Public Administration Workbook 8th edition Dresang Solutions Manual

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EXERCISE 2

Policy Evaluation

Time Required: 1 hour

Setting: Out-of-class written preparation, in-class discussion

The task in Exercise 2 is to prepare a design to evaluate the policy chosen in Exercise 1.

Students are required neither to gather data nor to undertake any real analyses. All that is required of the student is that he or she think through how one might go about ascertaining whether the choice made in Exercise 1 in fact accomplished its purposes. The main job of the instructor is to be alert for the bane of all evaluations (systematic and otherwise): unwarranted assumptions. What **were** the goals of this policy? How would we recognize success if we saw it? How do we go about collecting the right kind of information? Are there other plausible explanations (besides the hypothesis that our policy worked) for the outcomes we observe? Are we collecting the most relevant data and doing so in a feasible and efficient way? Beware of the misuse of surveys! Thus, while this is an easy exercise for students to complete (or at least to walk through), it places more demands on instructors. In effect, instructors must be prepared to challenge all of the casual assumptions students make about goals, measurement, data, causality, etc. When this exercise is conducted effectively, it in essence becomes a short course in research design for public administrators.

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