papers? How and why?

Specific Questions About Process

To help us compare specific TIG processes, we have some basic questions about how you approach each presenter category. You may have already talked about some of these, but we would like to make sure we have clarification.

2. In what order do you approach the proposal categories, and why do you approach them in this order?

3. In what way(s) is your selection process affected by the abundance or scarcity of available slots? How and why?

- Are slots abundant or scarce for each category?
- How does it influence whom you accept and reject in each category?
- How does it influence your criteria for each category?
- Does this differ between the types of proposals - Regarding Posters Sessions, Round Table sessions, Panels, Papers? How and why?

4. What is your criterion for judging proposals?

(Big name?)

(Popular interest?)

(Well written?)

(General enough?)

(Etc.?)

- Does this criterion differ between the types of proposals - Regarding Posters Sessions, Round Table sessions, Panels, Papers? How and why?

5. What do you do to group a session for a panel?
 - What do you do with proposals that don't fit with a theme? Why?
 - When a theme is short one proposal, what do you do? Why?
 - What do you do with proposals when there are too many for a theme? Why?

Other Questions

6. When do you request the opinion of a colleague? Why? (Additional opinion, political backup, etc.)
7. AEA gives you materials. How well do they work for you?
 - Is there anything you do that you believe is not effective? If so, why do you do it?
 - Is there anything you don't do – or only give lip service to – that is requested by AEA? If so, what? And why is its value low?
 - Are there any things that are confusing to you about what you are expected to do and how you are expected to do it?
8. Do you have any apprehension about refusing a proposal? Why? What do you do about it?
9. If a potential presenter requests reasons for rejection (or session change), is there anything you do to prepare for explaining your reasons?
10. Have you ever been involved in co-sponsoring a session with another TIG? Please explain how this co-sponsorship came about and any issues that presented themselves during the process.
11. Have you proposed a session to the presidential category? What was it about this proposal(s) that led you to do this?
12. If the demand for slots in each category continues to increase, what issues do you think will arise for your TIG? Are some of those issues already presenting themselves? How are they presenting themselves? Do you have any ideas about what changes you will make in the future if this happens?
13. Any last comments about the your experience with the TIG selection process?