

Thursday, November 5, 2009

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. STATISTICS..... Paramount Room

A Comparison of Predictive Accuracy in Logistic Regression and Discriminant Analysis

Maira L. Martelo, University of North Florida

Logistic regression and discriminant analysis may both be used in situations in which a researcher wishes to predict a categorical dependent variable using a series of predictor variables. The present study investigated differences in estimates of prediction using the two procedures. Several small data sets are used to illustrate differences in output for each analysis. Both analyses yielded estimates of the contributions of each predictor variable to the overall predictive power of the variable set. Likewise, both yielded results for analyzing the overall fit of the predictive model to the data and the overall accuracy of prediction. However, predictive models are generated using different mathematical methods across the two analyses, and each procedure yields different statistics for assessing fit of the predictive model to the data. In logistic regression, predictor variables may be continuous, categorical, or a combination of both continuous and categorical. By contrast, discriminant analysis allows only for the use of continuous predictors. Logistic regression requires a model in which the dependent variable is dichotomous (binary); in discriminant analysis, the dependent variable may have more than two categories. To allow for the limitations of both procedures, all analyses computed for the two procedures used a dichotomous dependent variable and continuous predictor variables.

Results of the comparison pointed to differences in effect size estimates, estimates of variable contributions, and overall predictive accuracy. Estimates of overall correlational effect size indicated that discriminant analysis consistently produced slightly larger estimates. Estimates of individual predictor variable contributions varied across the two procedures; however, the relative importance of variables tended not to vary. Finally, overall predictive accuracy varied across the two procedures, sometimes favoring logistic regression and sometimes discriminant analysis.

Using Parallel Analysis to Determine the Number of Components to Extract in Principal Components Analysis

Trudy Abadie, University of North Florida

This paper presented a case for the routine use of parallel analysis among the tools that researchers use in determining the number of components to extract in principal components analysis. An overview of several common techniques for determining the number of components was provided. Each technique was illustrated using an educational research data set. Principal components analysis, like all varieties of factor analysis, involves the reduction of a large number of variables into a smaller number of common factors that contain much of the data in the original variables. Extraction and interpretation of an appropriate number of meaningful components is essential, yet varying techniques for extraction of components often yield contradictory results.

Two traditional techniques for extracting factors include the eigenvalue greater than one rule and the visual “scree” test. The former technique tends to result in the overextraction of components in many cases and the latter in inexact and overly subjective judgments about the number of factors. Parallel analysis adds to the usefulness of and helps the researcher see beyond the limitations of these traditional rules. Parallel analysis compares actual factors to those generated with random numbers. Factors are extracted for both the random data and the actual data, and factor eigenvalues are compared. The point at which the random data produce larger eigenvalues than the actual data is the point at which factors are no longer interpreted. Procedures were illustrated for computing the results of all three of these techniques using SPSS software.

Results of the several examples were presented and contrasted, with data output used to illustrate the merits and limitations of each procedure. It was concluded that a combination of the several techniques, including routine use of parallel analysis, was likely to yield the most accurate estimate of the number of components in most research situations.

Beliefs and Intentions of U.S. Registered Dietitians Toward Evaluating Psychological Factors Related to Food and Weight Concerns and Making Referrals

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Donna O. Burnett, Retta R. Evans, David M. Macrina, Jane L. P. Roy,
and Scott W. Snyder, University of Alabama at Birmingham;
Olivia W. Kendrick, University of Alabama; and
Barry C. Stephens, Lindsey Wilson College

Given the heterogeneous etiological nature of obesity and the refractory nature of obesity treatment, registered dietitians (RDs) must consider the contributing factors of individual cases. The online Dietitian Beliefs and Intentions Questionnaire (DBIQ) was developed and piloted to confirm psychometric properties before using to investigate beliefs and intentions of U.S. RDs toward evaluating psychological factors and making referrals. A simple random sample of 5,458 of the nation's 74,723 RDs received a hyperlink to the DBIQ by e-mail or via the U.S. Postal Service.

A priori power analysis determined that 382 completed cases were required to represent the population of 74,723 U.S. RDs (95% confidence level; CI = 5), with 50 additional cases for cross-validation. PCA with internal consistency reliability analyses resulted in eight components related to evaluation and referral. Composite scores were created and used in multiple regression analyses (MR), along with specific demographic variables. MR was conducted on a random sample of 400 completed cases to investigate intention to evaluate, with an additional 55 cases reserved for cross-validation. MR was conducted on a random sample of 391 completed cases to investigate intention to refer, with an additional 53 cases reserved for cross-validation.

For both models, the following variables, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control, were significant predictors ($p < 0.05$) of the behaviors of interest. Having completed a course of study in psychology or a related field significantly predicted intention to evaluate ($p = .027$); working in a practice setting with psychology professionals significantly predicted intention to refer ($p = .048$). Results may inform interventions designed to increase the number of dietitians who evaluate psychological factors and make referrals.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. ON PUBLISHING IN RESEARCH IN THE SCHOOLS: SUGGESTIONS FROM THE EDITORS (Symposium) Louisiana Room

John R. Slate, Janene W. Hemmen, and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie,
Sam Houston State University

In this symposium, the two Co-Editors and the Production Editor of the Research in the Schools journal interacted with participants about publishing in the Research in the Schools journal. This internationally-refereed journal is the flagship journal of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA) and is jointly sponsored by MSERA and Sam Houston State University.

Participants were presented with specific guidelines to follow in submitting manuscripts to the journal. These guidelines, if followed, should enhance the likelihood of submitted manuscripts being accepted for publication. Two examples of these guidelines are: (1) strict adherence to writing in the American Psychological Association Publication Manual latest's edition and (2) creating tables using the table function in Microsoft WORD. Currently, the three editors immediately return manuscripts to authors if these guidelines are not met.

In this symposium, participants were presented with detailed information concerning errors that increase the likelihood of manuscripts being rejected from publication. For example, citation errors, though present in most manuscripts submitted for review, are much more frequent in manuscripts that are rejected than are present in manuscripts accepted for publication. Insufficient detail concerning participants and procedures is another error that increases the likelihood of a manuscript being rejected.

Participants were provided with opportunities to discuss their own manuscripts and their own experiences in the publishing field. Particular emphasis, however, in this symposium was publishing issues specific to the Research in the Schools journal. As such, audience members who attended this session and followed the guidelines with which they were provided may have an enhanced likelihood of having manuscripts submitted to the journal accepted for publication.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. EVALUATIONUniversity Room

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Developing Dispositions During Teacher Education

Janet S. Boyce, California State University, Fullerton, and Marilyn Foxworth,
Kyna Shelley, and Dana G. Thames, University of Southern Mississippi

The recent attention to teacher dispositions has evolved as an element of the national goal to have a “quality teacher” in every classroom. Discussion in the literature includes two opposing viewpoints. One view suggests that preservice teachers be assessed as part of the application process and screened based on the success or lack of a specific set of criteria. A second view has evolved which focuses on the impetus that preservice teachers develop their dispositions during the course of a teacher education program. The literature appears to address only theory and position statements with regard to the development of dispositions during teacher education.

This study employed two different measurements and included pre- and post-assessments with both instruments to examine whether 127 preservice teachers actually developed their dispositions during the second semester of teacher education. Tentative conclusions were drawn from the results that reported a significant difference in pre- and post-assessments with both measures. The challenges of effectively assessing preservice teachers were also discussed. The implications of the findings of this study raised questions for teacher education programs.

Students from Historically Black Colleges/Universities: Demographic Influence on College Placement Scores

Stephen K. Miller, Western Kentucky University

The black-white achievement gap remains one of education’s biggest challenges (Jencks and Phillips, 1998; Miller, 1995); that the divide increases with higher income is especially intriguing (Hedges and Nowell, 1998). Lower socioeconomic status is one important dimension of the achievement gap (Persell, 1977; Rothstein, 2004), but neglecting the middle class in theory and applied research clouds the problem. College placement scores are certainly not immune to this trend (Council of the Great City Schools and ACT, 2001; Council of the Great City Schools and The College Board, 2001; “Expanding Racial Gap,” 2002), particularly for African-American males (Ogbu, 2003). Further study is necessary to understand this problem (Portes, 2005). One valuable source of information could be historically black colleges/universities (HBCU), yet scarce resources impede work in this area. From a larger study of college placement scores in five HBCUs--Alabama A and M University, Fisk University, Kentucky State University, Oakwood College, and Tennessee State University--the research question was: What are the effects of demographic factors on SAT and ACT scores?

Data were collected via survey from students at target institutions. Data cleaning yielded 651 cases for independent variables (17 variables in three blocks--Personal Identity, Educational Identity, and Family Socioeconomic Status--with 4, 7, and 6 measures, respectively); 474 for dependent variables (SAT, ACT scores equated by z scores).

A new Socioeconomic Index (SEI) was developed from five socioeconomic status indicators--Father’s and Mother’s Educational Level, Family Income, and Father’s and Mother’s Occupational Prestige--utilizing factor analysis. After computing descriptive statistics, psychometric analysis confirmed the SEI; one factor explained 52% of the variance (Cronbach’s alpha = .75). College placement scores were regressed on demographic variables, with .147 effect size. Religion (dummy coding), Educational Program, and SEI were significant. Implications, including selection for the college only population, were related to understanding black families and achievement.

Data Collection for Accreditation Purposes

Nancy J. Fox, Christopher Young, Kathleen Friery, and Donna Herring, Jacksonville State University

Current accreditation agencies and standards place priority on program and unit data collection. Universities are encouraged to make data-driven decisions. Departmental faculty members also need to access various data in order to make curriculum decisions. The ease of having everything in one place to enhance the decision-making process contributed to the decision to use LiveText at

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Jacksonville State University. NCATE, CACREP, and the Educational Leadership Re-design through the Alabama State Department of Education provided motivation to utilize grading rubrics for data collection. Within each rubric the accreditation standards have been identified and linked. Subsequently, as faculty scored students using a rubric, data were systematically accumulated.

The presentation demonstrated rubric composition, including adding in accreditation standards, faculty scoring process using rubrics, data collection process, as well as various ways to illustrate data for accreditation purposes. The program data portfolio used for faculty access to data was also demonstrated. Dr. Friery, Department Head of Education Resources, developed a design to organize all program information in the Educational Resources Department. A Program Data Portfolio was provided to faculty members through the Educational Resources Faculty Newsletter, also provided through LiveText Program. Chairs also contributed by adding data and information within their individual program areas. Program Data Portfolios have been developed for each departmental program, including Counselor Education, Educational Leadership, Instructional Technology, and Library Media. As EIM Program Chair, Dr. Herring contributes to the Instructional Technology Program Data Portfolio. She is also the Departmental Assessment Committee Chair, which contributes to the design of the assessment plan placed in the portfolios. Dr. Fox, School Counseling Program Chair, assists in the training of faculty with the Program Data Portfolio. Mr. Young is an adjunct professor teaching EIM courses. The Program Data Portfolio information includes program information, assessment plans, program data, annual program reports, annual action plans, continuous improvement results, a syllabi and vita repository, and minutes for all professional minutes. Implementation of the Program Data Portfolio has provided a secure place for faculty to access data easily and quickly at one site.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. TECHNOLOGY King Room

The Application of Social Networking Technologies in Teacher Education Programs

Daniel W. Surry and Paige V. Baggett, University of South Alabama

This paper described how social networking technologies (SNTs) can be used by teacher educators. SNTs are commonly web-based tools that allow people and groups to interact, communicate, collaborate, and share resources. Typical activities in a SNT include having asynchronous discussions and chats, posting photos and videos, sharing links to information and resources, and organizing and archiving information. The most common SNTs include Facebook, MySpace, Ning, Blogger, and Twitter.

The paper began with an overview of social networking technologies, their development, and usage. The features of the most common SNTs were then discussed and contrasted. Following this, the five primary applications of SNTs to teacher education programs were discussed. These applications are: (1) support of traditional classroom activities for teachers and students, including facilitating communication between instructor and students and between students, establishing a positive learning environment, and providing links to resources, (2) facilitation of field experiences by enhancing communication between the student, supervisor, and cooperating teacher, by creating repositories of photos, discussions, and videos, and by allowing cohorts to remain in contact while student teaching in different schools, (3) facilitation of post-graduation support, in service professional development, and alumni relations by enabling the ongoing discussion of innovative tools and practices, enabling site-specific sub-groups to form, and fostering an on-going positive relationship between faculty, current students, and alumni, (4) support for program development and recruitment by disseminating information about the program to prospective students, local education providers, and other stakeholders, and (5) enhancing professional development for teacher education faculty by allowing faculty to collaborate on research and scholarship as well as grants and external funding, and by sharing best practices for teaching and services.

Space limitations in this abstract prevented a detailed discussion of each application. Each application is mentioned briefly here, but was discussed in more detail in the paper.

Impact of Video Tutorials in an Online Educational Statistics Course

Thomas A. DeVaney, Southeastern Louisiana University

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In an effort to further the research related to the use of instructional videos, the current study examined the impact of a series of video tutorials that were created and used in an online statistics course. The tutorials used representational screen recordings with narration to illustrate the procedures for utilizing a statistical analysis software package. Seventeen tutorials that ranged from 3 to 24 minutes with an average length of approximately 13.5 minutes were created. Each tutorial was recorded using Camtasia Studio. The tutorials were produced in Windows Media format and were initially distributed using a podcast-type method.

To evaluate the perceptions of the tutorials, a survey containing nine items to which students responded using a five-point, Likert-type scale was distributed at the end of the Spring and Summer 2008 terms. Students were also given the opportunity to comment on their experience with the tutorials through an open-ended question. Academic performance was determined through a series of performance-based tasks. These tasks required the use of SPSS to analyze data related to a scenario that was provided and were chosen because the use of SPSS was the main focus of the tutorials.

The survey results indicated positive perceptions of the tutorials that were supported by narrative comments that suggested that the tutorials were an effective component of the course. Comparisons of academic performance between sections with and without access to the tutorials showed no statistically significant difference. The results suggested that video presentations used as supplemental materials may provide instructional designers with a tool to create online courses that are as effective as traditional face-to-face courses.

Viewing and Gaming Habits of Fourth- and Fifth-Grade Children: Watching TV, Playing Video Games, Watching Movies, and Using the Internet

Bo Shadden, East Tennessee State University

The use of technology as a form of entertainment has exploded in recent years. Most of the electronic media that children have access to come in four forms: TV programs, movies, video games, and the internet. Increased access to electronic devices allows more opportunity for children to explore and download media of all types. Parents who want to monitor the viewing and gaming habits of their children are faced with a bewildering assortment of electronic media.

Each of the four media sources has a rating system designed to assist parents in making decisions about what their children watch or play. The familiar movie rating system was created in 1968 to provide more information to parents about the content of movies. The Entertainment Software Rating Board, established in 1994, assigns ratings to computer and video games based on their content, similar to the motion picture rating system. The television program rating system was put into use in 1997 by cable and broadcast television stations. Most of the Internet content rating systems in place now use a system of technical specifications known as PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection). PICS was developed in 1995 as a framework for the internet content rating systems.

The intent of this study was to determine the viewing and gaming habits of children between the ages of 9 and 12 years. The participants in this study were 164 fourth- and fifth-grade students from one school system in Kentucky. After obtaining permission from the participating children's parents, a paper-and-pencil survey was administered to determine the viewing and gaming habits of the participants. Differences were found between boys and girls and between fourth- and fifth-graders in the study. However, the information in this study was viewed with caution because the data were self-reported by the participating children.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M.

RESEARCH TO PRACTICE: APPLYING FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL LITERACY PANEL ON EARLY LITERACY TO UNIVERSITY EARLY LITERACY COURSE CONTENT AND PRACTICE (Training)..... Governor Room

Ellen M. Ramp, The University of Southern Mississippi

This training session proposed a method for early literacy instructors in teacher preparation programs to incorporate findings from The National Early Literacy Panel into their early literacy courses. The committee's findings, published in *Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy*

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Panel (2008) catalogs research results, related to literacy development in children from birth to age five. The meta-analysis was designed to complement and extend the National Reading Panel's (2000) review of effective reading instruction research.

The presentation targeted effective research-based practice for preschool and kindergarten students that was addressed in early childhood literacy courses. The panel identified six variables that had medium to large effects on later literacy development: alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming of letters and digits, rapid automatic naming of objects or colors, writing, and phonological memory. Research revealed that another five literacy components (concepts about print, print knowledge, reading readiness, oral language, and visual processing) showed moderate relationships with future literacy development.

The session included a review of the report's findings, a template for evaluating current early literacy courses in light of the Panel's suggestions, and a sample modified syllabus. Participants were encouraged to bring a current early literacy syllabus and a copy of *Developing Early Literacy* if they were interested in peer feedback.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. REFLECTIVE/CULTURAL THINKINGCapitol Room

The Man from Recife: Why Paulo Freire Remains Relevant

James D. Kirylo, Southeastern Louisiana University

The unfolding of Paulo Freire's philosophy, uniqueness, and the lens from which he viewed the world began at a young age in his hometown of Recife, Brazil, ultimately bringing this gentle spirit of a man onto the world stage. Extraordinarily grounded in the wisdom of humility, yet gifted with a determined strength, deep insight, and perceptive intelligence, Freire not only believed in the human spirit, goodness, and the fostering of a more hopeful world, but was also profoundly committed to challenge individuals, and political, educational, and religious structures that perpetuated the status quo. In the same spirit, passion, and commitment as such individuals as Martin Luther King, Jr., Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dorothy Day, Nelson Mandela, Oscar Romero, Desmond Tutu, Rigoberta Menchú, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and numerous others, Paulo Freire is that rare person who emerges ever so often in critical points of history when there is a need for a courageous, prophetic voice of conscience. In short, Freire's theoretical examination of political, social, economic, and educational inequalities illuminated a light for those living in the shadow, facilitating a voice, a language, and a way for a more just society.

What is it about Paulo Freire that attracts a cross-section of diverse individuals from varied disciplines? Moreover, What is it about him that attracts people from various parts of the world? Finally, Why is Paulo Freire still relevant today? To that end, this presentation explored those questions, delicately balancing the desire of captivating the interest of the novice to Paulo Freire's work, while simultaneously bringing a fresh and creative approach to the experienced.

When Students Reject the Student-Centered Classroom: Developing an Interdependent Relationship Between Theory and Practice in a Higher Education Classroom

Nik A. Clegorne, Louisiana State University

Through this position paper the author sought to conduct inquiry into the on-going debate concerning the relationship between theory and practice. The unique perspective that the author added to this discussion was the distinct vantages as a tenure-track faculty member and student affairs practitioner, both working in a large public university. The data used for this study were based on co-facilitation of an Educational Foundations course. The majority of the students in the class were entry-level student affairs practitioners. They were challenged to engage philosophically dense material with the expressed aim of drawing connections between the class material and their day-to-day interactions as higher education practitioners. Found was that student affairs practitioners were often expected to handle situations which present challenges for which they feel unprepared; claiming degree-programs did not prepare them for their positions. Consequently, foundational material covered in class is often viewed by practitioners as a having little connection to the "real world of student affairs." Further, these individuals often claim that they wish they had learned more "nuts and bolts" regarding careers in student affairs.

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Hence, the aim was to examine these anecdotal observations in our class. Primary data collection methods were field notes taken by the instructors and daily informal evaluations from students. Emergent themes were: (1) social and philosophical foundational concepts – and to a lesser extent, historical underpinnings – were of little use and (2) students want to engage their peers less when struggling with difficult concepts, preferring rather to have the material delivered to them in a lecture format from an “expert.” Therefore, the core of the presentation discussed how educators may teach classes in ways that better demonstrate the interdependent relationship between theory and practice by promoting the value of such studies beyond a simple transfer of knowledge.

**The Molding of Data-Driven Educational Decision Makers:
Educational Leadership Programs Reconsidered**

Evan Mense and Sharon C. Hoffman, Southeastern Louisiana University

Most faculty in educational leadership programs concur that preparing future educational leaders with a strong knowledge base in relevant data selection, data analysis, and improvement techniques enhances their abilities in decision making and implementing quality school improvement. However, an argument can be made that not all educational leadership programs correctly focus on the essential critical skills required to cultivate and grow strong educational leaders in the data-driven world of education. Nor do the programs adequately engage students in context-driven guided practices in learning these proficiencies.

This session addressed these disconnects and proposed the necessary skills education leaders need to create building infrastructures in attaining successful student achievement. The session highlighted a list of necessary skills for data-driven decision making of future educational leaders, such as collecting and managing information about students, staff, the school, and the community. A rationale for each proposed skill and research for support was discussed and presented. Effective data analysis identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses to seek out best instructional practices in meeting individual building needs was also included. Specific real-world application of learning outcomes within relevant contexts were proposed. Suggested curricula and instructional approaches were also shared.

**Manufactured Crisis and Educational Outcomes: Historic Roots
of the Challenges to Black Educational Achievement**

Roland W. Mitchell, Louisiana State University

James Anderson’s *Education of Blacks in the South* asserts that what is typically framed as the educational system failing black students is not an unforeseeable crisis, but instead, the logical outcome of a system that from its post-Civil War roots that was never intended to serve non-whites. Consequently, the idea that the Planter Class never intended for the children of ex-slaves (or poor whites) to get the same type of education as their children is quite plausible. Today, there is plethora of evidence ranging from the performance on standardized tests to graduation rates that lends credence to Anderson’s accusation. Consequently, this position paper took Anderson’s critique of the systemic issues that have historically led black students to struggle to pinpoint key curricular and policy-based decisions at the turn of the 19th century that have plagued U.S. schooling.

A cursory analysis of the educational outcomes of black students today may lead one to believe that the black community is disinterested in education. However, as W.E.B. Dubois stated at the conclusion of the Civil War, “For all intensive purposes the establishment of compulsory schooling in the South was a Negro idea.” Further, stories abound of slaves who risked dismemberment and death to learn to read. Hence, this presentation sought to conduct inquiry into the factors that led a community that was willing to risk life or death for education at the turn of the 19th century to be so drastically out of sync with education by the turn of the 20th century.

The position that this paper took was that the era between 1890 and the 1930s drastically shaped black perceptions of education today. Therefore, the rejection of exclusively vocational education by blacks of this era led to the lack of commitment to formal education within the black community today.

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9:00 – 9:50 A.M. MULTICULTURALAcademy Room

The Effects of Online Professional Development on Multicultural Attitude and the Competency of Elementary Teachers

Jay Feng, Mercer University

The study examined the effects of online cultural instruction on the multicultural attitude and competency of elementary teachers by addressing two research questions: (1) Do elementary teachers change in their multicultural attitudes after participation in online multicultural education? and (2) Do elementary teachers change in their cultural competency after participation in online multicultural education?

A single group pretest-posttest research design was used to examine changes in elementary teachers' multicultural attitude and competency. The participants of the study were 50 graduate students who were certified practicing elementary teachers. They were enrolled in a graduate Multicultural Education course that was taught online in Blackboard over a period of eight weeks. The course was designed to introduce students to principles and practice of culturally responsive pedagogy through various assignments, including case analysis, cultural studies, and reflection.

At the beginning of the course and again at the end of the course, participants were asked to complete online the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) and the Cultural Competency Survey (CCS). Data from the surveys were analyzed for pretest-posttest comparison. The paired sample t-test was conducted respectively to compare participants' multicultural attitudes and competencies before and after the online course. Conclusions were drawn about the effects of online cultural instruction on the multicultural attitude and the competency of elementary teachers, and implications were suggested for multicultural education.

