

2010 MSERA Proceedings

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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
MID-SOUTH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

**CONTAINING THE ABSTRACTS OF DISCUSSION SESSIONS,
DISPLAY SESSIONS, SYMPOSIA,
AND TRAINING SESSIONS**

**JOHN R. PETRY, EDITOR
LORRAINE ALLEN, ASSOCIATE EDITOR
ELIZABETH WELCH, ASSISTANT EDITOR**

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2010

MOBILE, ALABAMA

Wednesday, November 3, 2010

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. **MINORITY EDUCATION ISSUES** **Admiral**

Presider: Nancy Fox, Jacksonville State University

Ogbu's Oppositional Identity: Validation of an Empirical Scale

Stephan Miller, Western Kentucky University; Ella Smith Simmons, General Conference, Seventh Day Adventists; and Juanita Lynes, Richardson and Associates

Ogbu's (1994) theory of oppositional identity regarding minority-white achievement gaps has generated much attention and support from qualitative studies (Ogbu, 2003); quantitative analyses based on large secondary databases have disputed his claims (e.g., Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998). However, those investigations utilized proxies rather than measuring constructs directly and provided no validation to justify this approach. Efforts to develop direct measures of Ogbu's theory have been limited. The problem addressed in this report was the validation of an oppositional identity scale (Lynes, 2008) which refined previous work by Spradlin (1995). Ogbu (1978) theorized that involuntary immigrants (conquered or imported against will versus voluntary migration) developed strategies in opposition to the dominant culture to maintain ethnic/racial identity. In America, one result is resistance to "white" values generally. In schools, African Americans often refuse to invest in education (to achieve is to be white). The measure of Oppositional Identity (OI) was developed for a larger study of factors influencing students' college placement scores (CPS) at five historically African American colleges/universities (HCBUs).

After extensive data gleaning, descriptive statistics and extensive psychometric analyses were computed for a sample of 651 (only 474 had valid CPS). OI consisted of seven items collected in dual response on a five-point Likert scale (5 high): "Norms of the Hood" yielded Oppositional Norms (ON), conceptualized under Coleman's social capital; "My Personal Values" yielded OI. The factor analysis of 14 items (OI plus seven for Racial Identity) produced three factors explaining 57.51% of the variance. OI was a single construct, with Cronbach's alpha of .87. Interscale correlations with Racial Identity and ON were .15 and .52, respectively. The significant beta in final hierarchical regression for CPS (.177) was among the strongest in the study, demonstrating external criterion validity. Results provided considerable support for construct validity. Implications of select sample, the relation between ON and OI, equity, and African American achievement were discussed during the presentation.

Hispanic Student Access to Advanced Placement Courses

Susan Borg, Sam Houston State University

This qualitative, collective case study described the perceptions of academically successful Hispanic students regarding their access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses in four suburban Texas high schools. A multi-stage, purposeful sampling scheme was used to select 28 participants for four focus groups. Six participants from the focus groups participated in interviews. This study was based on Coleman's (1988) theory of social capital wherein three aspects of social capital that contribute to positive educational outcomes were identified: (1) trustworthiness, (2) information flow, and (3) norms and sanctions.

Classical content analysis revealed four major themes: (1) future, (2) course placement, (3) educational work ethic, and (4) relationships. The future theme emerged when participants discussed any upcoming event in their lives, whether it was predicted or planned and involved the subcategories of college or career. The course placement theme emerged when participants examined the past (i.e., elementary, middle, or high school advanced or regular courses) or current pathways of courses (i.e., whether or not the participant had regular or advanced level courses in high school) that led to a possible placement in courses like AP. The educational work ethic theme was dominant, especially the degree of work ethic involved for AP courses. Educational work ethic was discussed as subcategories of work effort (i.e., amount of work involved in successful students in AP courses), commitment (i.e., dedication of the individual to the amount of work involved in AP), and time management (i.e., juggling all of life's activities in addition to AP courses). The relationships theme varied the most with the discussion of the value of relationships with counselors, peers, parents, teachers, and other family members. Participants had both positive and negative experiences with two subcategories, counselors and teachers, which influenced their opinions about their placement in courses. Implications for researchers and practitioners were provided.

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8:30 – 9:20 A.M. **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH** **Grand Bay I**

Presider: Sherry Shaw, University of North Florida

The Role of Self and the QUAN/QUAL Struggle

Robert Gray and Burke Johnson, University of South Alabama

This paper examined the ways in which the concept of the Self in Western Thought has shifted from ancient times to the present, paying particular attention to how this shifting has shaped the ways particular periods and schools throughout history have tended more toward either quantitative or qualitative models for both epistemology and research. It was argued that historical constructs of knowledge and truth were shaped by how the thinkers and artists of an age conceptualized the Self. For example, the development of the empiricism that tends to define Enlightenment thinking coincides with the secularization of philosophy and the transformation of Self from a part of the medieval Great Chain of Being to something far more deterministic and mechanical in the Age of Reason.

It is out of this construct from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that current scientific method and quantitative methodologies derive. However, with the birth of Romanticism in the late eighteenth-century and the 200-plus years of intervening thought, the concept of Self has become something far more elusive and complex, which has given rise to the current richness of perspectives that characterize contemporary philosophy and qualitative research methodologies. It is the position of the authors that the rapid shifting of these perspectives accounts for the often tense relationships between QUAN and QUAL methodological schools of thought. They also hold that a fuller understanding of the historical role of the Self in the development of these positionalities, as well as in the birth of the wide variety of contemporary schools of thought that now dominate the academy (e.g., poststructuralism, post-colonialism, feminism, queer theory, cultural studies, etc.), serve to ease some of the tensions in the QUAL/QUAN struggle.

Social Connectedness of Deaf Adults in Retirement

Sherry Shaw, University of North Florida

This exploratory study investigated social connectedness of deaf adults who were reportedly at high risk for social isolation and depression as they reached retirement age. Traditional contributors to isolation have been loss of driving ability, insufficient access to telecommunication technology, and family mobility away from parents. Researchers discovered how technologies such as videophones, texting cell phones, and computers contributed to perceptions of connectedness that were unachievable previously. Researchers anticipated that participants would identify how they used available technologies to stay connected.

A purposeful sample of 14 Deaf, Native American Sign Language (ASL) users, who ranged in age from 62 to 91, was recruited individually and at senior citizen luncheons. Informed Consent, Project Overview, and two focus groups were conducted in American Sign Language. Native ASL users were trained as facilitators to obtain responses to three research questions: (1) How would you describe your social interactions during a given week with people who can communicate fluently with you? (2) If you feel a need to be more connected to people, what would you suggest would help you accomplish that? and (3) What kind of social activities do you enjoy most with other people?

Probing questions fostered additional discussion about friendships, affordability of technology, generational differences regarding preferred types of social interaction, and changes in interaction needs over time. Certified sign language interpreters served as transcribers for the video data, which were then cross-checked and coded to discover emerging patterns of connectedness (or lack thereof) of the sample. This study was the first of its kind to observe how social connectedness has achieved and how technology has changed the social interaction of deaf retirees.

Day-To-Day Operations of Home School Families: Selecting Methods from an Educational Menu of Choices to Meet Individual Instructional Needs

Kenneth Anthony, Mississippi State University and University of Maryland

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This study examined the day-to-day operations of home schools. Of interest were typical parent/ student interactions, teaching strategies, the nature of the learning environment, and what can be learned from home schools that would be of value to teachers in traditional schools. Previous research on home school education has focused on motivations to home school, defense and criticism of home schooling, and academic outcomes in home school settings. Little research exists examining the day-to-day activities in home schools.

