ENERGY EFFICIENCY EVALUATOR CERTIFICATION:

The Foundations of Impact Evaluation Certificate

BERKELEY LAB

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Glossary

The terms below focus on important concepts for creating a framework by which to certify energy efficiency program evaluators. This document does not include impact-specific definitions because they are not the focus of our effort to define a certificate program and other documents do a good job of presenting the many different definitions used.[1]

The terms below came mainly from *New Directions for Evaluation, Number 145, Spring* 2015 and provide the page number from this publication when applicable.

Accreditation: A mechanism whereby the educational program of an agency or educational institution is assessed by an external panel against established criteria. If it passes, the program receives a formal document indicating that it is accredited. (page 58)

Certificate: Document provided after completion of a training and accomplishment of learner outcomes.

Certification: The formal process used to determine individuals' relative levels of competence (knowledge and skill) in evaluation and, for those who reach or exceed specified minimal levels, to issue certificates attesting that the individual is competent to do good evaluation work. (page 87) An example is the *Certified Measurement and Verification Professional (CMVP)* where an individual with required experience attends a training and successfully passes a written test.

Competence: The habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, emotions, values and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served. (page 23)

Competencies: Knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are applied and observable. A set of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable an individual to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or job function to the standards expected in employment. (page 23)

Credentialing: The process whereby individuals who complete a specified set of evaluation courses and/or field experiences are issued a credential attesting to this fact, with the presumption that completion of the required evaluation courses or experiences prepares those individuals to perform competently as evaluators. (page 87) An example is the *Credentialed Evaluator (CE)* where an individual provides evidence to a Credentialing Board of their competence in specific broad topic areas by bundling education and experience.

Knowledge: What a person can learn; facts and information acquired by a person through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. (page 23)

Learning Outcomes: statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills, or attitudes.

Skills: What a person can do; the ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc. to do something well; expertise. (page 23)

[1] For example, see the glossary in *Energy Efficiency Program Impact Evaluation Guide*. December 2012. https://www4.eere.energy.gov/seeaction/system/files/documents/emv_ee_program_impact_guide_0.pdf

Standards: A principle mutually agreed to by people engaged in a professional practice, that, if met, will enhance the quality and fairness of that professional practice, for example, evaluation. *(The Program Evaluation Standards, 2nd Edition. Page 2)*

This effort does not involve accreditation because it is too early in the process of setting up evaluator trainings to begin to think about whether accreditation is needed for those organizations providing the trainings. Accreditation discussion may occur in the future after several certificates have been successfully launched.

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Introduction to Energy Efficiency Impact Evaluation Certification

This document describes the learning outcomes, connected to standards and competencies, for an energy efficiency impact evaluation certificate. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is sponsoring the development of certification for energy efficiency program impact evaluators to support the continued growth of energy efficiency as well as to create and maintain professional standards for those engaged in evaluation of energy efficiency programs. This certificate is the first step in DOE's certification plan.[2]

What certificate completion will and will not enable: Successful completion of the first certificate will identify people who have demonstrated understanding of the basic concepts, principles and methods used to determine the impacts of customer funded energy efficiency programs.[3] The training associated with the certificate provides a systematic framework of the basic, foundational knowledge needed to perform impact evaluations, but does not confer the ability to perform impact evaluations absent the inclusion of experienced, competent evaluators. Nor does this certificate ensure the ability to manage the myriad of tasks associated with evaluation. However, building the expertise that allows a successful career in evaluation requires a sound foundation to support professional growth and innovation. This certificate does just that – supports beginning a career in evaluation as well as shoring up the foundations for practitioners already in the field.

Goal for this Certificate

To provide the foundational information required to understand and describe basic energy efficiency program impact evaluation concepts, principles, and methods, as well as to ensure awareness of industry-standard resource documents used to determine the impacts of customer funded energy efficiency programs

Why obtain the certificate: There is one central reason to obtain the certificate and two subsidiary reasons. The central reason is that energy efficiency evaluators have many different backgrounds and lack a systematic exposure to the energy industry, energy efficiency, and evaluation (although many know about one or more of these areas.)[4] Energy efficiency evaluation uses terms and concepts similar to evaluation performed in other areas, but over forty years of practice, the energy efficiency evaluation field has developed unique terms and concepts. To speak the same 'language' and address program evaluation comparably, evaluators in this field need a primer that shows them the landscape so they can successfully draw from all areas to provide the best impact evaluation.

Given the varied backgrounds of energy program evaluators and unique language of the field, an individual who obtains the certificate is immediately conversant in the language of energy

[2] Certification can include a public acknowledgement of certificate completion such as inclusion of initials (i.e., Jane Doe, LEED AP® O+M) and ongoing education to maintain the certificate. This current certificate includes neither.

[3] These programs are typically administered by energy utilities and other third-party administrators

[4] For example, practitioners may hold a Bachelor, Master, or PhD in engineering, statistics, economics, or the social sciences.

efficiency impact evaluation and may see otherwise opaque connections. For many who oversee or are involved in evaluation at a high level, this amount of knowledge is often sufficient for their needs. An evaluator, on the other hand, can understand where their efforts 'fit' as they complete evaluation tasks. They begin to understand what they don't know and where they need to continue their professional education to become a well-rounded evaluator. Organizations hiring a person with this certificate know they are getting someone with a solid base for building expertise and that the organization does not have to spend significant time training the new staff member on the basics of impact evaluation.

Additionally, as procuring evaluation services assess a firm's experience, a firm with staff holding this certificate signals it has a strong *team* of individuals, not just one or two with experience.

Who the certificate targets: The target market for this certificate is professionals that are involved in the completion or use of energy efficiency program impact evaluations, as listed below:

- Evaluators
- Regulatory, utility or program administrator staff with responsibilities including EM&V
- Program implementers who need to interact with evaluators, or receive evaluation reports
- Other stakeholders who are engaged in energy efficiency regulatory matters or are interested in energy efficiency evaluation

For those aware of the Certified Measurement and Verification Professional (CMVP) credential, this certificate is distinct from, but complementary to, the CMVP. The main difference is that CMVP focuses on project measurement and verification (M&V), and this certificate is focused on program impact evaluation (which may include M&V).

Phase 1 - Scope Certification

The DOE funded the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships to conduct Phase 1 scoping study that culminated in an August 2016 report "*Scoping the Certification of Energy Program Impact Evaluators*".[5] The purpose of the scoping study was to determine if a certification for evaluators might add value to the industry, and to explore what the certification would address.