Transforming Teacher Candidates' Perceptions Regarding Teaching Students of Diversity

Mindy L. Crain-Dorough, Wendy Jacocks, and Cynthia B. Elliott, Southeastern Louisiana University

The study examined the impact of a dual language preschool field experience on the diversity perceptions of teacher candidates in an early childhood methods course. The need to address the population of language minority students – whose first language is not English – continues to grow rapidly with native Spanish speakers making up the largest percentage of this population (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2002). After a review of the literature on the incorporation of multicultural education in preservice teacher preparation programs, Trent, Kea, and Oh (2008) found that research is still needed regarding how to better prepare teachers for diversity within their future classrooms.

The dual language preschool classroom had native-English speaking and native-Spanish speaking four-year-old students who were taught half of the day in English and half of the day in Spanish. Teacher candidates in an early childhood methods course participated in a field experience in the dual language classroom as part of their course requirements. During the field experience the candidates interacted with the preschool children by facilitating activities at learning centers in the classroom.

The impact of the candidates' experiences in the dual language preschool classroom was evaluated using a mixed methods study using a variety of data sources, including candidates' narrative reflections of their experiences, recorded class discussions, interviews, pre- and post-Intercultural Willingness to Communicate Scale for Teachers data, and data from a diversity perceptions survey. Twenty-five of the teacher candidates in the course gave written permission to participate in the study. Analyses of survey data showed that the diversity perceptions of candidates changed after working with students of a diverse background, particularly regarding candidates' perceptions of their ability to teach students of diverse backgrounds. An analysis of qualitative data examined how these diversity perceptions were impacted by the dual language preschool field experience.

Preservice Teacher Development Through Community Partnerships

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Karen M. Boyd and Thillainatarajan Sivakumaran, University of Louisiana Monroe,
and Sarah Tymanm, Big Brothers Big Sisters Foundation of America

In an effort to prepare teacher candidates by providing professional growth and development opportunities, candidates were required to participate in community service learning by becoming mentors for K-12 students. Research supports the idea that teacher candidates can develop a more diverse understanding of other cultural groups and social classes by participating in service learning that is integrated with academics. The positive benefits for mentees can span more than academics in the lives of at-risk children.

University of Louisiana Monroe teacher candidates were paired with students from neighboring K-12 schools. This was accomplished through a partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters Foundation of America. Candidates received training and case worker support from the Big Brothers Big Sisters local chapter. At the conclusion of the semester, candidates responded to a survey that was designed to assist ULM College of Education and the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization with data for program improvement. Candidates provided feedback on the training received during the program onset, the effectiveness of scheduling visits, their initial feelings about becoming a mentor, and their feelings about the program upon completion.

The survey data reflected positive feelings about the program after candidates participated. Candidate feedback also reflected a need for collaborative efforts of the partnership to provide training and placement of matches in a more efficient manner. A majority of the candidates felt that the opportunity to mentor would benefit them as a future educator, while a small portion felt that the program would have no effect on their abilities as an effective educator.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. ATTITUDES/SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (Display)..... Paramount Room

African-American Males' Perceptions on Teaching as a Career

B.J. Kimbrough and Dianne Richardson Swain, University of West Alabama

African-Americans comprise 80% of the students in Greene, Hale, Marengo, Pickens, Choctaw, and Sumter counties. Of the 80%, 31% are African-American males. African-American teachers comprise 59% of the teachers in these counties, while only 12% are males. The reasons for such a disparity in the number of African-American male teachers in comparison to the number of African-American male students are unknown. Callas (2003) states that declining and low numbers of African-American male teachers have been linked to factors such as non-competitive salaries, a lack of opportunities to supplement salaries, cultural fears of being regarded as potential child abusers, and the low social status of the teaching profession. Williams (2001) asserts that African-Americans need to be encouraged to become teachers because there are many students who rarely or never encounter an African-American teacher. Such an experience could certainly influence an African-American male's perspective on the teaching career.

This study was conducted with the intent of understanding why so many African-American males choose not to become teachers. Participants included a total of 100 African-American male junior and senior level high school students from public schools in Blackbelt counties of Alabama. Data were collected using a 15-item survey. The instrument's five-point rating scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The survey included questions on: (1) basic demographics, (2) perceptions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, (3) opinions about teachers, and (4) the types of people who encourage students to consider teaching a career. The significance of this study is that it provided a valuable insight regarding how African-American males viewed the career of teaching and factors that influence their decisions to pursue careers in teaching. The results suggested that the lack of career awareness, constructive information concerning the profession, and encouragement were barriers to their interest in teaching.

Preschool Programs in North Alabama: Examining Quality Care and Education

Nina M. King, Elizabeth Engley, and Celia Hilber, Jacksonville State University

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This study was designed to investigate the quality of selected preschool programs serving children in North Alabama. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, "Children ages 3-4 (typically nursery school ages) experienced the largest increase in enrollment rates, from 20 to 55 percent, of any age group between 1970 and 2007" (Planty, Kena, Hannes, 2009, p. 2). Research indicates that there is a correlation between high quality preschool programs and positive outcomes such as greater success in school, decreased crime rates, and even "higher lifetime incomes," among other advantages (Stoney, 2004, p.1).

A 10-item survey consisting of both objective and subjective questions was developed to solicit information about each preschool program regarding enrollment, faculty and staff, curriculum, program assessment, and family involvement. Responses were analyzed qualitatively and/or quantitatively. In addition, program characteristics were compared to national and state standards for quality. Conclusions were drawn, and implications for program improvement were identified.

Social Competency, Self-Efficacy, Verbal Ability, and Academic Achievement

Candi L. Hill and Alice Carter, Louisiana Tech University

According to research, academic achievement is affected by numerous variables, including, but not limited to, social competence, academic competence, self-efficacy, and cognitive abilities, including verbal skills. Since research has shown that females typically have stronger verbal skills than males, it was anticipated that gender differences may exist in the variables associated with academic achievement. Participants were 141 college students (49% male, 51% female) who completed a packet containing the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire, the Dating and Assertion Scale, the Verbal subscale of the Questionnaire on Imagery and Verbal Habits and Skills, and demographic information.

The effects of social competency, self-efficacy, and verbal ability on social competency were analyzed using a MANOVA. No significant effects for self-efficacy or verbal ability were found. Among the female participants, individuals with higher grade point averages were found to be significantly more socially competent than individuals with lower grade point averages, $F(3, 6(8)) = 3.55, p = .019, \text{partial} = .14$. This finding could be because individuals with poorer grades spend less time studying, thus find themselves with more time to hone their social skills. Within the male participants, there were no significant effects.

Racial and Age Differences in Mathematics Attitudes

Alice P. Carter and Oscar D. Carter, Louisiana Tech University,
and Julie A. Osland, Wheeling Jesuit University

Racial and age differences in mathematics achievement have been well documented; however, little has been written about racial and age differences in attitudes toward mathematics. The purpose of this study was to explore racial and differences in attitudes toward mathematics. This study was part of a larger ongoing project on gender differences in attitudes and performance in mathematics. Participants were 215 students enrolled in psychology classes at a mid-sized university in the South. Ages of participants ranged from 17 to 53. The sample consisted of 182 traditional and 43 nontraditional students. Racial makeup of the sample was 173 Caucasian and 52 African-American students. Participants were provided extra credit for participating in the study.

Volunteers completed an informed consent form and a packet of self-report inventories which included demographic information, the Fennema-Sherman Mathematics Attitude Scales – Short Form (FSMAS-S) and the Cynical Attitudes Toward Mathematics Scale (CATMS). A two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if any racial or age differences existed in attitudes toward mathematics. Results from the MANOVA showed no significant interaction between race and age, Pillai's Trace = .041, $F(6, 216) = 1.529, p = .170, \text{partial} = .041$, significant racial differences, Pillai's Trace = .061, $F(6, 216) = 2.324, p = .034, \text{partial} = .061$, and significant age differences, Pillai's Trace = .095, $F(6, 216) = 3.759, p = .0014, \text{partial} = .095$. Follow-up analyses revealed that African-Americans were significantly less cynical toward mathematics than Caucasians, $F(1, 221) = 5.119, p = .025, \text{partial} = .023$,

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and nontraditional students viewed mathematics as significantly more useful than traditional students, $F(1, 221) = 12.170$, $p = .001$, $\text{partial} = .052$. No other significant differences were found.

Determining the Correlation of Math Performance to Math Attitude in Preservice Teachers

Dale Campbell and Patricia K. Lowry, Jacksonville State University

Is the knowledge of mathematics content in general related to feelings/attitudes toward teaching mathematics? These two areas were examined through the completed Mathematics Attitude Survey along with how to use manipulatives and incorporate them into the teaching of mathematics content. A major question was answered: If the preservice teacher has a weak background in mathematics, does that negatively affect her/his attitude toward teaching mathematics skills?

The implications for change in feelings/attitudes are evident in the literature review and through the data gathering of preservice teachers. It is important to have preservice elementary education teachers determine if their mathematics skills are weak or on target for teaching elementary-aged students. In addition, preservice teachers need to be aware of the transfer of negative or positive feelings to elementary-aged students.

At the beginning of the term, preservice teachers enrolled in an undergraduate teaching mathematics course were asked to complete a Math Proficiency Test covering basic eighth-grade mathematics. Then, the preservice teachers completed the survey about whether they were good at math, not good at math, have math anxiety, like doing math, are concerned about teaching math to children, and are excited about teaching math to children. Using a list of responses from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, to strongly disagree, they responded to nine items on the questionnaire. The tenth item stated whether they passed the test the first time it was given. These preservice teachers were divided into two groups according to whether they passed the test the first time. It was determined that their negative attitude was associated with their inability to pass the test the first time. Those that passed the test had a tendency to have a more positive attitude toward teaching mathematics.

Factors Influencing Minority Student Persistence and Success

James S. Bridgeforth and Kyna Shelley, University of Southern Mississippi

Current literature suggests that motivation in college has a positive impact on academic success and retention. The purpose of this qualitative study was to address factors that may contribute to the motivation among African-American students. Additionally, information was gathered about current programs that help African-American students persist, as well as barriers facing these students

The researcher interviewed administrators and faculty members, including those of color, to gain practical solutions that may benefit African-American students. Interviews were conducted at a public institution that has the largest enrollment of African-American students of all predominately white institutions in that state and larger than most historically black colleges. The undergraduate four-year completion rate for African-American students in the institution is 14%. Responses reflected several themes. For example, major barriers identified include upper administration's lack of knowledge regarding best practices and a cultural gap among faculty. Respondents also suggested unprepared students, students' lack of knowledge about resources, and a lack of African-American faculty, administrators, and staff at the university. Suggestions for increasing motivation and persistence among students of color include, for example, students being encouraged to place academic priorities above social priorities.

There was strong consensus that the university should establish an executive officer whose sole focus would be diversity and equity for students of color. It was determined that the programs and services needed to increase motivation among African-American students already exist at the university; however, those resources are not used effectively. Respondents believed that academic support programs were mandatory, particularly for those who may be at risk. It was noted that staff members may fear being perceived as racist, which likely interferes with improvements in motivating students of color. This clearly indicates the need for more training for faculty, staff, and administration regarding diversity and multiculturalism.

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10:00 – 10:50 A.M. LEARNING Louisiana Room

Organizing Instruction to Meet Instructional Goals Revisited

Charles E. Notar, Sherri Restauri Carson, and Gina W. Riley, Jacksonville State University

The patterns of learning were presented at the MSERA 2008 conference, and a number of the participants at the session asked the question of how preservice and inservice teachers use the patterns. To answer this inquiry, an electronic survey of two semesters of interns and their cooperating teachers (350+ surveys were sent electronically) on their use of the 14 patterns of learning was conducted. The 14 areas were: Time/Chronological Pattern, Order in Space, Cause/Effect, Problem/Solution, Pro/Con, Topical, Simple-to-Complex, Known-to-Unknown, Most Frequently Used to Least Frequently Used, Procedural, Whole-Part-Whole, Comparison and Contrast, Statistics, and Combining Patterns. The results of the survey were presented by grade level, subject, and use between interns and cooperating teachers.

Somewhere Over the Virtual Rainbow: A Student-Centered Online Learning Model for Graduate Special Education Majors

Joy N. Bell, Kennesaw State University

Today, more than ever before, it is the responsibility for special education teacher educators to prepare students to meet the needs not only of students with special needs, but to meet the diverse learning needs of digital learners with special needs. In addition, many of the students in teacher education programs have grown up with ubiquitous technologies and who now depend on special education teachers to utilize 21st century strategies to meet their diverse learning needs. Many have witnessed the dramatic change in teaching and learning tools over the past decade. Unfortunately, many instructional methods have not kept pace, and traditional methods are being ineffectively applied to these new learning environments (Elliot, 2009). However, several promising e-pedagogies, such as constructivism, social constructivism, and connectivism, are now leveraging technology to create enhanced learning opportunities.

As the researchers faced the challenge of revising a traditional face-to-face master's degree in special education, they utilized a design-based research method to explore the use of a student centered model of online learning focusing on: (1) digital learner characteristics and learning styles and (2) online instructional design strategies/pedagogy for graduate special education students at a metropolitan university.

This presentation shared experiences from the perspectives of a special education content expert and an online instructional designer after utilizing a student-centered online learning model. Finally, the author hoped to facilitate the development of a community of learners who can continue to exchange ideas, raise questions, and seek support from others relating to the use of online learning in special education teacher preparation.

The Relationship Between Modes of Participation and Satisfaction with Implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning Systems in Higher Education

Melissa J. Haab, Alabama Southern Community College

Participants in the study were 194 higher education employees from colleges and universities in the United States who participated in a specified ERP system implementation. Various modes of participation (Barki and Hartwick, 1994; Cotton et al., 1988; Hinckley, 1978; Nutt, 1986) were identified, and an instrument was created to determine the relationship between the various modes (Hinckley, 1978) and satisfaction with product (Doll and Torkzadeh, 1988) during an implementation of a specified ERP system in higher education. The hypothesis was supported that there was a relationship between the role of employee and modes of participation.

The results of this study showed that the linear combination of the mode measures was not significantly related to the overall satisfaction index. These results suggested that, although there is a

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statistically significant relationship between role of employee and modes of participation, the modes of participation did not predict satisfaction with product during an ERP system implementation. Exploratory research was also conducted. The results suggested that veteran employees participated more than newer employees during an ERP system implementation and that employees in four-year private institutions participated more in an ERP system implementation than those from four-year public institutions.

Qualitative questions were asked of the participants regarding their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the product. Of those satisfied with the product, participants responded that they liked the web-accessibility and self-service, integration, flexibility, accuracy of data, and functionality. Of those dissatisfied, they responded that they did not like the delivered reports, navigation, number of defects/upgrades, functionality, and documentation. When evaluating the 32 ways that employees could participate in an ERP system implementation, employees rated their top three activities as: (1) team membership, (2) implementation planning, and (3) attending training sessions. These findings suggested an importance of implementation planning, teamwork, training, and communication during an ERP system implementation.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. ISSUES IN TEACHER EDUCATION: INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM (Symposium).....University Room

Organizers: Elizabeth K. Wilson, Kristy T. Black, Priscilla Foster, and Xia Chao, University of Alabama, and Jennifer A. Lawley, University of Montevallo

Teacher education has been challenged by various segments of society (Hansen, 2008). Subsequently, it is important to examine the impact of different facets of teacher preparation. This symposium delved into four aspects of teacher education.

Paper 1: This study examined the professional identity development of six secondary teachers (4-6 years) of ELLs by asking four research questions that examined their development, views of ELL students, and teacher preparation. The data were collected from three sources: observation, fieldnotes, and interviews. Corbin and Strauss's (2008) coding system was utilized for data analysis. The findings revealed that their professional development was situated and dynamically shifted. That is, it was embedded inside classroom practice and outside impacts from colleagues, teacher education programs, state and national educational policies, and local community maturity. Implications were presented for classroom practice and teacher educators.

Paper 2: The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine if there was a correlation between preservice teachers' own elementary social studies experiences and their attitudes about teaching social studies in their future classrooms. The participants in this study were 55 preservice elementary teachers. An online survey was completed by the preservice students in elementary education and analyzed using descriptive statistics; responses were grouped according to themes and recurring responses (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The results of the study implied that, although a large number of preservice teachers did not have a positive social studies experience in elementary school, they all had a positive attitude about teaching the subject within their own classrooms.

Paper 3: Teacher education programs are surmounted with new ideas and challenges just as is America's education system. An increasing need for inservice and preservice teachers to develop innovative instructional approaches has emerged. Service learning has become one of those approaches (Boyle-Baise and McIntyre, 2008). This study was conducted for the purposes of examining the impact of service learning during teacher preparation on new teachers. This study evaluated the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education standards and framework for developing a teacher education program to fully understand how it is designed with connecting learning and the community. Moreover, the outlined study provided an examination of teacher education programs to determine what types of programs and organizations were constituents of service learning.

Paper 4: The purpose of this study was to examine current teacher beliefs in rural schools and how they have changed over time. With growing numbers in teacher attrition, addressing daily stress and concerns offer information for teacher education programs to better prepare preservice teachers. Four participants with various years and backgrounds were interviewed and completed journaling activities. Recurring themes were coded and member checking were completed to verify results. Three factors appeared to impact teacher beliefs and effectiveness: (1) isolation/alienation, (2) administrator support, and (3) school climate. More attention was focused on new teachers in rural areas. This

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research explored school climates and how to recognize their roles within the existing climates/communities already in place. Implications for teacher educators were discussed.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS (RIP) King Room

Presiders: Michelle G. Haj-Boussard, McNeese State University,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Arkansas School for the Deaf

Meeting Needs or Failing Students: Understanding Remedial Education on College Campuses

Thad Mitchell and Roland W. Mitchell, Louisiana State University

Remedial courses are not a new, revolutionary idea; however, little attention is paid to the types of students that are successfully remediated and the students who do not progress. This research examined the effectiveness of remedial courses offered at community colleges and four-year institutions in Southeast Louisiana. Grubb and Associates defined remediation as "a class or activity intended to meet the needs of students who initially do not have the skills, experience or orientation necessary to perform at a level that the institutions or instructors recognize as 'regular' for those students."

This study first provided an historical overview of remediation in higher education. Next it provided a review of literature primarily concerning issues associated with student under-preparedness and how institutions have evaluated the effectiveness of programs that attempt to remedy this problem. Specifically looking at students in Southeast Louisiana, the author identified background characteristics of students who were enrolled in remedial courses in junior colleges and four-year institutions. The study then evaluated the retention rates of students enrolled in one or more remedial course. The strength of the study was that it provided a comparison between the characteristics of students who were successfully remediated and students who failed to complete their degree program.

The purpose of this study was to identify the types of students who were enrolled in remedial courses and assess whether these courses were meeting the needs of the students or if they were serving as an elimination process that ultimately limits the educational opportunity for some students. The concluding portions of the paper reflected inquiry into student perceptions concerning the effectiveness of remedial courses. In it, students voiced their thoughts concerning whether remedial classes met their personal needs in regard to the particular subject(s) (i.e., English, Math, or Reading) for which remediation was necessary.

Early College High Schools and First-Generation Students with STEM Career Aspirations

Marian N. Jackson, University of New Orleans

Few researchers have studied first-generation students and early college high schools. The research points out that there is an achievement gap among poor students in mathematics at both the elementary and the secondary school levels (Adelman; 1999; Walker, 2007). This paper was a review of the literature on first-generation students and their experiences in post-secondary education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors. Of particular concern were first-generation students representing one talent pool that one severely disadvantaged because of a lack of access to resources for success in mathematics and science-related majors. In spite of the literature contending that first-generation students are less likely to persist in college than are students whose parents have baccalaureate degrees, the contributing factors to the success of first-generation students who have taken a demanding high school curriculum have not been identified.

First-generation students are more likely to enter vocational and technical fields; students from second-generation families are more likely to major in science, math, engineering, architecture, humanities, art, and social sciences (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Despite the financial hardships of first-generation students, the causes of a low percentage of students persisting in mathematics, science, and engineering majors include low participation in pre-college initiative programs, failure to enroll in advanced math and science course offerings in high school, and exposure to noncertified mathematics and science high school teachers. However, these students are not choosing

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math and science majors because of a lack of high school preparation for success in the college STEM curriculum.

The Success and Retention of College Students in Online Versus Face-to-Face Classes

Rosie H. McGhee, Southern University and A&M College

This study investigated the impact of method of communications on the success and retention of students in an Introduction to Computer Technology course at a community college. The study incorporated the gathering of data basically from student grades and attendance in both online and face-to-face Introduction to Computer Technology classes being taught by the same instructor. The students who participated in this study volunteered. The instructor was certified as an online instructor by the college and its governing board. The students who responded to the questions on the Student Info Pre-Questionnaire Survey did so honestly and to the best of their ability. All students involved in this study at BRCC each semester had an equal opportunity to enroll in the class. A non-experimental, descriptive research design was used because the independent variable was not being manipulated and no treatment or intervention was provided to the participants. Instruments used in the study included student grades and the official attendance record.

Four sections of the classes were being taught at the community college by the same instructor: same curriculum, homework, and testing requirements. The sample comprised two sections being taught online and the other two classes taught face-to-face. Classes were taught using the mytclab course management software. The course schedule listed these similar self-selected classes. The online instruction delivery was synchronous, and students were expected to work at the same weekly pace as the face-to-face students. The syllabi for all classes were the same and clearly indicated the grade points for successful completion of the course. The findings of this study suggested implications for classroom success and student retention.

Students' Perception of the Culture and Climate on Selected Christian College Campuses

Heather Moore, East Tennessee State University

According to the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), there are approximately 4,000 institutions of higher education in the United States. About 1,600 of these are private, non-profit, four-year colleges and universities, and approximately 900 of the private institutions have a Christian affiliation. This large number of Christian, non-profit, four-year colleges and universities suggests that Christian faith may play a role in students' choice of where to attend college.

This study investigated college choice by surveying Christian college students. Undergraduate and graduate students from five church-related colleges were surveyed to determine their perception of the campus culture and climate of their institutions. Approximate 400 students from each college or university were targeted using an online survey.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONGovernor Room

**A Study of Correlates and Predictors of Quality of Teaching:
A Multiple Regression Analysis Approach**

John K. Rugutt and Caroline C. Chemosit, Illinois State University,
and Luria S. Stubblefield, Southern University and A&M College

The purpose of this study was to explore the degree of influence selected learning environment had on student satisfaction with quality of teaching by examining the linkages between it and preparation and classroom management, student grades, course contribution to student learning, and student full-time status. The purpose of this study was to investigate the strength of relationship between the above variables and student satisfaction with quality of teaching. This study was guided by the following research questions: (1) Which of the three predictor variables (i.e., preparation and classroom

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management, student grades, course contribution to student learning and student full-time status) are most influential in predicting student satisfaction with quality of teaching? and (2) Does the obtained regression equation resulting from a set of four predictor variables allow us to reliably predict student satisfaction with the quality of teaching?

The results of the study were of interest from a variety of perspectives. First, this research is important because it integrates key variables that can impact the quality of teaching and, thus, student academic performance. While numerous studies have focused on critical thinking skills, student-faculty interaction, student-to-student interaction and the impact these variables have on student academic performance, fewer studies have focused on preparation and classroom management, student grades, course contribution to student learning, and student fulltime status in predicting student satisfaction with the quality of teaching.