Case methodology was used to study the research questions. The participants were a purposeful sample. The researcher identified four families with experience in home education. The participants were drawn from a larger pool of families from a home school organization. Data were gathered using interviews, observations, and artifacts. Data collection focused on the daily learning activities of the families. Data were coded and analyzed using NVivo 8. Data analysis charts were used to analyze domains and research questions within and across the four cases. Supporting data from both parents and children, as well as from multiple data sources within and among the case, were identified to support the major findings.

Findings suggested these families operated their home schools using traditional methods to reach progressive goals. The families operated their home schools much as a person in a restaurant would choose food from a menu. They identified instructional goals and selected methods from a variety of choices available to them. These methods included courses taught through a home school cooperative, enrollment at community colleges, online courses, video instruction, and individual study. One option not available was public schools. Traditional schools can learn from home schools through serving as a resource that supports individual learning goals rather than as the sole distributor of knowledge in a community.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. SCHOOL CULTURE AND ACHIEVEMENT Grand Bay II

President: Brian Reid, School Transformation

Validation of the Revised School Culture Elements Questionnaire for Selected Sub-Populations

Thomas DeVaney, Flo Hill-Winstead, and Nan Adams, Southeastern Louisiana University

The Revised School Culture Elements Questionnaire (RSCEQ) collects from respondent's perceptions about school culture using an actual vs. preferred format that allows the questionnaire to be used to facilitate school improvement. The RSCEQ is a 20-item questionnaire that utilizes a four-point, forced choice Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree) to solicit Actual belief alongside Preferred belief about each item. Prior validation studies provide evidence for constructs representative of general professionalism and perceived elements of school culture. However, validations within subgroups, including elementary vs. high school teachers, have not been conducted.

The purpose of this study was to examine the psychometric properties of the RSCEQ for selected subgroups including elementary vs. high school teachers. The RSCEQ was distributed to faculty in PreK-12 schools in southeast Louisiana from Summer 2009 through Summer 2010. The surveys were distributed as part of a class project for students enrolled in graduate courses in Educational Leadership. Each student was required to distribute the surveys to the faculty at her/his school. Students were required to obtain consent from their school to administer the surveys. Surveys were completed by over 1,000 teachers in approximately 50 schools. Reliability and confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses, using information from prior validation studies were used to determine if the identified factor structure was maintained for selected subgroups. Based on the results of the analyses, recommendations for survey revision were provided.

Examining School Culture in a Rural Appalachian School

Jennifer Chambers, April Wood, and Roger Cleveland, Eastern Kentucky University

A research-based paper was presented to share results from a study assessing the existing school culture in rural Appalachian schools to obtain a better understanding of how educators conducted business in their schools; therefore, determining if there was a correlation between school culture and student achievement. The research built partnerships with local schools in the Appalachian region and

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Eastern Kentucky University's College of Education through reciprocity. This study addressed three research questions: (1) Were school culture audits a viable approach to improve student achievement? (2) How can one gain a better understanding of school culture through the process of an audit? and (3) What do the findings of a school culture audit assess about rural Appalachian schools? Every school has a culture; every culture can be changed. The body of educational research citing the critical role school culture and climate play in determining school success is overwhelming. Many of the top leading educational scholars indicate that three of the top five factors tied directly to school success are related to culture. These three factors are parental and community involvement, safe and orderly environment, and collegiality and professionalism.

Researchers from Eastern Kentucky University's College of Education conducted an equity-culture audit of a rural Appalachian school. The culture assessment team activities included a review of the documents collected from the school's portfolio/profile; the school web site; and formal and informal group interviews with students, teachers, parents, student support staff, as well as school-level leadership. The assessment team also conducted classroom observations, walkthroughs, and surveys. The researchers' report provided direction for the school on its journey to increase student achievement for all students. The school leadership increased the focus on equitable, culturally responsive, and rigorous instruction.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION Commodore

President: Rebecca Robichaux, Mississippi State University

Exploring Learner Intent for Students of Community College Developmental Mathematics Courses

W. Darlene Gray, University of South Alabama

This study explored how community college students in developmental mathematics courses described their intentions toward the learning expected of them, how this description changed from the beginning to the end of the course, and how students explained these changes. Research reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (2003) states that 100% of community college in the United States offer developmental mathematics courses. Developmental students are usually self-supporters with little academic college success (Roueche & Roueche, 1993). Motivation can help to increase effort but it cannot always tell us the excellence with which students use that motivation. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) believed actual learning behavior is more accurately predicted by a learner's intent. Ryan (1970) and Tyler (1975) discussed intent in terms of volitional properties that included persistence, determination, will power, effort investment, desire, work ethic, striving mindfulness and focus. These properties, along with students' choices, help one understand reasons and commitment of students' actions.

The participants were 80 students from four sections of Intermediate Algebra with the final sample including 34 students. The instrumentation included a seven-question online questionnaire and a six-question, face-to-face interview, where students chose which instrumentation they would like to complete. With the online questionnaire, students described their intentions toward learning as "to learn the material" so as to "not fail the class." The responses to the face-to-face interview were "complete all assignments" and "study the topics weekly," "seeking help from the learning center" if it was necessary. The interview provided better information because students took time to think about their answers and explored their learning intent. The information gathered in this study helped one look at developmental mathematics students' intent and focused on instructional strategies that promoted successful completion of these courses.

Attitudes, General Education Mathematics Courses, and the Gender Gap

Martha Tapia, Berry College

There is considerable interest in students' attitudes toward mathematics and the relationship between attitudes and achievement in mathematics. For many years there has been particular concern about the achievement gap in mathematics between males and females and about the lack of females going into science and mathematics. Attitudes play an important role in achievement and persistence in

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mathematics courses. The development of a positive attitude toward a subject is one of the most prevalent educational goals. While attitudes are important, attitudinal research among college students has not been thoroughly investigated.

In this study, the scores on the Attitudes Toward Mathematics Inventory (ATMI) of students enrolled in general education mathematics courses were compared by course being taken by gender. The ATMI is a 40-item, Likert scale inventory with four factors: (1) self-confidence, (2) value, (3) enjoyment of mathematics, and (4) motivation. The ATMI was administered to students enrolled in general education mathematics courses (statistics, precalculus, and calculus) during the fall semester. The sample consisted of 125 participants. Forty-one were enrolled in statistics, 37 in precalculus, and 47 in calculus. The sample was predominantly Caucasian. Of the 125 participants, 55 were males and 67 were females. The students completed the inventory in their classes. Data were analyzed using a multivariate factorial model with four factors of mathematics attitudes as dependent variables (self-confidence, value, motivation, and enjoyment of mathematics) and two independent variables (sex and class). Assumptions were verified. The interaction of sex and class and the main effect of sex were not significant. The main effect of class was found to be significant with large effect size in all factors. Students enrolled in statistics and calculus scored significantly higher than precalculus students in self-confidence and value. Students enrolled in calculus scored significantly higher in enjoyment and motivation than all other students.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. COLLEGES OF EDUCATION WERE NECESSARY BUT NOT WITHOUT SYSTEMIC EDUCATION (Symposium)..... Commander

Organizer: Asghar Iran-Nejad, University of Alabama

Madeline Gregg, Sally Zengaro, and William Stewart, University of Alabama

Ever since the 1980s, when Shulman and Schön published their influential work in response to perceived educational problems of the time, the field of education, in general, and the college of education, in particular, have been the object of close scrutiny. Shulman recommended the institution of education ought to make teacher knowledge its principal focus, and Schön questioned the status of educational research as the proper source of knowledge for professional practice. However, neither recommendation has remedied the perceived ailments of education, despite repeated attempts at educational reform. What Schön and Shulman's answers have done is become institutionalized as the solutions to the educational problems.

