

So, What do You Want to Know? Mapping the Way Toward Effective Evaluation

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Overview

- Evaluation informs program development and provides accountability
- Evaluation requires planning
- Coming up with the right questions is arguably the most important step in evaluation
- An Example:

*Science & Society Initiative at Duke,
Science Communication*

Program Evaluation

- A systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using data to answer questions about projects, policies, and programs, particularly about their effectiveness, efficiency, and development
- Evaluation as reflective practice

Discerning Outcomes

- Seeking the answer to: “So What?”
- To what should the program be held accountable?
- Good outcomes are:
 - Reasonable (associated with program intent)
 - Pertinent to the evaluation questions
 - Measurable
 - Proximal (short term) as well as distal (longer term)

An Example: Evaluating Duke's Science & Society Initiative



A campus-wide initiative founded in 2013 that examines the integral role of science in law, policy, social institutions, and culture.

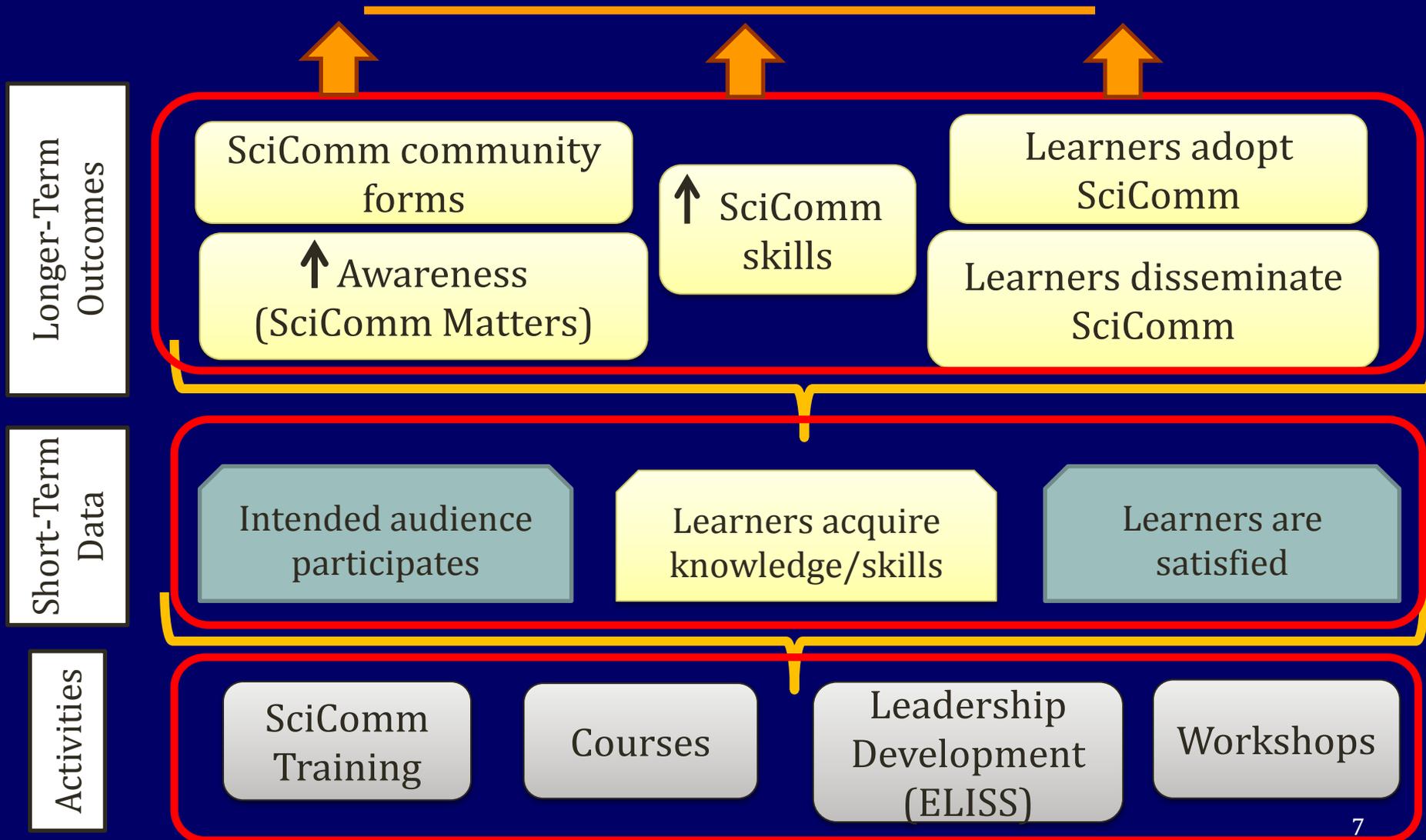
Science & Society Initiative at Duke

Mission: To maximize social benefit from scientific progress by making science more accessible, just, and better integrated into society.

Goals:

- To embed an understanding of the ethical, legal, and social implications of science into education and scientific research, conduct, and communication.
- To better integrate science into policy and legal decision-making.
- To carry out and publish research on questions related to the integration of science and society.
- To improve science communication in order to enhance public understanding of science.

Goal: To Improve Science Communication in Order to Enhance Public Understanding of Science



Short-Term Data

Proximal Data

Participation

Satisfaction

Knowledge/
Skill
Acquisition

What to Measure

Learner...

- *Counts*
- *Characteristics*
- *Perseverance*
- *Satisfaction*
- *Performance*
- *Learning*

Data Collection

- Participant surveys
- Program administrative data

Longer-Term Outcomes

What to Measure

Data Collection

↑ SciComm skills

Learners adopt
SciComm

Learners
disseminate
SciComm

↑ Awareness
(SciComm Matters)

SciComm
community forms

- Persistent behavioral changes among learners
- Dissemination of program effects
- Changes in broader awareness
- Systemic changes that promote sustainability and awareness

- Follow-up with learners (surveys, observations, interviews)
- Comparison groups
- Program records; social media tracking
- Scan of SciComm activity

Conclusion

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