This study was based on multiple design elements. It was cross-sectional in that it considered variables of a specific secondary school's teaching and learning environment at a specific point in time. Further, a post hoc correlation design was used as a framework for data analysis in the study. Thus, relationships among the variables were explored (rather than manipulated) in an attempt to develop a regression model for examining the relative contribution of each of the predictor variables to mathematics achievement.

A variety of self-report measures has been developed to examine student perception of learning environment and their own characteristics as learners. This study used measures in Student Assessment of Teaching and Learning (Ellett, Loup, Culross, McMullen and Rugutt, 1997) that assessed of a wide variety of factors among college students. This study analyzed data that were collected from students ($n = 153$) enrolled in the Evening School Division of Continuing Education at a southern, public, state university. The classes in this program were traditional undergraduate college courses.

Four kinds of data analyses were completed for this study: (1) descriptive statistics for the sample, (2) summary of intercorrelations among the study variables, (3) regression analyses, and (4) univariate and multivariate analyses for selected demographic variables. The regression results indicated that the overall model significantly predicted student satisfaction with quality of teaching, $R^2 = .503$, $R^2_{adj} = .502$, $F(4, 1460) = 369$, $p < .000$. This model accounted for 50.2% of variance in student satisfaction with quality of teaching.

The study concluded with a discussion of the importance of preparation and classroom management, course contribution to student learning, student fulltime status and student grades, and the challenges institutions face in trying to improve students' achievement through providing quality instructional services.

Complete results of the above data analysis and procedures were reported at the conference. Further, the major findings and conclusions of the study were also discussed in view of their implications for future research, measurement theory, research design, and practice.

An Action Research Study of Teacher Candidate Responses on Culturally Responsive Teaching

Maud A. Kuykendall, Vicki Hartley, and Elaine Lambert, Delta State University

The action research study asked graduate level teacher candidates to reflect and report on their growth in cultural competence over the course of their field experiences. At the conclusion of their field experiences, they responded to a series of questions with prompts regarding: (1) their cultural awareness and demonstration of cultural competence, (2) the use of student-centered planning and instruction, and (3) the use of a variety of strategies representative of culturally responsive teaching. Six teacher candidates and the course instructor participated in the action research. Of the six candidates (all females) participating in the semester-long study, four were African-American, one was Caucasian, and one was Chinese-Mexican American. The course instructor, who was a female Caucasian, acted as lead action researcher. The lead action researcher met with the candidates once a week for eight weeks. The candidates received instructional materials and lectures on culturally responsive teaching as they developed a special education unit planner and a set of five-day lesson plans. During field experiences the lead researcher observed each candidate implement her unit and gave her feedback at least three times.

At the conclusion of field experiences, the candidates were given a description of culturally responsive teaching and asked to determine what experiences contributed to their growth in cultural competence and how they utilized culturally responsive instructional planning and assessment. The lead

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researcher coded the responses and developed themes. Two additional special education faculty members reviewed the themes and findings. The lead action researcher and the two faculty members refined the themes and generated tentative conclusions. The findings of the study suggested implications for the development of a module or set of modules on culturally responsive teaching.

Targeting Special Education Certification (TSEC) Through Professional Learning Communities: An Evaluation Report

Mitzi Trahan and Dianne Olivier, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Targeting Special Education Certification (TSEC) is a Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) professional development initiative designed to support non-certified special education (SPED) teachers with specialized classroom support. TSEC creates supportive cohorts of SPED teachers having limited opportunities for professional development programs concentrating on specific needs of special education students. In 2009, 10 Louisiana districts were purposively selected because of special education shortages. The notion of community is also aligned to NCLB 2001 school reform initiatives. It is anticipated that leadership and targeted assistance will increase the number of newly certified special education teachers meeting highly qualified educational standards.

The purpose of this report was to present mixed methodology evaluation data regarding participants' satisfaction about the effectiveness of the TSEC program and overall project success. Survey questions were designed to elicit perception of impact on teacher retention, SPED certification efforts, and confidence in SPED instructional strategies. Secondly, recommendations were offered for the initiation, implementation, and sustainability of a learning community that supports and reinforces programs goals.

Educational research consistently shows that there are multifaceted relationships between professional development, teacher growth, and student achievement. To maximize the benefits of participation in TSEC, it is important to provide access to resources and instill a culture of improvement and collaboration. In identifying factors that best impact student achievement, the design of staff development efforts must be considered to nurture teacher learning and instill a sense of belonging. Initial results showed that new SPED teachers often felt that they were alone during their first days as a new teacher. The professional learning community intentionally provides a collaborative culture of ongoing professional learning in which both teacher and student growth are the desired outcomes. The successes of TSEC can be replicated by continuing quality programming and encouraging collaboration that captures a sense of strength in numbers.

**10:00 – 10:50 A.M. CREATIVE ARTS ENCOURAGE PERSONAL EXPRESSION OF LOSS
(Training).....Capitol Room**

Vincent R. McGrath, Mississippi State University

In this training session, the use of the creative arts in grief therapy was discussed. Students experience less difficulty in their school work when given the opportunity to express their emotions by drawing, composing, creating, and performing. Packets with information and materials on successful use of the arts were given to the participants. Educators increased their understanding and confidence in innovative techniques that will complement their skills in supporting students through life/death issues. The facilitators have personally experienced loss of spouses, organized a community support group, worked with school counselors, and conducted numerous national, regional, and local workshops.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS.....Academy Room

**Factor Structure of the Attitudinal Items from the TIMSS 2003 Student Questionnaire
(Grade 8): Comparison Between Hong Kong and the USA**

Lingqi Meng, Louisiana State University

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Many researchers used the 12 items (e.g., I usually do well in math; I would like to take more math in school) from the TIMSS 2003 Student Questionnaire (Grade 8) when studying how students feel about math. These items were generally called “student attitudes” toward math (or science) in TIMSS. However, studies conducted using TIMSS data showed that different scholars used different constructs in their studies. The confusing use of different constructs underlying the questionnaire items might result in misunderstanding, especially with cross-cultural studies between societies.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the factor structure of the 12 questionnaire items and evaluate if these items tested the same measures when used in Hong Kong and the USA. The 12 items from the student questionnaire described above were used in the study. These items were classified under two constructs by the TIMSS 2003 User Guide. One was called “liking math,” which included seven items. The second construct was called “valuing math,” which included five items.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the two-factor structure (“liking math” and “valuing math”). Multiple fit indices (chi square, CFI, GFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR) were used to evaluate the overall fit of the model. If the hypothesized model was a reasonable fit for the data, then path coefficients were compared in the Hong Kong model and in the USA model. If the hypothesized model was rejected, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine the factor structure in both Hong Kong and the USA.

The Effects of Teaching Without a Textbook in an Eighth-Grade Mathematics Classroom

John A. Sargent and Meghann Woodell, East Texas Baptist University,
and Dona Packer, University of Texas at Tyler

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of teaching without a textbook in an eighth-grade mathematics classroom. The research question guiding this qualitative action research case study was: How does teaching eighth-grade mathematics without a textbook affect the students? The participants in this case study were 17 eighth-grade math students in a junior high school located in Northeast Texas, a teacher who was in her 15th year of teaching junior high school mathematics, and the researcher. The case study took place over a 14-week period. Action research methodology facilitated insights on a daily basis because of interaction between the participants and researcher. Data collection procedures included observations/field notes, reflective journal, student interviews, and teacher interviews. Categories were generated through the constant comparison method with continual refining and analysis.

Three themes emerged from the data analysis. First, the teacher felt rushed to complete as much as possible in a limited amount of time because there was no textbook present for the students. Second, numerous interruptions were caused by other teachers and students to get worksheets. Third, the large amount of worksheet-driven instruction resulted in the students becoming disinterested and disengaged in the learning process.

Implications from this case study were in several areas and are important for teachers who teach junior high school mathematics without a textbook. Teaching mathematics without a textbook affected the students negatively. Many students became disorganized with no textbook to serve as an anchor of instruction. Teachers were forced to present numerous examples in class because the students did not have a textbook to reinforce background knowledge. The learning of mathematics-specific vocabulary was hampered because of the absence of a textbook.

The Relationship Between Mathematics and Reading/Language Arts TCAP Scores Among Third-Grade Males

Whitney Shelton and Patrick N. Kariuki, Milligan College

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between mathematics and reading/language arts Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) scores at a selected elementary school. The sample consisted of 12 randomly selected males in a third-grade classroom. Data were collected for this study using the overall TCAP reading/language arts subtest scores, overall mathematics scores, mathematics scores in the criterion referenced categories of number sense theory and computation, and reading/language art scores in the criterion referenced categories of content and

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meaning. Data were analyzed using a Pearson's product moment correlation and multiple regression procedures.

The results indicated significant relationship between TCAP overall scores of mathematics and reading/language arts scores ($r = .904$, $p = .001$). Also, significant relationship was found between reading/language arts meaning and mathematical number sense theory ($r = .734$, $p = .016$). Similarly, significant relationship was found between reading/language arts content and mathematics computation ($r = .811$, $p = .004$). Finally, significant influence was found in reading/language arts scores in the criterion-referenced category of meaning and content on the overall TCAP mathematics score in males. Reading/language arts meaning had the most influence (Beta = $.760$, $p = .004$), followed by reading/language arts content (Beta = $.724$, $p = .008$).

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION Paramount Room

A Case Study of Emerging Adults: Negotiating Adult Milestones in Academia

Lauren A. Menard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how local emerging adults were transitioning to adulthood and to describe those experiences traditionally associated with adulthood. For this purpose, the following research questions were developed: (1) How do young adults today describe conditions surrounding adult transitioning? (2) How do young adults consider parenthood? and (3) How are experiences of leaving home and living independently described by young adults today? Researchers have noted the need for qualitative studies to describe the socially constructed self-perception of adulthood and to give voice to participants. Participants were from Acadiana, a southern region of Louisiana with a distinct, eclectic culture and strong French heritage. This study utilized a collective case study design with a semi-structured interview protocol. Eight open-ended questions relating to adulthood milestones were created to guide the face-to-face interviews.

Results supported the ambiguity in defining adulthood and uncertainty surrounding emerging adulthood that is noted in current literature. Other findings supported the continued validity of parenting as a marker in defining adulthood for emerging adults who have and have not had children. The following response from Jake, a financially independent 27-year-old, illustrates the complexity of decisively claiming adult status: "I would say I am close to an adult. . . . it took me a long time to figure out all the things I used to think I knew that I really didn't know. But, if that means that I'm turning into an adult, I guess that's one of the things."

An implication for this study was to use current descriptions from emerging adults to inform social initiatives that address independence through entering the workforce and post-secondary outcomes. Findings provided insights for audiences seeking to support the valuable development of young adults today as they transition to the independent, productive citizens of tomorrow.

Building a Professional Learning Community: A Case Study of the Collaboration of Full-Time and Adjunct Faculty in the Transformation of One Doctoral Program in School Leadership

Pamela H. Scott, East Tennessee State University

This case study examined the collaborative efforts of full-time and adjunct faculty in transforming a fragmented, disjointed doctoral program in school leadership into a cohesive, dynamic program. Developing the capacity of full-time and adjunct faculty to function as a professional learning community is a primary way to facilitate change. This paper described the two-year process of change, the development of a professional learning community, and the resulting transformation in organizational culture.

This study employed a qualitative design using the single-unit case study that permitted an in-depth analysis of the process of change that occurred in the development of the professional learning community. A variety of evidence and multiple research techniques was used in data collection. Analysis focused on the theoretical proposition that a professional learning community fosters the change process. Factors that facilitated the capacity of the professional learning community and the resulting program changes were identified utilizing the High-Involvement Management framework.

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The foundation of the high-involvement management framework used in business and education is the premise that factors identified in the framework (power, knowledge and skills, information, and rewards) are characterized as facilitators of change. Three themes emerged from the analysis of the data: (1) individual readiness for change, (2) organizational readiness for change, and (3) the social aspect of professional learning. Implications of each theme were discussed.

**A Summative Program Evaluation of the Alternative Certification Program
at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, 1999-2007**

Marclyn D. Porter, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Alternative routes to teacher certification, initially developed to address the issues of teacher quality and teacher shortages, have become part of the educational lexicon. Yet, little is known about these programs, the participants, and their perceived level of readiness. This evaluation study added to the research in the areas of teacher preparation and alternative licensure programs and provided a better understanding of program participants' perceptions of their preparedness to be effective teachers. In 1998, a committee of UTC faculty and public school administrators collaborated to design a program to specifically address the shortage of highly qualified teachers in the "high needs" areas of Math, Science, Foreign Language, and Special Education within a local urban school system. This cooperative endeavor was to provide training and coursework in a cohort format, at the post-baccalaureate level, for initial licensure candidates. Because of funding constraints, the "cohort design" Alternative Certification program was terminated in 2007.

This study evaluated, from the participants' perspective, the effectiveness of the Alternative Certification Program as measured by the original program goals and objectives and (1) identified the program's effects on learners and participants and (2) provided evaluation findings that cited the strengths, deficiencies, and suggestions for program improvement.

A 28-question survey was distributed to all participants via email and conventional mail. The survey generated descriptive data of program participants, as well as program evaluation data. Additionally, existing records collected and maintained by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga pertaining to participants' program start and completion dates, M.Ed. completion, and teaching placements were gathered. All data were coded, and an analysis was performed to identify statistically significant findings. The findings of this program evaluation suggested implications for teacher educators, teacher preparation programs, and new teacher induction processes.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS/COMPUTERS..... Louisiana Room

Why is There a Decline of Women in Mathematics-Based Professions?

Gwyllyn Williams, Southern University and A and M College

This paper presented a look into the investigation of "assessing the role of personality in profession choices" of mathematics-based careers. Despite increases in female labor force participation, women remain substantially underrepresented in most scientific, mathematical, and technical fields. There is a small number of women in mathematical, engineering, physics, chemistry, computer science, and other similar fields, which has variously been attributed to discrimination and in the differences in ability or choice.

This paper looked at and used collected data containing information on professional, economically, as well as vocational, interests to investigate the determinants of entry into mathematics-based professions. This paper presented the results that showed how men and women differed systematically in their interests, and that these differences can account for a socially, economically and statistically fraction of the professional gender gap. This paper showed the results of the factors that contributed to the professional career choices from vocational up to the desired professional career choice.

Investigating the Impact of Virtual School Technology on K-12 Science Students

Thursday, November 5, 2009

Gwendolyn C. Huggins, Southern University and A and M College

The last decade has seen an explosion of multimedia digital technology-computers and all that goes with them in K-12 schools throughout the country. Data have revealed that computers are powerful and flexible tools that can enhance teaching and learning in innumerable ways. At the same time despite that fact, not enough research has been done to show if we have received an adequate return on our educational investment. At issue is, Will all of this technology improve education for a large number of students? Will it make our educational systems more effective and efficient? Will it help schools better prepare students for their lives in the 21st century? The rapid influx of technology into schools is, in many cases, running ahead of the educational vision and careful plans necessary to put technology to good use.

According to the literature, a computer allows students to interact with people in more engaging ways than ever before. Systems give students the opportunity to try manipulating simulated worlds of their own making. Students can fly to the moon, design their own animal, or direct their own newscast. Each literature review searched for ways in which the computer will support the cultivation of success for students. Tentative conclusions were drawn, and attempts were made to verify the implications of maximizing investments in technology in K-12 schools science programs. The findings of the literature suggested that further research is needed.

Factors Contributing to the Success of College Algebra Students

Michael J. Self, Southern University and A and M College

This literature review was conducted to identify factors that had an effect on student performance in college algebra. Once identified, the factors would be studied to determine their level of significance in predicting student success in college algebra. The literature was divided into three main subheadings: demographic variables, high school variables, and placement tests. The results of the literature review indicated that two demographics variables (age and gender) had only a moderate impact. Several high school variables (including high school grade point average), as well as mathematics placement scores, had a significant impact on student success.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. STUDENTS AT RISK.....University Room

Drop Out or Persist? The Influence of Differentiated Instruction and Teacher Behavior on College Freshmen and GED Students

Ronald A. Styron, Vera Robertson, Kyna Shelley, and Gaylynn Parker, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of this research was to provide information to school administrators about the impact differentiated instruction and teacher behavior had on students' decision to drop out of high school or persist. The goal of this study was to help determine if a significant relationship existed between differentiated instruction, teacher behavior, and dropout status. The participants in this study included students enrolled in selected colleges or GED programs. The age of the participants was from 16 to 21. Participants completed a questionnaire constructed by the researchers to gather data pertaining to their experiences with differentiated instruction and teacher behavior their last year in high school. Eighty-six first-year freshmen and 50 GED students completed the questionnaire.

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to test for significant relationships between differentiated instruction, teacher behavior, gender, race, and dropout status. A significant relationship was found between differentiated instruction, teacher behavior, and dropout status. However, there was no significant relationship between gender and dropout status, nor race and dropout status.

Cognitive and Motivational Contributors to Aptitude: A Study of Spoken and Signed Language Interpreting Students

Thursday, November 5, 2009

Sherry Shaw, University of North Florida

A 2008 causal-comparative study was conducted with spoken and signed-language-interpreting students at four institutions in the European Union. The study was built on two previous investigations of essential characteristics, as reported by interpreting students and their professors to measure these characteristics with standardized performance and motivation tests. It grouped participants as “entry-level” or “advanced,” depending on their prior experience in simultaneous interpreting coursework.

The study documented cognitive and motivational scores of spoken language (SP) and signed language (SL) interpreting students at both levels, using a computerized neuropsychological screening test, CNS Vital Signs, and the Achievement Motivation Inventory. The CNSVS, previously used solely in the medical arena, measured the ability to: (1) remember words or geometric figures and recognize them in a field of distractors, (2) perform executive control tasks that require adjusting responses to randomly changing rules, (3) sustain attention, (4) coordinate psychomotor and visual-motor responses, and (5) rapidly react to complex directions in the participant’s native language. The latter was measured in milliseconds and was of particular interest to the purpose of this comparative study.

The AMI measured personal characteristics around three themes of self-assurance, ambition, and self-control. Independent sample t-tests were conducted on all the subscales of the CNSVS and AMI. Significant differences between the SP and SL students were found in the areas of visual memory, concentration, and internality (belief that success is because of internal causes), and between the advanced and entry-level students in the areas of concentration and the eagerness to learn new things in the absence of external rewards. This study represented the first attempt to compare measured traits in students representing two modes of interpreting, thus establishing precedence whereby joint research efforts can be sustained and elaborated on in the US, UK, and Canada.

High-Performing Students’ Perceptions of Teacher Efficacy and Parental Involvement

Vinson F. Thompson, Memphis (TN) City Schools

Attribution Theory provides a theoretical framework concerning the factors (internal and external) to which individuals attribute their own, and other’s, successes and failures. Parental involvement has long been recognized as having a significant impact on the success of a student. Likewise, recent research suggests that effective teachers are a key factor toward better education. With a variety of factors contributing to the success of students in the classroom, this study aimed to investigate if higher-performing, graduating seniors attributed their success in school to internal (natural intelligence) or external (parental involvement, teachers) factors.

This study was designed to answer the research questions with a quantitative analysis of survey data. An instrument with 10 affirmative statements was designed as an exit survey for graduating seniors by the school’s administration and distributed within Advanced Placement courses. The sample utilized in this study was composed of 80 high-performing high school seniors. All of the students surveyed were taking at least two AP classes during the 2008-2009 school year.

Students’ perceptions about five independent variables were analyzed and the influence they had on the dependent variable of academic success: (1) Elementary School Teacher Influence, (2) Middle School Teacher Influence, (3) High School Teacher Influence, (4) Parental Influence, and (5) Natural Intelligence Influence. A multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the impact of each independent variable on the perceived seniors’ academic success.

After the data were analyzed, a significant relationship was expressed between student success and parental involvement. There was no significant relationship between the perceived teacher efficacy and student success. The study helped illustrate the perceived value of teacher influence on high-performing students.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M.

THE MULTIVARIATE GENERAL LINEAR MODEL: USING CANONICAL CORRELATION AS A FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR UNDERSTANDING OTHER MULTIVARIATE STATISTICAL METHODS

(Symposium)..... King Room

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Organizer: Larry G. Daniel, University of North Florida

Tina Holland, Dan Keplinger, Kathleen Thomas, and Donna Ellis, University of North Florida

This symposium included four papers by educational doctoral students on the relationship of canonical correlation analysis to other multivariate statistical methods, namely: (1) multiple regression analysis, (2) principal component analysis, (3) discriminant analysis, and (4) multivariate analysis of variance. All papers included an analysis and a discussion of data to make the discussion concrete. Canonical correlation analysis is an elegant multivariate statistical procedure useful for testing research hypotheses regarding relationships between two variable sets of sizes n_1 and n_2 , where n_1 and n_2 are both greater than (2). As the most general form of the general linear model, canonical correlation analysis subsumes all other parametric statistical analytic methods, including t-test, ANOVA/ANCOVA, multiple regression, discriminant analysis, and MANOVA/MANCOVA, and it is related as well to factor analytic procedures as well.

Canonical Correlation Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis: Moving from One Dependent Variable to Multiple Dependent Variables

Multiple regression analysis produces optimal weighting of a set of predictor variables to derive estimates of a dependent variable of interest. In a similar fashion, canonical correlation analysis yields weights for variables in both the independent and dependent sets such that the correlation between the two sets is optimized. The author illustrated how regression and canonical correlation are related with focus on various sets of weights and coefficients useful in interpreting results of the two procedures.

Canonical Correlation Analysis as Double-Barreled Principal Components Analysis: Using Factor Analytic Logic to Understand Canonical Correlation

Both principal components analysis and canonical correlation analysis are concerned with the creation of latent variables that explain a larger set of observed variables. In principal components analysis, the goal is to derive a small number of independent linear combinations (principal components) of a set of variables that retain as much of the information in the original variables as possible. Likewise, in canonical correlation analysis, linear combinations (canonical variates) of variables in the independent set and the dependent set are formed such that the correlation among the canonical variates is maximized. A common data set is used to compute both factor analytic and canonical correlation results to show the common properties of the two procedures.

Discriminant Analysis: A Special Case of Canonical Correlation

Discriminant analysis investigates the degree to which a set of continuous variables serves effectively to predictor the group to which an individual belongs. In essence, discriminant analysis is a special case of canonical correlation—only one dependent variable is specified, and it is specified at the nominal level. Data were presented and analyzed to show the similarities between these two techniques.

MANOVA and Canonical Correlation Analysis: Using the General Linear Model to Test Group Differences

Multivariate analysis of variance and canonical correlation analysis are closely related procedures. MANOVA, more specifically than canonical correlation analysis, focuses on group differences across two or more dependent variables; however, as the author demonstrated, canonical correlation, because of its similarities to MANOVA, can also be used to test these differences.

Each paper was followed by a brief comment period from the audience, with discussion moderated by an educational research faculty member.

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11:00 – 11:50 A.M. ADMINISTRATION/HIGHER EDUCATION.....Governor Room

Principals' Voices Regarding Visionary Leadership

Janene W. Hemmen and John R. Slate, Sam Houston State University

In this study, the authors interviewed 12 practicing principals who graduated from Educational Leadership Constituency Council (ELCC)-recognized or ELCC-denied building level programs regarding their perceptions of visionary leadership. The focus was on these principals' perceptions of visionary leadership as developed during (throughout) principal preparation programs. The purpose of this study was to determine how prepared for the role of visionary leader recent graduates of ELCC-recognized programs perceive themselves to be as compared with graduates of ELCC-denied programs. What are the perceptions of principals from ELCC-recognized and denied principal preparation programs regarding visionary leadership?