The Wholetheme Organization of Systemic Educational Science

The introductory presentation, the piecemeal answers of Shulman, Schön, and others, has seldom extended beyond cosmetic reforms and have even themselves become new sources of educational problems. The presentation demonstrated that to be successful education must be wholetheme and systemic.

Biofunctional Embodiments of Systemic Education

The second presentation discussed how the biological person understands, learns, and develops in the context of systemic education. The central theme of this presentation was that education must help learners develop their own knowledge, rather than internalize someone else's knowledge. The presentation discussed evidence to illustrate and support these contentions.

Systemic Teacher Education: MAP at School and on Campus

The third presentation discussed how, for the past 16 years, a team of professors at the University of Alabama has been inventing and refining a radically different teacher education program

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from the traditional model. Called the Multiple Abilities Program (MAP), the program is actually quite difficult to describe in a coherent way, even chronologically. The difficulty is that the teaching, practica, assignments, and structures of MAP create loops rather than a straight line. As one speaks about MAP, one is constantly moving in the spaces between cause and effect, focusing now on subjects and then on objects, all the while discussing the same phenomena! This discussion of the difficulty of describing the complex system that is MAP was inspired by a discussion of sustainable farming (Pollan, 2006).

Systemic Interest Versus Expertise as the Goal of History Education

Developing expert-like, critical thinking has certainly been an improvement over focusing solely on facts. However, this presentation described an alternative perspective that focused on student interest as the proper source for educational objectives. Moreover, this perspective suggested that enabling students to have insights in their own areas of creative interest is a necessary complement of focusing on critical thinking.

A Systemic Education Perspective on Moral Disengagement in Professional Soccer

The final presentation theorized that two dispositional modes of biofunctional embodiment, rather than disembodied rules of moral cognition, were involved in the development of morality among adolescents participating in professional soccer.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. TECHNOLOGY Captain

President: Jennifer Hadley, University of South Alabama

Technical Writing Redesign and Assessment: A Pilot Study

Gaye Winter, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of this study was to compare scores on writing assignments from already existing, fully online courses in technical writing to pilot, hybrid courses at a southern university. A total of 232 students' assignments were compared in this study. All writing assignments were scored by six trained instructors of English using the same five-point rubric. The pilot hybrid classes had a total of 97 writing assignments. The students were divided into three disciplines: business, humanities, and sciences. In the pilot, hybrid classes, there were 18 students (19%) enrolled in a business major. Five students were enrolled in humanities (5%), and 74 students (76%) were enrolled in the sciences. Fully online classes had a total of 135 scored writing assignments. Thirty-nine students (29%) enrolled were business majors, 19 students were humanities majors (14%), and 77 students were enrolled in science majors (57%).

Descriptive statistics were used to identify each set of responses. A MANOVA was used to compare writing assignment scores in the fully online classes to the pilot hybrid classes. The results were significant in the concerns and organization categories. The study showed that the fully online classes had a higher percentage of students scoring in the very good and excellent range than the pilot redesigned hybrid classes in the areas of concerns and organization. The category of concerns was determined by the question: In terms of attending to the needs and concerns of its readers, how successful is this document overall? The category of organization was determined by the question: In terms of overall organization and following the conventions of the memo/email genre, how successful is this document? No significant findings were identified for expression or overall quality components.

Virtual Reality Training: Can 21st-Century Educational Technology Be Safely and Effectively Utilized as a Means of Criminal Rehabilitation?

Jennifer Hadley, University of South Alabama

The purpose of this paper was to examine the pros and cons of implementing virtual reality training within the criminal justice field. Specifically, the use of Second Life as a means of providing rehabilitative life skills training to inmates pending release was discussed. Proponents of educational

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technology believe that such training provides many benefits to resource-poor correctional institutions. It is argued that the ability to provide exposure to valuable skills, such as conflict resolution, money management, and job readiness, encourages more positive post-release experiences leading to a reduction in the rates of recidivism, particularly when these trainings have been otherwise abolished as a result of budgetary shortfalls. However, a large segment of criminal justice professionals maintain specific concerns regarding safety and security and the use of virtual reality training in the prison system. Although Second Life encourages experiential learning in a realistic environment through the creation of a virtual persona, or avatar, many fear the associated risks do not justify the benefits. The primary focus of this paper was to determine whether the benefits outweighed the risks, examined the reasoning behind this conclusion, and encouraged further research on the topic.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. AT-RISK STUDENTSAdmiral

Presenter: Bobby Franklin, Mississippi College

Cohort Survival Analysis: Examining Age, Attendance, and Test Performance as Dropout Predictors

Bobby Franklin, Mississippi College

The greatest nemesis to the success of a school is the dropout. With the implementation of longitudinal data systems and the establishment of high school cohorts, states are in a position to examine in more detail the phenomenon of dropping out. Dropout early warning systems have been touted as a tool to help reduce the numbers abandoning their education too soon. For many students, waiting until they were in high school to recognize the problem is too late. Thus, this study used data prior to entering high school as predictors of dropping out of high school.

Three possible predictors of dropouts were examined by applying survival analysis procedures and the Receiver Operator Characteristic (ROC) curve to a high school graduation cohort. Survival analysis treats time as the dependent variable and provides a way to not only identify the “what” (variables) related to dropping out but the “when” (time) as well. Results showed being over age is the best predictor, followed by attendance and test performance, respectively. Students who were below the age of 14 when entering the 8th grade and attended school over 94% of the time tended to delay dropping out of high school close to a year later than their over-age peers. While state exit exams were used as gatekeepers for high school entrance, performance on this test and remaining in school was the weakest relationship examined. Negative implications exist for grade retention policies in pre-high school grades.

Students’ Qualitative Perceptions of an Alternative School: Comparing Prior Setting to Current Environment

Elizabeth McFadden, Davies County (KY) Public Schools; D. Clayton Smith, Western Kentucky University; Debra K. Bauder, University of Louisville; and Stephan Miller, Western Kentucky University

Many at-risk students struggle in traditional schools, often dropping out. Alternative schools constitute a second chance in separate, more personalized environments. The knowledge base has several limitations. The current work was taken from a larger case study that addressed several of these deficits: replicating prior research, utilizing mixed methods, comparing previous school to alternative site, and analyzing relationships among variables; strategies seldom found in this field (Lehr & Lange, 2003a, 2003b). This report compared only student perceptions of the two settings. Research on alternative schools is typically atheoretical, merely descriptive and anecdotal, with hard data on academic achievement or attendance often lacking (Antrop-Gonzales, 2003). Studies are needed that explored what produces differences in quality and success, e.g., culture/climate, instruction, curriculum, or student attitudes and motivation.

Case study compared responses (31 volunteers who met two-semester residence requirement) from previous site environment (PSE) to an alternative setting (VHS, pseudonym). Open-ended questions explored reasons for quality of experience in both settings. Responses were listed and grouped according to like categories. Three broad themes were found: (1) adult relationships, (2) adult

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help, and (3) climate/setting size. Results were consistent and striking. Student comments revealed almost exclusively negative feelings about PSE; VHS was viewed as highly positive. Many students scored the “quality of experience” question that preceded the open response as “1-Awful” or “2-Bad” for PSE and “5-Excellent” for VHS (e.g., Student 13: PSE--They were too uptight and snobby; VHS--They help me with all my problems and work with me in class and my outside life).

