

Event Impact Assessment Instructor's Manual

1 Basic Concepts and Definitions

This is the instructor's manual produced to accompany the book *Event Impact Assessment: Theory and Methods for Events and Tourism*, by Donald Getz, 2018, published by Goodfellow Publishers.

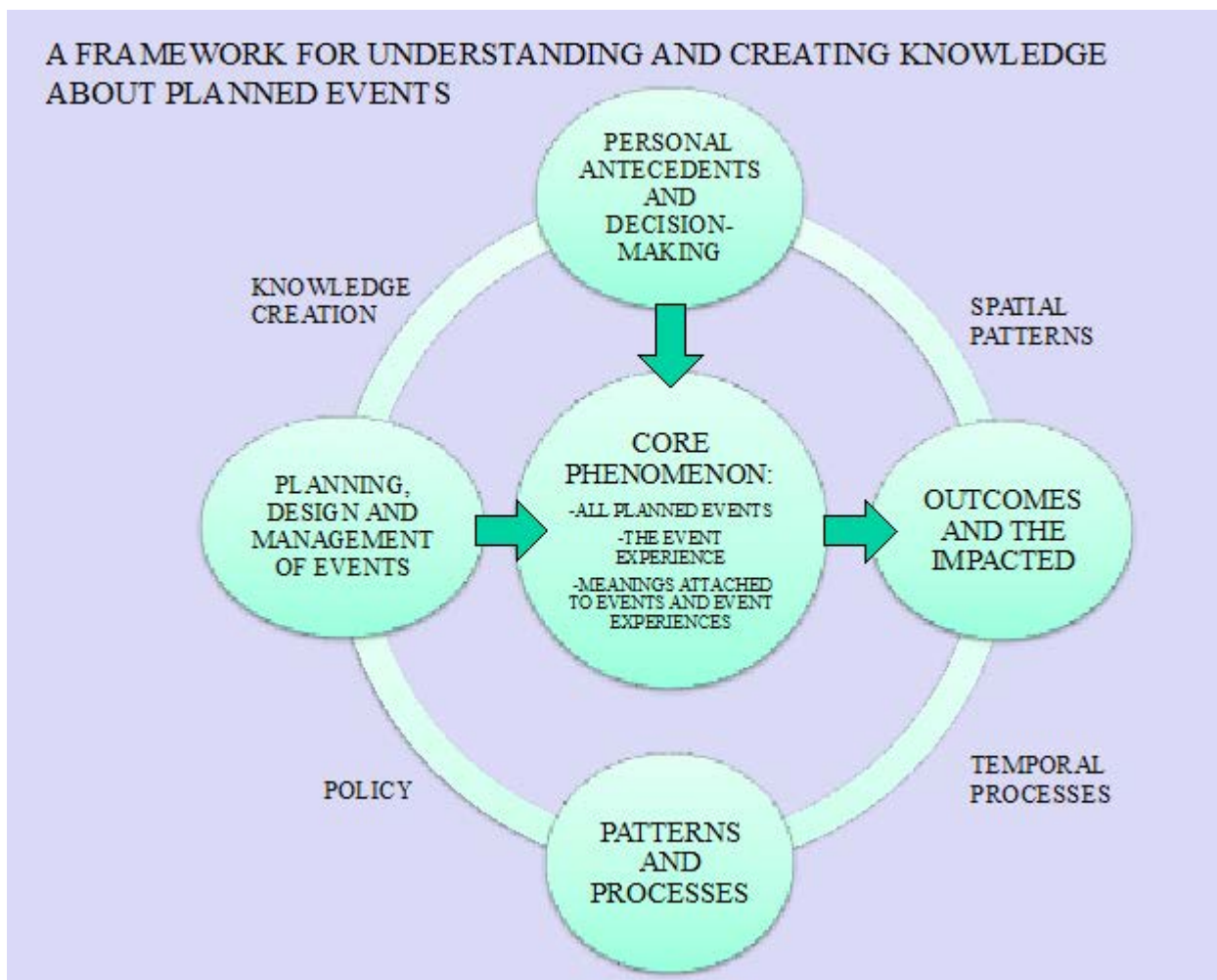
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Overview

One approach to an introductory lecture is to get right into a discussion of substance, such as “what are the major impacts of events on the economy, society, culture and the environment?”, or “what can events do to foster social capital or sustainability, and how do we measure outcomes?”