From a qualitative analysis of the interviews, nine metathemes emerged: (1) Understands the Need to Know the Entire Organization, (2) Builds a Culture of Teamwork, (3) Motivates Stakeholders, (4) Understands Role in the Change Process, (5) Builds Relationships, (6) Communication, (7) Challenging Role, (8) Needs to be Knowledgeable of Resources, and (9) Needs to be a Human Resource Specialist. In the presentation, exemplars and quotes from the participants were provided to illustrate each of these metathemes. All nine metathemes were evident in the interview data from both the practicing principals of both ELCC-recognized and denied principal preparation programs.

Based on these findings, it appeared that visionary leaders need to know the entire organization. For school reform to be successful, it must be guided by a visionary leader who is prepared to provide professional support and guidance at all level of the school (Bottoms et al., 2003). A visionary leader must have a clear picture of the future for the organization as evidenced through the vision (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). A visionary leader knows what is best for the students, the school, and the community, and makes decisions based on the beliefs used to develop the vision (Clark and Clark, 1992).

**Implications of Accountability and Globalization for Educational Leadership:
Three Questions of Educational Leadership**

Robert O. Slater, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The main purpose of this conceptual piece was to suggest a simple, almost common-sense heuristic for organizing the rapidly growing research literature on educational administration and leadership, a literature that is not only increasing in quantity but sophistication as well (Guthrie, 2009). The heuristic essentially consists of three basic questions about education, questions that those who have any experience in or with the field have probably asked themselves more than once. The questions are: (1) What should our students know and value? (2) What kinds of schools and schooling does it take to enable them to develop or acquire the knowledge and values we believe they should possess? and (3) What kinds of leadership and administration are required to create, sustain, and make better these schools and ways of schooling?

Perhaps the main point to make about these three questions is that, while only the third appears to bear directly on educational leadership and administration, they are all, in a sense, questions of educational leadership. This is because, at the school system and school levels, the effectiveness of leadership and administrative action must necessarily depend on the degree to which it is consciously and consistently guided by all three. If school superintendents and principals do not keep in mind what their students should know and value, and if they do not know about the different ways in which students learn, and the ways of teaching and organizing instruction that are most likely to enable them to learn, then the visions these leaders and managers articulate, the planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, coordinating, assessing, acting in the name of social justice, and other things that they do cannot be done very intelligently or wisely, and, therefore, are less likely to have much of an impact on what students learn.

The questions are at bottom questions of leadership also because it is leadership at the federal and state policy-making levels that, through the laws and policies made, ultimately decide what students should know and value. These laws, policies, and rules, in turn, dictate the kinds of schools and

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schooling that we can have which, in turn, constrains and determines what school and school system leaders and managers take to be important and what they can do. So, all three questions are questions about leadership and, perhaps more important, questions with which leadership needs always to be concerned. Implications of this point for educational administration preparation programs and colleges of education were explored.

Perceptions of PDS Stakeholders: Do They Make A Difference?

Elizabeth K. Wilson, Kathleen P. Hughes, Sikharini Majumdar,
and Annie Kaye Bean Smith, University of Alabama

In 1986, the Holmes Group coined the term Professional Development School (PDS) to promote a different kind of partnership between teacher education programs and schools. In this model, the stakeholders (school-based educators, teacher educators, and teacher candidates) collaborate to develop similar goals. (Book, 1996). Although many institutions participate in PDS relationships, little research has been conducted to determine their effectiveness (Smith, 2009). Murray (1993) developed effective features of PDSs while Boyle Baise and McIntyre (2008) presented different perspectives of PDS relationships.

Using both of these models, the researchers developed a framework to analyze six PDSs. Specifically, they hoped to examine: (1) the views of different stakeholders and (2) the perceived outcomes of the relationships. Participants in the study were site coordinators at six PDSs, administrators from the six PDSs, three university faculty, and three teacher candidates. Data sources included surveys (Smith, 2008), interviews, and related artifacts. Qualitative data were analyzed using constant comparative analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The results of this study illustrated that the stakeholders believed that the PDSs were making a positive impact on the university and at the schools (Holmes Group, 1986). Overall, there were no differences on the perceived effectiveness (Murray, 1993) of the PDSs by the participants. Stakeholders believed that the reciprocity of the relationships had benefits for all partners. Differences appeared when considering the type of impact being made by the collaborations. Specifically, two of the six PDSs were categorized with a community-oriented view--ethic of service (Boyle Baise and McIntyre, 2008). One of the relationships had stimulated the development of a community organization that developed the goals to revitalize the community and make the school the center of that community; teacher candidates and university faculty/staff became vital to that effort. Additionally, the presentation provided implications and future research recommendations.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. MENTOR SESSIONCapitol Room

Presenter, Linda W. Morse, Mississippi State University

Hosted by MSERA Mentors, this session provided opportunities for attendees to collaborate with one or more long-term members of MSERA about attendees' existing or potential research projects, proposed or draft manuscripts, dissertation ideas, data analysis, program evaluation projects, and other research-related topics. These sessions were offered primarily for new graduate students and professional members of the Mid-South Educational Research Association

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. A WORKSHOP ON MASTERY LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION (Training)Academy Room

Beverly M. Klecker, Morehead State University, and Ann Chapman, Eastern Kentucky University

Two major concerns of colleges and universities are: (1) student learning and (2) student retention. This workshop was presented by two professors who have used mastery learning, formative assessment, and cognitive alignment of content in both face-to-face and online classes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The objectives of the workshop were to: (1) introduce the participants to the theoretical framework for mastery learning and criterion-based assessment (e.g., Bloom, Tyler,

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Guskey, Brookhart, Stiggins), (2) present examples, syllabi, and assessment strategies from their own teaching, (3) provide materials and instruction for aligning course objectives and developing classroom assessment, (4) guide participants in developing mastery-learning assignments and assessments, and (5) invite participation in research on mastery learning.

This one-hour workshop was designed to invite MSERA members to share their own experiences with mastery learning. Participants were encouraged to bring a current syllabus from a course in which they would like to include mastery learning and formative assessment strategies. The presenters hoped that this free workshop presentation would increase enthusiasm for using mastery learning techniques in higher education and help to create a “critical mass” of MSERA members interested in participating in research in this field.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. ADMINISTRATION ATTITUDES Paramount Room

Job Satisfaction Among High School Principals In Mississippi

Geoffry A. Haines, Delta State University

The main purpose of this study was to assess job satisfaction of Mississippi high school principals as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). Five additional questions were addressed by the study: (1) What is the general satisfaction level of Mississippi high school principals concerning: age, gender, ethnicity, education, salary, experience, public versus private, school size and socioeconomic level? (2) Is there a relationship between general job satisfaction and the Mississippi Department of Education school rating level (1-5)? (3) What is the satisfaction level for the 20 job dimensions as measured by the MSQ? (4) Which demographic variables are predictors of general job satisfaction? and (5) What effect has the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) had upon job satisfaction?

All Mississippi high school principals were invited to participate. Forty-three percent, or 153 of 355, responded. Each completed a demographic sheet, the MSQ, and questions concerning NCLB. The MSQ Long-Form measured job satisfaction on a 20-dimension Likert-scale ranging from “Very Dissatisfied” (1) to “Very Satisfied” (5). A mean of 3.93 (SD = 0.55) indicated that the principals were “Satisfied” (3.00-3.99) with their jobs. Mean scores for demographic variables ranged from “Satisfied” (3.00-3.99) to “Very Satisfied” (4.00-4.99). Compensation ranked lowest (M = 3.30, SD 1.02), and Moral Values ranked highest (M = 4.29, SD = .55). Fifty-eight percent reported less job satisfaction since the initiation of NCLB. A 79% increase in stress levels and an 86% increase in workload were reported. Also, 70% reported spending less time with their family.

Recommendations included the need for: (1) longitudinal/interval studies measuring changes over time, (2) similar studies with elementary and middle school principals, (3) investigating how principals job satisfaction affects teacher and student performance, (4) interview providing insight into principal job satisfaction and possibly discovering new concerns, and (5) further research regarding NCLB.

A Mixed Methodological Study of Factors Contributing to Student Persistence and Their Impact on Student Attrition in Foreign Language Immersion Programs

Nicole S. Boudreaux, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

In the United States, foreign language immersion programs are K-8 voluntary programs wherein children are instructed in the core subjects in a language other than English. While these programs are quite popular, many parents, having purposefully chosen immersion for their child’s education, change their mind and transfer their child in a regular non-immersion program. Because student attrition is detrimental both for the student (Wiss, 1989) and the institution he/she leaves (Louisiana Consortium of Immersion Schools, 2006), it is equally important for researchers and school administrators to explore the extent of the phenomenon and investigate the reasons for student withdrawal from foreign language immersion programs.

Based on research from higher education (Tinto, 1973), which offers an attrition/persistence model transferable to the immersion setting, this study examined this issue through both withdrawal and persistence aspects, using a mixed methods approach to analyze the phenomenon in a large French

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immersion program located in southwestern Louisiana. Its primary purpose was to investigate the factors guiding parents' decisions to enroll their child, keep him in, or withdraw him from a foreign language immersion program. Quantitative data from consolidated student rosters, exit forms, and end-of-year teacher reports from 2001 through 2008 were used to establish a profile of withdrawing French immersion students, and a four-point, Likert-scale parent questionnaire provided information on students currently in the program.

Qualitative data from comments on the parent questionnaire and from two focus group discussions were integrated to establish a profile of persisting French immersion students. Data from both quantitative and qualitative phases of this research were then reconciled, following the Johnson and Onwuegbuzie's (2004) data analysis stages. Results from quantitative and qualitative data analyses were shared, as well as conclusions and implications for immersion programs.

**The Organizational Model of the Institution and the Academic Disciplinary Areas:
Implications for Administrators In Higher Education**

Martha Jallim Hall, Southern University and A&M College

Birnbaum (1988) developed four theoretical models (anarchical, bureaucratic, collegial, and political) of governance in higher education as a means for viewing institutions from a particular perspective to understand how they function. His work provides a lens for administrators to conceptualize the organizational model dynamics of colleges and universities as complex with the existence of different models within a single institution. Higgins (1997) tested Birnbaum's (1988) conjecture to determine the perceived relationship between Birnbaum's typology of organizational models and the degree of coupling in on- and off-campus continuing education offices. Two studies have been conducted using Higgins' (1997) protocol. Jones (1999) examined the relationship between the models and Butler's (1994) conditions of trust with members of the president's cabinets at state colleges and universities. Williamson (2000) conducted a quasi-replication of Higgins' (1997) study on academic nursing center faculty.

This study was conducted to examine Birnbaum's (1988) conjecture and to use Higgins' (1997) protocol to determine if there was a significant difference in the perception of the organizational model of the educational institution and in the six academic disciplinary areas by faculty within a single institution. Data were gathered from 300 full-time teaching faculty from the six academic disciplinary areas. Several statistical processes were applied using both categorical and subscale data that allowed for comparison of the data across the academic disciplinary areas.

The study found that when using categorical data: (1) statistically significant differences in the perception of the organizational model of one academic disciplinary area and (2) when evaluated as individuals, faculty did not have a different perception of the educational institution and the academic disciplinary areas.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. “MEETING” IS NOT A CURSE WORD (Training)..... Louisiana Room

Lesia Holder, Midway College

For departments, councils, teams, and committees, whether one is preparing for an accreditation visit or deciding who will teach at 8:00 a.m., meetings are a common - and often dreaded - aspect of academic life. Learn how to facilitate meetings that make the best use of faculty talents and faculty time. This workshop itself served as a model activity for this topic, as participants represented a diverse group of faculty who came together to explore a common interest.

The facilitator did not reveal the “meeting with a meeting” strategy at the onset of the workshop, but disclosed it in the session and asked participants to reflect on their experiences. The group was taken through a process of: (1) developing common goals, (2) determining an effective meeting format, (3) working together within that format, addressing obstacles such as dominant personalities, tendencies to veer off course, negative or conflicting perspectives, etc., (4) summarizing and recording meeting outcomes, and (5) establishing future plans. Activities included: (1) developing common goals: (a) large group - suggest reasons that meetings do not go smoothly (assign recorder), and (b) small groups- categorize reasons into broad issues; develop agenda items to address large group- share results and discuss different outcomes; (2) determining an effective meeting format: provide a list of

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meeting topics/scenarios and meeting formats and ask small groups to determine the best matches based on the composition of the group (size, participants, goals, etc.); and (3) facilitation: use a powerpoint presentation to demonstrate a point - provide examples of proper use and misuse of technology in different settings.

Throughout the session the facilitator presented and modeled a variety of strategies that may be adapted according to facilitator style, participant dynamics, meeting size, level of formality, and other variables. The tone of the presentation was light and humorous, and participants left the session with a “bag of tricks” that can be immediately applied in any meeting scenario. Emphasis was placed on participatory leadership and group ownership of meeting outcomes.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. TEACHER EDUCATION (Display)University Room

Preparing Elementary Education Majors for Inclusive Classrooms: A Collaboration of General and Special Education Faculty

Rebecca M. Giles and Dennis Campbell, University of South Alabama

As teacher education programs strive to be more inclusive, relationships between general and special education faculty will change into collaborative partnerships. While labels to identify this change vary, the consistent focus is to create educators who are qualified to work with students of all abilities and exceptionalities. This study reported on a pilot program in a southern, urban university where the teacher preparation program has traditionally been a discrete model. General education students took one nature and needs special education course. Special educators took one general education reading course with some overlap in professional studies coursework. Once the college was reorganized with all teacher preparation programs in the same department, this new department was charged with developing a program within the context of current requirements that would better prepare general education teachers to work with students with disabilities.

During Spring 2009, three sections of a required elementary-early childhood (K - 6) course were co-taught by a general and special education faculty member for the purpose of increasing elementary preservice teachers' sensitivity to instructional adaptations for students with special needs. The majority (61%) of students (N = 41) responding to an anonymous course evaluation indicated that participation in this course greatly increased their sensitivity to children with special needs. Further, respondents overwhelmingly (36 times) rated their field experience, which included one day spent shadowing a special educator, as the most beneficial course requirement.

Responses (N = 34) to the open-ended question, “What is the most important thing you learned in this course?” elicited 13 comments pertaining to adapting instruction. For example, one student wrote, “I learned about collaboration and working with students with special needs. More of this is needed in the College of Education for Elementary Education majors,” while another commented that “all children deserve the very best education.”

Preservice Teachers Teaching and Learning Through a Community Event: The Mobile International Festival

Paige V. Baggett and Rebecca M. Giles, University of South Alabama

For the past five years, College of Education faculty and students have been collaborating with the Mobile International Festival (MIF) in varying degrees. Collaboration during the 2008 25th-anniversary festival developed into the greatest degree of involvement and resulted in the first evaluation of the partnership. Two Leadership and Teacher Education faculty members coordinated efforts with MIF organizers to engage over 100 elementary-early childhood preservice teachers in various aspects of the event, ranging from contributing to the Educator's Resource Guide to volunteering during the three-day event.

To assess students' perception of their MIF experience, a 14-item instrument, with four demographic items and 10 questions regarding individual involvement, was developed using Survey Monkey and distributed via email to participants. Of the 10 participation questions, seven questions solicited quantitative responses with the opportunity to provide comments while the three remaining open-

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ended questions provided qualitative remarks. Voluntary, anonymous responses from 43 preservice teachers indicated that participation was viewed favorably by all respondents. In terms of personal understanding, 69% indicated that participation with MIF resulted in increased general knowledge, while 62% reported increased teaching knowledge. Based on their experience with MIF, 65% indicated that they were more likely to personally attend the festival in the future, and (92%) indicated that they were more likely to initiate a field trip to the event for their future K-6 students.

Responses regarding the best part of the participants' MIF experience varied greatly and included such items as increased awareness of other cultures, developing instructional activities, and interacting with visiting students. Open-ended responses provided further insight regarding the view of this partnership as a beneficial learning experience that allows for classroom application. Additionally, further feedback provided useful information for improving specific course-related requirements for future participants.

Relationships and Learning In the Classroom: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Alicia Westbrook and Richard Mohn, University of Southern Mississippi,

Research in the area of attachment has added understanding of the impact teacher-child relationships have on academic success. Using attachment theory as the theoretical framework, a self-administered questionnaire was developed to survey pre-primary and primary teachers' attitudes and understandings of educational constructs: teacher-child relationship, mediated learning experiences, and emotional intelligence. Currently, there is not an instrument in the literature that assesses the educational constructs together.

The literature suggests that these constructs are intertwined and related to one another through attachment theory. Researchers have noted Bowlby's (1988) attachment theory as the theoretical base for research in the area of teacher-child relationship as well as the origin of social and emotional development and signified the importance secure attachments have on mediated learning experiences. The development of an attitudes and understanding self-administered questionnaire was created to survey pre-primary and primary teachers' attitudes and understandings of educational constructs: teacher-child relationship, mediated learning experiences, and emotional intelligence.

An expert panel of 10 pre-primary and primary education specialists participated in the development of Relationships and Learning in the Classroom (RLC). The panel's expertise was employed during the early stages of question development to assist in deciphering vocabulary related to each construct as well as educational practices of each construct. The result of discussions was a 24-item self-administered questionnaire. A convenience sample of 235 pre-primary and primary teachers from various counties of a southern state participated in the research. A factor analysis using principle axis factoring was used to discover the underlying factor structure of the constructs. Items were loaded using oblique rotation to allow factors to be correlated. The analysis showed a two-factor model which explained that two constructs were being assessed: pre-primary and primary teachers' attitudes towards and understanding of teacher-child relationships, social and emotional intelligence, and MLE.

Empowering Middle School Teachers to Create Change for the Achievement of Students Placed At-Risk: Successes and Challenges of a "Partnerships for School Reform" Grant

Edith G. Mayers, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

In April 2006, the Louisiana State Board of Regents awarded a three-year \$400,000 grant under the "K-16 Partners for School Reform" (K-16 PSR) program to researchers to transform targeted underperforming K-12 schools into schools that meet and/or exceed standards identified by the state's K-12 Accountability System. Empowering Teachers to Create Change for Student Achievement is the result of a collaborative effort between the university's College of Education and the local school system and two of its middle schools. The grant's two targeted middle schools had not met their growth targets prior to the implementation of the grant. Both schools had significant numbers of students placed at-risk. Over 80% of students were on free or reduced lunch at one school, and approximately 95% of students were on free or reduced lunch at the other school. One school was comprised of 75% African-American students, and the other school was over 95% African-American students.

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The researchers used three strategies designed to empower teachers to create change for student achievement: formed a leadership team and provided a counselor intern at each school who managed a discipline program entitled Positive Behavior Support (PBS), provided professional development in literacy and mathematics, and provided instruction in the integration of technology with curriculum in teaching and learning. The results of the three-year grant resulted in: a Positive Behavior Support program that changed the culture of the discipline at the two middle schools; two university courses taught on-site at one school for mathematics and English/Language Arts teachers emphasizing strategies, technology integration, and leadership skills; and two schools that raised student achievement by the end of the three-year grant.

How to Use Video in Evaluating Teacher Candidate Progress

Elizabeth E. Hillman, University of Southern Mississippi

This presentation demonstrated how to utilize video technology to improve the execution and evaluation of teacher candidate lesson plans, teaching skills, and reflective practice. The display session used numerous teacher candidate-prepared video examples of lessons to explore not only the students' ability to use technology, but also to plan and implement effective lessons. Video editing and development also allows teacher candidates to reflect on the quality of instruction and evaluate the lesson within the context of a particular classroom context. This process also allows candidates to reflect on how using the video technology impacts their learning.

Participants discussed how videos can be utilized in university or college settings to capture and evaluate student progress. The presentation explained how teacher candidates learn the video production process in order to create a teaching demonstration video. The session demonstrated how to use Moviemaker (a free Windows application) to cut, edit, and present a video that showcases a teacher candidate's skills. Detailed instructions and handouts were provided so that participants would be able to implement video presentation methods in their teaching settings. The session also discussed possible barriers and solutions and provided student perceptions and impressions of the video presentation process.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. HIGHER EDUCATION King Room

Leadership in Higher Education: What Faculty Want

Eric J. Heinrich, Louisiana Tech University

This paper focused on what faculty members expect from those in positions of authority. It included a discussion of different types of faculty assessment and perceptions of fairness in the evaluation process. It also looked at the differences between newer faculty members and those who have been at a particular institution for a longer period of time.

Developmental and Domain Concerns of Personal Epistemological Beliefs: A Literature Review

Shane T. Warren, Mississippi State University

The purpose of this review was to critically examine personal epistemological belief changes in regard to the academic transitions. The foundation of this research stems from empirical evidence recently published dealing with different facets of epistemology, including the origins of epistemology based on the model proposed by William Perry in 1970, differences in the concept of domain, and multiple epistemological beliefs from grade school, middle school, high school, and college perspectives. To ensure the academic integrity of research, the articles for the review were selected from peer-reviewed journals through Internet databases EBSCOhost, PscholInfo, and Google Scholar.

The findings of this review denoted two keynote aspects of epistemological beliefs. The first aspect was the two unique methods by which researchers framed epistemology in regard to domain: one method, grounded in specific academic discipline such as math or science, and the other, a more global

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viewpoint of epistemology unrestricted by the specification of academic discipline. The second aspect was that epistemological beliefs possess a developmental component that changes in complexity as the individual matures. Specifically, as the individual matures, more information is available for evaluation and integration into the learning process.

The implications of these findings indicated multiple new directions of research in regard to epistemological beliefs. The original model, as well as more recently updated models, had not addressed cultural differences that may impact the method of learning or the beliefs about learning of minority or non-indigenous persons. The results signified a need for a more culturally sensitive model that incorporated more collectivistic cultures as well as the current individualistic culture on which the current models are based. Moreover, existing approaches to the issue of domain in relation to epistemological beliefs need to be reconciled in an effort to better facilitate understanding of personal epistemology and its implications for education.

Defining the Construct “Teacher Leader”: A Review of Literature

Beverly M. Klecker and David Barnett, Morehead State University

The purpose of this review of literature was to examine definitions of the construct “teacher leader” to inform the construction of a state-mandated, re-designed master’s degree program in Kentucky. This new graduate education program was designed to qualify credentialed teachers to complete requirements for a Master of Arts degree that would develop skills to serve as leaders for schools striving for excellence. Kentucky’s Education and Professional Standards Board (EPSB), in mandating the re-design, left the definition of “teacher leader” to each teacher-education institution in the state. Additionally, each institution was required to create the master’s program in collaboration with public school district personnel.

The search for this review of literature included Google Scholar and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). The words “teacher leader” were used to search across the years 1998-2009. Fifty-seven books, journal articles, and conference papers were reviewed. The construct “teacher leader” appeared across time and cultures (e.g., a United Kingdom source cited Finland as having both nation-wide teacher leadership and the highest test scores on the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]). A matrix was developed to differentiate and summarize the definitions.

A distillation of these data resulted in categories that included, but were not limited to: (1) collaboration, (2) collegiality, (3) decisionmaking, (4) leadership styles, (5) analyzing data, (6) helping others grow professionally, (7) exerting influence in informal settings, and (8) delegating responsibility. An interesting finding in the review was the wide-spread assumption that “teacher leader” = “female leadership.” The session included participation and discussion by MSERA members.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. HIGHER EDUCATION/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.....Governor Room

Doctoral Students and the Conditions of Their Education

Tiffany N. Labon-Sims, University of Southern Mississippi

Historically, the United States developed its higher education system after German universities. However, the United States university systems are distinct because of two levels: undergraduate and graduate. The primary purpose of doctoral education is to prepare a new generation of university professors “who will become productive researchers and innovators, and in turn become teachers of the following generation” (Nerad, 2008, p. 279). The United States infrastructure for its university systems includes hundreds of institutions that award doctoral degrees, with a majority of those being affiliated with the American Association of Universities.

