

Canadian Evaluation Society – Ontario Chapter

2001 Year in Review

Chair's Comments

Elana Gray, Chair of the Ontario Chapter in 2001

I would like to begin by thanking the membership of the CES Ontario Chapter for the opportunity to serve as Chair of the chapter during 2001. It has been an honour and a privilege to work on your behalf. During this year, the volunteer Board of Directors has been busy on a number of fronts and I would like to acknowledge their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

- a. First of all, I would like to thank Jarold Cosby who was an active member of the Board and the Professional Development Committee and resigned in May to pursue a new and challenging career position.
- b. On a strategic note, we have been involved in a variety of initiatives throughout the year as we continue to review the strategic planning discussions and survey results that were led by Peter Venton. We will also hear from Jennifer Yessis about the planning that has begun with respect to evaluation advocacy.
- c. Under the leadership of Rochelle Zorzi, an exciting Annual Conference entitled Two Worlds Connect: Enhancing the Value of Evaluation provided our members with various perspectives and practical ideas from both decision makers and evaluators on how to ensure that evaluations are both useful and used. Looking forward to the future, Wendy Young is currently planning for an exciting conference 2002 which she will address in a few minutes.
- d. A particular highlight on the Professional Development front this year involved the unique opportunity to hear from Dr. John Owen from the University of Melbourne, Australia as he led us through the understandings of using program logic to undertake effective evaluation. Both Martha McGuire and B.J Richmond have provided countless hours towards organizing this and other valuable events.
- e. Adam Spencer, together with the professional development committee have been working very diligently at promoting the Ontario Chapter for recruiting new members as well as paying particular attention to the background and interests of our current members. In addition, both Adam and Candace Nykiforuk are currently conducting a survey of our student membership to determine how we can better meet our student needs.
- f. On a technical note, Rochelle Zorzi has been working very hard with her website development team in planning, organizing, and developing the Chapter's website

that provides our members with absolutely everything you ever wanted to know and more about the Ontario Chapter in a very user friendly, easy to access manner. If you have not already done so, please visit us at www.evaluationontario.ca.

- g. Our treasurer, Mehboob Habib, continues to devote much of his time towards keeping the Chapter's finances in order, which is not an easy task when there are so many events and activities happening throughout the year. In addition to these activities, we are pleased to announce that the Ontario Chapter contributed \$500.00 to support the Student Evaluation Case Competition, of which I'm very proud to announce the crystal trophy was awarded to the Five Star Consultants team from the University of Waterloo. The Ontario Chapter also contributed \$1,400.00 to support a student to attend the CES National Conference held in Banff, Alberta this year and \$300.00 to support 6 students to attend the CES Ontario Chapter Annual Conference held in April.
- h. Finally, you will hear from Sandy Henderson, who has organized the program for today as well as the election for the new board members joining us in 2002, which will occur during the AGM. You will also hear Sandy speak from the National perspective, including exciting news about the American Evaluation Association and the Canadian Evaluation Society Joint Conference to be held here in Toronto in 2005.

The next year will bring many exciting challenges to the Ontario Chapter and we look forward to working with the new board members to be voted in at the AGM. We will, however, be saying good bye to Sandy Henderson who is leaving the Board to pursue her relatively new position with the Corporate Policy Branch, Management Board Secretariat. Many thanks to Sandy for your work with the Board over the past 5 years and best wishes for the future.

In conclusion, I would like to personally thank each of the Board members and active Chapter members for your dedication and enthusiasm towards all the activities and events we engaged in throughout 2001. The success of this past year is a direct result of the time you have given so generously and your professional expertise, it was truly a pleasure working with such dedicated professionals. I look forward to continuing to work together in 2002.

Strategic Planning Report

Peter Venton, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee

Terms of Reference

In the Spring the Board of Directors approved a terms of reference of the Strategic Planning Committee and it was posted on the web site under Chapter News.

- refine business line descriptions using input from web survey in summer 2000

- develop a definition of quality evaluation
- develop achievement measures of goals related to mission statement
- report to board prior to annual general meeting

No volunteers came forward and membership on the Committee declined. The Chairman, yours truly, got very busy on other things and needless to say we did not report to the Board before the AGM. Patricia Garbuio recently agreed to work with me on the strategic planning committee. If any are interested in following subject matter please contact me.

Quality Evaluation

I have identified two broad dimensions of quality evaluation: (1) a full range of generic applications and (2) the identification of standards of excellence for each component. The Range of components could include following core body of knowledge:

1. Outcomes measures: Development of specific definitions of immediate, intermediate and ultimate program outcomes and specification of measurable indicators of those three levels of outcomes.
2. Program Logic: Analysis and specification of quantitatively testable hypotheses about logical relationships between program activities and program outputs and between program outputs and immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes.
3. Activity-based costing. Development of costs of program activities (i.e., activity based costing)
4. Attribution analysis of which there are two basic types: control experiments and statistical correlation analysis.

In summary, evaluation covers (1) the identification and measurement of program elements; inputs, costs, outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and ultimate outcomes plus (2) attribution analysis which specifies logical relationships between the elements and the measurement of (the degree of) those relations. For standards my intention is to seek some help from academics who teach program evaluation and do research on what might constitute standards of excellence. We should send this note off to Arnold Love for example and ask him for comments on whether standards of excellence exists and can be succinctly described.

Goal Measures

Mission Statement: *To increase the use and quality of evaluation that results in greater effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of policies, programs and services of public and private organizations in Ontario.*

The second terms of reference is to "develop achievement measures of goals that are related to the CES Ontario mission statement". The outcomes relate to the goals related to this mission statement and the objectives related to the needs to be fulfilled for each of the five business lines: advocacy, promotion, dissemination of knowledge, supporting research and facilitating networking. Some examples:

Goals Related to the Mission Statement

Outputs: Number of program evaluations completed by members across the Province per year.

Outcomes: Impacts of member evaluations on (1) effectiveness, (2) efficiency or (3) allocation decisions (e.g. dropping programs, shifting resources among programs).

Promotion

Outcomes: Number of new people who become aware of program evaluation principles or applications in a year as a result of direct contacts with Chapter members, attending essential skills courses, CES (Ontario) advertising or web site availability, or any printed marketing tools created by the Chapter.

Advocacy

Outputs: The number of presentations to targeted groups lobbied during the year

Outcomes: The number of directed evaluation studies initiated by target groups within 12 months of CES Ontario lobby activity.

Dissemination of Knowledge about Quality Evaluation

Outputs: Number of attendees of professional development events in a year

Outcomes: The number of applications attempted by those who take our essential skills courses (say within a one year period after they have taken them),

Facilitating Networking

Outputs: Number of annual conference attendees who praise net working opportunities on surveys. Number of attendees at the annual general meeting

Supporting research in evaluation

Outputs: Portion of budget allocated to research activity, key note speakers on evaluation research topics

Professional Development Report

Martha McGuire and BJ Richmond, Co-chairs of the Professional Development Committee

CES-Ontario has had a very busy year of activities. Thanks to our members for feedback from the seminars and workshops.

We had planned to hold 1 Essential Skill Series (ESS) workshop, 1 intermediate level workshop, and 1 advanced workshop. In 2001, We exceeded our goals and held 2 public ESS workshops, 1 dedicated ESS for 60 Ontario government staff, an intermediate workshop with presenter John Owen, and an advanced workshop with Steve Montague.

In 2002, We hope to do 3 public ESS workshops (April, June, October) to meet waiting list demands, and possibly 1 Ontario government dedicated ESS.