This paper provided quotations to illustrate themes, discussing reasons and implications for these sentiments. Adult caring and institutional intimacy seemed to be central to helping these students become successful. These feelings were consistent with quantitative analyses demonstrating improved outcomes on hard data examined. Policy recommendations were given regarding strategies to help these at-risk students

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP Grand Bay I

Presider: Kathy Campbell, Southeastern Louisiana University

In Search of Professional Dispositions for Effective School Leadership

Kathy Campbell, Mindy Crain-Dorough, and Mary Winstead, Southeastern Louisiana University

M.Ed. candidates in educational leadership at a southern university must demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for effective school leadership. Evaluation criteria depicting effective knowledge and skills at the completion of the program have been established; however, criteria for effective dispositions have been a continuing topic of discussion. Additionally, the question of when to evaluate dispositions has also been a topic of concern. Assessing dispositions as a screening tool assumes that dispositions are, for the most part, constant and unchanging, whereas assessing dispositions at the midpoint or at the end assumes that dispositions were dynamic and developmental.

The theoretical framework used for the study was the trait theory of leadership. Early trait theorists believed personality traits alone could distinguish leaders from non-leaders; whereas, second generation trait theorists proposed certain characteristics determined more effective leaders from less effective leaders. They also acknowledged effective leader behavior is a combination of personality traits and situational leader behavior.

School district superintendents were interviewed regarding the dispositions they look for when hiring school principals. Responses were unitized and categorized and compared to two existing disposition instruments. Results indicated the characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes most often cited by superintendents as criteria for effective school leaders.

The study added to the body of knowledge regarding dispositions most effective in leading schools. Such knowledge aids universities in preparing and evaluating their candidates. Furthermore, an instrument was constructed using these characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes as survey items for candidate self-report and professor/mentor observations. Use of the forthcoming instrument indicated dispositions that were static and unchanging and those that were dynamic and developmental.

Alabama’s New Principals: Were They Prepared to Change Schools?

William Kiser, Nancy Fox, Charlotte Eady, Israel Eady, and Mary Montgomery Owens,
Jacksonville State University

In this paper, Jacksonville (Alabama) State University examined the qualifications of the graduates of the newly designed MSE Instructional Leadership Program. The educational leadership program was redesigned to better prepare candidates to not only become effective administrators, but also to become effective instructional leaders. JSU formed a problem-solving group of 40 participants known as the Advisory Council that began meeting fall 2005. The Council was composed of students, current and former, administrators from surrounding Alabama school districts, leadership faculty, and university administrators. The Advisory Council met frequently as the specific curriculum, activities, and procedures for the new program were designed.

The Council developed criteria for all courses and experiences in the new program. Each course contained school problem-based activities that reflected the best of current literature in the field of educational leadership. Activities were developed and approved by Council members who were practicing administrators. Activities were evaluated by performance-based rubrics that confirmed the development

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of the knowledge and skills of the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders. Technology was used effectively in course delivery and in the development of a professional portfolio by all candidates. Assignments, called “artifacts” in portfolio language, were almost always school-improvement projects drawn from the student’s own school or district. Students were required to interact with other school staff members as they attempted to solve a problem. The complete portfolio was presented at the end of the second of two required internship courses. The first cohort began the program in January 2009 and graduated in August 2010. This paper addressed challenges of reforming the leadership preparation program and the strengths and weaknesses of the first graduating cohort.

Implementing “School Turnaround”: Beyond Race to the Top

Randy Parker, Louisiana Tech University

Included in the current wave of educational reform and accountability is an increased emphasis on drastically changing the structure, operation, and administration of low performing schools. The concept is commonly referred to as “School Turnaround.” Effective use of school turnaround concepts was a component of the recent U.S. Department of Education “Race to the Top” application process. As such, this issue and process should be reviewed and discussed by both educational researchers and practitioners so the effective aspects of the initiative can be sustained and replicated.

This paper presented a literature review of the research base on School Turnaround and then described the development and initial implementation of a state-wide school turn around leadership program for low-performing schools. This leadership development program was designed to recruit, instruct, develop and support a new generation of school leaders prepared to turn around chronically underperforming schools. This program identified and utilized best practices through collaboration between colleges of education and colleges of business to strengthen the organizational and instructional leadership skills of currently certified and experienced principals. Participants in the program underwent a rigorous selection process utilizing the Event Behavioral Inventory, supporting documents, and extensive interviews. The program engaged school leaders, their management teams, and district-level staff in an intense two-year executive leadership program delivered by State-Department-of-Education-approved program providers. The program included significant integrated field-based experiences, relevant coursework, and strong collaboration among local schools, districts, communities and program providers. Working collaboratively, the principal and her/his team developed a comprehensive school “turnaround” plan that focused on raising student achievement levels. In addition to focused school improvement in the first two years, there was continued implementation of the plan during year three to sustain and further advance student achievement gains that were made.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. TEACHER EDUCATION..... Grand Bay II

President: Ronald Styron, University of Southern Mississippi

The Role Teacher Qualification Plays in Achievement for Economically Disadvantaged Students in Mississippi

Marsha Walters and Karen McGee, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of No Child Left Behind is to strengthen student achievement and teacher accountability, providing highly qualified teachers to guarantee equal opportunity education for all students. Recent research has contributed to the concept that in order to close the student academic achievement gap, teacher quality has to be significantly improved. While some students were taught by highly qualified teachers, others were taught by teachers with emergency certifications.

Using a stratified sample size from the Mississippi Department of Education's archival data, the researcher examined the relationship among the percentage of highly qualified teachers, the percentage of emergency provisional teachers, and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in grade five, scoring at basic or proficient levels in the Language section of the 2007-2008 Mississippi Curriculum Test 2 test. While the findings were statistically significant, the strength of correlation was weak between teacher quality and the achievement of economically disadvantaged students. A 10-year longitudinal study in Mississippi could be pursued for further research to determine if there is greater practical significance among teacher quality and economically disadvantaged students' test scores.

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Perceptions of Public School Administrators Concerning Online Teacher Education

Neil Faulk, McNeese State University

This study examined perceptions of Louisiana public school administrator about online teacher education. Online teacher education has spread rapidly with little feedback or evaluation from public school personnel. Data were collected by means of a survey questionnaire. The survey consisted of nine items where participants responded to a Likert-scale format and one open-ended question in which respondents were asked to provide comments/suggestions in regard to online teacher education. Regular and electronic email were used to survey all of the public school superintendents of Louisiana. Electronic mail was used to survey a sample of 150 public school principals. The response rate was 65% for the superintendents and 58% for the principals.

Based on the limitations of the study, the following conclusions were made: (1) administrator perceptions of online teacher education appeared to be much more negative than positive, (2) administrator perceptions of online teacher education appeared to be negative in terms of teacher preparation for the areas of classroom management, student diversity and needs, the social aspects of teaching, and teacher methodology/pedagogy, (3) administrator perceptions of online teacher education appeared to be positive in terms of preparing teachers for the theories of teaching and learning, and (4) a large majority of administrators had moderate to strong reservations regarding the hiring of teachers that were trained primarily online. Louisiana school administrators appeared to be open-minded to this new methodology but appeared to be unconvinced that it would prepare teachers for the challenges faced. Results agreed with prior research in another region of this country.