The DOE made two key decisions based on the Phase 1 report:

- DOE supports and will encourage certification efforts moving forward, starting with a foundational certificate for evaluators assessing the energy impacts of programs
- The foundational level impact certificate DOE supports will be broad and include both gross and net impact information

Phase 2 – Implement Certification

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) is under a Phase 2 contract to manage the process and ensure implementation of the first certificate. LBNL and their subcontractor, Grounded Research and Consulting, LLC (the LBNL team) facilitated discussion around all the

[5] The Phase 1 report is here: http://www.neep.org/scoping-certification-energy-program-impact-evaluators or here: https://www.iepec.org/?p=9143

topics covered in this document. LBNL will contract with an organization to act as the implementing organization for the first certificate based on the agreed competencies and learning outcomes.

A seven-person steering committee, made up of energy efficiency program evaluation experts, was closely involved with creating the content of this document and met, via conference calls, six times between March and September 2017. Each of these individuals added their unique perspectives and years of experience to help create a relevant and targeted certificate.

The DOE, LBNL, and steering committee all recognize that specific components may change as this certificate is implemented. However, all participants earning this certificate must achieve the learning objectives described herein.

As the steering committee considered appropriate training learning outcomes for this certificate, they discussed and reviewed standards for energy efficiency evaluators in general and the desired competencies for a foundational-level impact certificate. Their choices for standards and competencies form the basis of the learning outcomes. Each is described below.

Standards: There are core principles for being a good evaluator even though evaluation practices may differ across energy efficiency, education, criminal justice or mental health. Therefore, we drew from outside of energy efficiency program evaluation for standards. Evaluation standards identify and define quality. Unlike technical or content standards, though, evaluation standards do not specify exact procedures to be followed in a specific setting, but require responsiveness and judgments in each evaluation setting.[6]

The LBNL team chose to include standards from the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE) and guidelines from the American Evaluation Association (AEA) as fundamental components of the certificate. The JCSEE standards are approved by the American National Standards Institute as an American Standard and have been adopted by several other evaluation organizations. The JCSEE standards consist of 30 standards (5 main standards with anywhere from 3 to 8 standards within each). The AEA guidelines have a large overlap with the JCSEE standards, but tend to be slightly broader. Both bring important information on the qualities of a good evaluator.

These standards are described further in Appendix A to Appendix C.

Competencies: This certificate covers broad topics about energy efficiency, evaluation in general, and impact evaluation methods. These topics are the foundation for any evaluator. As such, earning the certificate demonstrates wide exposure to many impact evaluation topics, although does not indicate deep knowledge of any specific area. The LBNL team created learning outcomes to enable the following competencies:

- Knows program evaluation fundamentals that ground and guide professional practice (e.g., professional ethics, standards, guidelines, principles, competencies, approaches, and theories).

[6] Yarbrough, et. al, *The Program Evaluation Standards, A Guide for Evaluators and Evaluation Users. 3rd Edition.* Page xxii.

- Identifies evaluation purposes.
- Describes the evaluand[7]/program, including its basic purpose, components, and functioning.
- Understands methodology that grounds inquiry in program evaluation practice.
- Determines appropriate methods, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods.
- Frames evaluation questions (e.g., identifies evaluation purpose and appropriate evaluation questions, provides clarity on reporting needs).

Appendix D includes the full list of evaluator competencies and highlights those chosen for this certificate.

Learning Outcomes: This document provides a list of specific learning outcomes that are tied directly to the chosen competencies and standards.

Learning outcomes are detailed starting on page 7.

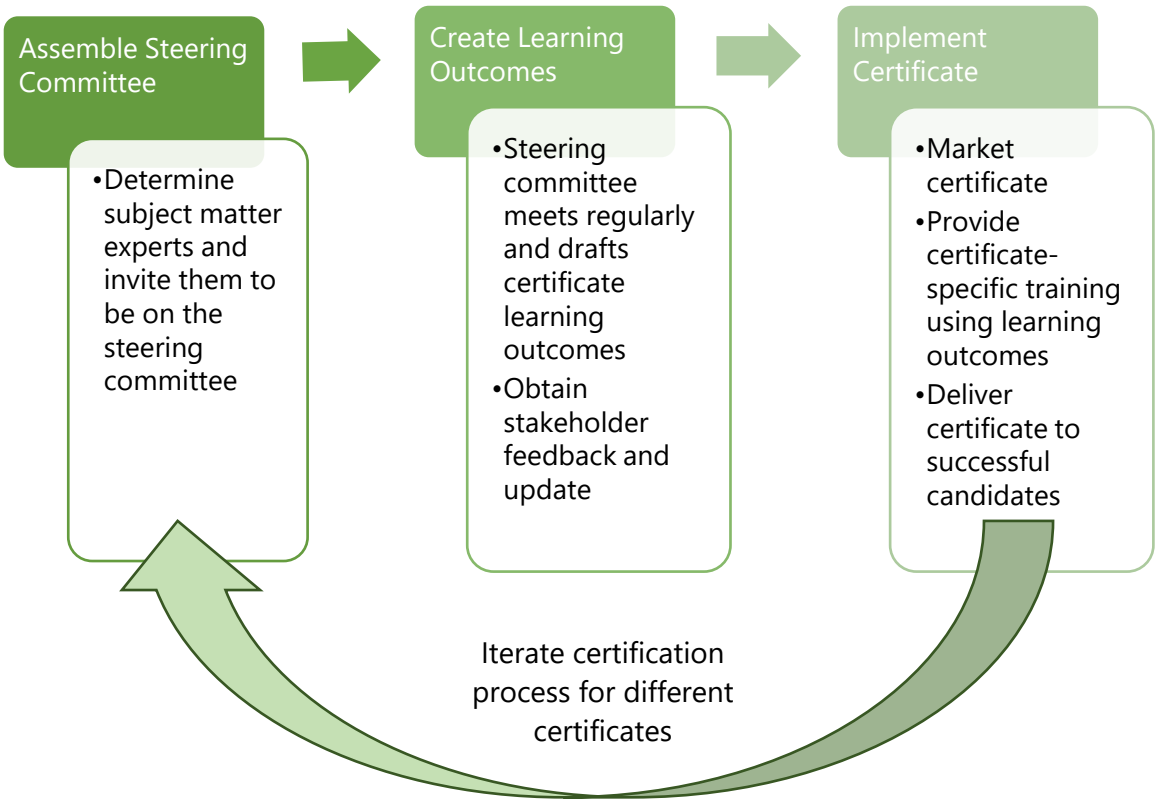
Next, is an overview of the certification process and certificate, followed by the detailed learning outcomes for the training required to obtain the certificate.

[7] The evaluand is the subject of an evaluation, typically a program or system rather than a person.

