



AmeriCorps

State, National, and Tribal Programs Evaluation Requirements





Learning Objectives



By the end of this tutorial, participants will be able to:

- Understand the broader federal policy context within which AmeriCorps operates
- Describe the AmeriCorps State and National Evaluation Requirements



Tutorial Overview



This tutorial will cover:

1. Federal Regulations
2. Defining Evaluation
3. Evaluation Designs
4. Evaluation Requirements
5. Additional Resources



Federal Policy Context



Presidential Administration	Federal Laws, Policies and Guidance
President Clinton (1993 – 2001)	Government Performance and Results Act
President Bush (2001 – 2009)	Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)
President Obama (2009 – 2017)	<p>Memoranda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act 2010• M-10 -01 Increased Emphasis on Program Evaluation• M-12-14 Use of Evidence and Evaluation in the 2014 Budget• M-13-17 Next Steps in the Evidence and Innovation Agenda



Code of Federal Regulations



The Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR, is the collection of all administrative rules and regulations from the various departments and agencies of the Federal Government. It is organized by titles, chapters, and parts that cover specific regulatory areas.





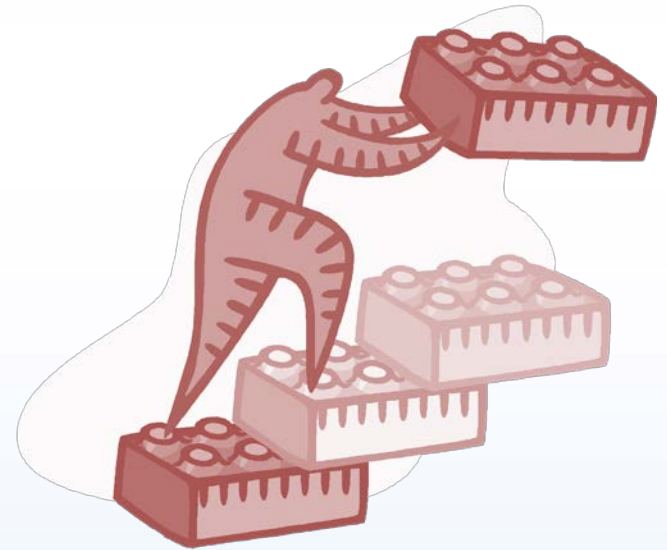
Code of Federal Regulations



Primary focus of this tutorial:

*Evaluating Programs:
Requirements and
Procedures (§§.700 -.740)*

**CNCS finalized these
regulations July 8, 2005**





Definition of Performance Measurement



Performance measurement is the process of systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to the direction of observed changes in communities, participants (members), or end beneficiaries receiving your program's services. It is intended to provide an indication of your program's operations and performance.



§2522.700



Definition of Evaluation



...evaluation uses scientifically-based research methods to assess the effectiveness of programs by comparing the observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program.

§2522.700





Comparing Performance Measurement and Evaluation



	Performance Measurement	Evaluation
What is it?	A system of tracking progress in accomplishing specific pre-set targets (activities, outputs, and/or outcomes)	A formal scientific process for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data about how well a program was implemented (process evaluation) or how effectively the program accomplished desired outcomes/impacts (outcome/impact evaluation)
Why is it typically used?	To gauge program delivery, quality, participant satisfaction and engagement; to improve products, services, and efficiency; to inform/enhance decision making, and support planning and program development	To assess program effectiveness and determine whether the program is responsible for changes found
How does it work?	Monitors a few vital signs related to program performance objectives, outputs, and/or outcomes	Comprehensively examines programs using systematic, objective, and unbiased procedures in accordance with social science research methods and research designs
Who typically does it?	Program staff	An experienced researcher (often external to the program) who has formal training in evaluation
When is it done?	Ongoing Basis	Periodically



Building Evidence of Effectiveness



**Evidence
Informed**

**Identify a strong
program design**

- Gather evidence supporting the intervention-Design/Adopt a strong program
- Develop a Logic Model
- Create Implementation Materials
- Pilot implementation

**Ensure effective
implementation**

- Document program process(es)
 - Ensure fidelity in implementation
 - Evaluate program's quality and efficiency
 - Establish continuous process improvement protocols
- [Performance Measures - Outputs]**

**Assess
program's
outcomes**

- Develop indicators for measuring outcomes
 - Conduct pre-/post-intervention evaluation to measure outcomes
 - Conduct process evaluation
- [Performance Measures - Outcomes]**

**Obtain evidence
of positive
program
outcomes**

- Examine linkage between program activities and outcomes
- Perform multiple pre- and post-evaluations (time series design)
- Conduct independent (unbiased) outcome evaluation(s)
- Conduct meta-analysis of various studies

**Attain strong evidence
of positive program
outcomes**

- Establish causal linkage between program activities and intended outcomes/impact (e.g. Conduct quasi-experimental evaluation using a comparison group, evaluation with random assignment (RCT), regression analysis, or other appropriate study design)
- Conduct Multiple independent evaluations using strong study designs
- Measure cost effectiveness compared to other interventions addressing same need