Teacher Assistant Online Elementary Degree Program (TAP) Performance Analysis

Holly Hulbert and Kelly Sambis, University of Southern Mississippi

This study surveyed participants in the newly-generated online, elementary education degree program for teacher assistants to determine the effectiveness of the internship method of instruction. Data were collected from the current participants to determine if the knowledge level of the teacher assistants was equivalent to that of those completing the degree in the traditional classroom setting. Work samples from both the traditional degree students and the online teacher assistant students were analyzed with the same assignment rubric to determine levels of difficulty. The researchers collected survey data during the online course instruction and utilized a work sample from an introductory course in the degree program. The same assignments were collected from the traditional degree plan students and those participating in the TAP online degree plan. The online students were required to conduct threaded discussions, as well as write reflection papers, regarding the content of the courses. When comparing these products with the face-to-face students, the difference in quality was quite obvious. The teacher assistants wrote from experiences in the classroom; whereas the face-to-face teacher candidates wrote from limited observations. The online students had a much deeper understanding of the importance of each topic. Several commented (after studying theory) that they understood why they were doing what they were doing in the classroom. The face-to-face students' reflections revealed hopes and dreams of what they would do in the future, but the connection between theory and practice was limited.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. STATISTICS..... Commodore

President: Paige Baggett, University of South Alabama

The Effects of Multidimensionality on Parameter Estimation in Item Response Theory (IRT)

Hyun Jung Chae, Middle Tennessee State University

Multidimensional Item Response Theory (MIRT) is an important development in psychometrics for the accuracy in estimating latent factors. However, many studies have utilized a unidimensional IRT model instead of the MIRT model. The main purpose of the current study was to compare the accuracy of item parameter estimates using both unidimensional and multidimensional IRT models through simulation studies. The unidimensional IRT model and two multidimensional IRT models were compared using the Mplus 5 program. The data for 10 items with one general factor and one group

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factor were simulated, and three models were compared with each other in terms of the model fit indices and item discrimination index. Finally, the loglikelihood chi square difference tests were conducted among three IRT models, and the test results showed a significant difference between the multidimensional IRT models and the unidimensional model.

This study found that two multidimensional IRT models, that included the bi-factor model and the between-item model, were much more appropriate for a multidimensional data set than for the unidimensional IRT model. Many global model fit indices were reported, such as CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and WRMR from the WLSMV estimation method, and AIC, BIC, ABIC, and the difference tests from the MLR estimation method. All results from these model fit indices demonstrated the utility of the multidimensional IRT model. The study also found that the two multidimensional models, the bi-factor model and the between-item model, were similar to each other. However, the interpretation and the application of two multidimensional models would vary according to the characteristics and situations of a test.

Improving the Comprehension of Hypothesis Testing Methods for Business Statistics Students

Alan Chow and Gholamreza Tashbin, University of South Alabama

The purpose of this project was to improve the ability of students to make business decisions using hypothesis testing methods. Historical performances of students have indicated there is a disparity between the levels of applicable understanding the average student exhibits after completion of the chapter on hypothesis testing. Redesigning the unit of instruction used in teaching hypothesis testing would provide the students with a better understanding of the material and create an increased ability to apply these methods to business decision making. Hypothesis testing is covered near the end of the semester and builds on the material presented and learned in preceding chapters. Students historically have difficulty in comprehending the subject and applying the techniques to decision making examples.

Because of this historical problem with hypothesis testing, a detailed Instructional Media Design Package (IMDP) was prepared to document the improvements made in presenting the material in an effort to improve student learning outcomes. Part of this was to identify and develop both terminal objectives and enabling objectives for the course, and, in particular, for the specific section on hypothesis testing. Steps of the enabling objectives were matched with specific corresponding performance objectives. The IMDP also included a redesign of the course delivery system and media and the methods of assessment of student performance to stated objectives. The major learning components, procedures, and materials utilized in the delivery of this course material enabled the learner to understand and ultimately master the terminal objective. The instructional strategy was based on Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction. Evaluation consisted of one-to-one evaluation with target learners. The three main criteria used were clarity, impact, and feasibility. The evaluations assured the intended learners that the instructional material was clear.

When Mandated Statistical Reporting Practice Goes Off the Tracks: An Analysis of Some Recent and Noteworthy Train Wrecks

David Morse, Mississippi State University

For decades there has been vigorous debate concerning the utility of traditional, Neyman-Pearson hypothesis testing as the basis for drawing inferences about hypotheses or for characterizing what is true for one or more populations of interest. The criticisms of null hypothesis significance tests (NHSTs) were well-known: dependence on sample size; the potential disconnect between non-chance findings and findings of practical import; the "nil null" hypothesis is never true to begin with; confusion of calculated probabilities with the likelihood of the null hypothesis being true; and mistaking a result that was not statistically significant as evidence that the null hypothesis is true. From the critics of NHST have come a host of suggestions, from eliminating it altogether to strongly encouraging or mandating additional elements to be reported.

The rise and fall of two specific mandated reporting practices were chronicled in detail in this paper: (1) minimum sample size necessary for statistical significance and (2) probability of replication. Statistical reporting practices that appeared to be careening towards disaster were more briefly discussed. In each instance, the history of the practice, from its inception to adoption by one or more scholarly journals, and subsequent demise or fall into disuse was described. That the flaw(s) that proved

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the undoing of each were discernable from the outset served a useful object lesson; if proponents of a proposal were either very persuasive or well-placed, the proposal may be adopted, often without critical review. In other cases, people might adopt proposals out of fear of being different or perceived as out of step. By examining and reflecting on some of these cases, one is better equipped to avoid the trap of the "emperor's new clothes."

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. WRITING A SUPPORTABLE SABBATICAL PROPOSAL (Training Session) Commander

Gahan Bailey and Brenda C. Litchfield, University of South Alabama

Preparing a successful sabbatical proposal takes time, effort, and creativity. If one's university is going to invest in one and pay one while one is not teaching, it wants to make sure one has a solid, unique, and worthwhile project planned. Too many sabbatical proposals were written that lack specific details and a unique approach to study that were outside the regular activities of a professor. One needs something new, something different. A sabbatical is a time to show one's ability to contribute to one's field, advance one's knowledge and skills, and showcase one's university. Certainly not all sabbaticals applied for were approved. How can one write a sabbatical proposal that will stand out among other proposals submitted? What does one need to include in one's proposal so it is approved? How can one prepare a proposal that once granted, will lead to a successful sabbatical that will enhance one's college and university's mission? How will one's sabbatical scholarship be disseminated among the various scholarly networks? Participants in this training session received a "sabbatical resource book" which was used during the session to brainstorm, write, and refine sabbatical ideas. Small groups and one-on-one assistance were utilized.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION (Displays).....Preconvene

Developing a Model for Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Culture in Higher Education

Peggy Jasperson, Kyna Shelley, Richard S. Mohn, and Thomas J. Lipscomb,
University of Southern Mississippi

Researchers have examined the construct of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) without establishing a single definition (Organ, 2006). However, certain components of OCB were consistently present in the OCB framework. Specifically, OCB focuses on tasks that go beyond the norm of what would be typical job behavior and includes actions contributing directly or indirectly to the organization. OCB is inherently discretionary; behaviors go without reward and were not enforceable or required. Further, little OCB research has been conducted in higher education institutions but has instead focused on business and on lower-level, hourly employees.

In this study OCB was examined in combination with an assessment of organizational culture. The goal was to evaluate several dimensions of OCB, including extra-role behavior, participation, initiative, and industry, as well as other theoretically-related constructs for which valid and reliable subscales have been developed. Based on OCB literature, with permission of instrument developers, established subscales were combined to examine the relationship among various components of OCB and organizational culture. For this pilot study, a questionnaire was distributed to faculty at a research-intensive institution to assess initial reliability of these subscales and to confirm inter-relationships among them. Demographic differences were analyzed to provide the context for subsequent invariance testing. This study was unique since it simultaneously examined several dimensions of OCB while also looking at organizational culture from the perspective of university faculty. The preliminary results provided the basis for a multi-state survey intended to develop a model using SEM to understand the predictive and mediational impact of the OCB subscales. Understanding the relationships among OCB constructs and the factors that may distinguish one model from another will prove useful in colleges and universities where OCB is posited to be critical to the success of the academic units and the institution as a whole.