An intensive search for articles, books, and studies that encompassed the nature of doctoral education was conducted. This search included library and electronic resources for scholarly work in peer-reviewed and published work. Doctoral students need and expect that the services and tools necessary to complete their degree were available to them at their universities. The literature review presented explained the author’s reasoning for wanting to research the areas that affect doctoral students in the journey to degree completion. Several areas that affect doctoral education include financial funding,

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the experiences of minority students, and the program structure. Another area is the past research that has been done on doctoral education in the United States. Lastly, there have been criticisms of the U.S. doctoral education, system, and entities of change in doctoral education, as well as initiatives and innovations in doctoral education, plus examining why some students decide to depart from their doctoral pursuits before earning their Ph.D.

Examining the Predictive Validity of the Achievement Goals for Research Scale

Eric D. Deemer and Alice P. Carter, Louisiana Tech University

Confirmatory factor analytic work has shown the recently developed Achievement Goals for Research Scale (AGRS; Deemer, Carter, and Lobrano, submitted for publication) to possess sufficient construct validity, yet it remains to be seen whether AGRS scores are predictive of theoretically relevant constructs. Briefly, the AGRS consists of six goal types: (1) absolute task mastery (AT goals), (2) incremental task mastery (IT goals), (3) self-demonstration of competence (SDC goals), (4) mastery avoidance (MAV goals), (5) performance approach (PAP goals), and (6) performance avoidance (PAV goals). One-hundred thirty graduate students in the sciences participated in the study.

A moderated hierarchical regression analysis was conducted in which BAS-drive was regressed on a model consisting of all of the achievement goals and gender modeled as a dummy-coded covariate (males = 0, females = 1). Gender was nonsignificant on step 1 of the analysis, whereas significant main effects for PAP goals = .38, $p < .01$ and IT goals = .21, $p < .05$ were detected on step 2. All main effect and interaction terms involving gender and the achievement goals were entered on step 3. The omnibus F-test of the overall model was significant, $F(9, 115) = 2.82$, $p < .01$, as gender was found to moderate the relationship between SDC goals and BAS-drive = .37, $p = .05$. Despite the detected interaction effect, post hoc probing of the gender-SDC interaction indicated that the simple slopes for SDC goals were not significant for either men, $t(115) = -.62$, $p = .54$ ($b = -.04$), or women, $t(115) = 1.00$, $p = .32$ ($b = .10$).

Findings suggested that scientific achievement goals reflecting competitiveness and methodical mastery pursuit were associated with increased drive motivation among science graduate students, thus providing further evidence of the construct validity of the AGRS.

The Relationship Between Teacher Turnover and Selected Characteristics of Georgia Public High Schools

Eun J. Talka, Mercer University

Many teachers, especially beginning ones, leave the profession at an alarming rate. Constant and ongoing teacher turnover in schools, especially those serving poor and minority students, causes school staffing problems, serious financial burdens, loss in teacher quality, and the hampering of student achievement. Thus, teacher turnover is a major problem for many schools and school districts in the United States. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher turnover and five selected school characteristics: student/teacher ratio, percentage of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students enrolled, student absentee rate, student dropout rate, and student graduation rate.

The study was guided by five research questions and related null hypotheses. Pearson correlations were computed to test the hypotheses and assess the relationships among variables. Six years of data, representing the school years from 2002–2003 through 2007–2008, from all public high schools in the state of Georgia, were collected and analyzed. The study results indicated that the teacher turnover rate and the aforementioned five school characteristics were significantly related. The large sample size led to small correlations meeting statistical significance.

The results of the study were consistent with prior evidence except for two variables: student dropout rate and student graduation rate. Discovering predictors of teacher turnover could help educators discover and use factors for increasing teacher retention rates. Therefore, the following proposed recommendations and future research directions arose from the study findings: (1) reduce student/teacher ratio, (2) support and train teachers working with LEP populations, (3) investigate school climate and morale, (4) extend the study to examine different predictor factors, (5) conduct local (district-

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level) research, and (6) use different statistical procedures such as multivariate methods to better use the information available from the sample of this study.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. EDUCATION REFORMCapitol Room

**Democracy and Higher Education: A Critical Retrospective of Allan Bloom's Critique
of American Higher Education and Its Implications for Foundations
of Education Courses in Teacher Training Programs**

Robert O. Slater, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this paper was to critique foundations courses in teacher training programs by way of a critical retrospective of Allan Bloom's (1987) best seller, *Closing of the American Mind: How Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Our Students*. In a matter of months the book became # 1 on the New York Times Best Seller's list and skyrocketed the little-known Bloom to international fame. As its subtitle suggests, the book had as one of its objectives a critique of American higher education. In a nutshell, this critique was that advanced capitalist democracy has a number of self-destructive imbalances which create a disequilibrium. These imbalances have to be corrected and aggressively so or the democracy will tend to slide into tyranny. The correction of these imbalances must be done at both the individual and institutional levels.

One important role of higher education is first simply to make students aware of the disequilibrium that is inherent in a democracy and how it plays out in their individual lives. The second task is to give them the wherewithal to correct imbalances in their own lives and in the democratic institutions in which they live and work. The argument of this paper was that Bloom's thesis holds up pretty well almost 25 years after he made it, and especially in light of our present circumstances. Teacher training programs should incorporate Bloom's analysis of democracy into their foundations curriculum. In so doing, they could give teachers and school administrators a renewed vision of democracy and their role in promoting and sustaining it.

**Dropouts and the Career Diploma: An Examination of Louisiana's
Attempt to Solve a Persistent Problem**

Belinda M. Cambre, University of New Orleans, and Daniel W. Surry, University of South Alabama

Louisiana has suffered from a long-standing problem of students dropping out of formal education programs. In 1990, the state was last in the nation in this respect, posting only a 56.7% graduation rate, compared to the national average of 71.2%. By 2006, the dropout figure improved to 61.9% but still lagged behind the national average of 69.2%. In the summer of 2009, the state legislature proposed a solution to the problem in the form of a career diploma. The career diploma option allows eighth-grade students, with parental permission, to create a five-year graduation plan, consisting of fewer courses and an exemption from the graduate exit exam. The bill was supported by the governor and the state's school board and headed for final passage. Although the bill was supported in concept by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE), the LDE has opposed the legislation because it allows for students to circumvent the state's current accountability system. Ironically, state school board policy allows students to promote to higher grades after several unsuccessful attempts on the state exam. Despite research that students did not drop out because of the accountability system, proponents of the measure specifically tie the dropout problem to the testing system.

This paper examined the literature on dropouts and argued that the career diploma option will not solve Louisiana's dropout problem. Proponents of the bill have not paid attention to the primary reasons Louisiana students drop out of school: pregnancy, family reasons, and a disconnect to the school. This solution provided the state with an increased graduation rate but will fall flat of providing quality education. Further, students were disadvantaged should they choose to attend a Louisiana university. Louisiana industry will suffer because of an inability to attract new business to the area.

Evaluating the Use of Gaming Frameworks as an Instructional Tool

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Saswati Majumdar, University of Louisiana at Monroe

Instructional gaming is a framework that has an instructional or learning format and involves competition and is rule-guided. Students at large find traditional format of online courses non-motivational, and instructors in turn do not find students engaged enough with the learning process. Would it help if the traditional format was substituted with a more flexible and less daunting framework? Can a gaming framework be possibly used as an instructional tool? Current research speaks in favor. A traditional course generally has certain characteristics, difficult for students to cope up with. For instance, it provides the student with voluminous information at a time, which can act like an information overload, since all of the information might not be used right away. Also, a student has no control over the contents and its delivery, no choices as such, and online courses almost always bear no storyline, which does not help in keeping high levels of motivation.

A gaming framework on the other hand relies on an experiential learning model, allowing greater student participation, targeting diverse senses of the learner (visual, auditory, kinesthetic senses, combined complex skills) and has key characteristics which not only can successfully maintain motivational level of the learners, but also can result in greater cognitive retention.

The three main features of gaming are choice, controls, and a storyline. Motivation is also a key aspect in keeping up attendance rates. Researchers at the University of Piraeus, Greece (2005) have documented their findings of pre-, posttest errors and improvement percentage to have noticeable differences [Improvement: T_v (t-test value) = 4.52; C_v (critical value) = 2.00] between students using VR-ENGAGE (an Intelligent Tutoring System "ITS" that operates through a virtual reality game) and simple ITS. Numerous other researchers, worldwide, have found such a paradigm shift of great efficacy; hence, my support to the gaming approach.

The National Standards Movement and a National Curriculum: Two Opposing Viewpoints

Janis P. Hill, Louisiana Tech University, and Amy H. Bourgeois, Louisiana State University

In June 2009, officials with the Louisiana Department of Education released the news that Louisiana has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Governors' Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSS) to form a consortium of 49 other states and U.S. Territories for the purpose of developing common state standards. In addition, the agency temporarily postponed a state project focused on revising the existing state standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) in the four core academic areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Both of these actions, along with what appears to be support by the DOE and the Superintendent of Education, imply that a set of "standardized" expectations may soon be in place for all students in all states – a thought which is viewed by some as a positive development and to others as a negative one. Where one perspective recognizes the possibility for higher, stronger standards and improved student achievement, the other viewpoint notes the dangers that accompany too much standardization and federal control, specifically, the development of a national curriculum.

This presentation explored the presence of the two antithetical concepts in education today and looked specifically at the relationship between the two, as well as their influence on the educational reform occurring across the country. A collaborative venture between a college professor with considerable experience with the standards movement and a young doctoral student with a focus on higher education, the dialogue of the presentation sought to uncover the "good" and the "bad" of both perspectives.

1:00 – 1:50 P.M. EDUCATION REFORMAcademy Room

Analyses of Ohio Middle School Teacher Preparation Programs Using Factor Analysis

Suzanne Franco, Wright State University; Katie Kinnucan-Welsch, University of Dayton;
and Martha S. Henricks, Wilmington College

The study examined middle school teacher preparation programs in the state of Ohio to

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identify: (1) what the program differences are and (2) concepts or themes that represent the differences using factor analysis. Of the 50 IHEs offering a teacher preparation program in Ohio, 41 responded to an online survey of 55 questions covering the specific teacher preparation program requirements such as program structure, content requirements, and field experiences.

Each IHE was asked to complete the survey on the following programs: Middle Childhood Mathematics and Language Arts grades 4 through 9, and Adolescent/Young Adult (AYA) mathematics grades 7 through 12. There were 58 responses from 41 IHEs. This study is a part of a state-wide project investigating the possible relationship between teacher preparation for grades 4-8 math and reading and student achievement in grades 4-8. The survey questions were developed in conjunction with three state-wide investigations regarding the relationship between student achievement and teacher preparation (Louisiana, Florida, and New York).

Factor analysis of the 55 program data factors yielded six clearly defined components: placement/diversity, entry requirements for math, exit requirements for math, entry requirements for ELA, exit requirements for ELA, and other. The SPSS varimax rotation explained 67% of the variance in the data. However, none of the components were particularly indicative of the variation among the preparation programs represented in the data. The researchers believed that the NCATE requirements and other legislative requirements have guided this relative homogeneity.

Voices of the Teaching Professional: The Impact of NCLB on Elementary Science Education

Brenda H. Webb, University of North Alabama, and M. Jenice Goldston, University of Alabama

No Child Left Behind and Reading First have changed classroom curricula and pedagogy across elementary classrooms in the United States. Using the lens of critical theory, the researchers' explored the impact of NCLB on elementary science education as perceived by teachers in three Alabama classrooms. The study questions focused on the following: (1) How do three elementary teachers describe and enact the teaching of science in their classrooms since the implementation of NCLB and other intersecting state mandates? (2) How do three elementary teachers perceive the impact of current mandates on students' experiences and learning of science in the first year of federal accountability testing for science knowledge? and (3) In what ways do three Alabama elementary teachers voice and reflect upon their status as professionals teaching in the current climate of mandated reform and accountability carried out across the state?

A multiple case study approach was selected. Data were collected over eight months using a variety of sources that included classroom observations, interviews, focus group interviews, and documents related to instruction and professional development. Inductive content analysis was incorporated with researchers coding the data, negotiation the meaning of the participants' words and actions. Data revealed categories that gave shape to themes focused on the impact on elementary science education. Themes focused on the following: (1) marginalization of science, (2) limitations on teacher decision making, (3) teacher resistance/compliance, (4) state accountability, (5) time constraints, and (6) the de-professionalism of teaching.

Alternative Administrative Certification: Factors Influencing Program Choice

Dana L. Bickmore, Louisiana State University

The research outlined in this paper was part of a larger longitudinal study exploring aspiring principals' involvement in an alternative principal preparation program managed by a not-for-profit organization in the Southeast. This paper examined factors that influence aspiring principals' choice to pursue principal certification through an alternative administrative program. Researchers used a mixed method design to answer two research questions: (1) What factors influenced individual's intentions to pursue principalship? and (2) What factors influence aspiring principals to choose an alternative principal preparation program for certification?

Data included program documents, an in-depth semi-structured interview of the program director, a survey of potential program candidates, and in-depth semi-structured interviews of four program participants. Using descriptive statistical methods to analyze the survey data and rank ordering factors that influenced candidates, an inductive process was then employed to analyze interview data

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using participants' words and word phrases and organize developing themes. Although results were tentative, factors influencing participants to pursue principalship included the desire to make a greater difference, a belief in the candidates' knowledge and skill to make that difference, desire for self-improvement, and desire for career advancement. Using a socialization framework, these factors fall primarily within the internal processes dimension.

Factors influencing aspiring principals' choice of an alternative program, however, were much more related to specific elements of the program. Aspiring principals outlined the full-time internship, program mentoring beyond the school-based principal, duration and structure of the program, and awarding of administrative certification without requiring pursuit of a master's degree as factors. These aligned with the organizational/contextual dimensions of socialization. In addition, participants were influenced by the program's philosophical and leadership theory – social entrepreneurship.

Assessing Professional Learning Communities Through Formal and Informal Measures

Dianne F. Olivier, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this paper was to present assessment measures developed as a result of a research team's 12-year exploration into the concept and practice of professional learning communities. The foundation of this research is based on dimensions of a professional learning community as initially conceptualized by Hord (1997). Formal and informal assessments, dialogue skills, and several tools designed to assist educators in identifying and addressing priorities were discussed. While many schools, with the best intentions, choose to use the professional learning community label, it is essential to accurately assess the level of effectiveness of PLC characteristics. In an effort to gauge the level at which schools function along the continuum of PLCs, formal and informal measures can be used to assess schools as learning communities.

This paper offered assessment, diagnostic, and planning tools designed to analyze dimensions of a PLC, create a plan for fostering an instructional culture, and structure next steps in the development of PLCs. The tools that were presented included: the Professional Learning Community Assessment-Revised (PLCA-R), the Professional Learning Community Organizer (PLCO), the Professional Learning Community-Innovation Configuration Map (PLC-ICM), the External Support Systems-Innovation Configuration Map (ESS-ICM), the Professional Learning Community Developmental Rubric (PLCDR), and an Initial Plan for Creating PLCs.

A conceptual description of phases of change (initiating, implementing, and sustaining) in a PLC serving as a framework for the formal assessment was presented. This background provided for the development of the rubric used to determine progression of specific school-level practices reflecting each dimension through levels of change as discussed by Fullan (1985). Innovation Configuration Maps were offered as tools to clarify what the intervention looks like in practice. These tools assess progress related to each PLC dimension and identify next steps for future practice in sustainability of the innovation.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. EDUCATION REFORM Paramount Room

Teachers' Responses to Current Educational Issues Affecting Their Professional Lives

Gahan Bailey, Edward L. Shaw, Jr., and Lynda Daughenbaugh, University of South Alabama

A qualitative study was conducted using the written responses from 90 elementary, middle, and high school teachers who were asked to record their initial reactions to five educational issues. They included: (1) accountability, (2) English Language Learners, (3) inclusion, (4) No Child Left Behind, and (5) parental involvement. The data were analyzed by identifying emerging themes from the written responses given by teachers from various grade levels.

The results yielded 13 themes at the elementary level and 12 themes at both the middle and high school levels. The issue of accountability produced two themes shared by all grade levels: (1) pressure on teachers and (2) lack of accountability for parents and students. All groups of participants agreed on the following issues: (1) more resources are needed for English Language Learners, (2) inclusion works for some, but not for all, and (3) parental involvement is almost nonexistent in the schools. Both the elementary and middle school teachers' themes named excessive paperwork for No

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Child Left Behind and the lack of parental involvement as having negative impacts on their job. Other themes unique to the grade levels were also revealed in this study.

Data analysis, based on the demographic variables: (1) degrees held, (2) years of teaching experience, and (3) age, suggested that there were no substantial differences among the various groups in relation to these factors; however, several participants in each group wrote notable and revealing responses. Finally, participants' responses were compared with definitions and descriptions provided by a review of literature addressing the five issues.

Making a Difference Through Teacher Leadership

Deborah L. Hayes, Lincoln Memorial University

I "want to make a difference in the lives of students" is reported to be the voice of teachers entering the teaching profession (Stiengelbaur, 1992). Are teachers restricted within the confines of the classroom to make a difference? Fullan (1993) proposes that making a difference in improving the school is dictated by teachers as agents of change. The paradox in education is that teachers frequently see themselves as agents of change, but the educational system is entrenched in the status quo. Administrators often do not know how to involve their bright people in the decision-making process; therefore, they lose them.

This study was conducted to determine whether teachers were currently being given an opportunity to participate in both formal and informal leadership roles. Fifty-four teachers were surveyed. The findings of this study were useful for educators as they strive to include teachers in school governance and to identify the challenges that these future teacher leaders will face in accepting these roles.

No Child Left Behind: Perspectives and Knowledge of Parental Involvement

Jill Y. Brooks, Little Rock (AR) School District, and Gail D. Hughes, University of Arkansas-Little Rock

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires states, districts, and schools to develop and implement parental-involvement policies, yet the extent of implementation remains largely unmeasured. Thus, researchers surveyed 142 elementary-school administrators and 639 parents in a southern state to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between parent and administrator practices and knowledge of parental involvement and whether parental responses differed by demographics.

The survey utilized a four-point, Likert-type scale with 12 questions measuring practices (Cronbach's alpha = .84) and eight measuring knowledge (Cronbach's alpha = .91). Administrators ($M = 3.607$, $SD = 0.295$) reported statistically significantly ($F(1, 762) = 13.721$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .018$) higher practice scores than parents ($M = 3.487$, $SD = 0.356$). Similarly, results revealed a statistically significant difference ($F(1, 762) = 44.363$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .055$) between the administrators' ($M = 3.666$, $SD = 0.355$) and parents' knowledge ($M = 3.321$, $SD = 0.587$). When comparing the practice and knowledge of parents by SES, race, and educational level, only race was significant (Phillai's Trace = .041, $F(6, 1046) = 3.686$, $p < .001$, multivariate $\eta^2 = .021$). Contrary to existing research, black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino American parents exhibited greater knowledge of NCLB than white/European Americans. While administrators scored higher than parents, scores for both groups indicated relatively high levels of practice and knowledge.

It appears that NCLB parental-involvement expectations have been communicated, and future studies should explore whether this knowledge generalizes to other districts and translates into practice. Additionally, researchers should examine racial differences to determine if the existing literature is becoming dated. The significantly higher scores by Hispanic/Latino American exhibited a reduction in school-language barriers that was possibly impacted by geography. Ultimately, when school and home understand the importance of NCLB, parental-involvement students will achieve.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. TECHNOLOGY Louisiana Room

iPods and the ILrn Theory: A New Vision for Classroom Connections

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Lesia Lennex, Morehead State University

Teachers in this study believed that they were giving clear direction to students in using technology to enhance their learning. The teachers directions were frequently ignored. An examination of the actual words used to deliver instruction indicated that directions about specific manipulation of the technology might not have been clear. Students formed community groups with values and mores befitting the interpretation of the assignment. Each group evolved: (1) a leader, one which was either charismatic or bold with the iPod technology, (2) a monitor who would alert the group to switch to topic on the iPod when the teacher was proximal, and (3) an evaluator who determined whether the group had met its perceived intentions of the assignment. In this eighth-grade classroom, students did not question each other about the content of the extension videos. In other videotaped research with handhelds (Lennex and Nettleton 2009), students quizzed each other about new materials and techniques presented on handhelds.

The implications suggested that students were forming their own learning constructs. In the iLRN model, the teacher provides initial student instruction. The quality of the directions determines the extent to which students depend on the teacher for further feedback and technical assistance. If a teacher is perceived as not understanding even a small part of the technology, Lennex (2008) discovered that P-12 students were unlikely to ask for clarification of assignments or for any further assistance. Exploration and peer coaching replaced the teacher. Teachers who encouraged this interaction discovered that this scaffolding of student knowledge (Chen, 1999; Marcovitz, Hazma and Farrow, 2000) produced final student projects that demonstrated higher levels of critical thinking and creativity when compared to teacher-controlled projects. Using the handheld technology generated final products that exceeded teacher-set project parameters. Further research in P-20 settings with handheld technology is indicated.

Are Faculty Concerned with Online Delivery at Traditional Institutions?

La Toya M. Hart, Jackson State University

This study was designed to provide information to administrators about concerns faculty might have with online delivery at traditional institutions. Faculty from the eight institutions under the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning were invited to participate in the study regardless if they participated in online delivery. The results of this study allowed administrators and faculty an opportunity to address concerns and explore putting written policies in place related to online delivery.

The self-administered questionnaire containing 20 concern items were measured on a four-point horizontal numeric scale where 1 = no concern, 2 = a minor concern, 3 = a concern, and 4 = a major concern, which were identified by the literature. After analyzing individual means, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The Kaiser-Guttman eigenvalue greater-than-one rule was used to extract factors, which produced five concern subscales. The subscales were identified as rewards, course quality, legal, workload/effort, and support. There were 223 respondents who completed the questionnaire. Faculty reported low levels of concerns about legal issues and rewards. Greatest concerns were those regarding workload/effort where there were differences found based on the faculty member's tenure status. Differences were found between gender and preferred delivery method. No significant differences were found with the subject variables and the satisfaction of an individual who has engaged in online delivery.

The study indicated that policies should clearly address how the workload/effort of faculty was rewarded for the creation and delivery of online courses. These policies were uniform in nature, and there was ongoing dialogue between administrators and faculty to put these policies in place. Administrators will also need to consider more seriously faculty concerns related to course quality. University systems should consider oversight of online delivery rather than individual institutional systems doing so. University system oversight will create uniform policies across the entire system.

How to Use Photo Story in Class Activities and Portfolios

J. Gordon Nelson, Donna Herring, Jimmy Barnes, and Kathleen Friery, Jacksonville State University

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Microsoft Photo Story 3 is a free download that can be use for pedagogical as well as for personal use. It consists of pictures, arranged in a sequential order, with the ability to type text and record sounds – music and/or voice. It is a flexible program that can be used by teachers to share visual information such as procedures in sports, shop classes, nursing techniques, or science labs, where various steps can be visually represented to aid learning. It can be also used at the beginning of a course as an “ice breaker” to share personal information in classes in preparation for future group work. Teachers can use Photo Story in a three-stage model to: (1) demonstrate, model, and teach a “how to do” subject (Teacher Centered – Knowledge and Comprehension), (2) have students work in small groups to develop lessons (Cooperative Learning – Application, Analysis, and Synthesis), and (3) have groups present in class (Group Presentations – Evaluation). The above “Knowledge Navigator – Three Stage Model” was previously developed with PowerPoint as the visual media, but here it is adapted to Photo Story.