Overview of Certification Process

The DOE supported certification for energy efficiency impact evaluations by creating the process shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Overview of Certification Development



In the future, certification may include a continuing education requirement to maintain a specific certificate and may include the ability to revoke the certificate (the foundational certificate does not include either of these).

Overview of the Certificate

Name of Certificate

Foundations of Energy Efficiency Program Impact Evaluation

Description

This certificate will provide energy efficiency (EE) program impact evaluators with the foundational information required understand and describe the basic concepts, principles, methods, as well as industry-standard resource documents used to determine the impacts of customer-funded energy efficiency programs. The certificate is relevant to any person who wants to obtain an understanding of the broad options available for EE impact assessments.

Certificate Objective

To indicate that the certificate-holder has knowledge in five broad areas of evaluation:

1. Purpose and history of energy efficiency programs
2. Program evaluation in general

3. Energy efficiency impact evaluation
4. Impact evaluation methods and key tasks
5. Framing an evaluation (e.g., identifying evaluation purpose and appropriate evaluation questions, providing clarity on reporting needs)

Materials

As part of cost to obtain the certificate, each person will receive a book on program evaluation standards[8] and an electronic "binder" with all materials that includes documentation of relevant references with links to obtain further topical information if desired.

Prerequisites

To be determined.

Certificate Requirements

Each person will be expected to attend the 2.5-day in-person training. Two days will be on content and the last half day will include the written test.

Demonstration of Competencies

Each person's knowledge will be assessed through a written test at the end of the in-person training. To pass the test and obtain the certificate, the trainee will need to answer a yet-to-be specified percentage of the questions correctly. If the trainee fails, they can take the test again within a yet-to-be specified period. Certain individuals may be allowed to take the test without the training, provided that they can demonstrate that they have received a similar alternate training (this option will be determined by the certification advisory board).

Certificate Expiration

This certificate does not expire and requires no continuing education or other actions to maintain the certificate.

Cost

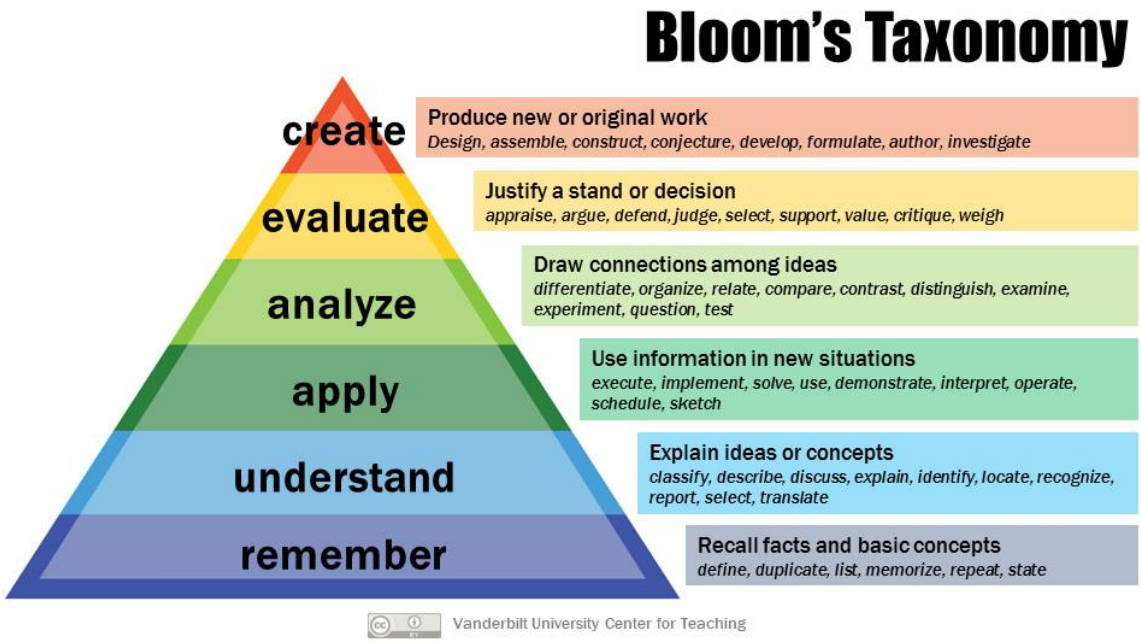
To be determined.

[8] Yarbrough, Donald B., Shulha L, Hopson, R, Caruthers, F. 2011. *The Program Evaluation Standards. A Guide for Evaluators and Evaluation Users. 3rd Edition.* SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks.

Detailed Learning Outcomes for Certificate Completion

The LBNL team chose Bloom's Taxonomy as the organizing structure to help operationalize learning outcomes for certificate completion. Bloom's taxonomy is a classification system used to define and distinguish different levels of human cognition—i.e., thinking, learning, and understanding. Educators have typically used Bloom's taxonomy to inform or guide the development of assessments (tests and other evaluations of student learning), curriculum (units, lessons, projects, and other learning activities), and instructional methods such as questioning strategies.[9] We show the six levels of this taxonomy below in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Bloom's Taxonomy



Source: https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/

Training for the foundational impact certificate falls into the first two areas (remember and understand) as that is the appropriate level for a certificate that covers the basics of an area and can be covered with the chosen 2.5 days.

The implementing organization, once chosen, will perform multiple tasks, among which is developing the certificate exam based on the learning outcomes. Additionally, trainers will use the learning outcomes to determine specific lesson plans (e.g., explicit instructions and activities to obtain the desired outcome).

The steering committee fully expects that the certificate training will be modified as trainers develop experience with its implementation and also expect that feedback from participants and course reviewers may influence the further development of the course. While the initial instructors may have a bias as to the emphasis of the included material, the steering committee expects that this bias will be minimized since any training will need to cover the specific learning outcomes outlined in Table 1.

