DISTINGUISHING AND CLARIFYING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

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DEFINITIONS

• **Research**: an activity that aims to contribute to a knowledge base of explanatory understanding

• **Evaluation**: an activity that aims to inform whether and how an effort is achieving its goals
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  • Anchoring in relevant scholarship
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• Description of innovation
  • Detail
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- Data collection and analyses
- Evaluation plan
  - Accountability
SOUND RESEARCH

• Goal is to produce new understanding

• Research questions ask HOW and WHY. Answers EXPLAIN.
DESIGN – BASED RESEARCH

- Projects can explore an innovative idea practically while also conducting research
- Innovative idea -> design of intervention -> positive impacts
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  - Let’s talk about what research could look like in this process…
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• Conjecture maps (Sandoval, 2014)
  • Articulate assumptions
  • Inform what to look for
  • Explains HOW and WHY things should happen
  • Data collection and analyses to test conjectures
CONJECTURE MAP

- High level conjecture about how to support learning in some context

**Design Conjectures**

- **EMBODIMENT**
  - Tools and Materials
  - Task Structures
  - Participant Structures
  - Discursive Practices

- **MEDIATING PROCESSES**
  - Observable interactions
    - Participant Artifacts

**Theoretical Conjectures**

**OUTCOMES**

- Learning
- Interest/Motivation
- Etc.
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  - What knowledge would help all of us better achieve these outcomes?
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  • What questions about learning, instruction, teaching, contextual factors, culture, mediating factors, teacher learning, student outcomes, demographic factors, institutional factors, are most relevant to understanding more? So that we understand better HOW to realize the goals?
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  • How is your context a case that can be informative to these broader issues?
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- What analyses will enable inferences from those data soundly (mitigate and qualify uncertainty)
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• Research is a goal of projects, so there needs to be a plan to evaluate the quality of research
• Many tools of research (in particular collecting and analyzing data) are also tools of evaluation, even though they serve different purposes
• EVALUATION can collect data that are used to support RESEARCH assertions
EVALUATION

• Check solicitation for requirements
• External advisory board
  • Mechanisms for input on your project
  • Plan, timeline, meetings
  • Appropriate expertise
• OR External evaluator
  • Formative feedback
  • Summative feedback