**Evidence
Based**



Evaluation Study Designs and Causal Impact



Evaluation Study Designs	Comparison	Ability to make statements about causal attribution
Experimental Design Studies	Randomly Assigned Groups	A large, thick, olive-green arrow pointing upwards, indicating that the ability to make statements about causal attribution increases from non-experimental to experimental designs.
Quasi-Experimental Design Studies	Statistically Matched Groups	
Non-Experimental Design Studies	Not Statistically Matched Groups or Group Compared to Itself	



Evaluation Study Designs and Causal Impact



Experimental Design Studies

Randomly Assigned Groups

- Random assignment to treatment and control groups
- Controls for differences between the two groups so differences in outcomes can be attributed to whether or not individuals participated in the program



Evaluation Study Designs and Causal Impact



Quasi-Experimental Design Studies

Statistically Matched Groups

- Uses two groups, but no random assignment, often due to practical considerations
- Carefully match the two groups at beginning of evaluation to be confident they are basically the same
- Subsequent observed differences between groups will be due to whether or not individuals participated in program services



Evaluation Study Designs and Causal Impact



Non-Experimental Design Studies

Not Statistically Matched Groups or Group Compared to Itself

- Do not meet the requirements for experimental or quasi-experimental designs
- Can also include process and implementation evaluations that make sure plans are followed



Evaluation Study Designs and Causal Impact



Evaluation Study Designs	Comparison	Ability to make statements about causal attribution
Experimental Design Studies	Randomly Assigned Groups	A large, thick, olive-green arrow pointing upwards, indicating increasing ability to make statements about causal attribution from bottom to top.
Quasi-Experimental Design Studies	Statistically Matched Groups	
Non-Experimental Design Studies	Not Statistically Matched Groups or Group Compared to Itself	



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**Evidence
Based**



Evaluation Study Designs and CNCS Requirements



Evaluation Study Designs	Meet Requirements	
	Large Grantees	Small Grantees
Experimental Design Studies	Yes	Yes (optional)
Quasi-Experimental Design Studies*	Yes	Yes (optional)
Non-Experimental Design Studies	No	Yes

*Fulfills CNCS evaluation requirement for large grantees if a reasonable comparison group is identified and appropriate matching/propensity scoring is used in the analysis.



Evaluation Requirements



- AmeriCorps State Competitive and National Direct Programs (including Education Award Programs)
 - Over \$500, 000
 - Under \$500,00
- State Commission Formula Programs



Evaluation Requirements



National Direct and State Competitive (\$500K+)

*...you must arrange for an **independent** evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to the Corporation for competitive funds...*

§ 2522.710



Evaluation Requirements



National Direct and State Competitive (less than \$500K)
or Education Award Programs

*...you must conduct an **internal** evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to the Corporation for competitive funds...*

§ 2522.710



Strengthening the Evidence Base



National Direct and State Competitive (less than \$500K)
or Education Award Programs

- Encourage use of experimental or quasi-experimental designs but not required
- Select a study design most appropriate for developmental phase of AmeriCorps program (process, implementation, outcome or impact)



Evaluation Requirements State Commissions



...you must establish and enforce evaluation requirements for your State Formula subgrantees, as you deem appropriate.

§ 2522.710



Evaluation Requirements



- *The Corporation may, in its discretion, supersede these requirements with an alternative evaluation approach, including one conducted by the Corporation at the national level.*
- *Grantees must cooperate fully with all Corporation evaluation activities.*

§ 2522.710



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Evaluation Requirements

What is Due When? § 2522.730



If you are competing for...	Submit evaluation plan	Submit evaluation report	If funded...
Your first three-year competitive grant (and you have had less than three years formula funding)			Begin the evaluation planning process.
Your first three-year competitive grant (and you have had three or more years of formula funding)	✓		Complete evaluation during the three-year grant period.
Your second three-year competitive grant	✓		Complete evaluation during the three-year grant period.
Your third three-year competitive grant	✓	✓	Complete evaluation during the three-year grant period.
A competitive AmeriCorps grant beyond your third three-year grant	✓	✓	Complete evaluation during the three-year grant period.



Supporting Grantees



- ***Grantees that have not completed the evaluation requirements in the proper timeframe*** are strongly encouraged to provide any evaluation findings available and provide an evaluation plan for the next grant period that would fulfill the requirements.
- ***Evaluations that show null or negative findings*** will not automatically lead to an unacceptable assessment of your program. CNCS expects such findings to be used for program improvements.



Resources Available



- Evaluation FAQs:
nationalserviceresources.gov/evaluation-amerikorps
- Electronic CFR: www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr
 - Select Agency List from left navigation bar
 - Scroll down to CNCS, select 45 CFR Chapters XII, XXV
 - Scroll down to XXV, select 2500-2599
 - Select 2522
 - Select Subpart E – Evaluation Requirements
- CNCS Program Officer



Resources Available



- Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) –
whitehouse.gov/omb/mgmt-gpra/index-gpra
- Program Assessment Rating Tool –
georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/omb/expectmore/part.html
- Memoranda
 - Increased Emphasis on Program Evaluation
whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-01.pdf
 - Use of Evidence and Evaluation in the 2014 Budget
whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2012/m-12-14.pdf
 - Next Steps in the Evidence and Innovation Agenda
whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2013/m-13-17.pdf