



# Evaluation Data Report

## Optimal Control Working Group

### Meeting One: April 26-28, 2011

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# Optimal Control Working Group, Meeting One Evaluation Data Report

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## Evaluation Design

### Evaluation Questions

The evaluation of the working group was both formative and summative in nature, in that the data collected from participants was intended to both gain feedback from participants about the quality of the current working group and also to inform future meetings. The evaluation framework was guided by Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation model for training and learning programs (Kirkpatrick, 1994<sup>1</sup>). Several questions constituted the foundation for the evaluation:

1. Were participants satisfied with the working group overall?
2. Did the meeting meet participant expectations?
3. Do participants feel the working group made adequate progress toward its stated goals?
4. Do participants feel they gained knowledge about the main issues related to the research problem?
5. Do participants feel they gained a better understanding of the research across disciplines related to the working group's research problem?
6. What impact do participants feel the working group will have on their future research?
7. Were participants satisfied with the accommodations offered by NIMBioS?
8. What changes in accommodations, group format, and/or content would participants like to see at future meetings?

### Evaluation Procedures

An electronic survey aligned to the evaluation questions was designed by the NIMBioS Evaluation Coordinator with input from the NIMBioS Director and Deputy Director. The final instrument was hosted online via the University of Tennessee's online survey host mrlInterview. Links to the survey were sent to seven working group participants on April 29, 2011 (working group organizers and participants associated with NIMBioS were excluded from the evaluation). Reminder emails were sent to non-responding participants on May 6 and 11, 2011. By May 18, 2011, five participants had given their feedback, for a response rate of 71%.

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<sup>1</sup> From Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994). *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

## Evaluation Data

### Respondent Satisfaction

**Table 1. Satisfaction with content and format of the working group**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the working group was very productive.	80%	20%	-	-	-
The working group met my expectations.	80%	20%	-	-	-
The presenters were very knowledgeable about their topics.	100%	-	-	-	-
The presentations were useful.	100%	-	-	-	-
The group discussions were useful.	100%	-	-	-	-
I would recommend participating in NIMBioS working groups to my colleagues	100%	-	-	-	-

**Table 2. Satisfaction with working group accommodations**

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the working group accommodations:

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Strongly dissatisfied	Not applicable
Comfort of the facility in which the working group took place	80%	20%	-	-	-	-
Resources of the facility in which the working group took place	80%	20%	-	-	-	-
Travel arranged by NIMBioS	60%	40%	-	-	-	-
Housing arranged by NIMBioS	60%	40%	-	-	-	-

***Suggestions for NIMBioS to improve the resources and/or accommodations available to working group participants:***

*Longer hours for working groups.*

**Views of Group Progress**

**Figure 1. Do you feel the working group made adequate progress, for its first meeting, toward finding a common language across disciplines in the research area?**



***Comments about finding a common language:***

*No comments*

**Working Group Format and Content**

**Figure 2. How do you feel about the format of the working group?**



***Suggestions for improving group format:***

*No comments*

**Figure 3. Do you feel the participating in the working group helped you understand the research happening in other disciplines in the group's topic area?**



***Comments about understanding research in other disciplines:***

*This was the first meeting and I feel it was really productive. I am looking forward to see how the tasks we defined get completed.*

**Table 3. Learning about issues related to the working group's research problem**

<b>As a result of participating in this working group, I have a better understanding of:</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
The research data available on the working group's topic	100%	-	-	-	-
The modeling techniques available on the working group's topic	80%	20%	-	-	-
New methods and modeling techniques that need to be developed	100%	-	-	-	-
The types of data needed to better inform existing models	80%	20%	-	-	-

### ***Most Useful Aspects of the Meeting***

*Being able to interact and develop new and simple ideas to evaluate the efficacy of using the aggregate model control for ABM Model.*

*Exchange of ideas.*

*Presentations and discussions.*

*The common understanding of this problem area that the group is developing is immensely valuable.*

*This is a relatively young and eager group of individuals that want to get things done.*

### **Impact on Future Research Plans**

**Figure 4. Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the working group will influence your future research?**



### ***Comments about influence on future research:***

*"Perhaps" might be a better answer in my case. My current commitment to national interagency fire management research and development is very time consuming.*



**Figure 5. Did you develop unanticipated plans for collaborative research with other working group participants?**



***Comments about plans for collaborative research:***

*Again, "perhaps" might be a better descriptor. I agreed to explore how stochastic mathematical programming methods might be used for the two cases the group is initially investigating. It is not yet clear that these methods will warrant collaborative research.*

*I found some possible collaborators.*

*Optimal control of the treatments for HIV, HBV viruses using the aggregate model and using the control for ABM model.*

**Figure 6. Do you feel the expectations for the next working group are clear (in the sense that you are leaving this meeting with a good idea of what your contribution will be at the next meeting)?**



***Comments about understanding what is expected of working group members:***

*I think the tasks and expectations are clear.*

## Suggestions for Future Meetings

*Give us some free time in the middle of the day to decompress. Maybe a lunch on our own type plan so we can get out of NIMBioS for an hour or two.*

## Additional Comments about working group

*Thank you NIMBioS.*

# Appendix

## Optimal Control Working Group Evaluation Survey

## Optimal Control Working Group Survey

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this survey. Your responses will be used to improve the working groups hosted by the National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis. Information supplied on the survey will be confidential, and results will be reported only in the aggregate.

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about this working group: (Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied)

I feel the working group was very productive.

The working group met my expectations.

The presenters were very knowledgeable about their topics.

The presentations were useful.

The group discussions were useful

I would recommend participating in NIMBioS working groups to my colleagues.

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

As a result of participating in this working group, I have a better understanding of:

(Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

the research data available on the working group's topic

the modeling techniques available on the working group's topic

the types of data needed to better inform existing models

new methods and modeling techniques that need to be developed

Do you feel the working group made adequate progress, for its first meeting, toward finding a common language across disciplines in the research area?

Yes

No

Comments:

Do you feel the participating in the working group helped you understand the research happening in other disciplines in the group's topic area?

Yes

No

Comments:

Do you feel the expectations for the next working group are clear (in the sense that you are leaving this meeting with a good idea of what your contribution will be at the next meeting)?

Yes

No

Comments:

Do you feel that the exchange of ideas that took place during the working group will initiate or influence your future research?

Yes

No

Please explain:

Did you develop unanticipated plans for collaborative research with other working group participants?

Yes

No

Please explain:

What do you feel was the most useful aspect of the working group?

What would you have changed about the working group?

How do you feel about the format of the working group?

This was a very effective format for achieving our goals

This was not a very effective format for achieving our goals ->

The working group format would have been more effective if:

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the working group accommodations:

(Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied)

Travel arranged by NIMBioS

Housing arranged by NIMBioS

Comfort of the facility in which the working group took place

Resources of the facility in which the working group took place

Please indicate any changes NIMBioS can make to improve the resources and/or accommodations available to working group participants:

Please provide any additional comments about your overall experience with the working group: