



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation

DEVELOPING THOUGHT LEADERS IN EVALUATION

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FROM THE DIRECTOR...



IDPE director Dr. Chris Coryn

Albert Einstein once said “not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.” Relat-

edly, the IDPE now has nearly 30 full-time doctoral students who are at various stages of their studies. Several more students were admitted and joined the IDPE in the summer and fall of 2008, including two Assessment for Learning Fellows. Please join me in welcoming these new students to the IDPE.

This summer three IDPE students—Drs. Willis Thomas, Daniela Schröter, and Wes Martz—successfully defended their doctoral dissertations and completed the IDPE. They join myself, Drs. Nadini Persaud,

Thomaz Chianca, and John Risley, as alumni/alumnae of this one-of-a-kind program. It is clear, from the work produced by these graduates, that they have successfully fulfilled the IDPE’s mission and that they represent the next generation of “thought leaders” in evaluation theory, methodology, and practice. Please join me in congratulating the most recent graduates for a job well done!

IDPE STUDENTS DEFFEND DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- From the director...
- New IDPE courses
- IDPE and EC host workshop for faculty and students from Thailand
- IDPE students conduct impact evaluations of Heifer Project International
- IDPE Awards

Three IDPE students successfully defended their doctoral dissertations this summer. First, **Dr. Willis Thomas** defended “A Metaevaluation of Lessons Learned Repositories: Evaluative Management Practices in Project Management,” on June 17th. Dr. Thomas’s committee consisted of **Dr. Michael Scriven** as chair, **Dr. Liliana Rodriguez-Campos**, and **Dr. Larry Buzas**.

Next, **Dr. Daniela Schröter** defended her dissertation titled “The Evaluation of Sustainability

for Sustainability: The Development of an Evaluation Checklist,” in which she showcased the development and validation of the Sustainability Evaluation Checklist (SEC), on June 27th. **Dr. Michael Scriven** directed Dr. Schröter’s dissertation committee, with **Dr. Mathew Mingus** as chair, and **Dr. Jennifer Palthe** rounding out the committee.

Finally, **Dr. Wesley Martz** ended the string of defenses on June 30th with “Evaluating Organizational Effectiveness,” in which he



developed a tool to overcome deficiencies and challenges in current approaches to organizational effectiveness evaluation. Dr. Martz’s committee included **Dr. K. C. O’Shaughnessy** as chair, **Dr. Michael Scriven**, and **Dr. Liliana Rodriguez-Campos**.

Congratulations Drs. Thomas, Schröter, and Martz!

STUDENT ACCOLADES

On March 25, 2008, third-year IDPE student **Tererai Trent** successfully completed her written and oral comprehensive examinations for the IDPE. Her examination committee consisted of **Drs. Michael Scriven** (Claremont Graduate University), **Chris Coryn** (IDPE), and **Robin Miller** (Michigan State University). Tererai is also well on her way to completing her doctoral dissertation, in which she will critically examine the current

approaches used to evaluate HIV/AIDS initiatives in developing countries.

This summer, IDPE students **Ann Cullen, Stephanie Evergreen, Amy Gullickson, Paul Lamphear, Todd Harcek, and Kristen Martens** conducted impact evaluations of Heifer Project International (HPI) in Cambodia, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, and Vietnam. Both Anne Cullen and Amy Gullickson lead their

respective teams. Other IDPE and WMU faculty involved in the evaluations include **Drs. Paul Clements** and Chris Coryn. The evaluation is directed by former IDPE director Dr. Michael Scriven and is managed by IDPE alumni **Dr. Thomaz Chianca**.

Dr. Daniela Schröter, former IDPE student, recently published *Training Competencies Through Internet Supported Cooperative Learning*.