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Dispositions! Dispositions!

Shirley Jacob, Southeastern Louisiana University

Current admissions and retention requirements at many teacher education training institutes are based on GPA and PRAXIS scores, neither of which are good predictors of success in the classroom. Some programs utilize individual interviews that are subjective and very time consuming, making them impractical for teacher training programs with large enrollments. At best, these individual interviews fail to identify leadership and human relation skills so essential to success in the classroom. Research verifies that faculty members were unwilling to counsel students out of teacher education programs, and students seldom self-select to leave teacher training programs. Unfortunately, candidates in teacher training programs do not demonstrate deficiencies until their junior and senior years when they are involved in practicum courses and student teaching. Therefore, how can teacher training programs identify student deficiencies earlier?

Several teacher education programs were looking at quantitative and qualitative measures in their admissions programs with some of these schools piloting the group interview as an effective and cost efficient predictor of student performance. The group interview concept is based on the work of Zipora Shechtman (University of Haifa, Israel) who verified a strong correlation between the group interview procedure and long-term measures of teaching success. This display session described the group interview process, presented data collected related to the predictability, and explained how the process has been used to target specific deficiencies earlier in the training program so that appropriate interventions can be made and career counseling offered, if needed.

Alternative Assessments in Online Courses

Crystal Thomas and Carla Stout, University of South Alabama

This display session provided a summary of literature regarding online learning assessments used in higher education and their effectiveness. Faculty and administration at the collegiate level were often concerned with assessing students' learning in online courses while eliminating cheating. In face-to-face classes, faculty often depended on multiple choice tests to determine students' mastery of the material. The fear of cheating is pervasive among faculty when addressing online assessment because faculty often focus on the use of multiple choice tests. Research suggests that alternate forms of assessment can lead to equally effective learning, and the adoption of such assessments depends on the education of faculty in its use.

College Service Preferences of Students Attending Branch Campuses

Marion B. Madison, Andryna Kuzmicic, Bonne Heatherly, Melissa Werner, Valerie Hendrix,
and Wanda Hutchinson, Athens State University

This study surveyed junior-level college students to determine which of the college services would be preferred at the branch campuses. Because of the recent reduction in funding, there is a need to establish which services would be utilized before expanding the off-campus services. This study was constructed to help provide information to assist in the decision making process.

The participants were students from five classes surveyed from the following formats: main campus (2), branch campus day classes (2), and branch campus blended course (1). A blended course meets three times during the term and the rest of the course is online. Demographic data were collected in such areas as race, marital status, and employment status. Eighty-one surveys were administered and returned. Forty-four were from the main campus, and 37 were from the branch campus. The strongest item on the survey was the reason for attending college. Of the 81 surveys returned, 71 listed pursuing degree for employment as the most important reason for attending college. No participants listed this reason as unimportant. Thirty-three respondents listed campus life as unimportant, and 22 listed meeting new people as unimportant. The findings of this study suggested possible expansions of some services and indicated that other services would not be utilized.

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9:30 – 10:20 A.M. **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: LITERATURE REVIEW** Captain

Presider: Charles Notar, Jacksonville State University

Use of Bibliographic Systems and Concept Maps: Great Tools to Complete a Literature Review

Maria Martelo, University of North Florida

Writing a literature review is a challenging task for doctoral students, regardless of the topic. After reading great amounts of articles related to their dissertation topic, doctoral students face the challenge of writing the literature review using the proper references. Determining how to include all existing theories and studies is one of the first challenges, but after the process of selecting and reading articles and research reports is done, the real challenge begins: how to make good use of the references, giving appropriate credit to the authors, but at the same time, finding their own voice in the process. Excel is a useful tool for building a bibliographic system, not only to keep all the references together, but also to create categories that will later help students to write a coherent literature review in which different voices were joined in a meaningful conversation.

The bibliographic system should consist of an Excel sheet in which students can include the proper APA reference, the format of the information (for instance: book, journal article, policy paper), direct quotations, and the most important aspect: the categories. In addition, creating a concept map after the reading process is also a valuable step because it gives the student an outline for the literature review. The concept map also provided the categories that were used in building the bibliographic system. Combining a bibliographic system with a concept map is very useful in writing a literature review because it provides organization, as well as an opportunity for students to introduce their own voices by categorizing information from different authors.

Literature Review Organizer

Charles Notar and Virginia Cole, Jacksonville State University

The authors provided an explanation of a literature review and a form and frame of reference for organizing references for a literature review. There are several aspects of a literature review that can be streamlined with proper organization of the reference information. A review of why a literature review is needed was provided. Problems a writer of a literature review may encounter were also discussed. The form was divided into sections with questions and helpful hints on what should be included in each section.

Conducting and Writing the Literature Review Chapter of the Dissertation: An Exemplar

Rebecca Friels and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, Sam Houston State University

In this manuscript, from the point of view of both a doctoral student and her advisor/dissertation committee chairperson, the authors described the developmental process of conducting and writing the literature review chapter of the dissertation representing the social and behavioral sciences. This process, based on Combs, Bustamante, and Onwuegbuzie's (2010) interactive literature review process (ILRP) and Leech, Dellinger, Brannagan, and Tanaka's (2010) validation framework, facilitates the experiential components (e.g., exploring belief systems, developing standards and criteria), as well the final product (e.g., coding literature, discovering salient themes, and writing results) of the literature review.

Specifically, the authors presented sections of the literature review chapter of the dissertation and the procedure used to categorized literature into methodological, empirical, and conceptual articles for the purpose of identifying themes based on the following criteria: (1) the research or concept illuminating or extending understanding of the phenomenon (i.e., provided meaning) and (2) the rigorous research design showing vividness, creativity, thoroughness, congruence, and sensitivity. To evidence the developmental and interactive process as a foundation for conducting and writing a rigorous literature review, the following components were presented: (1) theoretical framework, (2) the ILRP and the

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validation framework, (3) descriptions of the first author's dissertation literature review process, and (4) reflections of the advising faculty/dissertation committee chairperson (second author) with respect to the process.

To this end, using the literature review chapter as an exemplar, they explained and advocated a structured literature review process for exploring belief systems, developing standards and criteria, delineating salient themes, and writing the results. The authors hoped the descriptions and examples of a comprehensive, accurate review of literature offer advantages for instructors and shed light upon the literature research process for students' confidence in writing a rigorous review of literature.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. **MATHEMATICS EDUCATION** **Admiral**

President: Rebecca Robichaux, Mississippi State University

Co-Teaching vs. Solo Teaching: Comparative Effects on Math Achievement in Elementary School

Melissa Witcher, Douglas County Schools, and Jay Feng, Mercer University

Among many instructional strategies attempted to increase academic achievement in elementary schools is co-teaching, also referred to as team teaching and collaborative teaching. In co-teaching, two qualified teachers work together to plan and teach the same class, whereas, in solo-teaching, one teacher is responsible for planning and teaching the class. Is co-teaching more effective than solo-teaching in the elementary school? Do students in the co-teaching class have better academic performance than students in the solo-teaching class? Previous studies on the effectiveness of co-teaching at the elementary level have been inconclusive (Dugan & Letterman, 2008).