This model has been found to be highly motivating for students as it has constructivist “hands on” experiential characteristics. Finally, Photo Story can be used to develop portfolios for prospective employers on student interests and expertise. With increasing interest in portfolios, Photo Story can be useful as it compresses pictures and sounds in a program that can even be emailed. This presentation showed how to create a Photo Story and share student examples, such as baking a cake, building a Ford Mustang, preparing a clarinet to play, proper ways to do specific physical exercises, and several other examples of procedures aided by visual representation using Photo Story.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. SCIENCE EDUCATIONUniversity Room

Measuring Metacognitive Self-Regulation in a Biology Intensive Freshman Orientation

Erin R. Wheeler, Southern University and A&M College

Universities and colleges have relied on supplemental education programs to increase the retention and progression of students. While the formats of these programs vary, a vast majority of the literature related to them is dedicated to the issues associated with the widely recognized Supplemental Instruction (SI) format. Furthermore, there is limited research done on supplemental education programs that targets specific disciplines and student populations; namely, those that target freshman biology majors. This paper reviewed open-access literature on the design, effectiveness, and efficiency of biology supplemental education programs and the theoretical framework of metacognitive self-regulation. Published research has proven that freshman lack the ability to self-regulate their learning. Therefore, freshman preparation programs should develop these metacognitive skills and use appropriate instruments to measure their development.

As of this present research, the initial and only existing study of a biology-intensive freshman orientation did not include any instruments to measure the effectiveness of the orientation on the development of the students’ ability to self-regulate their learning. Results from the initial study proved that the intensive orientation format was effective in terms of overall biology grades of participants. However, the program’s effectiveness can be further validated by the addition of an instrument that measures metacognitive self-regulation. Strengthening the validity of this program can make the intensive orientation format a viable option for other colleges and universities to adopt.

Informal Science Education and Its Effect on Middle School Students’ Science Attitudes

Tonya J. Rose, Southern University and A&M College

According to the book titled Learning Science in Informal Environments, informal settings provide space for all learners to engage. Learners thrive in environments that acknowledge their needs and experiences. The literature review discussed the need for students to engage in informal science learning environments and how these environments may have a positive effect on students’ science attitudes. Informal Learning is self-directed learning. Informal learning may or may not be structured and does not follow a specific curriculum. This type of learning is often characterized as being accidental and sporadic. It occurs outside of the classroom setting. Informal learning settings include but are not limited to museums, science centers, zoos, aquariums, after school programs, and environmental settings.

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When using the Test of Science Related Attitudes (TOSRA), which was created by Barry Fraser in 1981, there was a noticeable change in the attitudes of middle and high school students. Informal environments increases a student self study by allowing the student to remember and try to retain information that they think is valuable. It gives the student motivation by allowing the students to complete task by themselves. Students become motivated when they are able to complete tasks successfully with little or no help from the instructor. It also boosts their confidence. These and many other factors contribute to a students overall change in attitude when informal science sites were visited.

The articles selected for this review included journal articles, documents, and books dated within the last five years. All articles included relevant information to the review of literature, including possible methodologies that may be used in future research.

Formal and Informal Science Education: A Collaborative Effort

Tonya M. Jackson, Southern University and A&M College

Informal science learning has garnered the attention of many educators and researchers. This fervor of interest might lead others to believe that informal science education is superior to formal science education. To imply that there is one way to learn science or that there is one best way to gain scientific knowledge is presumptuous. Through research made available in journals and publications by the National Research Council, this paper intended to show that science education requires a collaboration of both informal and formal scientific learning by first displaying the attributes of both formal and informal science education. The literature suggests that distinguishing between the two types of learning can be problematic; however, there were several indicators or characteristics that can be used to identify formal and informal science learning. Second, this paper outlined instances in which the implementation of either formal or informal science education would be beneficial to the learner.

The review of literature indicated that there are times when it is advantageous to implement formal science learning and times when it is advantageous to utilize informal science learning. The disadvantages of utilizing either types of learning are highlighted in the literature. In order to determine what science learning consists of and what the impact of learning science in these environments is, assessments must be implemented. The paper next focused on how these learning environments were evaluated.

The research implied that differences in evaluation styles are because of the participants, the environment and other factors. Finally, through the literature, this writing sought to unify informal science learning and formal science learning. Research denotes that, because science learning is a cumulative process, it must be supported by experiences in informal and formal learning environments.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. HIGHER EDUCATION King Room

African-American Faculty in the Academy: Has Significant Progress Occurred Yet?

Jonathon L. Modica and Ketevan Mamiseishvili, University of Arkansas

African-Americans make up more than 12 % of the United States population; however, they represent slightly more than 5% of post-secondary faculty (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Numerous studies have reported that African-American faculty members experience fewer opportunities for career growth and advancement than their white peers (e.g., Perna, Gerald, and Baum, 2006; Weinberg, 2008; Williams and Williams, 2006). Furthermore, they often feel marginalized and socially isolated, which might also adversely affect their entry and performance in academic institutions (e.g., Barden, Harrison, and Hodge, 2005; Patitu and Hinton, 2003). After almost four decades of extensive research, the question that still remains to be answered is: How much progress has been made to increase the entrance and advancement of African-American faculty in higher education institutions, especially at research universities nationwide?

The proposed study attempted to partially address this question and examined the changes in the demographic characteristics, career progression, and productivity of African-American faculty members at research universities over time. The study utilized the data from the 1993 and 2004 National Study of Post-secondary Faculty data sets (NSOPF: 93, 04). These data sets provided nationally

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representative samples of faculty and instructional staff at public and private degree-granting institutions in the U.S. (NCES, 2006). The sample of this study included all faculty members who identified themselves as African-American in the 1993 and 2004 data sets.

The author employed descriptive statistics and t-tests to observe and test for the differences between 1993 and 2004 national samples of African-American faculty on demographic, career position, and productivity variables. By identifying these differences in career progression and productivity of African-American faculty, the authors can highlight if and to what extent progress has been achieved in increasing the representation and success of these faculty members at research universities in the U.S.

Reframing the Scholar Practitioner Doctoral Program in Leadership: A Participatory Program Evaluation

Pamela H. Scott, East Tennessee State University

Bridging the gap between theory and practice requires a process of evaluating and reframing the scholar practitioner doctoral program in leadership. To ensure advanced content in the doctoral program at East Tennessee State University, a participatory program evaluation was conducted to identify the current status of the program, identify strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations for program improvement. A participatory program evaluation was used to learn from stakeholders in the leadership program how the program was working. The premise that stakeholders would be empowered to improve performance if they were involved in identifying evaluation questions and gathering and analyzing data was a basis for this method of evaluation. Stakeholders were full-time and adjunct faculty, students currently enrolled in the doctoral program, and graduates of the doctoral program.

Two questions guided the evaluation: (1) Does the doctoral program in leadership have curricula that are aligned, delivered, and assessed? and (2) Are there standards of quality inherent in the doctoral program in leadership? Data were gathered using questionnaires, individual and focus group interviews, key informant interviews, and document review. Because knowledge is socially constructed, stakeholders analyzed and interpreted the data.

An analysis of the data from phase one of the participatory program evaluation revealed a disjointed curricula, overlap of course content, inconsistent delivery, and inconsistent rigor. A common body of knowledge was developed that became the foundation for group consensus on a plan of action for program improvement. As a result, the stakeholders were empowered by knowledge to facilitate change in the doctoral leadership program.

Creating Foreign Language Immersion Programs: A Case Study of Program Implementation

Heather K. Olson Beal, Stephen F. Austin State University

Immersion programs typically have three objectives: (1) developing second language proficiency, (2) increasing content area achievement, and (3) promoting positive attitudes towards self and others. Despite a significant body of literature regarding the positive impact of immersion programs on student achievement, the process of implementing such programs remains largely unexamined. This case study explored the process by which a K-5 dual language program was implemented in a small town in east Texas. The objective of this research was to make transparent the process of establishing early language learning programs and contribute to a broader professional discussion of this issue. Findings may prove beneficial in planning and improving immersion programs. This qualitative case study explored the following questions: (1) Who were the key individuals involved in establishing this program? (2) What were the main objectives of the program? and (3) What were the major challenges encountered during the implementation process?

Semi-structured interviews with key participants were the primary source of data. Interview data were broken down into units of meaning that served as themes that were subjected to a systematic content analysis and then the constant comparative method. Three primary themes emerged from the data. The first theme was the importance of garnering support from school board members, principals, teachers, and support staff. A second theme was the importance of achieving clarity regarding the program objectives. In this case, program developers were committed to a program that would benefit

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native English- and native Spanish-speaking students. A third theme was the importance of a future orientation that acknowledged the importance of innovation, adaptation to change, and flexibility. The people who created the program saw the steady growth of the Spanish-speaking population in their district and sought ways to meet the needs of the English Language Learners (ELLs).

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. MULTICULTURAL EDUCATIONGovernor Room

Competence and Control Cognitions: A System for Academic Well-Being Among African-American College Students

Karla L. Snipes, Cecil Robinson, and Wei Liu, University of Alabama

Competence and control beliefs positively contribute to the academic achievement and well-being of students (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2006). However, little research has examined competence and control beliefs independent of one another. Additionally, few studies have explored the influence of competence and control beliefs among African-American students. Based on the dual theory of motivation, competence beliefs (perceptions of capabilities) and control beliefs (perceptions of chances to accomplish desired outcomes) are identified as expectancy beliefs about future events (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2006). The constructs of hope, self-efficacy, and optimism are all expectancy beliefs that make up aspects of competency and control cognitions. Combining the constructs creates a system of competence and control cognitions that acts as a protective factor for academic well-being.

Two hundred five college students from an historically black university in the southeastern United States were recruited from sections of Introduction to Psychology courses to participate in the study. Students completed a survey that included self-reported background information and the following measures: Academic Hope Scale (Campbell and Kwon, 2001), Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (Zimmerman et al., 1992), Life Orientation Test (Scheier and Carver, 1985), Brief Cope (Carver, 1997), PANAS scale (Watson et al., 1988), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha test of reliability were computed to determine the reliability and validity of the survey measures. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine whether the cognitive set, and which measures within the set, predicted academic achievement, coping, emotional affect, and life satisfaction.

Results indicated that the measures of hope, self-efficacy, and optimism formed a robust set that was predictive of academic achievement; enhanced life satisfaction, positive emotion, and coping strategies; and reduced negative emotions and maladaptive coping strategies. Implications of this work for student development were discussed.

Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: An Assessment of Preservice Beliefs About Diversity

Audrey Bowser, Arkansas State University

Because schools are becoming increasingly diverse, a significant role of teacher preparation programs is to prepare its prospective teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. Within the context of teacher education, this research was rooted in social reconstructionist theory (Sleeter and Grant, 2003) based upon a critical multicultural conceptual framework interwoven with critical pedagogy (Freire, 1996; McLaren, 2003). There is widespread recognition that prospective teachers must be better prepared to teach an increasingly culturally diverse student population (Hodgkinson, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Nieto and Bode, 2008; Sleeter, 2001; Zeichner and Hoeft, 1996).

This research study assessed how preservice teachers' personal and professional beliefs at different stages of their teacher preparation program differ regarding their beliefs about multicultural education. The Personal Beliefs about Diversity Scale and the Professional Beliefs about Diversity Scale were used to measure preservice teachers' beliefs about multiculturalism and a range of diversity issues (Pohan and Aguilar, 2001). The preservice teachers of the study were all enrolled in a required professional education course, 30% at the beginning stage, 33% at the intermediate stage, and 38% at the advanced stage. The multicultural framework proposed by Sleeter and Grant (2003) was used to

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analyze the responses to the qualitative data to determine the 346 preservice teachers' multicultural perspectives.

Overall, the results revealed that the preservice teachers in this study held favorable beliefs about multicultural understandings; however, the majority of students tended to conceptualize multicultural education from the human relations approach. This study found that the students' growth in multicultural knowledge and awareness appeared to increase as they advanced through the teacher education program. Transforming teacher education to support multicultural technology pedagogy, therefore, necessitates both a close examination of personal beliefs as well as an assessment of future professional beliefs.

The Purpose of Preschool: Sociocultural Influences on Policy Development

Bridget E. Thomas, George Mason University

Despite data indicating their effectiveness, the United States has thus far failed to support preschool and early childhood initiatives in the way that many other industrialized nations have. This research investigated how a culture's perspective on the purpose of preschool is related to the development and implementation of its policies. Using qualitative content analysis of relevant policy documents (e.g. legislation, curricula, regulations), the study evaluated universal preschool programs in three countries that are at varied points on the spectrum in terms of support for early childhood education: the United States, Canada, and Sweden. To allow a focus on universal preschool programs, as well as to draw more size-appropriate comparisons, the research specifically addressed the state-level universal program in Georgia in the United States, the burgeoning provincial-level program in British Columbia in Canada, and the federal-level program in Sweden.

Three explanatory case studies were developed (one for each location) that theorized how beliefs regarding the purpose of preschool manifested in the design, implementation, and value structure of early childhood policies and programs. At issue was how the wording, structure, and development of written policies related to a program illustrate underlying beliefs about and goals for the program, whether they were explicitly stated. Also investigated was the way in which the design and implementation of a program revealed the core policy values most relevant to the program (and possibly the larger culture). Results and discussion focused on the policy implications for each location and its universal preschool program, particularly regarding where and how well the program fit into the larger educational and policy structure.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. FIELD EXPERIENCESCapitol Room

Teaching Classroom Management: Using Research with Exemplary Teachers to Construct An Explicit and Tangible Framework for Teaching Preservice Teachers

Anne C. Lindsay, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

This presentation was based on a study of the classroom discourse of three handpicked exemplary early childhood teachers. The study was grounded in the fact that increasing attention has been focused on the significance of oral language in classrooms with young children (Dickenson, McCabe, and Essex, 2006), but that explicit models for how this is accomplished are often limited. The purpose of the study was to provide tangible, explicit evidence of how highly effective teachers structured their verbal and nonverbal interactions with children.

The three teachers were videotaped in 30-minute segments during their regular teaching time. The tapes were transcribed verbatim including nonverbal information. Transcripts were divided into episodes of discourse and then discussed with the teacher to determine her intent in each episode. The statements of intent were then sorted and resorted using the constant comparative method. Out of the approximately 350 episodes, eight categories of interaction emerged with numerous examples of how the teachers structured each kind of interaction.

The results have had implications of several kinds. One of the most useful has been their application to teacher education, in particular the area of classroom management or guidance. They provided an explicit, tangible framework for teaching student teachers how to enact many of the

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interactions that teachers use to accomplish what is termed “positive, authoritative child guidance, based on principles of developmentally appropriate practice” (Marion, 2007).

This presentation described the study briefly and then the structure and use of this framework in the teaching of preservice teachers providing examples of the eight different categories and the structures used to enact them both from the original study and from ongoing practice in the field.

Barriers to Success for Student Teachers: Potential Pitfalls During the Student Teaching Experience

Elizabeth K. Wilson, Bridget Griggs, and Alan Brown, University of Alabama,
and Carol V. Livingston, University of Mississippi

The student teaching experience is recognized as the most important phase of a teacher candidate’s development (Henry and Beasley, 2002). Unfortunately, not all student teachers are ready for the challenges presented in this experience (Knudsen and Turley, 2000; Raths and Lyman, 2003). The researchers sought to examine characteristics or factors that were barriers to success during the student teaching experience. The research questions for the study included: (1) What factors were barriers to the successes of the student teachers in this study? (2) What differences existed between student teachers who were able to complete the student teaching experience and those unable complete the requirements of the teacher education program? and (3) What characteristics commonly recur?

The participants in this study were 15 student teachers over seven semesters. Participants were placed in either the traditional triad model of student teacher supervision or an alternative model of student teacher supervision. Faculty from the teacher education program and classroom teachers developed remediation plans for each student teacher who experienced difficulties. Data sources for the study included: (1) communications from each student teacher from university and school representatives, (2) student teacher evaluations, and (3) remediation plans.

All data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman’s (1994) constant comparative analysis. Most frequently, the areas that emerged as “barriers to success” for the student teachers were professionalism, classroom management, and instructional planning. It is important to note that deficient content knowledge was noted as a concern for only two of the participants; both of these student teachers were language arts majors and experienced difficulty with teaching grammar in their classes. The findings of this study can be used: (1) to guide curriculum design in teacher education programs and (2) by teacher educators, classroom teachers, and student teachers to address and prevent potential concerns that may arise during student teaching.

When Metaphors Reveal Images of Teaching in Preservice Physical Education Teachers

Franco Zengaro, Armstrong Atlantic State University

Preservice teachers come to teacher education programs with preconceived beliefs about the teaching and learning contexts. These beliefs often hinder them from accepting newer ways for conducting their future classes. The purpose of this research was to investigate how a group of preservice physical education teachers used metaphors to describe their views of teaching. Lakoff and Johnson’s seminal work on metaphor analysis, constructivist theories, and teacher practical knowledge provided supporting theoretical frames from which knowledge construction was articulated in this research.

One hundred undergraduate preservice teachers in a physical education teacher education program at a mid-sized university in the South participated in the study. They were asked to select metaphors to complete two sentences: Being a student was like _____. As a teacher, I want to be like a _____. The data were analyzed using the technique of constant comparison methodology for identifying and classifying themes. The results indicated that the largest common theme (24%) was viewing teaching as an emotional practice, where preservice teachers offer support, compassion, and care to their future students. About 30% viewed teaching as either the transmission of knowledge (13%) or a clear-cut, certain process (16%). Only 10% mentioned the need to adapt teaching for learners with special needs.

These findings were important because they were indications of how preservice teachers view the teaching-learning process. If we want to change the way teachers teach, we must reach them

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before they leave our teacher education programs. This study added to our understanding of where preservice teachers are in their beliefs about teaching and learning, which enables us to evaluate the success of our educational objectives. By understanding what preservice teachers believe about teaching, we can be more effective in helping preservice teachers accept the challenges of diversity in the classroom.

**2:00 – 2:50 P.M. USING R IN APPLIED REGRESSION ANALYSIS
(2-hour Training)..... Academy Room**

Hongwei Yang, University of Kentucky

R is a powerful, free, open source programming language used by a growing number of data analysts inside corporations and academia. It has about 2,000 packages for high quality graphics and all levels of data analysis. R is gaining increasing popularity as one of the leading programming languages in many fields of study, including statistics, education, psychology, engineering.

This training session aimed to provide attendees with a practical introduction of the R environment and how to use the language to perform regression analysis: ordinary least squares (OLS) and binary logistic regression. Topics included R objects and data types, fundamentals of using the R language to import, manage and manipulate data, using R functions, performing regression analysis under the R environment, and producing regression-related R graphics. The training session is most appropriate for beginners in R and efforts were made to step attendees through the initial perplexities in learning to use the language. However, the session assumed that attendees have had some prior exposure to statistics: descriptive statistics, statistical inference, t-test, linear regression, etc.

The training session began with an overview of R before proceeding to program installation. Then, after learning to use R as a calculator, attendees were acquainted with programming basics and an introduction of R objects, data frame in particular. Next, attention was shifted to downloading, installing, and loading R packages and how to use R functions. Two regression examples were provided with one on OLS and the other binary logistic regression. After examining the regression outputs, relevant graphics were generated using R. During the session, attendees were shown how to get help for R topics through various sources including the program documentation, the RSEEK website, and electronic mailing lists. Besides, detailed slides were made available to all attendees.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. EDUCATION REFORM Paramount Room

Elementary Education Majors' Experiences in a Middle School Field Placement

Gahan Bailey, Andrea M. Kent, and Kelly Byrd, University of South Alabama

What happens when you take elementary education majors, whose only experiences have been in lower elementary grades (K – 3), and put them in a 6th-grade middle school placement? Answers to this question and other revelations were disclosed as this qualitative study focused on four elementary education preservice teachers who completed a 13-week field placement in a 6th-grade class in a middle school environment. Elementary education majors in the college of education at a university in the Southeast receive certification in grades K–6. During their field experiences they are typically placed in elementary grades K–5, with no experience in the 6th grade since it is part of a middle school rather than an elementary setting.

Because these students were certified to teach 6th grade, the researchers sought to begin a program in which elementary majors would gain experience in the middle school environment. Many middle school teachers were elementary certified, but had no experience or educational background in middle level education prior to their accepting a job in a middle school. Thus, one purpose of this program was to allow students who had an interest in possibly teaching middle school to gain experience observing, interacting, and teaching in the middle school environment.

Data from the participants were collected with a pre- and post-questionnaire, weekly journal reflections, Pow Wows (focus groups), and formal and informal observations. Additionally, informal and

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formal meetings were held with the cooperating teachers. Qualitative strategies and procedures were used to generate meaning from the participants' perspectives.

Mentoring the Mentors: Aligning the Needs and Expectations of University Faculty and Cooperating Teachers

Susan P. Santoli, Susan Piper, and Andre Green, University of South Alabama

Cooperating teachers play a critical role during the student teaching classroom experience. Because university personnel cannot be in each classroom every day, the mentoring of student teachers is left largely to their cooperating teacher. The question then becomes how to effectively and efficiently train cooperating teachers so that they provide the guidance and support that will best prepare preservice teachers for managing their own classrooms in the way that the university deems integral to fully developing students into successful educators. Currently, very limited training has been provided to cooperating teachers.

This study was conducted through a southeastern public university. A survey was distributed among all teachers that were eligible to be cooperating teachers in a two-county area, whether they were currently serving as cooperating teachers. Participants were asked to voluntarily take an online survey that focused on: how well they were prepared to be mentors, what type of training and guidance they felt would better prepare them to serve as mentors, what delivery method for the training would best allow them to participate in such training with consideration to their scheduling issues, and what type of support they would like to receive from the university during the student teaching experience. Results from this study were used to design training for cooperating teachers.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. COGNITION/ACHIEVEMENT Louisiana Room

Chinese and African-American College Students' Hope

Wei Liu, Cecil Robinson, and Karla Snipes, University of Alabama

Hopeful thinking is a cognitive disposition that emphasizes one's perceived ability to produce goals, viable routes to achieve goals (pathways), and the energy to act on routes towards goal pursuit (agency) (Snyder, 2002). Two decades of research have linked hopeful thinking to an increase in positive outcomes across multiple clinical and educational settings. Although compelling, this research has been conducted primarily in the United States with few studies of ethnically diverse populations (Chang, 1996; Chang and Banks, 2007).

To begin to address this gap, this study examined the validity of hope among Chinese (N = 847) and African-American (N = 153) college students. Students were recruited from six universities in China and an historically black university in the southeast United States. All participants voluntarily participated in the study without incentives. Questionnaires consisted of the demographic information, the Dispositional Hope Scale (DHS; Snyder et al., 1991), and measures to validate the DHS: Problem-Solving Inventory (Heppner and Peterson, 1982), Positive and Negative Schedule (Watson et al., 1988), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (Deiner et al., 1985).

Results indicated that all measures had moderately high reliability. Between-group analysis of variance suggested that African-American students reported significantly higher scores on all measures, but correlation analyses revealed that the strength and direction of the relationship between hope and the other variables function similarly across populations. Within group analyses revealed that the Chinese students who participated in this study were largely homogeneous, but that there were gender and developmental differences among African-American students. These results lent evidence to the importance of hopeful thinking across cultures, but highlighted differences that may exist between and within groups. More research is needed to understand the differences in scale scores across groups, and differences within the African-American students if researchers were to develop hopeful interventions that will reach all students.