You might have examples of problems and issues at hand, such as controversy over bidding on mega events (a current hot topic in Calgary, as I finish these notes). On the other hand, you might want to focus on what is great about events and tourism, leading to a discussion of events as positive agents of change.

I also think it is wise to connect a specialist course like this to the broader curriculum, and the model below is useful in that regard. It is from *Event Studies* and has also been modified for inclusion in *Event Tourism*. Obviously the element called “outcomes and the impacted” is the subject of this book, but evaluation and impact assessment link to all the elements, starting with goals.



Lecture 1

1.1 Introduction

To start learners thinking about impact assessment I present four scenarios that illustrate the four main applications of IA to events and tourism. In the introduction to Event Evaluation there are also scenarios to illustrate typical evaluation tasks, and it might be useful to consider both sets together.

You will readily find examples of *post-event economic* impact assessments, they have been done in abundance, but it will be more challenging to find examples of the other three. A feasibility study for a major event or venue *should* include comprehensive forecasts of impacts. Retrospective IAs of how events or tourism have changed an economy or environment are rare (I have none to cite!) and so are strategic impact assessments - the kind you might expect when a city or agency plans a portfolio of events - unfortunately, that seems to happen on an ad hoc basis mot of the time.

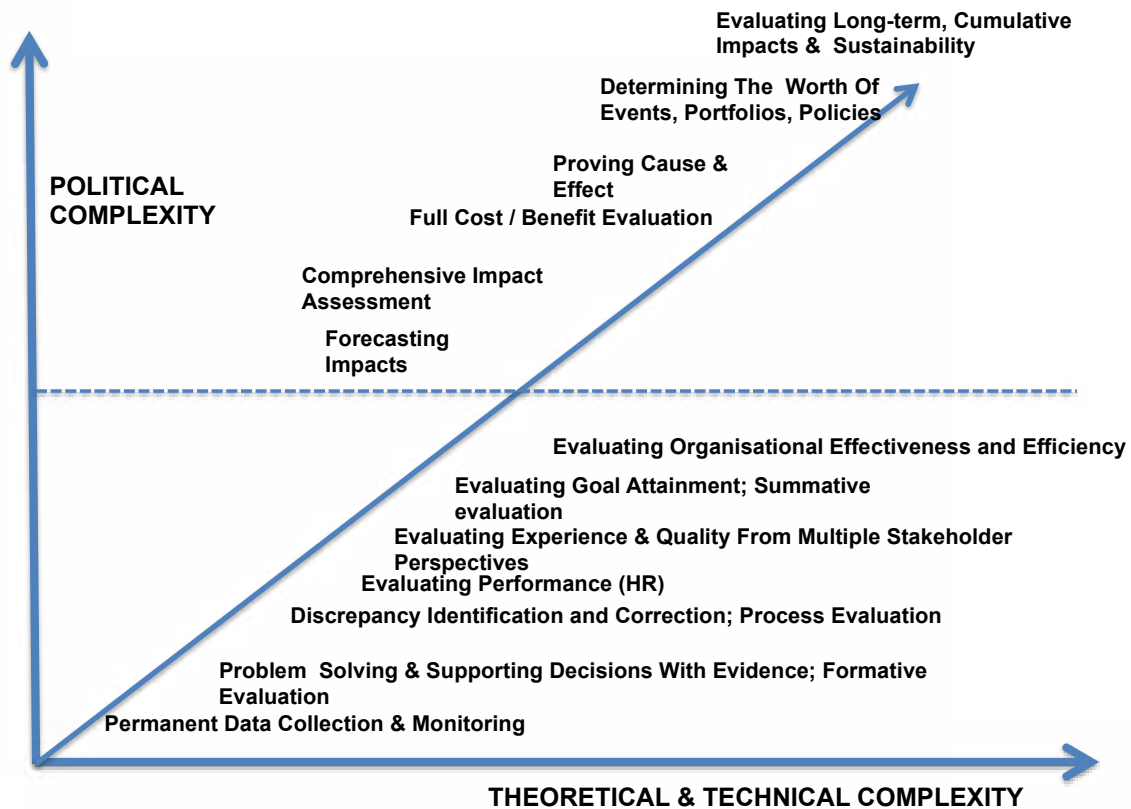
Exercise: As a discussion, or assignment, ask students to search for event and tourism impact assessments and review them, or have a guest present one in class. It might be necessary to use a published research article about impacts as an alternative, just to introduce some of the issues and topics covered in this book.

Also in the Introduction are discussions of social responsibility and sustainability, being two major themes running through this and the evaluation book. Any discussion of value-based planning and evaluation has to include these two themes as well as discussion of the many 'value perspectives' that shape event management and tourism.

1.2 Categories and Examples of Evaluation and Impact Assessment

Figure 1.1 is labelled Categories and Examples of Evaluation and Impact Assessment and it is worth going through this table to discuss applications, and particularly to distinguish between routine evaluation tasks and more complex impact assessment projects. The following complexity model is from the *Event Evaluation* companion book and it might be helpful to use it in discussing how most practitioners will do evaluations for decision support and problem solving, while impact assessments require other skills. While technical and theoretical complexity can be predicted, political complexity is always a wild card. Sometimes politics (including politics in government and within organisations) gets in the way of rational planning and professional evaluation or IA.

Evaluation Complexity Model



Scale; Mega Events

Mega events are considered throughout the book, as they present special challenges for evaluators and impact assessors. It is not just the scale that makes them different, but also the politics and controversies surrounding them. If mega events are featured in your course, then get the recommended books by Zimbalist and McGillivray and Turner.

Definitions

The Index in the book has 'definitions' as one item, providing page numbers for most or all the definitions in the book.

Figure 1.2 provides some Key Definitions (more follow) and here it will be useful to also look at key definitions from Event Evaluation, especially the discussion of value and worth, and different value perspectives on events.

Jump ahead, if convenient, to the Outcomes model (Fig 2.1). Stress that *outcomes and impacts* are used synonymously, while *outputs* are more short-term in nature and generally fall under the heading of routine evaluation. In this book we are most interested in events as agents of change, meaning that long-term impacts are the focus.

1.3 Evaluation, Impacts and Impact Assessment Defined

Refer to the *systems approach* when looking at inputs, transforming processes, outputs and impacts/outcomes. Here is the simple systems model from the Event Evaluation book where there is a pertinent discussion. This model also refers to external *stakeholders*, and while that term is used throughout this book it is the subject of another book in this series (Event Stakeholders by Mathilda van Niekerk and D. Getz, 2018, Goodfellow).

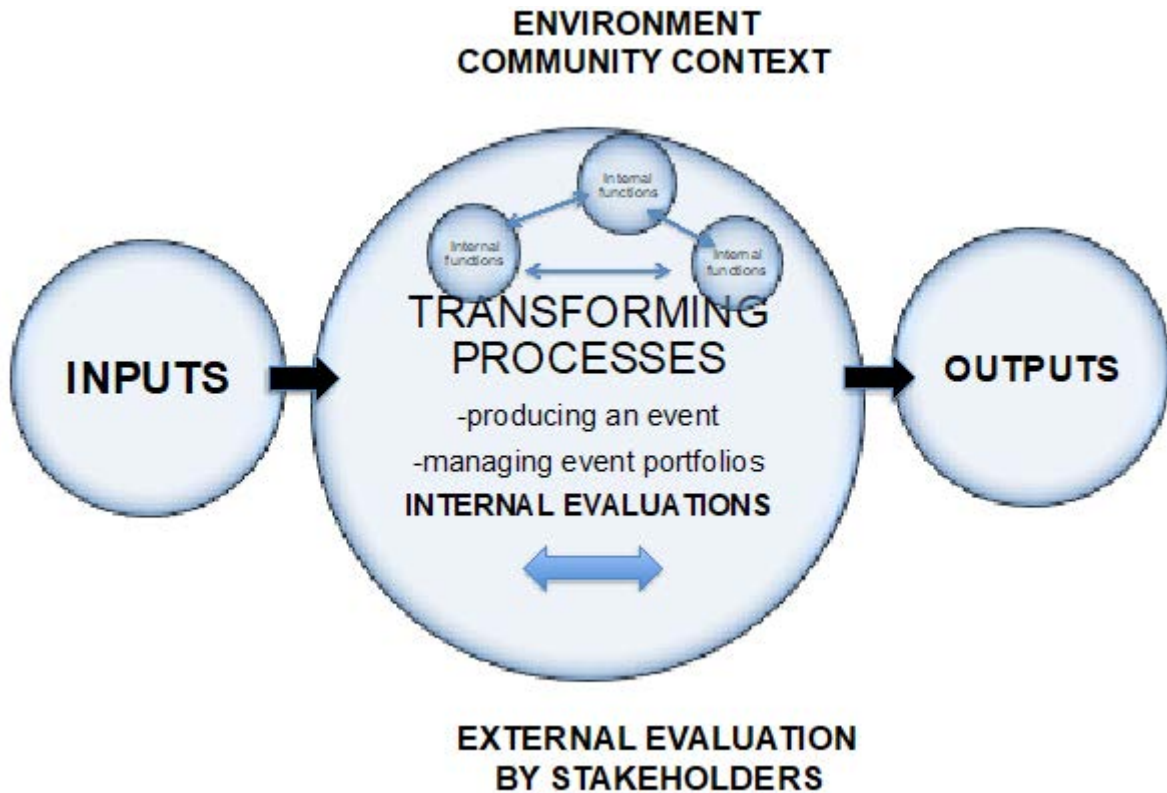


Figure 1.3: Impact Variables and Some Key Questions to Ask (Heuristics for IA)

Questions are asked in this table that deal with important variables when discussing impacts. I use the term *heuristics* in the sense that these questions can be short-cuts, or simple ways to get to the heart of an impact assessment problem. You can introduce *mitigation* here, with more on that topic coming a bit later.

Lecture 2

Figure: 1.4: Additional Concepts and Definitions

Students will have to understand impacts and related variables before progressing to *impact assessment*. When I think of some of these terms, especially feedback and tipping points, inevitably climate change comes to mind. *Positive and negative feedback* has to be explained with examples, as the terms are not intuitively understood. *Cascading effects and cumulative impacts* are also difficult to understand without examples. In all of this discussion of terms, *risk and uncertainty* start emerging as themes, leading eventually to the *precautionary principle*. Note that *sustainability and responsibility* are foundation paradigms for the evaluation and impact assessment companion books.

Figure 1.5: Four Applications of IA for Events and Tourism

FORECASTING IMPACTS

-What impacts will occur if we take a specified action?

POST-EVENT IA

-What were the demonstrable outputs and impacts of a planned event or a tourism project?

IA OF EVENTS/TOURISM ON THE ECONOMY, SOCIETY OR ENVIRONMENT

-What have been the overall impacts of events and/or tourism on the economy, society or environment?

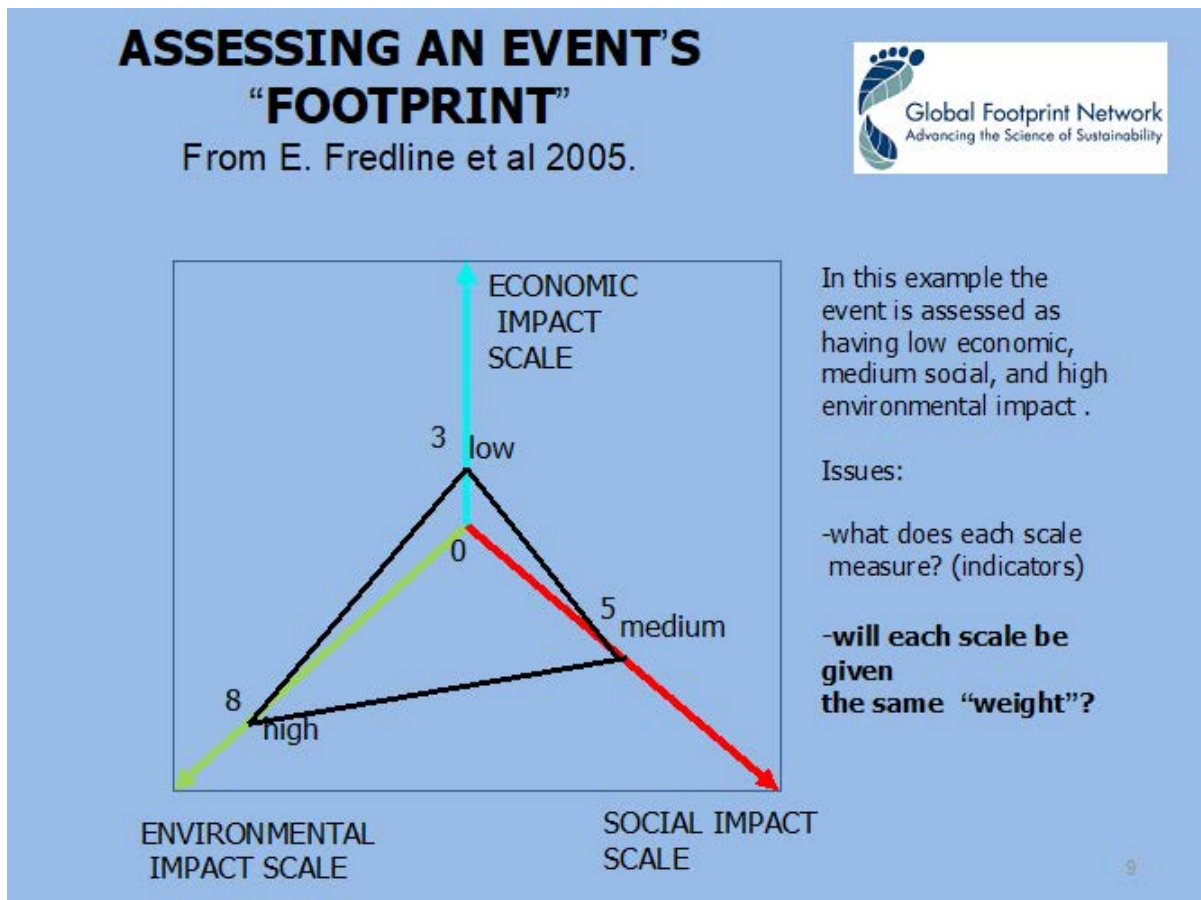
STRATEGIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT: what are the probable impacts of alternative policies, strategies or programmes?

You might want to use this diagram in the Introduction, along with the four linked scenarios. It is worth emphasizing that the whole field of impact assessment has evolved from the premise that we need to *predict* impacts, and logically it is true that without impact forecasting we cannot mitigate the impacts of events, venues, or tourism. However, most of the event and tourism applications we see, unfortunately, are post-event economic impact assessments. And when we do see forecasts it is usually associated with mega-event bidding, and almost always the proponents stress positives and downplay or ignore completely many of the costs and possible negative impacts. Indeed, should Calgary bid on the Winter Olympics is a discourse going on as I write this book and manual. It amazes me how the proponents stress various benefits, without any proof, while obfuscating the costs and negatives. The McGillivray and Turner book on Event Bidding discusses this phenomenon as well as the growing success of resistance movements. That is politics at work.

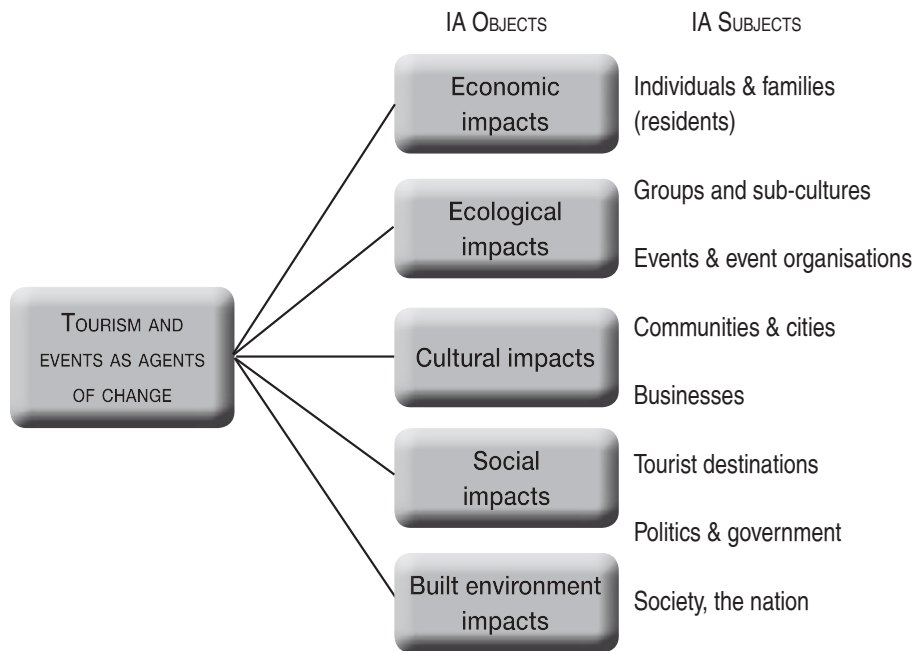
1.4 The Objects and Subjects of Impact Assessment

This is the way I chose to organise the focused chapters of the book (4 through 8). It reflects the triple-bottom-line approach, except I believe we have to distinguish between built environment (i.e., our cities and communities plus man-made landscapes) and natural environment (i.e., ecological process), and between social and cultural impacts.

Do students need a discussion here of TBL thinking? See the model below, and discuss the ‘incommensurability problem’ whereby the three dimensions cannot be directly compared unless surrogate monetary measures are employed for social and environmental impacts. That is what ‘triple-impact-assessment’ does (see the notes for Chapter 9). In event Evaluation I introduce the Balanced Scorecard and recommend the Event Compass as systems for integrating evaluation and impact assessment into the planning and operations of events and organisations, and those discussions deal with measurement issues.



A short description of the ‘subjects’ follows the diagram, but it has to be stressed that the eight categories I settled on can be combined or sub-divided according to the purposes of the impact assessment. For example, the focus on a given IA project might be on the residents, on culture only, or fully comprehensive. What we mostly see are economic impact studies that are limited to tourism impacts, and that is a shame. Increasingly we will see more social and cultural impact assessments in the events field, and for reasons of survival of the field we have to encourage assessments and forecasts related to climate change and other dimensions of sustainability, finding methods to handle the complexity that comes with long-term, cumulative impacts.

Figure 1.7: The Subjects and Objects of Impact Assessment

The concept of *managed event portfolios* is introduced, and this theme can be picked up for discussion anywhere in the book. The assessment of impacts and evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of portfolios (or multiple events), including cumulative impacts over a long period of time, is highly complex and I have never seen an attempt to do it. Yet it will become more and more necessary. This challenge will be picked up in the *Event Portfolio Management* book to be available in this series in 2019 (authored by V. Antchak, V. Ziakas, and D. Getz).

Assessments for Lectures 1 and 2

Short-answer Test Questions

It should be easy to turn the learning objectives for each chapter into a series of short-answer test questions, including definitions, multiple choice, and full-sentence answers. I give examples below, along with some indications of what good answers should include.

- ◆ **Learning Objective (LO):** Learn the meaning and nature of impacts and impact assessment (IA) applied to events and tourism, including categories and examples of evaluation and IA applied to events and tourism.

Q: How are evaluation and impact assessment different? Define the key terms.

A: I want to see an appreciation of the importance of evaluation and impact assessment systems being incorporated in every event and every permanent organisation that produces or supports events. Evaluation has both technical roles to play, supporting decisions and solving problems, and is also about determining merit and worth. Impact assessment can stand alone, as in feasibility studies, but ideally IA is one important input to evaluation. IA generally looks at longer term and permanent outcomes, not short-term outputs. Terms to define: evaluation, impact assessment, worth, merit.

Q: Why is impact assessment more complex than routine event evaluation?

A: The complexity model is the basis for this question. Answers should include political, technical and theoretical complexity. Stakeholders have to be mentioned under political complexity, as the involvement of external stakeholders in general (see the companion book *Event Stakeholders*) can make life very complicated for event managers and political decision makers. Technical complexity refers to the relative difficulties in doing necessary research or analysis, and theoretical complexity to the general absence of theory to underpin the change process (later in the course, theory of change can be brought into this type of question).

Q: Describe major applications of evaluation and IA for event managers.

A: There is a long list to choose from, namely Figure 1.1. A description should make clear the difference between routine evaluation and more complex IA. Students with first-hand experience can be expected to offer real-work examples.

Q: What does it mean to say that events are 'agents of change'? How does that affect impact assessment and evaluation?

A: Again, a more complete answer will be possible later in the course, after TOC has been discussed. But at least students should appreciate, early on, how routine evaluation for problem solving and decision support is very different from IA and evaluation when events have ambitious goals to change society or the economy. An 'agent of change' means the event either supports social marketing (in which case it is probably acting collaboratively as part of an event portfolio, or with other agencies) or the event believes it can be a force for something like social capital creation.

- ◆ **LO:** Know how impact assessment can be used for forecasting, post-event assessment, strategic policy decisions, and assessment of the impacts of conditions such as tourism in a given area.

Q: Compare the four major applications of IA applicable to events and tourism.