This study, using a quasi-experimental design, investigated the comparative effects of co-teaching versus solo-teaching on students' academic achievement in elementary school. Participants were 40 students of two fifth-grade math classes at a rural elementary school in the southeastern region, one with a regular education teacher (solo-teaching) and the other with the same regular education teacher and a special education teacher (co-teaching). Participants' math scores from Unit tests, CRCT and ITBS, were collected over a period of one semester and analyzed using a series of unpaired t-tests for comparison. Results of this study showed co-teaching had more positive effects than solo-teaching on fifth-graders' math achievement, and students in co-teaching benefited from having two qualified teachers in the classroom (Abdallah, 2009; and McDuffie, Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2009).

Assessing Elementary Preservice Teachers' Knowledge for Teaching Geometry

Rebecca Robichaux, Mississippi State University, and Kelly Byrd, University of South Alabama

Students in the southeastern region of the United States were not so successful in mathematics as students in the general population. One factor in improving student achievement is the quality of preservice teachers who enter the workforce each year. Current reform-based curriculum frameworks for mathematics suggest students be engaged in challenging activities that require them to use complex reasoning skills and divergent thinking skills to solve multi-step tasks. In order to facilitate this kind of mathematical understanding, preservice teachers need to possess a thorough conceptual and procedural understanding of mathematics, as well as an understanding of research-based, developmentally-appropriate pedagogical practices. Specifically, with regards to geometric thinking, preservice teachers must possess an understanding of shapes, transformations, location, and spatial visualization in the context of the first three van Hiele levels of geometric thought. The van Hiele theory of geometric thinking defines the first three levels of geometric thought as the visual level, descriptive level, and informal deduction level.

The purposes of this study were: (1) to assess elementary preservice teachers' content knowledge of geometry, (2) to determine if differences existed in the geometric understanding between face-to-face students and online students, and (3) to identify misconceptions held by these preservice teachers with regards to geometric content. One-hundred-fifty elementary preservice teachers completed an assessment of their geometric knowledge. Results of this assessment indicated these preservice teachers were functioning primarily at the visual and descriptive levels and were lacking in understanding at the informal deduction level. Misconceptions identified involved the number of lines of symmetry of

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common polygons, the hierarchical relationships among quadrilaterals, the definition of congruence, and the results of various transformations. Specific statistical findings and the implications of these findings were discussed.

The Effects of Accelerated Math Utilization on Grade Equivalency Scores at a Selected Elementary School

Christi Gentry and Patrick N. Kariuki, Milligan College

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of Accelerated Math utilization on students' grade equivalency scores. Twelve students for both experimental and control groups were randomly selected from 37 students enrolled in math in grades four through six. The experimental group consisted of the students who actively participated in the Accelerated Math program. The control group consisted of the students who did not participate in the Accelerated Math program. Data were collected from the reports generated from the Accelerated Math program and from the STAR Math program. The STAR Math testing reports were used to determine the grade equivalency for each student in both experimental and control groups. Data were analyzed using an independent t-test using the .05 level of significance. The results indicated a significant difference between experimental and control groups grade equivalency scores. The experimental group showed greater increase in grade equivalence scores than the control group. No significant difference was found in number operation proficiency. The results suggested that the use of Accelerated Math program, combined with regular classroom instruction, increased the students' grade equivalency scores.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. TEACHER RETENTION Grand Bay I

Presenter: Angela Rand, University of South Alabama

Teacher Retention: Teacher Characteristics, School Characteristics, Organizational Characteristics, and Teacher Efficacy

Gail Hughes, University of Arkansas-Little Rock

Nationally, schools were challenged with recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. In a southern state, 400 public schools were randomly selected and invited to participate in a survey; 70 principals consented to school participation resulting in 782 completed teacher surveys. When asked why they planned to leave teaching, 653 (83.50%) teachers indicated retirement, 54 (6.91%) selected advancement within education, 28 (3.58%) choose a career outside education, 28 (3.58%) specified care for family, and 19 (2.43%) had other reasons. The researcher utilized block-entry logistic regression analysis to determine the impacts of teacher characteristics, school characteristics, organizational characteristics, and teacher efficacy (respectively) on retention in teaching. The final model correctly classified 84.7% of cases (-2 Log Likelihood = 587.44; Hosmer and Lemeshow Goodness-of-Fit (8) = 6.54, $p = .587$; (4) = 6.44, $p = .169$). Wald statistics indicated that years teaching experience, socioeconomic status (SES), salary/workload, parent/student, and technology all made statistically significant contributions to the model.

Odds ratios for teaching experience indicated that veteran teachers were .5 times more likely, and experienced teachers 3.5 times more likely, to remain in teaching than novice teachers. SES findings were opposite to the hypothesized direction. Teachers indicated they were more likely to continue teaching until retirement at the lowest SES schools than at the highest SES schools (odds ratio = 0.56). Findings for parent and student participation and cooperation revealed that teachers who were more satisfied with these factors were 1.6 times more likely to remain in teaching. Teachers who reported higher levels of satisfaction with their salary and workload were almost twice as likely to remain in teaching (odds ratio = 1.93). The data seemed to indicate that schools in this study interested in increasing teacher retention rates should consider increasing salaries and work toward improving parent and student participation and cooperation levels.

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

Eun Talka, Mercer University

Teacher quality is the most important factors in student achievement. Nonetheless, many teachers, especially beginning teachers, 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, and loss in teacher quality, and ultimately hampers 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 results of the study indicated the teacher turnover rate, and the aforementioned five factors were significantly related. The large sample size led to small correlations meeting statistical significance. The results 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 rate. Therefore, the following proposed recommendations and future research direction arise from the study findings: (1) reduce student/teacher ratio, (2) support and train teachers working with LEP populations, (3) investigate school climate and morals, (4) extend the study to examine different predictor factors, (5) conduct local (district-level) research, and (6) use different statistical procedures utilizing the information available from the sample of this study.

Chinese Teachers' Turnover Intention and Its Relation to Job Stress and Satisfaction

Shujie Liu, University of Southern Mississippi, and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie,
Sam Houston State University

In contrast to the numerous studies conducted in developed countries, very few studies on teacher stress and job satisfaction have been conducted in developing countries, including China. Furthermore, no studies have been conducted in China to investigate teacher turnover intention. Because of the large population and limited jobs opportunities in China, it is difficult for a teacher to find a job outside of the teaching profession if the teacher leaves the current school. Thus, even if a teacher is stressful and dissatisfied, and therefore intends to leave, he/she is likely to stay in the same school. This might not cause teacher turnover, as it often happens in developed countries; however, the effect might be worse, because low job satisfaction and/or high stress have been found to negatively influence work productivity. Therefore, it is extremely important to explore how to help Chinese teachers successfully cope with their stress and improve their job satisfaction.

The objectives of this study were to investigate Chinese teachers' overall satisfaction with their job, sources of teacher job satisfaction and stress in China, and the possible reasons why Chinese teachers intend to leave the teaching profession for another occupation. This survey employed qualitative dominant mixed research with the emphasis on the qualitative data, while also taking into account certain quantitative data. The data were collected in Jilin Province of China, and 600 teachers participated in the survey. Constant comparative analyses revealed the following possible reasons why teachers would leave the teaching profession: (1) too low of a salary to support a family (e.g., buy a house), (2) exhaustion due to overwork, (3) inadequate breaks and holidays, and (4) high levels of stress. Among these, being highly stressed was the most frequently mentioned reason.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. TEACHER EDUCATION..... Grand Bay II

Presenter: Dianne Richardson, University of West Alabama

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Engaging “Pre” Preservice Teachers

Alan Brown, University of Alabama

In an era of standards and accountability, today’s secondary classrooms offer ever-increasing opportunities for teaching to become static and for learning to become isolated from students’ real-life experiences. While it is important for all educators to realize their “responsibility to reform, not just to replicate, standard school practices” (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p. 280), Cuban (1993) has linked university teacher education programs to a “dominance of teacher-centered instruction” (p. 282). Certainly, much has been written about the needs of preservice teachers, especially those in internship placements, but one must also recognize the needs of preservice teachers just beginning their university coursework. For instance, what if “pre” preservice teachers, those not yet formally admitted into teacher education programs, had the opportunity to engage in real-life classroom scenarios?