[9] http://edglossary.org/blooms-taxonomy/

Table 1. Competencies and Learning Outcomes for Foundational Impact Certificate

Competency Label	AEA Competency Number and Description (See Appendix D)	Relevant JCSEE Standard (See Appendix B)	Bloom's Taxonomy	Approximate Training Time (hours)
EE Programs	3.1 Describes the evaluand/program, including its basic purpose, components, and functioning	U1, U2, F3, A4, E1	Remember / Know	2

OUTCOMES	• recalls the history of EE programs and why EE programs were originally created
	  ○ identifies the basics of the utility business including load profiles, obligation to serve, load duration curves, load factors, rudimentary rate making (which includes differentiation between fixed and variable costs)
	• identifies the different types of EE and DER programs and states purposes of each, savings taxonomy (e.g. portfolios, programs, projects, measures)
	• describes the concept of comparing demand side and supply side resources, IRPs, and common cost-effectiveness assessments (e.g. California Standard Practice Manual and National Standard Practice Manual)
	• recognizes the different types of customers and participants (i.e., various utility sectors and their customer characteristics)
	• names the various 'players' within the EE program sphere and recognizes political realities of each
	  ○ describes the types of regulatory bodies and how they interact with EE programs			

Program Evaluation in General	1.1 Knows and applies program evaluation foundations that ground and guide professional practice (e.g., standards, guidelines, principles, competencies, approaches, and theories).	All	Remember / Know	1
OUTCOMES	• defines key program evaluation concepts (e.g., evaluability, impacts, processes, worth, etc.) • describes how evaluation and EE programs interact and how evaluation timing may affect a program • recognizes the different goals of evaluation • recalls the various types of evaluation associated with EE/Demand Response/Distributed Energy Resource programs (e.g., impact, process) • recognizes evaluation standards/guidelines (e.g., the JCSEE standards and the AEA guidelines) • identifies roles and relationships of evaluator in the program design/implementation/evaluation cycle, especially in regard to regulators and program administrators • describes what is included in evaluation frameworks			

EE Impact Evaluation	2.1 Understands methodology that grounds inquiry in program evaluation practice	U1, U4, U6, A2, A6, A8	Remember / Know	1.5
OUTCOMES	• defines key EE impact evaluation terms such as effective useful life, net and gross energy, and non-energy impacts • identifies the various impact designs, when to apply them, and tools of each (e.g., quasi-experimental, experimental designs) • describes what a counterfactual is and how baselines are related to the counterfactual • identifies where to find key EE evaluation resources (e.g., SEE Action publications, Technical Reference Manuals [TRMs], etc.) • explains the relationships and differences between impact evaluations and cost effectiveness evaluations, process evaluations, or market evaluations			
Key Impact Evaluation Methods and Tasks	2.1 Understands methodology that grounds inquiry in program evaluation practice 2.7 Determines appropriate methods, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (to the extent practical absent significant professional experience)	F2, A3, A8	Understand / Comprehend	6.5
OUTCOMES	• describes how to plan an impact evaluation and the tasks that must occur prior to choosing or implementing any impact method (e.g., research goals, questions, etc.) • recognizes how a sampling frame can affect an impact evaluation • describes the different types of impact evaluation approaches/methods along with their uses, strengths, limitations, risks, and relative costs • summarizes important tasks within four key impact methods • gives examples of complications that may arise during each task of estimating energy savings • explains savings persistence and savings interactions • explains the relationship between evaluation costs, accuracy, and timeliness • defines relative precision, absolute precision, and accuracy as well as the differences in each			
Framing the Evaluation	2.4 Identifies evaluation purposes 2.5 Frames evaluation questions	U2, U3, U6, F2, F3, A2, E1	Understand / Comprehend	1.5

OUTCOMES	• using a vignette of an example program and available evaluation budget:
	  ○ selects appropriate evaluation purposes
	  ○ distinguishes between several evaluation questions
	  ○ explains how evaluation goals and research questions support choice of impact method(s)
	  ○ explains what a report should include and how to structure a report depending on the audience
	  ○ paraphrases how to write about sampling and non-sampling errors within a report			

Next Steps

The LBNL team is in discussions with multiple organizations to be the implementing entity. This organization will create and maintain a certification board who will determine eligibility criteria and be part of developing and testing the certificate exam. The implementing organization will also be responsible for marketing the certificate training, and managing the training logistics. Once the organization is determined, the LBNL team plans to support the development of trainings for the certificate.

The organization implementing the certification should meet the following criteria:

- Be recognized as a professional development organization by practitioners in the field of customer-funded energy efficiency programs.
- Have sufficient staffing to support implementation of a certification process, including marketing, test-development, test administration, and development of trainings.
- Sufficient revenue or reserve finances to invest in starting up a certification program.
- Have board members or staff that are/have been evaluators.
- Have an active volunteer network that would participate in oversight or guidance.

Ideally, the organization would also:

- Maintain their own certification program and offer complementary certificates.
- Have developed certain infrastructure that could be leverage for this certificate, such as content delivery or testing platforms.
- Have a history of financial health.

Appendix A. Overview of Standards for Energy Efficiency Evaluators

Interviews with several evaluation experts during Phase 1 found a strong desire to codify ethical behavior for EE evaluators. For a profession such as evaluation where actions are non-formulaic, standards give a way to judge action, but are not hard and fast rules.[10] Below are five current evaluation organizations that follow written standards or guiding principles.

- The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE) has a set of standards that are approved by the American National Standards Institute as an American Standard[11] and have been adopted by:
  - Canadian Evaluation Society (CES)
  - African Evaluation Association
  - US Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Guiding Principles have a similar intent as standards, but are not stated to be standards. We found two organizations that have guiding principles:
  - American Evaluation Association (AEA)
  - UK Evaluation Society

Competencies versus Standards

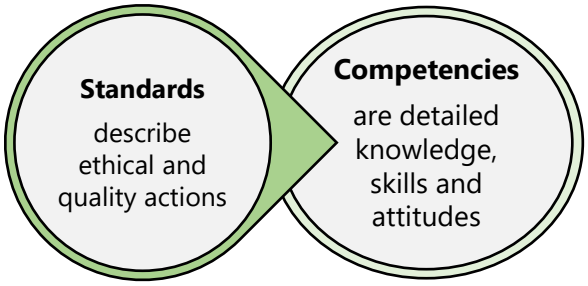
Any organization creating a certificate must have a clear understanding of the skills of a competent trainee. However, it can be difficult to untangle what is a standard and what is a competency as the terms are sometimes used synonymously. For Phase 2, we use the definition of competencies as written earlier to differentiate between the standards that are chosen for any evaluator and the competencies required for a certificate.[12] As such, for this Phase 2 effort, we have envisioned standards and competencies as having a relationship, shown in Figure 3, below.

[10] Because of the varied settings for EE evaluations, we believe that evaluation standards should require responsiveness and judgement and not specify exact procedures to be followed.

[11] JSEE PGES3-2010 (Part 1-PartV, pages 3-252) Approval date of June 21, 2010. (https://share.ansi.org/Shared%20Documents/Standards%20Action/2010%20PDFs/SAV4126.pdf)

[12] As defined earlier in the document, competencies are a set of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable an individual to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or job function to the standards expected in employment.

Figure 3. Graphic Representation of Standards and Competencies Relationship



Using this structure, we explicitly link a single training to one or more competency within one or more standards.