IDPE student Tererai Trent

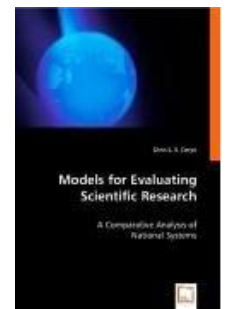
FACULTY ACCOLADES

Dr. Chris Coryn, director of the IDPE, recently published *Models for Evaluating Scientific Research* and co-edited, along with former IDPE director, **Dr. Michael Scriven**, a volume of *New Directions for Evaluation* titled "Reforming the Evaluation of Research." Dr. Coryn also had a review of the book *Program Theory-*

Driven Evaluation Science published in the *American Journal of Evaluation* and published a paper—co-authored with **P. Cristian Gugiu, Dr. Daniela Schröter** and former IDPE director, **Dr. E. Jane Davidson**—titled "Needs Assessment in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling"

which appeared in the *Evaluation Journal of Australasia*.

Dr. Coryn was also awarded the Michigan Association for Evaluation (MAE) John A. Seeley Friend of Evaluation Award at their annual conference in April. He was also invited to join the board of MAE.



FALL 2008 AND SPRING 2009 COURSE OFFERINGS

This summer, the IDPE offered, for the first time, a course on theory-based/theory-driven evaluation (summer II). The course is an in-depth, critical study and analysis of the theory, method, and practice of this evaluation approach.

In 2009 the IDPE will offer a series of new, evaluation-specific courses. In the spring

of 2009, the IDPE intends to offer courses on cost analysis and metaevaluation. In the summer of 2009, the IDPE will offer a two-semester course on experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental design for evaluation. This course will emphasize the elements of research design, in particular, identifying and reducing

threats to validity by modifying design features, identifying all potential threats, making all potential threats explicit, and then ruling them out one-by-one. The course does not cover statistical analysis of experimental, quasi-experimental, or non-experimental data.

NEW COURSES:

- Theory-Based/Theory-Driven Evaluation (Summer 2008)
- Cost Analysis for Evaluation (Spring 2009)
- Metaevaluation (Spring 2009)
- Experimental, Quasi-Experimental, & Non-Experimental Design for Evaluation (Summer 2009)

IDPE STUDENTS ATTEND MAE

In March, seven IDPE students attended the 13th annual Michigan Association for Evaluation (MAE) conference in Lansing, MI. The conference opened with a keynote delivered by **Dr. Melvin Mark** which discussed how programs and policies contribute to social betterment.

Following the keynote address, **Dr. Chris Coryn** was honored in recognition of his dedication to the field and

presented with the John A. Seeley Friend of Evaluation Award.

The MAE conference also offered afternoon workshops geared towards providing participants with a wide array of learning opportunities. Workshops included *Evaluation 101: An Introduction to Evaluation* presented by Dr. Chris Coryn and **Dr. Daniela Schröter**, *Principled Discovery: Learning from your data,*

with Reason by Dr. Melvin Mark, and an exploration of the Success Case Method titled *Measuring and accelerating Impact of Training Simply, Credibly, and Quickly* by **Dr. Robert Brinkerhoff**, Professor Emeritus at WMU.

IDPE students came away from the conference with a confidence in their abilities and new contacts in the field.



ALUMNUS SPOTLIGHT: DR. JOHN RISLEY

Shortly after defending his dissertation, and taking a few weeks off to enjoy, with his wife Julie and son Zach, their new baby Kate, **Dr. John Risley** accepted a position in the Greater Kalamazoo United Way's (GKUW) community investment division. In this capacity he works with United Way member agencies to improve their outcome reporting and evaluation systems. The community investment division works with volunteers to invest undesignated donations to GKUW's annual campaign in health and human service programs at GKUW's 42 member agencies in Kalamazoo County. In 2007 member agencies received almost \$6 million through this process.

John is the GKUW staff liaison to member agencies

dealing with physical and mental health—one of GKUW's four outcome areas. He enjoys working with GKUW's many community volunteers and staff at member agencies who do so much to improve the lives of Kalamazoo County residents. He also likes helping nonprofit organizations improve their work through internal evaluation.

John also works to advance GKUW's public policy agenda of making parenting education and support universally available to persons parenting children aged 0-6 in Kalamazoo County.

Although evaluation is a small part of his current job, John keeps in touch with the evaluation field through his involvement in the Michigan Evaluation Association (MAE)

and the American Evaluation Association (AEA). He will be presenting a paper at this year's AEA conference based on his efforts to help GKUW evaluate its policy advocacy activities.