Communications Report

Rochelle Zorzi, Communications Chair

The new CES-Ontario chapter website at www.evaluationontario.ca was launched on September 6, 2001, and for that we have to thank the members of the website committee: Orlena Broomes, Jeremy Heigh, Andrea Johnston, Keiko Kuji-Shikatani, Brian Putman, and Adam Spencer. These individuals reviewed other websites, discussed content and design issues, and worked out the technical aspects of website development. They set and achieved high standards for the site, especially in terms of its speed, organization, and design.

The site now provides information about the chapter and its governance, upcoming events, and provides links to evaluation-related resources and sites. It is an excellent forum for communicating with our membership. We are now able to post news on the site and communicate it to 85% of our members by email within hours instead of a week or two, as was the case when we relied on paper communications. We continue to send paper newsletters to the 15% of our members for whom we do not have current email addresses.

The site has the potential to be much more than a tool for communicating chapter news. It could become an important vehicle for furthering our chapter mission. We could use the site to:

- Disseminate knowledge about quality evaluation. We have already begun doing so by posting the Program Evaluation Standards and the CES Ethical Guidelines. Over time, we could add to these resources from our own pool of experts within Ontario. We could also add a "best practices" section.
- Promote evaluation, for example by developing and posting brochures, articles, or information sheets that explain what evaluation is, how it is beneficial, and how to maximize its benefits.
- Facilitate networking among evaluators and between evaluators and clients. We have already posted links to the CES job board, and could supplement this by posting a list of consultants as well as a list of agencies that fund evaluations. We could also offer topic-specific or location-specific discussion groups and listservs for our members.
- Help the board maintain records and organize. We could post our annual statements and maintain records of activities for posterity. We could create secure bulletin boards and resource pages so the chapter's various committees can maintain their own shared records.

We don't have the resources to do all of these things right away. But this is a taste of what can be, if we choose to go there. As always, I welcome your [feedback](#) about the website, the chapter communications, or any of these new possibilities.

Conference Report

Wendy Young, Interim Conference Chair

I am pleased to announce that the Board has chosen 'Economic Evaluations for Non-Economists' as the theme for the 2002 conference. I would also like to invite all members to participate in the planning of the conference. Just [let me know](#) that you are interested in helping out.

The format of the conference will be based on members' requests for us to organize advanced workshops. We would therefore like to have a keynote speaker followed by 3 concurrent workshops. One speaker will have expertise in conducting economic evaluations in health; one speaker will have experience in education; and one will have experience in the private sector. Speakers for the advanced workshops will be more experienced than speakers in past years.

Student Activities

Candace Nykiforuk, Student Representative

I am very pleased to report on student activities for the Board this year. In the past year, the Board has maintained a sincere interest in student issues, and the growth of student activities acknowledges that.

Activities continued from previous years include:

1. Financial support of the case competition at the CES National Conference.
2. Maintaining an active "Students' Corner" in both the Ontario Chapter Communique and Ontario Chapter website.

In addition, the Board has undertaken the following new initiatives:

1. Offering volunteer experiences in exchange for registration fees for students attending the Chapter's Annual Conference.
2. Offering a travel award for a student to attend the CES National Conference.
3. Investigating the development of a student newsletter to extend communication and interaction with student members.
4. Undertaking a survey of student members to better understand student needs and to target future student activities.

Adam Spencer, the Membership Chair, and I have been conducting the interviews for this survey over the past month. To date, participants in the survey have been graduate students and senior undergraduate students at universities in Southwestern Ontario. Briefly, preliminary results indicate:

- our student members' involvement with the Chapter stems from an evaluation course or a professor/mentor who highlighted CES
- some students see the journal and conference as membership benefits
- all respondents were interested in pursuing evaluation interests in their future careers
- each noted that they would like to see more networking opportunities and other career-building activities as well as a means of accessing potential employers
- there is poor awareness of the distinction between the Ontario Chapter and National CES; there is a need to create broader awareness of opportunities and activities within the Chapter
- each noted that they would like to see more communication with students
- some suggested that new student members could be attracted/involved through their professors/mentors and through evaluation courses (at both the graduate and undergraduate levels)
- there is poor awareness about how to get more involved with the Chapter
- there was moderate awareness of the Chapter website
- all of the respondents felt that the newsletter is a good idea and had many suggestions about content ideas, how to offer it (e.g., email, web-based, etc), and how often to offer it

In closing, I would like to thank the Board for the rewarding opportunity to be involved with their work and to make a contribution to the Chapter. I welcome the new Student Representative to the Board, Andrea Johnston, and wish her the best of luck in her new position.