Chosen Standards to Include in Training

Within evaluation, standards describe what it means to perform quality evaluation. Evaluation standards require responsiveness and judgement and do not specify exact procedures to be followed. Evaluators may need to discuss application of standards with peers to confirm they are performing quality evaluation. Additionally, as indicated by the JCSEE, "Few if any evaluations provide the opportunity to maximize quality in the application of each standard. Because of these limitations, a balanced application of individual standard depends on human values and choices in specific situation." [13] In a nutshell, following standards ensure that *energy efficiency evaluators are competent in any evaluation services they provide, act with integrity in their relationships with all stakeholders, and are accountable for their performance and their product.*

The JCSEE puts forward five main standards and the AEA presents five main principles. The JCSEE standards have an associated book that is very helpful. Specifically, the book contains each subcomponent's rationale and clarification as well as important application recommendations and hazards to understand how to apply each standard. AEA principles have good descriptions, but are more difficult to apply because of their slightly broader nature compared with the JCSEE standards (e.g., multiple JCSEE subcomponents can be covered by a single AEA principle subcomponent).

The JCSEE standards and AEA principles are sufficiently broad to cover EE evaluation with no changes. The training most likely will include the book associated with the JCSEE standards to help understand the standards and will discuss the AEA principles as well. Appendix B presents the main components of each with the full set of JCSEE standards and Appendix C provides the full set of AEA guiding principles.

[13] Yarbrough, Donald B., Shulha L, Hopson, R, Caruthers, F. 2011. *The Program Evaluation Standards. A Guide for Evaluators and Evaluation Users. 3rd Edition.* SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks. (p. xxii)

Appendix B. Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE) Standards

Table 2. JCSEE Standards

Main Standard	Standard Subcomponent
Utility: an evaluation serves the information needs of intended users	**U1 Evaluator Credibility** Evaluations should be conducted by qualified people who establish and maintain credibility in the evaluation context. **U2 Attention to Stakeholders** Evaluations should devote attention to the full range of individuals and groups invested in the program and affected by its evaluation. **U3 Negotiated Purposes** Evaluation purposes should be identified and continually negotiated based on the needs of stakeholders. **U4 Explicit Values** Evaluations should clarify and specify the individual and cultural values underpinning purposes, processes, and judgments. **U5 Relevant Information** Evaluation information should serve the identified and emergent needs of stakeholders. **U6 Meaningful Processes and Products** Evaluations should construct activities, descriptions, and judgments in ways that encourage participants to rediscover, reinterpret, or revise their understandings and behaviors. **U7 Timely and Appropriate Communicating and Reporting** Evaluations should attend to the continuing information needs of their multiple audiences. **U8 Concern for Consequences and Influence** Evaluations should promote responsible and adaptive use while guarding against unintended negative consequences and misuse.
Feasibility: an evaluation is realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal	**F1 Project Management** Evaluations should use effective project management strategies. **F2 Practical Procedures** Evaluation procedures should be practical and responsive to the way the program operates. **F3 Contextual Viability** Evaluations should recognize, monitor, and balance the cultural and political interests and needs of individuals and groups. **F4 Resource Use** Evaluations should use resources effectively and efficiently.
Proprietary: an evaluation is conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results	**P1 Responsive and Inclusive Orientation** Evaluations should be responsive to stakeholders and their communities. **P2 Formal Agreements** Evaluation agreements should be negotiated to make obligations explicit and take into account the needs, expectations, and cultural contexts of clients and other stakeholders. **P3 Human Rights and Respect** Evaluations should be designed and conducted to protect human and legal rights and maintain the dignity of participants and other stakeholders. **P4 Clarity and Fairness** Evaluations should be understandable and fair in addressing stakeholder needs and purposes. **P5 Transparency and Disclosure** Evaluations should provide complete descriptions of findings, limitations, and conclusions to all stakeholders, unless doing so would violate legal and propriety obligations. **P6 Conflicts of Interests** Evaluations should openly and honestly identify and address real or perceived conflicts of interests that may compromise the evaluation.

Main Standard	Standard Subcomponent
	P7 Fiscal Responsibility Evaluations should account for all expended resources and comply with sound fiscal procedures and processes.
Accuracy: an evaluation reveals and conveys technically adequate information about the features that determine worth or merit of the program being evaluated	**A1 Justified Conclusions and Decisions** Evaluation conclusions and decisions should be explicitly justified in the cultures and contexts where they have consequences. **A2 Valid Information** Evaluation information should serve the intended purposes and support valid interpretations. **A3 Reliable Information** Evaluation procedures should yield sufficiently dependable and consistent information for the intended uses. **A4 Explicit Program and Context Descriptions** Evaluations should document programs and their contexts with appropriate detail and scope for the evaluation purposes. **A5 Information Management** Evaluations should employ systematic information collection, review, verification, and storage methods. **A6 Sound Designs and Analyses** Evaluations should employ technically adequate designs and analyses that are appropriate for the evaluation purposes. **A7 Explicit Evaluation Reasoning** Evaluation reasoning leading from information and analyses to findings, interpretations, conclusions, and judgments should be clearly and completely documented. **A8 Communication and Reporting** Evaluation communications should have adequate scope and guard against misconceptions, biases, distortions, and errors.
Evaluation Accountability: encourage adequate documentation of evaluations and a metaevaluative perspective focused on improvement and accountability for evaluation processes and products.	**E1 Evaluation Documentation** Evaluations should fully document their negotiated purposes and implemented designs, procedures, data, and outcomes. **E2 Internal Metaevaluation** Evaluators should use these and other applicable standards to examine the accountability of the evaluation design, procedures employed, information collected, and outcomes. **E3 External Metaevaluation** Program evaluation sponsors, clients, evaluators, and other stakeholders should encourage the conduct of external metaevaluations using these and other applicable standards.

Appendix C. American Evaluation Association (AEA) Guiding Principles for Evaluators

(Copied from http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51 on 2/9/17, updated slightly to format the principles into a table)

Below you will find the *Guiding Principles for Evaluators* in their entirety. Brochures of the *abbreviated* version of the *Guiding Principles* are available, free of charge, in both hardcopy and PDF. To download the *abbreviated* version of the *Guiding Principles* in PDF format, click here. To obtain hardcopies of the *abbreviated* version of the *Guiding Principles*, please contact the AEA office at info@eval.org.

For a print-friendly version of the complete *Guiding Principles* click here.

For a training guide and resources based on the *Guiding Principles* click here.