Hierarchical Regression of Demographic Factors, Instructional Strategies

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Larry S. Ennis, Lindsey Wilson College, Stephen K. Miller,
and D. Clayton Smith, Western Kentucky University

Although there is extensive research on school accountability, notable gaps exist in the knowledge base. Both science (O'Sullivan, Reece, and Mazzeo, 1997) and middle schools (Southern Regional Education Board, 1999) lag behind other levels. The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 is widely considered to be the most comprehensive among state reform packages (Pankratz and Petrosko, 2000), yet middle school science is the lowest accountability content area (Petrosko, 2000). Further, large scale assessment studies are generally limited to demographic effects (Marchant, Paulson, and Shunk, 2006) because of resources required to examine instructional practices and student perceptions.

This paper brought these issues together: influence of teachers' Instructional Strategies (IS) on middle school science accountability in Kentucky, and controlling for demographics and mediated by student self-constructs. The database included 49,267 seventh graders from state science assessment, analyzed at student (1998 scores) and school levels (percentage change scores across 1994-95 to 1997-98 Accountability Cycle 3). Answers to additional survey questions on frequency of seven teacher ISs and two student constructs (science ability and effort) comprised instructional and mediating variables, respectively. Factor analysis produced three groupings of ISs--five items on inquiry-based science (ACTION) with TRADITIONAL and COMPUTER as single items.

Data were analyzed via hierarchical regression, inputted in three steps--demographics, ISs, self-constructs. Both student and school level models were significant, but effect sizes were low (.107 and .067, respectively). At individual level, the highest betas (both negative) were for free/reduced lunch and COMPUTER; for school level, only COMPUTER (again negative) and student effort were significant.

Results were discussed: instructional use of computers (possibilities include professional development, computers as babysitters, quality of software), minimal influence of demographic factors (measurement error; loss of low income subjects), low effect sizes (measurement error again; low levels of science outcomes across the state), and implications for science instruction.

Correlation Between Students' Attitudes Toward Math and Achievement Scores

Patrick K. Saidu, Vivica Smith-Pierre, and Eugene Kennedy, Louisiana State University

Research suggests that achievement in mathematics is a function of many interrelated variables: home-, family-, and school-related. However, most of these variables were beyond the control of educators; however, school-related variables can be influenced by educational interventions (Singh, Granville, and Dika, 2002). Attitudes influence success and persistence in the study of mathematics (Chang, 1990; Ma, 1997; Thorndike-Christ, 1991; Webb, Lubinski, and Benbow, 2002).

Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) has an open-door admissions policy whereby students who can benefit from the programs offered are accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical disability, marital or veteran status. However, despite the open door admissions policy, there is a great concern over the retention rates of students admitted. As the college strives to do everything possible to address these concerns, it was hypothesized by the author(s) that students' attitude toward math in particular is related with other factors such as retention rate, dropout proneness, predicted academic difficulty, and receptivity to institutional help.

This study aimed at addressing the following: (1) the correlation between students' attitude toward math and their achievement scores, (2) the correlation between gender and attitude toward math, and (3) comparing math achievement scores based on gender. The achievement scores were final math grades (letter grades A-F) for the Spring 2009 semester, and the attitude score was a composite score for each student from a math attitude inventory survey administered to each students during the Spring 2009 semester. The higher the attitude score, the better the attitude about math and less anxiety.

The findings of this study had implications for institutional support to students that need help in specific areas such as math, preparation initiatives and institutional advancement initiatives in meeting the needs of students or prospective students.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTUniversity Room

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The Relationship Between Per-Pupil Spending and Math Proficiency Scores in Economically Disadvantaged School Districts

Vinson F. Thompson, Belhaven University

This study was designed to answer the following research question: Is there a relationship between per-pupil spending and math proficiency scores in economically disadvantaged rural and urban school districts? There are over 7,000 rural school districts in the United States, and they hold 21% of the nation's student population. Many of these districts have higher economically disadvantaged populations and lower per-pupil spending than their urban counter parts. Urban school districts have been in the spotlight for inadequate performance on standardized tests, and the assumption is that the high economically disadvantaged rates warrant more per-pupil spending. The increased spending was used to counterbalance the students' socioeconomic standing.

The sample population was composed of 20 rural and four urban districts from a state located in the southeastern part of the United States. All the districts used in the study had an economically disadvantaged population of at least 55%.

The data were analyzed by comparing two independent variables (ED% and Per-pupil spending) to the dependent variable (math proficiency) in both rural and urban districts. The data utilized in the study were collected from a public website and segregated into urban and rural categories. The following variables were analyzed: (1) the economically disadvantaged percentage, (2) the pre-pupil spending amount, and (3) the math proficiency scores on two years of a standardized test.

The results indicated that the rural districts in the study had higher economically disadvantaged rates and lower per-pupil spending; however, they out-performed the urban districts significantly on the math proficiency scores. The intervening variables of student mobility, teacher buy-in, and the economic health of the communities were considered in the conclusion.

School Culture and Accountability Outcomes: Evaluating Standard

Christopher R. Wagner, Stephen K. Miller, Doug Smith, and Alejandro Saravia,
Western Kentucky University

Kentucky has developed nine Standards and Indicators for School Improvement (SISI), extending standards-based performance assessment from disciplinary content to whole-school reform. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE, 2004) also developed a Scholastic Audit (externally trained teams rate 88 indicators across nine standards) for school improvement. SISI has three standards each for Academic Performance, Learning Environment, and Efficiency. Standard 4, School Culture, is central to the second grouping and was examined here. Standards-based accountability holds that schools should teach and students should learn essential knowledge from disciplinary standards (Bolon, 2000; Fuhrman, 2001; Smith and O'Day, 1991). Yet, school improvement also requires a knowledge of organizational dynamics, leadership, and change processes. School culture encompasses these fundamentals, including attitudes, expectations, values, and beliefs about learning and human growth (Wagner, 2005). Miller (2008) summarizes relationships between culture, the learning climate, and achievement.

This study utilized secondary data from KDE composed of Scholastic Audits from 181 elementary schools from 2000-2005 across varying achievement levels. Each standard has its own indicators, assessed on a four-point behaviorally defined scale (four high). Psychometric analysis of Standard 4 included factor analysis of the 11 School Culture Indicators, plus Cronbach's alpha (internal reliability). Relationships among the demographic factors, the resulting culture factor, and the Academic Index, available from the Kentucky Performance Report, were explored through multiple regression. Factor analysis produced one factor, explaining 53.8% of the variance for Standard 4; Cronbach's alpha was .913. Only one demographic variable was significantly related to Culture ($R^2 = .168$). The hierarchical regression demonstrated strong effects on the Academic Index. In Step 1, demographics explained 62% of the variance; School Culture added 7% in Step 2.

These results demonstrated the importance of School Culture for accountability and validated the Scholastic Audit for school improvement efforts. Implications were discussed, including the independence of culture from demographic factors.

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College Students, Religiosity, and Abortion Attitudes

Tina Vazin, Alabama State University

This study assessed differences between students identifying themselves as either pro-life or pro-choice on three Religiosity Subscales (Attitudes, Feelings, and Importance). Participants were 95 students enrolled in numerous sections of an introductory psychology course at a southeastern regional university. All students were high school graduates, with 95% reporting their race as African-American. Approximately two-thirds (65.2%) were females. Students represented a variety of academic majors (16 different majors) with 76.3% enrolled as at the lower division level. The majority of these student labeled themselves as Christians (89.2%), and 60% as pro-life. Females represented a slightly larger proportion of pro-lifers (45.3%) compared to males (32.3%).

Students responded to the three subscales of the Religiosity Inventory (Attitudes, Feelings, and Importance). Items were evaluated on a five-point, Likert-type scale. Scores were transformed to a Percent Max Scale ranging from 0 to 100 with higher scores indicating greater agreement with the domain. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subscales (Attitudes, Feelings, and Importance) were .69, .87, and .89, respectively. Because two questions in the Attitude subscale failed to achieve an inter-item correlation of .3, they were deleted from further analysis. A 2 (Group: Pro-choice, Pro-life) X 3 (Scales: Attitudes, Feelings, and Importance) mixed between/within analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with alpha set at 0.05.

There were no statistically significant group effects or interaction effects. There was a statistically significant Scale effect, $F(2, 85) = 7.14, p < .001, \eta^2 = .14$. Regardless of group, students scored statistically significantly lower on Attitudes ($M = .71, SD = 12$) than on either Feelings ($M = .75, SD = 16$) or Importance ($M = .75, SD = 12$). There were no statistically significant differences between Feelings and Importance. This study suggested that Religiosity as measured with the three subscales of Attitudes, Feelings, and Importance failed to differentiate Pro-Life supporters from Pro-Choice advocates. Abortion Attitudes encompassed a more complex explanation than religiosity.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT..... King Room

A Longitudinal Investigation of Middle School Teachers

Pamala J. Carter, Ted Miller, and Lloyd D. Davis, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

A sample of middle school teachers from each of the 21 middle schools in Hamilton County, Tennessee was queried in focus group sessions each Spring of 2007 through 2009. They were asked, "While it seems difficult for us to determine exactly what good teaching looks like, what elements would you suggest are usually incorporated in good instruction?" Seven hundred eighty-two responses were transcribed. Using a minimum consensus ranking agreement procedure to categorize responses, focus group statements were aligned into domains according to Stronge's Teacher Skills Assessment Checklist classifications. The domains in this classification system are Teacher as a Person, Classroom Management and Organization, Planning and Organizing for Instruction, Implementing Instruction, and Monitoring Student Progress and Potential.

Results from the rankings found Teacher as Person predominated as a quality in good teaching (49.6 % of the responses) followed by Implementing Instruction (25.6 %) and Classroom Management and Organization (14.7 %). The remaining domains were far less often nominated with Planning and Organizing for Instruction at 7.8% and Monitoring for Student Progress and Potential at 2.3%. There were some longitudinal changes over the three years, with Teacher as Person generally increasing as a quality indicator, and Classroom Management and Organization declining.

Overall, these focus groups of middle school teachers' responses verified the capacity Stronge's categorizations to capture perceptions of quality teaching. The data also indicated that, while teacher's perceptions of quality align with Stronge's summary, the judged relative importance of the categories was not viewed as equivalent, and teacher perceptions may reflect system reform emphases.

A Study of Educational Retreats Providing Professional Development

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Betty G. Porter, School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans

The study examined educational retreats as conducted by schools for the faculty, by districts for their administrative personnel, and by outside providers for leaders and faculty in multiple districts to determine the factors that characterize a productive retreat for educational improvement in leadership and student achievement. The sample consisted of 17 retreats serving three districts, 12 schools, and principals from eight districts.

The researchers collected evaluation surveys from each retreat to compare participants' satisfaction with the quality of presentations and activities conducted during the retreats pertaining to leadership and student achievement. Open-ended questions were provided to determine similarities of activities performed in the 17 retreats and participants' degree of satisfaction with these activities. Coordinators for each of the 17 retreats were interviewed to determine the planning process for the retreats. These coordinators also provided the researchers with the evaluation forms that were used at the respective retreats and the compilation of results.

The results of the interviews and the evaluation forms were compiled to provide the researchers with traits participants felt were necessary to have a retreat that would enhance leadership and academic improvement. The findings of the study suggested elements of retreats that were necessary to provide assistance to the educators when planning staff retreats.

When, Where, and How We Enter: A Qualitative Study of the Induction Process of Teacher Educators in Public and Private Universities

Ellen S. Faith, Christian Brothers University

The study developed portraits of six teacher education faculty in public and private institutions of higher education: (1) to explore the strength of communities of practice within the education professoriate and (2) to investigate how teacher education faculty experience induction, mentoring, apprenticeship, and situated learning. Part of a larger project of mixed-method studies on the induction and learning processes of teacher education faculty, this inquiry focused on six full-time education professors with responsibilities as teacher educators, three in public and three in private institutions of higher education. The larger project investigated: (1) the negotiation of professional learning about the complexity of contemporary teacher education and (2) the efficacy of communities of practice for teacher education faculty in supporting situated professional learning.

The researcher met with each of the selected faculty members for an extended face-to-face structured qualitative interview and then conducted additional interviews by phone, transcribing and analyzing the content of the interviews and developing written portraits of the individuals. These six cases illustrated diversity in professional and academic backgrounds prior to entry into full-time faculty roles, highlighted the range of induction and learning experiences about contemporary teacher education encountered after assumption of the faculty role, and explored in greater depth issues that have been emerging in the larger set of studies. The case studies explored individual career and academic backgrounds in relation to personal and professional strategies for managing the challenge of becoming a teacher educator. The case studies also elucidated differences in the induction and community of practice experiences of teacher education faculty in larger public universities and smaller private ones. The portraiture method used in this study emphasized individual differences in negotiating the challenge of becoming a teacher educator and offers new perspectives suggesting needed improvements in the induction and professional learning process for teacher education faculty.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. EFFICACY.....Governor Room

The Indicators of Family Engagement Survey

Jeffrey Oescher and Monica Ballay, Southeastern Louisiana University,
and Melanie Forstall Lemoine, Louisiana State University

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One of the initiatives of the Louisiana State Improvement Grant 2 focuses on parental involvement in schools. After an analysis of existing instruments, the authors identified the need to develop a tool that school personnel could use to self-assess the level at which they were engaging families.

This paper discussed the development and validation of the Indicators of Family Engagement Survey designed to meet this need. Four key indicators of effective family engagement were identified, all of which were supported by the literature on this topic. These areas were: (1) the communication between a school and the families of students in it, (2) the support provided to families by the school, (3) the participation of families and students in the decision-making process at the school, and (4) the personal relationships between the school and families.

Issues specific to each area were identified, and item stems appropriate for a four-point Likert-scale were written. A total of 28 items was written, with the number of items for each area varying from six to nine. The survey was pilot tested in four schools; 150 teachers responded. Scores for the total and each area were computed as the mean of all non-missing items. Several items were eliminated based on statistical data that were deemed unacceptable (e.g., low item to total correlations).

Correlations between the remaining items and the total score ranged from 0.45 to 0.78. Correlations between the items in each area and the area scores ranged from 0.62 to 0.86. Cronbach alpha for the total was 0.95; the reliability estimates for the four area scores ranged from 0.86 to 0.90. A confirmatory factor analysis indicated that items loaded appropriately. In summary, these analyses provided substantial evidence by suggesting that the scale was appropriate for its intended use.

The Impact of Interdisciplinary Teaming on the Collective and Self-Efficacy of Middle School Teachers

Teresa T. Bagwell, Dianne F. Olivier, and Mitzi P. Trahan, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

This study examined the relationships between the constructs of interdisciplinary teaming, self-efficacy, and collective efficacy of experienced and novice middle school teachers who together form interdisciplinary middle school teams. The study was guided by the conceptual framework of Bandura's social cognitive theory wherein behavior, cognition and personal factors, and environmental influences interact. This study examined the impact of the team environment on teacher behaviors and, ultimately, student performance. The study also explored Bandura's (1997) collective efficacy construct, shared beliefs of a group regarding their abilities to successfully accomplish specific goals served to influence the degree of collective efficacy.

The study employed a mixed methods approach to elicit a more comprehensive analysis of potential relationships between teaming and self and collective efficacy. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through a combination of questionnaires, open-ended questions, and a focus group interview of novice teachers. Teachers were surveyed regarding the frequency and structure of teaming practices within their school environment. Two instruments were used to collect quantitative measures of efficacy: the Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs Scale-Self and the Collective Efficacy Instrument. The researcher identified and interpreted the resultant levels of teachers' self and collective efficacy within the context of the interdisciplinary team environment. The classroom setting was used as the context for teacher perceptions; collective efficacy was assumed to be at an organizational level. The sample included 70 teachers among five middle schools in the southeastern United States. Web-based survey software, known as Zoomerang, was incorporated to ensure a strictly anonymous, highly-confidential format for acquiring data.

Results demonstrated a high level of self-efficacy among both groups of teachers despite differences in teacher certification levels and degree of classroom experience. Teachers expressed the positive impact of teaming in areas such as classroom management, instructional decisions, and communication with students and parents.

Assessing the Impact of Teacher Disposition in Alternate Route Teacher Candidates: Challenges and Promising Practices

Shirley Bowles and Ursula Whitehead, University of Southern Mississippi

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The two main focuses of teacher education programs are skills and knowledge. However, in recent years, teacher education programs are being asked to promote a third component . . . the disposition of teaching, an idea that is being advanced by both NCATE and INTASC. Because alternative certification programs continue to increase as school districts, and institutions of higher education share common educational expectations, the authors assessed the Alternate Route Teacher candidates' (ART) perception of teacher dispositions.

The study grew out of experience in teaching ART candidates at a state-supported university in the Deep South. Of the 18 students enrolled in the alternate route classes, 11 completed the required three courses and participated in the study (N = 11). The make-up of the classes had a female majority diversified by age, ethnicity, race, religion, and social class. All of the students had a bachelor's degree, but no student had a degree in education. A questionnaire containing 24 Likert-format items with narrative comments was administered to ART candidates at the end of the semester.

In addition to data collected through the survey, information was also gathered through a self-directed assessment tool given to students at the beginning of the semester and discussed with the student via an Exit Interview. Results concerning the ART candidates' perceptions of teaching dispositions, and their perceptions concerning the potential influence of dispositions on their professional growth and development, were discussed

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. MATHEMATICSCapitol Room

Use of Metacognition and Heuristics to Facilitate Problem Solving in Secondary Mathematics

Ellen R. Bush, Southern University/St. Joseph's Academy

Problem solving, a major topic in mathematics curricula, is a fundamental issue in education for life. Students have difficulty in this area because they do not adequately think through problems, or because they lack confidence in their abilities. In the original action research study, 75 Algebra 2 Honors students participated in a series of activities designed to foster metacognition, or thinking about thinking, and heuristic problem-solving. Over a seven-week period, students recorded their thought processes and documented their problem solving efforts. They modeled George Polya's four-part problem solving heuristic for themselves and their classmates through independent work and group presentations. Problem solving pre- and posttests showed about an increase in student competence; attitude surveys reflected an increase in students' confidence in their problem-solving skills; this was supported by teacher observations and students' reflective comments.

Conventional research includes a number of paradigms to protect the integrity of the study. In action research, these were relaxed. The teacher is the researcher and manipulates the subjects, and often the research design, as the study progresses. Control groups may not be included as the classroom is the laboratory and students are all given what are hoped to be the best opportunities to learn. What does remain is the commitment to accurate reporting and analysis of the results and use of the research to further the goal of the best possible education for all students.

The follow-up problem-solving study reflected the findings of the original study, along with the researcher's professional development experiences, to enhance the success of a new group of students. Successive iterations will further student achievement as lifetime learners, competent with the skills of mathematics and the application of problem-solving skills to other areas of their education and lives.

Towards Connecting the Experiences of African-American Students with the Mathematics Curriculum

Peter A. Sheppard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

If America's prospective teaching force continues to be culturally and socially homogenous, what can be expected is a teaching pool that is innately naïve to the nuances of teaching African-American Students (AAS). What is more, the mathematics curriculum AAS are expected to learn is aligned with an "idealized cultural experience" synonymous with middle class Caucasians (Ladson-Billings, 1997). In order to address the above issues, the project afforded prospective teachers (PT)

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opportunities to better understand AAS and better focus on how they learn mathematics. Interpretative data came from journal reflections and culminating term papers and were subsequently analyzed to determine the degree to which PT implemented instructional strategies that incorporated experiences of AAS.

The format of the participants experiences mirrored that of the laboratory approach to field experiences (see Phillip et al., 2007; Dewey 1964). Participants were paired with 1st- 4th grade students in schools designated as "Title I Schools." Participants completed a minimum of 15 hours tutoring and mentoring without the guise of cooperating teachers thus embodying the basic tenets of the laboratory approach. A chief connecting thread from data is that PT may have come to realize that the mathematics they are expected to teach demands substantial mathematical skills (Ball and Hill, 2004) and a deep understanding of students' interests and experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1997). Further, they are chiefly responsible for ensuring that AAS are viewed as possessing potential and that the revelation of that potential is accelerated when effective teaching principles are applied. Furthermore, it also became evident to PT that AAS are often misdiagnosed as PT recognized that this is more a result of inadequate pedagogy rather than lack of ability. Finally, the benefits of experiences such as the above can be vehicles for improving the academic performance of AAS and engendering trusting, positive relationships between AAS and their teachers.

The Effect of Music on Time Used to Complete Mathematics Tests and Test Scores

John Bosco O. Namwamba, Southern University and A&M College

The goals of this research were to investigate whether volume levels of music had an effect on mathematics test scores of college students and time of completion of test. Previous pertinent research findings have been based on comparison of test scores in a subject or subjects of students for students that had music instruction and those that did not. It is argued by some scientists that high scores in mathematics tests by students that had music instruction is caused by stimulation in nervous system by music, enabling them to develop superior visualization in space. There is research evidence that correlates music instruction to students and their performance on tests. Research has also shown that music listening can enhance productivity and morale at work and that people use music listening to manage their well-being in daily life.

To meet the objectives of this research, a sample of 50 students was divided into control and experimental groups. Each group took the 20-question mathematics tests. Moderation of the tests was done by a panel of 10 to ensure that they were equivalent. The treatment group answered the test while listening to different volume levels of music. Each test was attempted with a corresponding loudness varying from minimum to safe maximum level. Test scores for the two groups and time used to complete each test were recorded. Statistical analysis was then carried out on the results to determine the effect sizes, significant difference, and correlations between groups. Results and conclusions from this study introduced new dimensions that previous workers had not considered.

4:00 – 4:50 P.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS (RIP)..... Paramount Room

Presiders: Michelle G. Haj-Boussard, McNeese State University,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Arkansas School for the Deaf

The Effects of Aviation Education on Minority

Catherine S. Woodyard, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

This research was conducted as a component of graduate thesis requirements. Despite a variety of contributing factors, the purpose of this study was to ascertain if a lack of exposure to aviation and aviation-related careers during students' K-12 school years contributed to the lack of female and minority participation in aviation careers. The null hypothesis considered whether exposure to aviation education would have no effect on female and minority aviation career interests. It was hypothesized that those students who had been exposed to aviation education would express a greater interest in aviation

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careers than students who had not been exposed to aviation education. Results were analyzed through the use of a two-dimensional chi square test, using the 95% level of significance.

Language Learners in the Constructivist English Language Arts Classroom

Susan N. Piper and University of South Alabama

This qualitative case study was designed to examine whether the affective filters of English language learners (ELLs) was lowered when in a junior high school setting a particular teacher of ELLs introduced her poetry activities, centered on aesthetic response and scaffolding transactions, to a group of English language learners. Ten ELLs from grades eight and nine who had different L1 backgrounds and who varied in fluency from non-English speaking to near-native English fluency participated in the study. The activities were developed based on an argument that transactions with particular poetry activities structured through centers would result in the lowering of students' inhibitions, thus accommodating access to the target language in the learner's environment and consequent target language acquisition in the academic domains.

The results of the study demonstrated that transactions with particular poetry activities structured through centers indeed resulted in the lessening of participants' inhibitions, thus providing access to the target language in the learner's environment and consequent target language acquisition in the English language arts academic domain. Participant products, both tangible and oral, seemed to indicate that learners' transactions with these poetry activities lowered inhibitions and resulted in interactions with and among other participants, thus indicating a lowered affective filter.