Treasurer's Report **Mehboob Habib, Treasurer**

At the CES-Ontario Annual Meeting in November 2001, Mehboob Habib presented a Financial Report and the chapter's Financial Statements, Year to Date, November 15, 2001.

Advocacy Report

Jennifer Yessis, Advocacy Subcommittee Chair

Background

Definition of Advocacy: To argue, plead for, promote or champion the utilization of quality evaluation in order to overcome the opposition or indifference to it.

Advocacy

- Need to be fulfilled
 - create demand for evaluation
 - get buy-in to directly use evaluation
- Target Groups
 - expenditure managers
 - legislative committees
 - Provincial Auditor
- Activities
 - face-to-face meetings
 - take positions on policies informed by evaluation
 - lobbying

Committee Tasks

- Scan the evaluation environment for advocacy in order to identify factors conducive to and factors inhibiting achievement of the expected outcomes of advocacy
- Identify target groups for CES (Ontario Chapter) advocacy initiatives
- Develop strategies and operational plans for implementing advocacy by asking professional advocates about their successful strategies

Membership Report

Adam Spencer, Membership Chair

Ontario Chapter Members

- October 2001 - 251 members
 - versus 270 members in February 2001
 - BUT, estimate over 300 members as of Dec 2001
- Over 30 new members (joined for 1st time)
- Types of membership
 - 75% Professional members
 - 24% Student memberships
 - 1% International/library memberships

- We represent 18% of CES' overall membership
 - 251 out of 1361 members across the country
- Where are our members?
 - 8% in Northern Ontario (area codes 705,807)
 - 7% in Eastern Ontario (area codes 613, 819)
 - 25% in Southwestern Ontario (area code 519)
 - 60% in Southern Ontario (area codes 416, 905)
- Ontario Chapter Members
 - Top 4 types of occupation: provincial agencies, health care, college/university, private firms
 - Focus on program evaluation: 69% primary/major focus; 20% minor focus; 3% no focus

Activities In Progress

- Examining ways to stimulate membership growth in Northern and Eastern Ontario
- Examining the possibilities of developing a Chapter member database and contact list
- Reporting on membership information AND surveying our student members has REVEALED a lot of missing/non-updated information

National Council Report

Sandy Henderson, National Council Representative

The Council is made up of provincial reps and is led by Nancy Porteous. The Council is divided into working committees:

The **Administrative Committee** developed the CES brochures and posted them on the web. It also responsible for student activities, including the student essay contest and evaluation case competition at the national conference. Congratulations to Candace Nykiforuk and her University of Waterloo team for winning the case competition in 2000 and 2001.

The **Membership Committee** oversees dues that are split between the Chapter and National. It allocates fees to the newsletter and journal. The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation is searching for a new editor.

The **Advocacy Committee** is developing short courses on benefits of evaluation for provincial governments.

The **Professional Development Committee** is updating and improving the delivery of the Essential Skills Series (ESS). It is working on defining the core body of knowledge for evaluation, and is considering developing a course more advanced than ESS. The PD Committee is also organizing the national conference (May 2002 in Halifax), and won a bid to host a 2005 joint AEA-CES international conference. Negotiations are underway. Dr. Arnold Love is Chair of the joint conference committee; the target is 1500 people to attend. The committee is still looking for sites to host the conference.

Elections

Sandy Henderson, Immediate Past Chair

The new board members are:

- Sandra Bozzo
- Mehboob Habib
- Adam Spencer
- Student Representative: Andrea Johnston