
Introduction to the Special Issue on the Program Evaluation Standards

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This special issue of *The Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation* is devoted to the program evaluation standards (PES), which are approved and published by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE). The purpose of the special issue is twofold. First, it is intended to highlight and promote the use of the PES by scholars, educators, and evaluators. Many of the following articles provide examples of how standards have been applied that may inspire others to integrate the PES into their work. Second, the articles provide information that can help to guide a future revision of the PES. Several papers in this edition introduce new research results on awareness of the standards and how evaluation practitioners use them.

The eight papers that constitute this issue each examine the PES through a different lens. The first two papers, Egelson's and Klinger and Klinger's, take reflective, retrospective approaches to document how history has shaped the evolution of the PES. Next, three authors present ideas and examples from the field on the use of the PES: King theorizes on how the PES can best impact the conduct of cost-benefit studies, Curtis et al. provide a demonstration of how standards can build evaluative thinking in an organization, and Snow et al. discuss the development of an evaluation toolkit.

Finally, the remaining three papers present research findings on the types and extent of PES

usage in different settings. MacDonald et al. show the prevalence of the PES in public health evaluation through a review of both scholarly work and grey literature. Morrison and Cunningham focus on standards dissemination in an in-depth study of a subset of evaluators working on a large educational grant program. Lastly, Watts et al. present the results of a systematic literature review and a survey of professional evaluators to quantify the knowledge and use of the PES by the evaluation field in North America.

The JCSEE, which organized the publication of this special edition, along with the committee's member-representatives—most of whom have served as volunteer reviewers—hope that the articles presented here inspire readers to learn more about the PES and integrate them into their professional work. Additionally, we would like to thank the authors of these papers for their time and expertise in supporting the PES in the field of evaluation.

Finally, readers who are new to evaluation standards or would like more information on the standards are encouraged to visit the JCSEE website. Visitors to evaluationstandards.org will find a listing of the standards statements, links to purchase the official books, and information on how to learn more or become involved with future revisions of the PES and other JCSEE standards.