A Longitudinal Study of Grade Retention Kindergarten Through Third Grade

Dilek Suslu and Eugene Kennedy, Louisiana State University

In this study, the grade retention among elementary school students from kindergarten through third grade was examined to understand if household income and parents' education (high school or less) had a relationship on grade retention. For this study, data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Kindergarten Class of 1998 - 1999 (ECLS-K) were used. ECLS-K data contained repeated observations of a nationally representative sample of students, their families, teachers, and schools for the kindergarten, and first-grade and third-grade years. Based on the composite household scores, the students' grade retention was examined through survival analysis.

The study is a valuable contribution to the existing literature. Hauser and Frederick (2006) critiqued the lack of existing reports of the overall prevalence of retention. They continued, "The Condition of Education in 2005" discusses delayed entry to and retention in kindergarten. It compares differentials between on-time kindergarteners, delayed entry kindergarteners, and kindergarten repeaters from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Class of 1998 (ECLS-K)." "However," they said, "there was no mention of retention in elementary or secondary schools at all." Therefore, longitudinal study of the grade retention from kindergarten years through third grade in terms of income and parental education is a valuable contribution to the existing literature which provides contradictory impact of grade retention on students' education.

The Knowing that Comes from Doing: University Administrators Discuss Managing Crises on College Campuses

Steven L. Mccullar and Roland Mitchell, Louisiana State University

From the tragic events associated with the Virginia Tech massacre to the immense destruction to several Gulf South schools as a result of hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Gustav, U.S. colleges and universities have recently experienced unparalleled crises. This position-paper reflected inquiry into the ways that higher education administrators respond to these crises. The primary research questions were: (1) Do college and university administrators feel the components of a crisis team organization are important and, if so, which of these factors are necessary? (2) Is there a difference

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between senior-level management and middle/entry-level management concerning what they consider to be essential skills for a crisis management team? and (3) What perceptions do university administrators have concerning their readiness for a crisis situation?

The data for this research were drawn from a series of (individual and focus-group) interviews with executive-level administrators who have been responsible for coordinating campus, community, and national-level responses to university crises. The preliminary findings of the study suggested, that, as a result of today's higher education institutions in many instances mirroring the structure, population, and bureaucratic complexity of small cities, participants were challenged to function in multiple capacities well beyond the official expectations of their positions.

The unique contribution of this study is that in the true tradition of constructivist research, despite its grounding in the admittedly sparse literature concerning the fore-referenced crises that plague 21st century higher education, it reports, "the knowing that comes from doing" as a result of the participants' vast pool of experiential knowledge of addressing university crises that range from serial-killers to natural disasters. Collecting, compiling, and ultimately disseminating this knowledge is a valuable resource for all educators; therefore, the overall aim of the paper was to challenge other administrators to document and share their insights about addressing such important issues.

4:00 – 4:50 P.M. STUDENTS AT RISK/MOTIVATION Louisiana Room

The Effectiveness of an After-School Program for Economically Disadvantaged Youth: Perceptions of Parents, Staff, and Students

Larry G. Daniel, Lunetta M. Williams, and Katrina W. Hall, University of North Florida

This study investigated the perceived effects of an after-school tutoring and enrichment program on students' achievement, self-esteem, and attitudes. The program, located in six Title I schools, featured three hours of academic and cultural enrichment services to students each school day. More than 90% of the students identified themselves as black. Data sources included surveys, focus groups, and an individual interview with the program director. Over 500 participants provided data. Surveys assessed attitudes of students, parents, and staff toward the program. Survey items were developed after referencing surveys used in similar studies and considering the specific goals of the program. Focus group data were analyzed using qualitative methods. After coding the focus group and interview transcripts from each population (students, parents, and staff which included the director), the authors identified common themes among the data sources.

Survey data indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the program by all participant groups, with parents slightly less positive in their perceptions than staff or students. An analysis of focus group data indicated that all participant groups viewed the program as a safe haven for students. Students felt safe in the program, and staff and parents stated that facilitating a safe environment was a priority. Parent and student focus groups noted an overall respect and fondness of the staff.

Two themes that emerged in all three focus groups were the academic help that students received and the social skills that students attained. Staff and parent focus groups mentioned character development of students as a significant outcome. Furthermore, the student and staff focus groups highlighted the autonomy provided to students by allowing them to choose from a variety of enrichment activities. Staff and parent focus groups desired more committed parent involvement. Students and parents wanted more information about college preparation.

The Relationship Between Competency Scores and Graduation Rates Among Vocational Students in an Urban District

Curt Fields, Memphis (TN) City Schools

Today's administrators are struggling to improve graduation rates in urban high schools. In this new environment of extreme accountability, educational leaders are analyzing every program available to their students in order to increase academic achievement. This study analyzed how vocational schools could play a role in helping students maintain the necessary motivation and skills to graduate. The intent of this study was to explore the link between a student's success in vocational

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training and their success in graduating from high school.

The sample used in this study was selected from a vocational school in a large urban district located in the southeastern part of the United States. Vocational competency scores were used along with two years of graduation rates in order to determine if a correlation existed. The study tracked 253 students as they progressed through the 11th and 12th grades. Students were analyzed by comparing their success in a chosen area of vocational training and their ability to graduate from high school. A product moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was utilized to determine the relationship between two research variables (Competency Scores and Graduation Success).

The results indicated that students with higher competency rates in vocational school had a greater chance of graduating. In conclusion, the study provided a framework for evaluating competency rates by assigning a mean score to a student's performance. The importance of the study resides in the ability of competency scores to operate as benchmarks for student achievement in high school. The study will help administrators to market their curriculums to other feeder schools and provide their faculties with meaningful professional development opportunities.

The Choice is Yours: An Exploratory Study of African-American Student Choice of Topic and Methodological Approaches in Dissertations

Tony T. Latiker and LaTessa Stone, Jackson State University,
and Robert Z. Carr, Jr., Langston University

There is an abundance of research examining student attrition in higher education. In recent decades there has been an increased focus on the attrition of doctoral candidates. Some estimates have suggested that more than half of all entering doctoral students fail to obtain their degrees. Researchers have concluded that some of the major factors that are related to student attrition in doctoral programs are directly related to the dissertation. Factors such as the number of times the topic is changed, student difficulty in focusing the topic, and poor topic choice contribute to attrition. Although much of the doctoral attrition literature identifies issues centered around the dissertation topic as one of the major factors that contribute to the attrition of doctoral students, little of it specifically examines the factors that influence doctoral students' choice of dissertation topic or research methods.

This study addressed this void in current literature by identifying and describing key factors or influences on African-American doctoral students' choice of dissertation topic and corresponding research methods in a college of education within an urban, historically black university. Qualitative research methods consisting of semi-formal interviews, informal interviews and observations, personal narrative, and document analysis were utilized to identify emerging themes and relationships. A total of six participants from a doctoral program in early childhood at an urban historically black college participated.

This study explained how personal experiences, work-related experiences, faculty/committee influence, mentor influence, coursework and individual student interest influenced six African-American doctoral students' choice of dissertation topic and methods. This study aided in understanding the environmental, programmatic, and individual influences that affect African-American student choices in dissertation topic and methods, thereby better enabling faculty to provide support to African-American doctoral students.

4:00 – 4:50 P.M. ADMINISTRATION/ATTITUDESUniversity Room

The Making of Dr. Edwards: A (Counter) Narrative, Autobiographical Understanding of the U.S. Higher Education Experience

Kirsten T. Edwards, Louisiana State University

Theorist Denise Taliaferro-Baszile (2006) describes a concept she terms the “onto-epistemological in-between” or the “space where I don’t quite belong.” Although the author describes her experiences as a faculty member at a predominately white institution, I knew instantly what she meant. I did not simply theoretically understand the concept. I just knew.

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In this paper, I take the reader on an autobiographical journey through my experience in the "Academic In-between." I describe intersections between my professional, personal, and academic life that have "carefully taught" me the nature of the Academy and my awkward position within it (McIntosh, 1988). Using post-colonial and narrative lens, I describe the navigational tools that have been inevitably added to my invisible knapsack. The legacy of colonization continues to significantly inform individuals' lived experiences (Mudimbe, 1988). As philosopher Achille Mbembe (2001) reminds us, we are never truly free of the colonial state. In addition, the potential for social justice work through the telling of stories or counter-narratives could not be ignored (Hills-Collins, 1990; Lawrence, 1995; Richardson and St. Pierre, 2000). Finally, in an effort to crystallize this very personal experience, I recruited the stories of fellow "in-betweeners" (Richardson et al., 2000).

Through interviews with academic colleagues, I explored the ways race, gender, and ideologies manipulate this in-between space. During the course of this project, I have witnessed the nuanced nature of the in-between space. However, in all its particularities it is real and apparently inescapable. Thus, this paper aided socially just scholars in better understanding the treacherous nature of the Academy, which in turn assists us in developing strategic responses to the hegemonic culture within these academic walls. Ultimately, this paper will hopefully assisted us in beginning the work of creating an institution that is a "home-space" for a diversity of individuals (hooks, 1994).

Leadership Styles and Student Achievement

Santina S. St. John, Concord University

Meeting annual yearly progress (AYP) mandates of No Child Left Behind appears problematic for school systems across West Virginia. Only four school systems statewide met the AYP criterion for the 2007 – 2008 accountability cycle. Research suggests that school achievement is a function of effective leadership and, according to the premises of Situational Leadership Theory II, successful leaders adapt their style to specific contextual factors.

The purpose of this study was to estimate the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership style, as measured by the Leader Behavior Analysis II-Other (LBAII-Other), and student achievement in mathematics and reading, as measured by the West Virginia Educational Standards Test (WESTEST). The LBAII-Other was mailed to 515 teachers, and 376 teachers returned surveys. Indices for effectiveness, flexibility, and primary leadership style were identified for 67 school principals in six West Virginia counties. Using correlation and regression analyses, the study tested hypotheses relating principal flexibility and effectiveness to student reading and mathematics achievement measures. Neither the regression of flexibility and effectiveness on mathematics achievement ($R^2 = .04$, $F = 1.41$, $p > .05$), nor the regression of flexibility and effectiveness on reading achievement ($R^2 = .01$, $F = .25$, $p > .05$) was statistically significant.

Researchers and policymakers were encouraged to consider constructs directly influenced by the school principal, such as school climate and teacher morale, as correlates of effective school principals. The nonsignificant relationship between principal effectiveness and student achievement has policy implications as advocates for school principals argue against accountability policies that reward or punish them based solely on school achievement scores.

Generational Differences in Workplace Attitudes

David A. Gibson, Charles Roberts, and Christine Gibson, Midway College

Many organizations employ members of three or more distinct generations. Current research suggests that there are attitudinal differences among generations. The Midway College research team surveyed members of various companies and organizations (including teachers) to investigate the differences among the generations. The survey instrument included 35 items that participants rated on a five-point scale. Survey items were related to employees' attitudes towards benefits, compensation, incentives, loyalty, supervision, and work environment. The researchers examined the differences among the generations' work-related attitudes using t-tests. Results of over 800 completed surveys showed several significant differences among the generations. These differences are of interest to any

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administrator looking to attract, retain, and motivate teachers and other employees from various generations.

4:00 – 4:50 P.M. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT/HIGHER EDUCATION..... King Room

Louisiana Value-Added Qualitative Study: New Teacher Focus Groups

Michelle G. Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University; Jeffery Oescher, Southeastern Louisiana University; Angelle Stringer, Teach Louisiana Consortium; and Robert Prickett, Centenary College

In 2007 the Louisiana Board of Regents initiated a study funded by the Carnegie Corporation to identify a common set of research-based factors with teacher preparation programs that impacted the performance of new teachers whose students demonstrated exceptional growth in mathematics (Math) and English/language arts (ELA). Information from the Value Added Assessment of Teacher Preparation Study being conducted by George Noell was used to determine teachers with exceptional growth. In 2008-2009 data were collected by the Louisiana Value-Added Qualitative Research team using a stratified sample of 50 of these teachers. Data included teachers' perceptions of their teacher preparation program, working conditions, beliefs about teaching, and dispositions. In initial analyses conducted by Gansle and Noell (2009), a striking pattern of "no significant relationships" or "no significant differences" was found between teacher effectiveness estimates and any of these variables.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the logical question: "Why?" "Maximum variation" purposeful sampling strategy was used to identify four participants from each of the four institutions or private providers involved in the data collection. Two were first-year teachers (2008-2009) and two were second-year teachers (2007-2008). These individuals differed in terms of each researcher's perception of the individual's effectiveness during her/his preservice study. This effectiveness was measured based on their supervisor's evaluation during their preservice experiences. The participants were interviewed in mid-July in a focus group setting. There was one focus group for the first-year teachers and another for the second-year teachers. These focus group interviews typically last between 60-90 minutes. An interview protocol and probes were drafted.

Data for this pilot study were collected via the participants' completion of the survey letter prior to the focus group interviews, the actual focus group interviews, and the potential follow-up interviews and observations. The survey letters were collected for analysis purposes. The focus group interviews were recorded – both audio and video – and transcribed for analysis. Potential follow-up interviews, data transcription, and data analysis occurred during the month of August.

The Relationship of Gender to Graduation, Dissertation Type, and GRE Score for Ed.D. Graduates

James H. Lampley, East Tennessee State University

The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (ELPA) at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) has been awarding degrees since 1972. During the first two years of the program, the graduates were 100% male. The first female Ed.D. student graduated from the department in 1974. Male graduates continued to out-number female graduates throughout the 1970s. By the close of the 1970s females were approaching equality in the number of graduates (1979 graduates = 42% female). However, in 1980 female graduates out-numbered male graduates for the first time. In the following 30 years (1980-2009), female graduates have out-numbered male graduates every year. For the most recent three-year period (2007-2009), the percentage of female graduates has been 63%, 69%, and 77%, respectively.

To illustrate this point, the author used a descriptive design to document the trend in the percentage of graduates by gender over time for one graduate department in education. Additionally a correlational design was used to study the relationship between type of dissertation (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), GRE score (verbal, quantitative, and total), concentration (school leadership or post-secondary and private sector leadership) and gender for graduates during a five-year period (2005-2009) for this same group of students. The latter analysis was designed to gain insight into

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related gender issues in other academic areas. Approximately 159 students were involved in the five-year study of graduates.

4:00 – 4:50 P.M. ADMINISTRATION/ATTITUDESGovernor Room

**Examining the Complexities of Leader Retention: Leading and Learning
in a Rapidly Changing Environment**

Belinda M. Cambre, University of New Orleans

At the end of the 2007-2008 academic year, the professionally managed, public charter school network, operated by a college of education and its founding corporate partner, did not renew contracts for a majority of its school site administrators. In the 2008-2009 academic year, only one administrator previously employed by the network continued employment. When such a major overhaul takes place, much is likely to be lost. However, research suggests that substantial shifts in leadership create new possibilities for leading and learning (Falk, 2001).

As such, this study examined the leading and learning experiences of charter school site administrators within the context of sweeping change. Semi-structured, open-ended interviews (Patton, 2002) were conducted with school administrators on two different occasions. First, the four sitting principals were interviewed in a focus group-style session, with sitting assistant principals participating in a second focus group. Second, all administrators were interviewed individually to allow further discussion.

Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Preliminary results revealed frustration with a lack of understanding the school and community culture, uncooperative parents, differences among the responsibility levels of the leadership teams at the school sites, and a level of anxiety and pressure to perform and produce immediate results and gains on state student achievement tests. Further, the leaders appeared to want to replace quickly employees who were deemed not as cooperative. The first year for these school leaders was a difficult one. Faced with the knowledge that their predecessors were released en masse based on low performance, and the desire for Network leaders to see a quick turnaround to the schools, this group of school leaders reflected the reality of high-stress, low-performing schools, and the possibility that new leadership brings. This study yielded great implications for leaders in similar situations.

**Conversations in Leadership: Perceived Effects of a University-Based Professional
Development and Networking Program on School Principals**

Kathleen T. Campbell and Mindy Crain-Dorough, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Rayma Harchar, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

A frequent complaint of school principals is that it is lonely at the top. The responsibility of leading a school often results in isolation from adult peers and a dearth of professional development. The concept of a principal center as a means of providing professional development and professional networking to school principals originated at Harvard University in the 1980's. Since then, many principal centers have sprung up all over the country. There are various models of principal centers, from simple to complex, from grass roots-initiated to corporate-directed, from self-funded to endowed sponsorships. However, two common traits that virtually all principal centers share are the provision of professional development and the opportunity for professional networking.

"Conversations in Leadership" is a university-based principal center still in its infancy. The program consists of a series of monthly presentations to K-12 principals on educational issues that spark professional dialogue among the principals of southeastern Louisiana. Each month, a university faculty member delivers a 30-minute presentation on an educational issue and facilitates a 30-minute conversation among participants. The present study used a mixed methods approach to examine principals' perceptions of the effects of "Conversations in Leadership." A focus group of seven frequent participants was conducted, and a survey was administered to all who had attended at least once. Themes emerging from the focus group provided the qualitative data and also guided the questions posed on the survey, which provided the quantitative data that were analyzed with an analysis of variance procedure.

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Results indicated that “Conversations in Leadership” furnished principals with desired professional development and reduced their feelings of isolation by establishing a venue for professional dialogue among peers. Additionally, many appreciated the interaction with principals from other school districts.

**A Case Study Examining an Elementary Principal's Attitude, Perspective,
and Philosophy About Male Teachers and School Culture**

Kelli D. Spencer, Mercer University

Male teachers are an underrepresented group in public elementary schools. Only 9% of the teaching population in America is male elementary-level teachers. Because of the lack of male teachers in elementary schools, exploring an elementary school that has 26.7% male teachers was vital in understanding how the principal influenced the school’s culture so that male teachers felt welcomed and comfortable and how the principal increased and maintained that population of male teachers. This case study was grounded in a review of literature about a principal’s influence on school culture and the history of male teachers in elementary education and the perspectives that administrators, teachers, students, and parents have about male teachers.

The researcher collected data through transcripts and field notes by conducting initial and final interviews with the principal, school-setting observations, two teacher focus groups comprised of eight female teachers and eight male teachers. Eight themes emerged that answered the two research questions about how the principal maintained and increased the number of male teachers and how the principal created a school culture that was inclusive and inviting to male teachers. According to the research findings, for an elementary principal to increase and maintain the percentage of male teachers, focusing on three major goals is vital: (1) developing personal relationships with male teachers, (2) recruiting teachers who are good fits for the school and the community, and (3) placing teachers in positions that are appropriate for their personalities, skill levels, and desires. For an elementary principal to create a school culture that is both positive and inclusive of male teachers, the following elements are critical: (1) create a support mechanism for male teachers, (2) give them purpose among the staff and in the school community, and (3) empower them to feel a level of comfort in their working environment.

4:00 – 4:50 P.M. RESEARCH STATISTICSCapitol Room

Writing Publishable Mixed Research Articles: Guidelines for Emerging Scholars

Nancy L. Leech, University of Colorado, Denver, and Julie P. Combs
and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, Sam Houston State University

For the past decade, it has become more common for researchers to conduct research that involves the combining or mixing of quantitative and qualitative approaches within the same study—a class of research known as mixed methods research or more inclusively as mixed research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Unfortunately, the area of writing mixed research has not been given much attention. Thus, the purpose of this paper was to delineate the challenges of writing mixed research studies and present a potential solution. The solution included providing guidelines for writing mixed research that were presented utilizing the framework designed by Leech and Onwuegbuzie (in press). These authors created a mixed research writing framework based on the 13 steps in the mixed research process described by Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Sutton (2006).

These methodologists distinguished three major stages of the mixed research process which were then sub-divided into the following 13 distinct steps: (1) determining the mixed goal of the study, (2) formulating the mixed research objective(s), (3) determining the rationale of the study and the rationale(s) for mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches, (4) determining the purpose of the study and the purpose(s) for mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches, (5) determining the mixed research question(s), (6) selecting the mixed sampling design, (7) selecting the mixed research design, (8) collecting quantitative and/or qualitative data, (9) analyzing the quantitative and/or qualitative data using quantitative and/or qualitative analysis techniques, (10) validating/legitimizing the mixed research findings, (11) interpreting the mixed research findings, (12) writing the mixed research report, and (13)

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reformulating the mixed research question(s).

Thus, Leech and Onwuegbuzie's framework was presented based on these three major stages. It was hoped that understanding these challenges in writing mixed research and using the suggested guidelines increased researchers' abilities to publish mixed research studies.

Using ICOMP in Factor Model Selection

Hongwei Yang, University of Kentucky

The simulation-based methodology study aimed to provide applied researchers with a new criterion in determining the number of common factors in exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The new criterion is Bozdogan's Information Complexity Criterion, or ICOMP. It belongs to the family of information model selection criteria. EFA is a dimension-reduction technique that assumes common factors and specific factors underlying the observed data. However, EFA assumes no prior knowledge of the number of common factors to be extracted. To this problem, multiple solutions exist.

The use of information model selection criteria was presented because they can overcome several well-documented problems from such traditional approaches as scree plots, the number of eigenvalues greater than 1, etc. These criteria map how well a factor model fits the data to a scalar value, which simplifies the comparison of factor models. The factor model that minimizes the criterion of choice is selected as the best model. Although information criteria are many, ICOMP was used here as the one on which the decision on the number of common factors was based. This is because of its better performance in selecting the true underlying model, as is documented in previous studies. The above ICOMP-based techniques were implemented using simulated data where the true underlying model was known.

The simulation was run 1,000 times. The total number of times that ICOMP successfully identified the true model was recorded. The performance of ICOMP was compared with that of several other well-established criteria: AIC, CAIC, etc. Both the simulation protocol and the ICOMP formulas were coded using the R language. The study provided support for the use of ICOMP in determining the number of common factors. The study also established a foundation for applying ICOMP to more complex psychometrics modeling problems using the R language.

Structural Invariance of Two Survey Formats of the Religiosity Scale

Joohee Lee, Mississippi State University, and Dana K. Fuller and Jwa K. Kim,
Middle Tennessee State University

The Intrinsic/Extrinsic Scale-Revised (I/E-R Scale, Gorsuch and McPherson, 1989) has been widely used for evaluating a person's religious orientation. Maltby and Lewis (1996) asserted that their three-alternative format of the I/E-R Scale demonstrated higher completion rates and higher reliability than the original five-alternative format. The main purpose of this study was to compare the underlying factor structure of the I/E-R Scale between the three-alternative format and the original five-alternative format using structural equation modeling (SEM). In addition to the I/E-R Scale, the Cross Cultural Religious Scale (CCRS) was also examined for the factorial structure across two formats. A total of 527 (294 for the five-alternative format and 233 for the three-alternative) students at a state-funded university participated in the study.

The general procedures for assessing the invariance of factor loadings and covariance were implemented using the AMOS 17.0 program. Each data set was analyzed separately to establish the best model fit for each group. Both scales moderately fitted the data even though some fit indices were slightly lower than those of ideally-fitting models. The baseline model for the combined group was established without any constraints for structural invariance. The constrained model for structural invariance was tested for the invariance of the factor loadings and the covariance among factors. Analysis showed that the factor structures were significantly different for both scales (I/E-R Scale, $\chi^2(16) = 120.59, p < .05$; CCRS, $\chi^2(20) = 91.86, p < .05$). Also different was the factor covariance of the CCRS scale ($\chi^2(3) = 11.11, p < .05$). However, the I/E-R Scale did not show any difference in the factor covariance ($\chi^2(3) = .53, p > .05$).