

Evaluation of the Peer Coach Program in the DWI Specialty Court in El Paso, TX

Proposal Deadline: 09/29/2024

Dates of Evaluation: September 2023 – September 29, 2024

Investigators

Oralia Loza, Ph.D. (she/they) is an academic researcher with academic training in biostatistics and epidemiology. They are currently serving as Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). Their research includes assessing drug use and sexual behaviors as risk factors for HIV as well as barriers to care among sexual and gender minorities on the Texas-Mexico border. Through collaborative projects, they contribute to making an impact on evidence-based changes in care, practice, and policy.

João Batista Ferreira-Pinto, Ph.D. is an Associate Research Professor at the College of Health Sciences at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), and Assistant Dean for Interdisciplinary Research. Dr. Ferreira-Pinto has more than 25 years of experience in health-related research and project evaluation, especially in the field of HIV and Substance abuse. Currently, he is responsible for the direction of the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation (CIHRE) and is the evaluator for a number of contracts and the co-PI and evaluator of two DHHS grants in this project, he will be involved in the implementation of data collection procedures, supervise the fidelity of the evaluation data collection, provide input with respect to evaluation analysis results.

Budget

The proposed budget is \$49,500.

Salaries: \$36,914

1. Undergraduate student assistant
2. Oralia Loza, Ph.D.
3. João Batista Ferreira-Pinto, Ph.D.

Incentives for interviews with program participants: \$490

1. 14 interviews @ \$35 per interview

Materials and Supplies: \$652

1. Mileage and Parking: \$280
2. External hard drives (2): \$150
 - a. WD - My Passport Ultra for Mac 2TB External USB 3.0 Portable Hard Drive – Silver - \$74.99 each <https://www.bestbuy.com/site/wd-my-passport-ultra-for-mac-2tb-external-usb-3-0-portable-hard-drive-silver/6290662.p?skuld=6290662>
3. Printer Color Ink: \$171.96
 - a. HP 952XL High Yield Yellow Original Ink Cartridge, LoS67AN#140 LoS67AN#140 - Price \$39.99
 - b. HP 952XL High Yield Magenta Original Ink Cartridge, LoS64AN#140 LoS64AN#140 - Price \$39.99
 - c. HP 952XL High Yield Cyan Original Ink Cartridge, LoS61AN#140 LoS61AN#140 - Price \$39.99

- d. HP 952XL High Yield Black Original Ink Cartridge, F6U19AN#140 F6U19AN#140 - Price \$51.99
- 4. Miscellaneous office supplies (folders, paper, etc.): \$91

	Wages	Fringe
SALARIES AND FRINGE		
<i>Undergraduate Student Assistant</i>	\$ 9,929	\$ 18
<i>Oralia Loza, Ph.D.</i>	\$ 14,324	\$ 3,600
<i>Joao B Ferreira-Pinto, Ph.D.</i>	\$ 12,661	\$ 3,285
SALARIES AND FRINGE SUBTOTAL	\$ 36,914	\$ 6,903
COMBINED SALARIES AND FRINGE BENEFITS SUBTOTAL		
	\$ 43,817	
MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES		
<i>interview participant incentives</i>	\$ 490	
<i>mileage and parking</i>	\$ 280	
<i>external hard drives</i>	\$ 150	
<i>printer color ink</i>	\$ 172	
<i>miscellaneous materials and supplies</i>	\$ 91	
MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,183	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS		
	\$ 45,000	
INDIRECT COSTS: 10.0% Modified total direct cost		
	\$ 4,500	
TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS		
	\$ 49,500	

Plan and Timeline

The following are the proposed activities for September 2023 through September 2024.

Overall Goal: Assess the impact of the **Peer Coach Program** integrated into the [DWI Specialty Court](#) in El Paso, Texas. The **DWI Specialty Court** was established on November 4, 2004. The **Peer Coach Program** was integrated into the **DWI Specialty Court** between 2020-2021.

Objective 1: Access the existing ongoing data collection system or exported data from the existing system and determine measures to be analyzed.			
Activity	Milestone/Deliverable	Responsible Individual & Agency Affiliation	Completion Date
Activity 1.1. Review past evaluations of traditional DWI Drug Court Programs	Literature search conducted	Loza / Ferreira-Pinto — CIHRE	Summer 2023 – Fall 2023