Revisions reflected herein ratified by the AEA membership, July 2004

Preface: Assumptions Concerning Development of Principles

A. Evaluation is a profession composed of persons with varying interests, potentially encompassing but not limited to the evaluation of programs, products, personnel, policy, performance, proposals, technology, research, theory, and even of evaluation itself. These principles are broadly intended to cover all kinds of evaluation. For external evaluations of public programs, they nearly always apply. However, it is impossible to write guiding principles that neatly fit every context in which evaluators work, and some evaluators will work in contexts in which following a guideline cannot be done for good reason. The Guiding Principles are not intended to constrain such evaluators when this is the case. However, such exceptions should be made for good reason (e.g., legal prohibitions against releasing information to stakeholders), and evaluators who find themselves in such contexts should consult colleagues about how to proceed.

B. Based on differences in training, experience, and work settings, the profession of evaluation encompasses diverse perceptions about the primary purpose of evaluation. These include but are not limited to the following: bettering products, personnel, programs, organizations, governments, consumers and the public interest; contributing to informed decision making and more enlightened change; precipitating needed change; empowering all stakeholders by collecting data from them and engaging them in the evaluation process; and experiencing the excitement of new insights. Despite that diversity, the common ground is that evaluators aspire to construct and provide the best possible information that might bear on the value of whatever is being evaluated. The principles are intended to foster that primary aim.

C. The principles are intended to guide the professional practice of evaluators, and to inform evaluation clients and the general public about the principles they can expect to be upheld by professional evaluators. Of course, no statement of principles can anticipate all situations that arise in the practice of evaluation. However, principles are not just guidelines for reaction when something goes wrong or when a dilemma is found. Rather, principles should proactively guide the behaviors of professionals in everyday practice.

D. The purpose of documenting guiding principles is to foster continuing development of the profession of evaluation, and the socialization of its members. The principles are meant to stimulate discussion about the proper practice and use of evaluation among members of the profession, sponsors of evaluation, and others interested in evaluation.

E. The five principles proposed in this document are not independent, but overlap in many ways. Conversely, sometimes these principles will conflict, so that evaluators will have to choose among them. At such times evaluators must use their own values and knowledge of the setting to determine the appropriate response. Whenever a course of action is unclear, evaluators should solicit the advice of fellow evaluators about how to resolve the problem before deciding how to proceed.

F. These principles are intended to supercede any previous work on standards, principles, or ethics adopted by AEA or its two predecessor organizations, the Evaluation Research Society and the Evaluation Network. These principles are the official position of AEA on these matters.

G. These principles are not intended to replace standards supported by evaluators or by the other disciplines in which evaluators participate.

H. Each principle is illustrated by a number of statements to amplify the meaning of the overarching principle, and to provide guidance for its application. These illustrations are not meant to include all possible applications of that principle, nor to be viewed as rules that provide the basis for sanctioning violators.

I. These principles were developed in the context of Western cultures, particularly the United States, and so may reflect the experiences of that context. The relevance of these principles may vary across other cultures, and across subcultures within the United States.

J. These principles are part of an evolving process of self-examination by the profession, and should be revisited on a regular basis. Mechanisms might include officially-sponsored reviews of principles at annual meetings, and other forums for harvesting experience with the principles and their application. On a regular basis, but at least every five years, these principles ought to be examined for possible review and revision. In order to maintain association-wide awareness and relevance, all AEA members are encouraged to participate in this process.

Main Principles	**Principle Subcomponent**
Systematic Inquiry: Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries about whatever is being evaluated	1. To ensure the accuracy and credibility of the evaluative information they produce, evaluators should adhere to the highest technical standards appropriate to the methods they use. 2. Evaluators should explore with the client the shortcomings and strengths both of the various evaluation questions and the various approaches that might be used for answering those questions. 3. Evaluators should communicate their methods and approaches accurately and in sufficient detail to allow others to understand, interpret and critique their work. They should make clear the limitations of an evaluation and its results. Evaluators should discuss in a contextually appropriate way those values, assumptions, theories, methods, results, and analyses significantly affecting the interpretation of the evaluative findings. These statements apply to all aspects of the evaluation, from its initial conceptualization to the eventual use of findings.
Competence: Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders	1. Evaluators should possess (or ensure that the evaluation team possesses) the education, abilities, skills and experience appropriate to undertake the tasks proposed in the evaluation. 2. To ensure recognition, accurate interpretation and respect for diversity, evaluators should ensure that the members of the evaluation team collectively demonstrate cultural competence. Cultural competence would be reflected in evaluators seeking awareness of their own culturally-based assumptions, their understanding of the worldviews of culturally-different participants and stakeholders in the evaluation, and the use of appropriate evaluation strategies and skills in working with culturally different groups. Diversity may be in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, socio-economics, or other factors pertinent to the evaluation context. 3. Evaluators should practice within the limits of their professional training and competence, and should decline to conduct evaluations that fall substantially outside those limits. When declining the commission or request

Main Principles	Principle Subcomponent
	is not feasible or appropriate, evaluators should make clear any significant limitations on the evaluation that might result. Evaluators should make every effort to gain the competence directly or through the assistance of others who possess the required expertise. 4. Evaluators should continually seek to maintain and improve their competencies, in order to provide the highest level of performance in their evaluations. This continuing professional development might include formal coursework and workshops, self-study, evaluations of one's own practice, and working with other evaluators to learn from their skills and expertise.
Integrity/Honesty: Evaluators ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process	1. Evaluators should negotiate honestly with clients and relevant stakeholders concerning the costs, tasks to be undertaken, limitations of methodology, scope of results likely to be obtained, and uses of data resulting from a specific evaluation. It is primarily the evaluator's responsibility to initiate discussion and clarification of these matters, not the client's. 2. Before accepting an evaluation assignment, evaluators should disclose any roles or relationships they have that might pose a conflict of interest (or appearance of a conflict) with their role as an evaluator. If they proceed with the evaluation, the conflict(s) should be clearly articulated in reports of the evaluation results. 3. Evaluators should record all changes made in the originally negotiated project plans, and the reasons why the changes were made. If those changes would significantly affect the scope and likely results of the evaluation, the evaluator should inform the client and other important stakeholders in a timely fashion (barring good reason to the contrary, before proceeding with further work) of the changes and their likely impact. 4. Evaluators should be explicit about their own, their clients', and other stakeholders' interests and values concerning the conduct and outcomes of an evaluation. 5. Evaluators should not misrepresent their procedures, data or findings. Within reasonable limits, they should attempt to prevent or correct misuse of their work by others. 6. If evaluators determine that certain procedures or activities are likely to produce misleading evaluative information or conclusions, they have the responsibility to communicate their concerns and the reasons for them. If discussions with the client do not resolve these concerns, the evaluator should decline to conduct the evaluation. If declining the assignment is unfeasible or inappropriate, the evaluator should consult colleagues or relevant stakeholders about other proper ways to proceed. (Options might include discussions at a higher level, a dissenting cover letter or appendix, or refusal to sign the final document.) 7. Evaluators should disclose all sources of financial support for an evaluation, and the source of the request for the evaluation.
Respect for People: Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of the respondents, program participants, clients,	1. Evaluators should seek a comprehensive understanding of the important contextual elements of the evaluation. Contextual factors that may influence the results of a study include geographic location, timing, political and social climate, economic conditions, and other relevant activities in progress at the same time. 2. Evaluators should abide by current professional ethics, standards, and regulations regarding risks, harms, and burdens that might befall those