A: A simple table to compare the four applications IA would suffice, just as in Figure 1.5. Point-form could be acceptable. Adding real-world examples would be exemplary. I think students will have the most difficulty relating to retrospective IA, which is seldom attempted. Linking this to the FPSIR model will help. The 'state' of a system (economic, social, ecological etc.) is a concept they have to grasp, as well as how systems are dynamic and in particular influenced by our collective actions - including events and tourism, whether we recognize them as agents of change or not.

- ◆ **LO:** Learn key definitions, including inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes, impacts and understand the variables affecting the definition and measurement of impacts

Q: Define the following terms, in full sentences: inputs, processes, outputs, impacts and outcomes. (This could alternatively be a series of short-answer questions).

A: A bit of memory work will not hurt, as these are all defined in Figure 1.2 - with the complication that outcomes and impacts are being used synonymously. A fuller explanation of outcomes will have to wait until outcomes theory is discussed.

Q: What are the main variables affecting the definition and measurement of impacts?

A: See Figure 1.3. There is really too much information here for one short answer, so perhaps you want to ask about each one separately. I think it is extremely important to recognize the spatial and temporal dimensions of impacts, and later on to consider the distributional or equity issues that arise. You might also want to discuss the 'heuristics', as each variable leads to questions that can be asked about impacts.

- ◆ **LO:** Learn the nature and roles of mitigation, including prevention, reduction and compensation

Q: Define 'mitigation' as it is used in impact assessment, and give event or tourism-specific examples of the types of mitigation actions that could be used.

A: See section 1.3.3. Two definitions are given in Figure 1.6. I think the three main elements have to be in the answer, namely: avoid, reduce, and compensate. These terms are easy to understand. The differences between minimise, rectify and reduce are more subtle, but they do describe different types of action. 'Avoid' could be to decide not to hold an event, whereas 'minimise' could mean to reduce its size. 'Rectify' could mean to clean up the mess after an event, and reducing the impact over time could refer to permanent management systems at venues, or actions taken during an event.

- ◆ **LO:** Be able to apply evaluation and impact assessment in many different event and tourism situations

This learning objective will have to be broken down into a number of questions, depending on your context. For example: "What are unique evaluation/IA issues or challenges for festivals/sports/business events?" A full answer will require the whole book and any examples the instructor can provide.

- ◆ **LO:** Recognize the importance of different value perspectives among the Subjects and Objects of impact assessment.

Q: Why is it helpful to identify major 'objects and subjects' of impact assessment?

A: The 'objects' of IA are the main categories of impact assessment, and they can include built and natural environments, social and cultural impacts, and economic. Comprehensive IA would cover all of these, but they can be done separately as well. With these as the starting point we can see how complex it would be to do a fully comprehensive IA, and we can emphasize the differences in theory and methods used in each 'object'.

Q: What is meant by 'value perspectives' and how do they influence evaluation and impact assessment?

A: Value perspectives are featured in the companion book *Event Evaluation*, but it should be clear to students that setting goals, determining the worth of events, and assessing their impacts, depends in large part on what value perspectives are being taken. If only economic goals and impacts are valued, then IA and evaluation can be very narrowly focused, but in many communities a full comprehensive evaluation and IA are necessitated by stakeholder engagement. Given the contents of this book, students must be able to articulate economic, social, and cultural value perspectives, as these are linked to strong interest groups, whereas environmental issues cross all value perspectives (and sometimes need voices, or lobby groups, to identify all the issues).

Long-Answer Questions (essays, or full sentence-and-paragraph answers; definitely not point form).

Q: Discuss the political considerations involved in each of the four main types of IA: forecasting, post event, retrospective and strategic. Give examples from the events or tourism sectors.

A: A good answer should start with a brief description of each of the four types of IA, as summarized in Figure 1.5, with an example for each. Students could also do a comparative table. While forecasting IAs are the norm in the world of major developments, and often form part of feasibility studies, say for a new arena or a bid on a mega-event, the most common types found in the events and tourism literature are post-event economic impact studies. Strategic and retrospective IAs are rare, and so only hypotheticals are likely to be included in the answer. What I would like to see in the answer is an appreciation of how and when impact assessments *should occur* in a perfect world, and some points on how they differ. For example:

"Whenever a major change is proposed, such as an arena development or bid on a mega-event, the potential impacts, and the alternatives, should be considered as part of a feasibility study. This should be a transparent and professional assessment, but politically there are often advocates who want to emphasize benefits and downplay or ignore potential costs and negatives. The same applies in post-event impact assessment, as so much has been invested in events or facilities that proponents and politicians do not always want a full accounting."