and determine necessary measures for the evaluation of the program.			
Activity 1.2. Meet with the DWI Specialty Court Specialty Court Administrator (IT or database management team) to determine the process of accessing the data and identifying measures or variables needed for this analysis and report.	Identify individual who has access to the database and capabilities/options for data export. Document what measures in the proposed analysis have already been collected in the existing data collection system.	Loza	Summer 2023 – Fall 2023
Activity 1.3: Determine if additional interviews need to be conducted among program participants and/or graduates or program team members to evaluate the program.	The individuals that may need to be interviewed, if any. Provide justification for these interviews.	Loza / Ferreira-Pinto — CIHRE	Summer 2023 – Fall 2023
Objective 2: If additional data needs to be collected, identify individuals to interview and create questionnaire or script for the interview.			
Activity 2.1: Prepare a script for interviews with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program participants • program graduates • program team • members • peer coaches 	Script completed/ Script piloted	Ferreira-Pinto — CIHRE	Fall 2023 - Spring 2024
Activity 2.2: Conduct interviews with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program participants • program graduates • program team • members • peer coaches 	Interview Conducted/ Interview transcription, analysis, and write-up.	Ferreira-Pinto — CIHRE	Fall 2023 - Spring 2024
Activity 2.3: Comparative analysis of findings from interviews with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program participants • program graduates • program team • members • peer coaches 	Analysis completed/ Write-up comparing data.	Ferreira-Pinto — CIHRE	Fall 2023 - Spring 2024
Objective 3: Conduct the analysis comparing participants program outcomes pre-and post-intervention of the Peer Coach Program.			

<p>Activity 3.1: Conduct descriptive statistics and determine bivariate differences between the pre-and the post Peer Coach Program groups</p>	<p>Data preparation and database management performed.</p> <p>Analysis and results tables completed.</p>	<p>Loza</p>	<p>Spring 2024 - Summer 2024</p>
<p>Activity 3.2: Determine adjusted results between pre-and post- Peer Coach Program groups</p>	<p>Analysis and results tables completed.</p>	<p>Loza</p>	<p>Spring 2024 - Summer 2024</p>
<p>Activity 3.3: Generate report summary of results and findings based on existing newly collected data.</p>	<p>Results text and report completed.</p>	<p>Loza Ferreira-Pinto — CIHRE</p>	<p>Spring 2024 - Summer 2024</p> <p>final report will be submitted by September 29, 2024.</p>

Peer Coach Program in the DWI Specialty Court in El Paso, TX

The traditional DWI Drug Court Programs are specialized courts designed to handle adults convicted of Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) offenses. DWI Drug Court Programs demand offender accountability by requiring judicial monitoring, mandatory treatment, and intensive supervision. The **DWI Specialty Court** in El Paso, Texas, is the first dedicated specialized court in the region designed to handle eligible adults convicted of DWI offenses.

The phases of the **DWI Specialty Court** program include a comprehensive eighteen (18) month, five (5) phase program:

Phase I: Substance Abuse Education/Prevention - Acute Treatment	Duration: 3 months
- Maintain employment	
- Early curfew	
Phase II: Substance Abuse Relapse Prevention - Clinical Stabilization	Duration: 4 months
Phase III: Sobriety Structures – Prosocial Stabilization	Duration: 4 months
Phase IV: Transition and Sobriety Maintenance – Adaptive Rehabilitation	Duration: 4 months
Phase V: Maintained Abstinence	Duration: 3 months

With the goal of keeping the offender drug-free and decreasing recidivism, the **DWI Specialty Court** in El Paso, Texas, has developed and implemented a **Peer Coach** component throughout the duration of the program.

The participants will report to the designated community supervision officer, who will continue to monitor all the terms and conditions of probation and monitor the alcohol monitoring unit. There will be a multidisciplinary team who will be participating in this program. Participants will meet monthly with the court and staff of probation.

The proposed project will evaluate the short-term impact of the **Peer Coach** components on how well participants are abstaining from drug use and avoiding being arrested for DWI infractions – either in a street setting or in their dwellings as well as other program outcomes from **home visits, drug testing, substance abuse counseling, family/life skills counseling**. We will use extant data that has been collected by the **DWI Specialty Court** for the last six years and will examine the behavior of the participants on how they fared in maintaining sobriety, avoiding arrests, improving family ties, sustaining their financial stability, and avoiding those situations that have resulted in their arrest in the past.

Participants

The El Paso **DWI Specialty Court** has been collecting data on all participants since its inception, regardless of whether they completed all phases of the program or not. Eligible adults to participate in the **DWI Specialty Court** are male and female adults (17 years of age or older) with a DWI misdemeanor and/or felony offense. All participants who enter the program are high-risk, high-need individuals including:

1. Repeat offenders
2. High risk for recidivism
3. High need of external support to avoid recidivism

Participants of the **DWI Specialty Court** will be included in the evaluation to include past graduates from the last six years. If they graduated during the grant period while the **Peer Coach** component was integrated (up to three years) the intervention group—or within the three years prior to that—the comparison group.

For a proper comparison, we will compare those in the intervention group (e.g., those who had the Peer Coach) within a three-year period to those who were enrolled in the three-year period prior to the intervention initiation (e.g., defendants not in a specialty court program; defendants on regular probation).