He expects policy advocacy to become one of his main areas of interest, along with legislative program evaluation—the focus of his dissertation.

Dr. Risley, along with IDPE director Dr. Chris Coryn, is currently preparing a manuscript titled "A Metaevaluation of Legislative Program Evaluations Conducted by State Legislatures in the United States from 2001-2005" for publication in the *American Journal of Evaluation*. This manuscript is based on John's dissertation.

Dr. John Risley's main interest are policy advocacy and legislative program evaluation



Dr. John Risley (center) with Dr. Chris Coryn (left) and Dr. James Sanders (right) following defense of his doctoral dissertation in November, 2007

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MINA ZADEH

Second-year IDPE student **Mina Zadeh** is a doctoral candidate following recent completion of her written and oral comprehensive examinations. Since 2000, she has been working at the Office of Evaluation and Inspections, Office of Inspector General, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). She leads multiple teams of analysts in conducting evaluations on Federal program, such as: Medicare, Medicaid, Food and Drug Administration, and emergency and bioterrorism preparedness. The reports produced in her office are used by Congress, the DHHS Secretary, and senior agency officials for policy decision making. She is a current participant of the DHHS International Technical Experience and Assistance

program for which she will complete a 3-month international rotation to provide technical assistance to a developing country.

Prior to her current position, Mina worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for about 4 years where she served as an epidemiologist and a surveillance coordinator. Her work primarily focused on international surveillance and epidemiology of influenza. She conducted the first national study to determine the status of influenza prophylaxis and vaccine usage in nursing homes – results published and presented in the *Journal of American Geriatrics Society* and the International Conference of Emerging Infectious Diseases, respectively. She also worked on the surveillance of

Crutzfeld-Jacob disease (mad cow), Kawasaki syndrome, and Reye's syndrome.

Her current interests include the evaluation of policies, programs, and national and international governments; as well as critical thinking. She has received leadership training and certification through Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Education; Leadership Development Program at DHHS Office of Inspector General; Office of Personnel Management; and Department of Agriculture Graduate School. She holds an M.P.H. from Emory University and a B.S. in Applied Biology from Georgia Institute of Technology. She is also certified in Hispanic Business and Technology.

Under an HHS program, Mina will complete a 3-month detail with the World Health Organization this year, where she will work on emergency and disaster preparedness programs

IDPE AWARDS

In 2007, the IDPE developed two awards to recognize doctoral students of evaluation: The Michael Scriven Dissertation Award for Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation Theory, Methodology, or Practice and The Daniel L. Stufflebeam Travel Scholarship.

The Michael Scriven Dissertation Award for Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation Theory, Methodology, or Practice is presented to a student

whose doctoral dissertation represents a significant contribution to the theory, methodology, or practice of evaluation. The first recipient of this award was **Kimberly A. van der Woerd** of Simon Fraser University for her dissertation "A Participatory Evaluation of a First Nations Substance Abuse Treatment Centre."

The Daniel L. Stufflebeam Travel Scholarship is pre-

sented to a promising doctoral student for travel to the annual American Evaluation Association (AEA). The first recipient of this award was **Melissa Borgos-Colon**.

Detailed information about both of these awards, including application instructions, can be found at <http://evaluation.wmich.edu/phd/awards.html>

IDPE AND EVALUATION CENTER HOST WORKSHOP FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS FROM THAILAND

The Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in Evaluation (IDPE) and The Evaluation Center (EC) successfully hosted a two-day workshop on meta-evaluation for nearly 20 faculty and students from The Division of Educational Research and Evaluation of Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Thai delegation chose to take advantage of the program's internationally recognized expertise in evaluation after hearing presentations on the CIPP Model and the evaluation standards of the Joint Committee for Standards in Educational Evaluation given by **Drs. Arlen Gullikson** and **Daniel Stufflebeam** in January 2008.

Prior to the workshop the group toured parts of WMU's campus including Waldo Library and the Education Library in Sangren Hall. Afterwards, they enjoyed meeting and mingling with EC staff and students at a dinner hosted by the Gullikson's at their home.

The workshop began the following day with formal introductions from **Drs. Len Ginsberg**, **Steve Magura**, **Lewis Pyenson**, and **Gary Wegenke**, as well as EC staff and IDPE students. Additionally, Dr. Daniel Stufflebeam provided the visitors with a history of the EC.

Drs. **Chris Coryn**, Arlen Gul-

lickson, and **Katharine Cummings** facilitated the workshop. Each workshop participant was provided with a workshop handbook and copies of the program evaluation, student evaluation, and personnel evaluation standards. After a fundamental discussion of metaevaluation the participants enjoyed lunch.

That afternoon, WMU President **Dr. John Dunn** welcomed the group to WMU's campus and conveyed his excitement over the prospect of a continuing partnership between the two universities. President Dunn also shared stories of his past visit to Kasetsart University.

At the conclusion of the first day, **Dr. Boonreang Kajornsinn**, head of the Division of Educational Research and Evaluation at Kasetsart University, remarked that the group was pleased and impressed by the plethora of information given to them by the IDPE and the EC.

Following dinner at the University Roadhouse, participants returned to the hotel to study and prepare for the final day of the workshop.

The second day of the workshop consisted of an examination of metaevaluation through case studies and discussions. Workshop participants prepared metaevaluation plans which they



successfully presented during a mock symposium in the afternoon. IDPE students **Kristen Richardson**, **Stephanie Means**, and **Margaret Richardson** served as discussants.

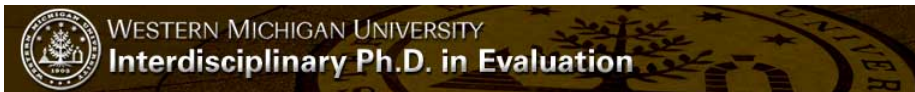
After the workshop, the visiting delegation enjoyed an afternoon shopping trip and tour in Kalamazoo. In addition to showing their appreciation for the hospitality they received from the IDPE and the EC, they expressed great interest in studying in the IDPE as visiting scholars. In response, Dr. Coryn will spearhead efforts to develop a long-term relationship of collaborative research, instruction, and learning, in addition to an exchange program between IDPE students and Kasetsart University's Educational Research and Evaluation students. Already, two of the workshop's attendees will begin studying in the IDPE this fall.

Kasetsart University
was founded in
1904 for the
advancement of
agricultural
education in
Thailand

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INTERDISCIPLINARY PH.D. IN EVALUATION PROGRAM

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NEW IDPE WEB SITE AND UPCOMING EVENTS

New IDPE Web Site

In 2007, fifth-year IDPE student (now a graduate) Daniela Schröter led the redesign of the IDPE Web site.

The new Web site includes updated student and faculty profiles, forms and documents commonly needed by IDPE students, IDPE application instructions and forms, and informational sections of interest to IDPE students and faculty that include such features as “what’s new?”, IDPE events,

and other announcements. Also new are the IDPE Daniel L. Stufflebeam Travel Scholarship and Michael Scriven Dissertation Award for Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation Theory, Methodology, or Practice.

Information and application instructions for these awards, as well as additional information about the IDPE, can be found on the newly-updated IDPE Web site at

[http://evaluation.wmich.edu/
phd/](http://evaluation.wmich.edu/phd/)

Upcoming Events

- Workshop on Quasi-Experimental Design and Analysis in Education, Northwestern University, given by Tom Cook and Will Shadish, August 11-15
- American Evaluation Association (AEA)—annual conference, November 5-8, Denver, CO

The Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation Program’s (IDPE) mission is to develop thought leaders in evaluation who have: (1) deep knowledge of evaluation theory, methodology, and practice, (2) superior skills in practical and critical thinking, and (3) a knack for seeing opportunities for innovation and improvement. To accomplish this mission, the IDPE is based on the concept that the best way to learn evaluation is by doing it and the best way to develop thought leaders in a discipline is by exposing them to the best and brightest minds available.



Western Michigan University,
home of the IDPE