Main Principles	Principle Subcomponent
and other stakeholders with whom they interact	participating in the evaluation; regarding informed consent for participation in evaluation; and regarding informing participants and clients about the scope and limits of confidentiality. 3. Because justified negative or critical conclusions from an evaluation must be explicitly stated, evaluations sometimes produce results that harm client or stakeholder interests. Under this circumstance, evaluators should seek to maximize the benefits and reduce any unnecessary harms that might occur, provided this will not compromise the integrity of the evaluation findings. Evaluators should carefully judge when the benefits from doing the evaluation or in performing certain evaluation procedures should be foregone because of the risks or harms. To the extent possible, these issues should be anticipated during the negotiation of the evaluation. 4. Knowing that evaluations may negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth. 5. Where feasible, evaluators should attempt to foster social equity in evaluation, so that those who give to the evaluation may benefit in return. For example, evaluators should seek to ensure that those who bear the burdens of contributing data and incurring any risks do so willingly, and that they have full knowledge of and opportunity to obtain any benefits of the evaluation. Program participants should be informed that their eligibility to receive services does not hinge on their participation in the evaluation. 6. Evaluators have the responsibility to understand and respect differences among participants, such as differences in their culture, religion, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and ethnicity, and to account for potential implications of these differences when planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting evaluations.
Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare: Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of interests and values that may be related to the general and public welfare	1. When planning and reporting evaluations, evaluators should include relevant perspectives and interests of the full range of stakeholders. 2. Evaluators should consider not only the immediate operations and outcomes of whatever is being evaluated, but also its broad assumptions, implications and potential side effects. 3. Freedom of information is essential in a democracy. Evaluators should allow all relevant stakeholders access to evaluative information in forms that respect people and honor promises of confidentiality. Evaluators should actively disseminate information to stakeholders as resources allow. Communications that are tailored to a given stakeholder should include all results that may bear on interests of that stakeholder and refer to any other tailored communications to other stakeholders. In all cases, evaluators should strive to present results clearly and simply so that clients and other stakeholders can easily understand the evaluation process and results. 4. Evaluators should maintain a balance between client needs and other needs. Evaluators necessarily have a special relationship with the client who funds or requests the evaluation. By virtue of that relationship, evaluators must strive to meet legitimate client needs whenever it is feasible and appropriate to do so. However, that relationship can also place evaluators in difficult dilemmas when client interests conflict with other interests, or when client interests conflict with the obligation of evaluators for systematic inquiry, competence, integrity, and respect for people. In these cases, evaluators

Main Principles	Principle Subcomponent
	should explicitly identify and discuss the conflicts with the client and relevant stakeholders, resolve them when possible, determine whether continued work on the evaluation is advisable if the conflicts cannot be resolved, and make clear any significant limitations on the evaluation that might result if the conflict is not resolved. 5. Evaluators have obligations that encompass the public interest and good. These obligations are especially important when evaluators are supported by publicly-generated funds; but clear threats to the public good should never be ignored in any evaluation. Because the public interest and good are rarely the same as the interests of any particular group (including those of the client or funder), evaluators will usually have to go beyond analysis of particular stakeholder interests and consider the welfare of society as a whole.

Background

In 1986, the Evaluation Network (ENet) and the Evaluation Research Society (ERS) merged to create the American Evaluation Association. ERS had previously adopted a set of standards for program evaluation (published in New Directions for Program Evaluation in 1982); and both organizations had lent support to work of other organizations about evaluation guidelines. However, none of these standards or guidelines were officially adopted by AEA, nor were any other ethics, standards, or guiding principles put into place. Over the ensuing years, the need for such guiding principles was discussed by both the AEA Board and the AEA membership. Under the presidency of David Cordray in 1992, the AEA Board appointed a temporary committee chaired by Peter Rossi to examine whether AEA should address this matter in more detail. That committee issued a report to the AEA Board on November 4, 1992, recommending that AEA should pursue this matter further. The Board followed that recommendation, and on that date created a Task Force to develop a draft of guiding principles for evaluators. The task force members were:

William Shadish, Memphis State University (Chair)
Dianna Newman, University of Albany/SUNY
Mary Ann Scheirer, Private Practice
Chris Wye, National Academy of Public Administration

The AEA Board specifically instructed the Task Force to develop general guiding principles rather than specific standards of practice. Their report, issued in 1994, summarized the Task Force's response to the charge.

Process of Development. Task Force members reviewed relevant documents from other professional societies, and then independently prepared and circulated drafts of material for use in this report. Initial and subsequent drafts (compiled by the Task Force chair) were discussed during conference calls, with revisions occurring after each call. Progress reports were presented at every AEA board meeting during 1993. In addition, a draft of the guidelines was mailed to all AEA members in September 1993 requesting feedback; and three symposia at the 1993 AEA annual conference were used to discuss and obtain further feedback. The Task Force considered all this feedback in a December 1993 conference call, and prepared a final draft in January 1994. This draft was presented and approved for membership vote at the January 1994 AEA board meeting.

Resulting Principles. Given the diversity of interests and employment settings represented on the Task Force, it is noteworthy that Task Force members reached substantial agreement about the following five principles. The order of these principles does not imply priority among them; priority will vary by situation and evaluator role.

A. **Systematic Inquiry:** Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries about whatever is being evaluated.

B. **Competence:** Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.

C. **Integrity/Honesty:** Evaluators ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.

D. **Respect for People:** Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of the respondents, program participants, clients, and other stakeholders with whom they interact.

E. **Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare:** Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of interests and values that may be related to the general and public welfare.

Recommendation for Continued Work. The Task Force also recommended that the AEA Board establish and support a mechanism for the continued development and dissemination of the Guiding Principles, to include formal reviews at least every five years. The Principles were reviewed in 1999 through an EvalTalk survey, a panel review, and a comparison to the ethical principles of the Canadian and Australasian Evaluation Societies. The 2000 Board affirmed this work and expanded dissemination of the Principles; however, the document was left unchanged.

