Title: Randomizing Groups to Evaluate Place-Based Programs

Presenter: Stephen W. Raudenbush, Ed.D
University of Michigan
School of Education
610 E University
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
rauden@umich.edu

Dr. Raudenbush is Professor, School of Education and Survey Research Center; and (by courtesy) Departments of Statistics and Sociology at The University of Michigan.

His research involves the development, testing, refinement, and application of statistical methods for studying individual change and the effects of social settings such as schools, and neighborhoods on change.


Presenter: Howard S. Bloom, Ph.D.
Chief Social Scientist
MDRC
16 East 34 Street
New York, NY 10016
Howard.Bloom2@mdrc.org

Before assuming his position as Chief Social Scientist at MDRC, Dr. Bloom was on the faculty at Harvard University for eight years and New York University for 13 years. His areas of interest include applied statistics, program evaluation, research methodology, service operations management, decision analysis, benefit-cost analysis, human resources policy and public finance.

He is now Principal Investigator of MDRC’s methodological initiative to develop new ways of combining experimental and non-experimental methods for measuring program impacts. He is co-principal investigator with Stephen Raudenbush on a grant sponsored by the W.T. Grant Foundation. This grant aims to conduct empirical research on key issues involved in the design and analysis of group-randomized studies and to disseminate this information through a series of workshops with Dr. Raudenbush.

Description: This workshop will introduce participants to the precedents, principles, pitfalls and prospects of field experiments that randomize intact groups to evaluate
interventions that—for theoretical or practical reasons—are targeted on groups rather than on separate individuals.

**Objectives**  
Participants will learn: (1) how to determine sample sizes, including the number of participants per group and the number of groups to be randomized; (2) how and when to use group-level or individual-level covariates for blocking, matching or statistical adjustments, and (3) how to estimate the impacts of interventions and their standard errors in ways that properly account for the clustered nature of the data.

**Outcomes**  
The aim is to develop the capacity of researchers and research funders to design effective evaluations of interventions that seem to improve the lives of young people. We expect that foundations and government research funders will receive higher-quality grant proposals by using the methods and software introduced in this workshop. We expect that all participants will gain proficiency in defining design questions and using prior data to make decisions with the assistance of freely available software and documentation provided at the workshop.

**Career Level & Prerequisites**  
This workshop will be accessible to researchers and research funders who are familiar with basic concepts of statistical hypothesis testing and linear models.

**Methods**  
We will use lectures and discussion to present these ideas. Small working groups will practice using software provided at no cost.

**Materials**  
The software, documentation, and supportive articles and chapters to be used in this workshop are available at [www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org).