Measures

The following are the measures that will be requested from the existing and ongoing data collection for the **DWI Specialty Court**. These will include sociodemographic characteristics, program outcomes, and *Post-Program Outcomes*. These measures will be discussed with **DWI Specialty Court** team to ensure that this is a complete list of measures collected and needed for this evaluation.

Sociodemographic Characteristics

For each participant, we would request the following sociodemographic characteristics:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Gender Identity (gender beyond the binary may not be available yet)
4. Military Background
5. Date of arrest
6. Reason for arrest
7. Date of Entry into the program
8. Program graduation status
9. Date of graduation from the program
10. Participation with Peer Coach
11. Date abandoned the program
12. Date of any re-arrests after completing program
13. Reason for re-arrests

Program Outcomes

Given that participants were followed up and assessed for the *Post-Program Outcomes* over time, and given the timeline of the current grant, for this evaluation we will include a follow-up of **three months** after graduation from the program.

These measures, for both the experimental and comparison groups, refer to behaviors or characteristics recorded by **DWI Specialty Court** team members while the individual was undergoing the program.

1. Attendance to at least one after-case meeting
2. Sobriety/Relapse
 - a. unannounced Breathalyzer and random observed urinalysis screening/testing
 - b. relapse of alcohol use
 - c. relapse of drug use
 - i. type(s) of drugs used
 - d. Discontinued attendance to support group meetings

3. Recidivism
 - a. DWI Arrest (Yes/No)
 - b. Date of DWI Arrest
 - c. Any Other Arrest (Yes/No)
 - d. Date of Other Arrest
 - e. Reason for any Other Arrest
4. Family unification
 - a. Number of relatives participating in the program
5. Financial stability
 - a. Sustained employment
6. Change in Environment
 - a. moved away from the drug/alcohol using situations /people
7. Time to Treatment/Service Assessment
8. Number of home visits by a License Texas Peace Officer and/or License Community Supervision officers

Post-Program Outcomes

These measures refer to the same behaviors or characteristics observed within **three months** after the individual from the experimental or control group, completed or left the program.

1. Attendance to at least one after case meeting
2. Sobriety
 - a. unannounced Breathalyzer and random observed urinalysis screening/testing
 - b. relapse of alcohol use
 - c. relapse of drug use
 - i. type(s) of drugs used
 - d. Discontinued attendance to support group meetings
3. Recidivism
 - a. DWI Arrest (Yes/No)
 - b. Date of DWI Arrest
 - c. Any Other Arrest (Yes/No)
 - d. Date of Other Arrest
 - e. Reason for any Other Arrest
4. Family unification
 - a. Number of relatives participating in the program
5. Financial stability
 - a. Sustained employment
6. Change in Environment
 - a. moved away from the drug/alcohol using situations/people
7. Time to Treatment/Service Assessment
8. Number of home visits by a License Texas Peace Officer and/or License Community Supervision officers

Analysis Plan

Database Management

Working closely with the **DWI Specialty Court** team members, the evaluation team will develop a plan to export data from SQL to SPSS (.sav format), as the preferred format, or to Excel (.xls or .csv).

Also, **DWI Specialty Court** team members will describe and identify the values of the variables in the existing data set that will be used by the evaluation team to assess the *Post-Program Outcomes* will be compared with the initial program participants who participated prior to the initiation of the **Peer Coach Program**. A final report will include the history and sociodemographic characteristics of the evaluation project, as well as the methodology, analysis, and results of the evaluation.

Other possible comparison groups could include:

1. Past program participants (more than three years ago)
2. Arrested under the same circumstances, but who did not enter the program
 - a. Those on probation
 - b. Those who serve time
 - c. Those in community supervision

Statistical Analysis Plan

The following is a description of the analysis that will be performed with the existing and ongoing data collection for the **DWI Specialty Court** with the **Peer Coach Program**.

Descriptive statistics will include mean and standard deviation for continuous variables and frequency and percent for categorical variables. Bivariate differences by intervention group will be determined using t-Tests for continuous variables and Chi-Square Tests for categorical variables, or their non-parametric equivalents, as needed. Adjusted associations by intervention group will be conducted using multivariate logistic regression analysis. This analysis will be adjusted for significant sociodemographic characteristics. Significant associations will be determined at alpha level 0.05. The analyses will be conducted using SPSS Version 27.0.

1. Descriptive statistics of the sociodemographic characteristics of all participants
2. Determine differences in Sociodemographic Characteristics by intervention group
3. Determine differences in *Post-Program Outcomes* by intervention group
4. Determine differences in *Post-Program Outcomes* by intervention group after adjusting for significant sociodemographic characteristics that differed by intervention group

Contact Information

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