Process of the 2002-2003 Review and Revision. In January 2002 the AEA Board charged its standing Ethics Committee with developing and implementing a process for reviewing the Guiding Principles that would give AEA's full membership multiple opportunities for comment. At its Spring 2002 meeting, the AEA Board approved the process, carried out during the ensuing months. It consisted of an online survey of the membership that drew 413 responses, a "Town Meeting" attended by approximately 40 members at the Evaluation 2002 Conference, and a compilation of stories about evaluators' experiences relative to ethical concerns told by AEA members and drawn from the *American Journal of Evaluation*. Detailed findings of all three sources of input were reported to the AEA Board in *A Review of AEA's Guiding Principles for Evaluators*, submitted January 18, 2003.

In 2003 the Ethics Committee continued to welcome input and specifically solicited it from AEA's Diversity Committee, Building Diversity Initiative, and Multi-Ethnic Issues Topical Interest Group. The first revision reflected the Committee's consensus response to the sum of member input throughout 2002 and 2003. It was submitted to AEA's past presidents, current board members, and the original framers of the Guiding Principles for comment. Twelve reviews were received and incorporated into a second revision, presented at the 2003 annual conference. Consensus opinions of approximately 25 members attending a Town Meeting are reflected in this, the third and final revision that was approved by the Board in February 2004 for submission to the membership for ratification. The revisions were ratified by the membership in July of 2004.

The 2002 Ethics Committee members were:

Doris Redfield, Appalachia Educational Laboratory (Chair)
Deborah Bonnet, Lumina Foundation for Education
Katherine Ryan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Anna Madison, University of Massachusetts, Boston

In 2003 the membership was expanded for the duration of the revision process:

Deborah Bonnet, Lumina Foundation for Education (Chair)
Doris Redfield, Appalachia Educational Laboratory
Katherine Ryan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Gail Barrington, Barrington Research Group, Inc.
Elmima Johnson, National Science Foundation

Appendix D. American Evaluation Association Evaluator Competencies

The steering committee reviewed both the Phase 1 core topics[14] and competencies[15] to determine specific competencies for this impact evaluation certificate. Because this is about evaluation, the committee also closely reviewed the competencies drafted by the American Evaluation Association (AEA), shown below in Table 3. The committee chose the five domains highlighted in green to be included in the foundational impact evaluation certificate and used the Phase 1 core topics and competencies to help determine specific learning outcomes.

Table 3. AEA Draft Competencies[16]

1.0	**PROFESSIONAL DOMAIN**—focuses on what makes evaluators distinct as practicing professionals.
The competent evaluator . . .	
1.1	Knows and applies program evaluation foundations that ground and guide professional practice (e.g., standards, guidelines, principles, competencies, approaches, and theories).*
1.2	Demonstrates integrity as an evaluator through ethical and culturally appropriate practice that respects all people.
1.3	Reflects on personal evaluator competence, areas for growth, and implications for professional practice.
1.4	Engages in ongoing professional development to extend personal learning and growth.
1.5	Contributes to the general and public welfare through evaluation practice.

2.0	**METHODOLOGY DOMAIN**—focuses on technical aspects of inquiry such as framing questions, designing studies, sampling, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting results, and reporting findings.
The competent evaluator . . .	
2.1	Understands methodology that grounds inquiry in program evaluation practice.
2.2	Understands diverse value orientations that underpin methodological choices.
2.3	Conducts reviews of the literature as appropriate.
2.4	Identifies evaluation purposes.
2.5	Frames evaluation questions.
2.6	Designs credible and feasible studies that address evaluation purposes and questions.
2.7	Determines appropriate methods, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods.
2.8	Identifies data sources and samples.
2.9	Collects data using sound and credible procedures.
2.10	Analyzes data using sound and credible procedures.

[14] Phase 1 report, page 11.

[15] Phase 1 report, Table 2.

[16] Table copied from a document on the AEA website (which unfortunately does not have a public link). AEA considers these "draft" as the association continues to discuss and update this list. The table is as of 2/24/16.

2.11	Interprets findings/results and draws conclusions by identifying possible meanings in context.
2.12	Justifies evaluation findings/results and conclusions, judging merit and worth when appropriate.
2.13	Reports evaluation findings/results.
2.14	Conducts informal and formal meta-evaluations of studies, identifying their strengths and limitations.

3.0	**CONTEXT DOMAIN**—focuses on understanding the unique circumstances and settings of evaluations and their users/stakeholders.
The competent evaluator . . .	
3.1	Describes the evaluand/program, including its basic purpose, components, and functioning.
3.2	Determines evaluability of the evaluand/program.
3.3	Identifies and understands the evaluation context (e.g., its site/location/environment, participants/stakeholders, organization/structure, culture/diversity, history/traditions, values/beliefs, politics/economics, and power/privilege).
3.4	Respects and responds to the uniqueness of the evaluation context.
3.5	Identifies and engages users/stakeholders when planning and conducting the evaluation.
3.6	Attends to issues of evaluation use in context, including the information needs of intended users.
3.7	Considers broader contexts within which the evaluation takes place.

4.0	**MANAGEMENT DOMAIN**—focuses on logistics such as determining and monitoring work plans, timelines, resources, and other components needed to complete and deliver the study.
The competent evaluator . . .	
4.1	Knows how to obtain work as an evaluator (e.g., RFPs/RFQs, grants, and work assignments).
4.2	Determines a feasible scope of work and timeline for the evaluation.
4.3	Identifies required resources for the evaluation.
4.4	Knows how to secure/budget evaluation resources and justify costs.
4.5	Uses technology appropriately to support and manage the evaluation.
4.6	Communicates in timely and effective ways with appropriate people to keep the evaluation moving forward.
4.7	Monitors evaluation progress, problem solves issues, and makes adjustments appropriately.
4.8	Keeps appropriate records to document the evaluation process.
4.9	Completes and delivers the evaluation on time with appropriate documentation.

5.0	**INTERPERSONAL DOMAIN**—focuses on human relations and social interactions that ground evaluator effectiveness.
The competent evaluator . . .	
5.1	Values and fosters positive interpersonal relations as foundational for effective evaluation practice.
5.2	Uses appropriate social skills to enhance interaction for effective evaluation practice.
5.3	Listens to understand and engages diverse perspectives in evaluation.
5.4	Communicates in meaningful ways throughout the evaluation (written, verbal, visual, etc.).
5.5	Demonstrates culturally responsive interaction throughout the evaluation.
5.6	Facilitates constructive interaction among those involved in the evaluation.
5.7	Applies teamwork skills for collaborative endeavors in evaluation.
5.8	Negotiates evaluation issues soundly and fairly.
5.9	Addresses conflicts and disputes constructively in evaluation.

*The foundational training covers the domains highlighted in green