This ethnographic study, influenced in part by Boal’s (1979) Theatre of the Oppressed and Freire’s (1970) critical pedagogy, examined one instructor’s approach to offering “pre” preservice teachers (n=27) the opportunity to take part in these real-life, decision making processes. During each role-playing scenario, an invited participant played the role of a student, parent, or administrator to engage unsuspecting “pre” preservice teachers with commonly reoccurring scenes from secondary classrooms. The most powerful scenarios included a foreign language professor playing the role of an ESL student, special education instructors playing the role of students with autism, and university staff members playing the roles of apathetic/irate parents. Data collection consisted of observations, questionnaires, and artifact analysis which were analyzed using Corbin and Strauss’s (2008) constant comparative analysis. Results indicated themes such as making decisions and owning consequences, identifying with teacher and student experiences, overcoming fear and frustrations, providing comfort through discomfort, acknowledging the challenges of diverse classrooms, and reflecting on clinical placements. Discussion included the potential for future study and implications for practice and program design.

Emotional Antecedents of Preprimary Teacher Learning

Elizabeth Beavers, University of Southern Mississippi

A study of the relationships between emotional understanding, the dispositional attributes to think critically, receptiveness to new learning, and willingness to change using structural equation modeling was conducted. Data from 186 preprimary teachers were analyzed to confirm the relationships between the constructs yielding four key findings addressing the individual and collective relationships between the variables expressed.

Specifically, the findings and interpretations of this study produced the following conclusions: (1) one’s willingness to change may stem directly from the individual’s emotional understandings, (2) there is a strong relationship between emotional understanding and critical thinking dispositions, (3) receptiveness to new learning precedes one’s willingness to change, and (4) there is a statistically significant relationship between the interactions of emotional understanding, critical thinking dispositions, receptiveness to new learning and willingness to change. Overall, a strong relationship was revealed between the constructs explored. The recommendations drawn from the findings served to foster consideration of the variables that were important when addressing preprimary teacher learning and willingness to change.

The recommendations further suggested that if the aim was to meaningfully impact quality early childhood preschool experiences and provide germane training for teachers, a deeper analysis was needed of the attributes and quality of preprimary teachers, as well as the means by which we teach teachers.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. TECHNOLOGY Commodore

Presider: Randy Parker, Louisiana Tech University

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Teachers' Use of Technology: Lessons Learned from the Teacher Education Program to the Classroom

Vivian Wright, University of Alabama

This paper described 10 teachers' perceptions of technology integration and technology use in their classrooms five years after their graduation from a teacher education program that encouraged technology use and offered many opportunities to use technology in teaching and learning. Qualitative data sources consisted of surveys and reflections, completed by the participants during their teaching methods class and their internship. Additionally, five years into their teacher induction, the researchers conducted at least one interview and at least one classroom observation with each participant. The researchers used Hooper and Rieber's (1999) five phases of technology use (familiarization, utilization, integration, reorientation, and evolution) to categorize the teachers' efforts.

At the conclusion of this study, the researchers found the five teachers who were at Hooper and Rieber's reorientation or evolution phases were teachers who had continued professional development, had engaged students in using technology, and had support from their school community (e.g., access to resources and professional development opportunities). The researchers presented additional implications and recommendations for teacher educators' consideration when promoting technology integration. These included use of case studies that encouraged thinking outside the box and discussions in how, when, and why a teacher should use technology; engaged the teacher candidates in developing methods of using today's emerging technologies (e.g., mp3 players, cell phones) in instruction; and the need to reevaluate teacher education program methods for teacher induction.

An Online Rubric: Adding Flexibility, Feasibility, and Accessibility to Writing Assessment

Jennifer Good, Auburn University-Montgomery, and Kevin Osborne, Sandhills Community College

When creating an assessment plan for a university-wide Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, administrators considered multi-layered evaluation that captures external comparisons for benchmarking and internal growth of students, with longitudinal growth measured through an online writing rubric. The purpose of this presentation was to chronicle the collaboration of personnel in WAC and Institutional Effectiveness in creating the online rubric, highlighting the flexibility, accessibility, and feasibility afforded by incorporating existing university databases and web-based applications. The rubric measured five distinct components of writing: focus, content, organization, style, and language conventions. Although these components and the rating scale remained consistent, faculty members had the opportunity to modify descriptive indicators per four of the five components. After the rubric was created, personnel in Institutional Effectiveness considered the technical nuances of measuring longitudinal growth per individual student, as well as the essential variables in data collection for future long-term meaningful analysis. In Spring 2010, instructors from the first two composition courses in the WAC program entered writing performance ratings per individual student (N=646) into the online rubric, which yielded a mean of three (Acceptable) or better on each of the five writing components. A comparison of means yielded significantly higher ratings ($p=.05$) on all five components of the online rubric for students in their second semester of writing instruction as opposed to the first semester, suggesting that the rubric had a level of validity. Detailed data from this first iteration of collection, and the implications of the data generated through the online rubric, were shared. This online rubric, adaptable at other institutions, was offered as a method to balance the tension of large-scale accountability with course-specific writing assessment. The integration of the online rubric into the full assessment plan, including its use in unit assessment, was discussed.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS: HIGHER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Commander

Presiders:

Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Educational Consultant

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Predicting College Performance: A Comparison of Academic Factors

Amy Weems, University of Louisiana-Monroe

The purpose of this study was to examine and compare academic predictors of college performance. Academic predictors: (1) high school GPA, (2) ACT Scores, (3) Composite English Math High school percentile, (4) class rank, and (5) high school coursework (college core curriculum). The justification for the study was: (1) the higher percentage of high school students entering college (Conley, 2007), (2) the flat retention rates of college students (Conley, 2007), (3) the cost of attrition for students and colleges (Daugherty & Lane, 1999; DeBerard, Spielmans, & Julka, 2004; Kahn & Nauta, 2001), (4) the results of educational reform (Beecher & Fischer, 1999; Louisiana Board of Regents, 2001), and (5) the rising educational costs and limited resources (Beecher & Fischer, 1999; Kahn & Nauta, 2001).

The theoretical model for this study was based on the assumption that high school GPA and ACT scores were reliable predictors of college performance and persistence (Beecher & Fischer, 1999; Bryson et al., 2002; Daugherty & Lane, 1999; DeBerard et al., 2004; Horn & Kojaku, 2001; Pike & Saupe, 2002). However, mixed findings related to high school rank and coursework as predictors of college performance and persistence provided an impetus for additional research and comparison (Beecher & Fischer, 1999; Horn & Kojaku, 2001).

The research questions hypotheses were: (1) high school GPA will not be a significant predictor of college performance, (2) the ACT composite score will not be a significant predictor of college performance, (3) ACT English score will not be a significant predictor of college performance, (4) ACT math score will not be a significant predictor of college performance, (5) high school class rank will not be a significant predictor of college performance, and (6) a combination of academic factors (high school GPA, ACT, and high school class rank) will not significantly predict college performance.

Non-experimental random sampling, correlational descriptive analyses, multiple stepwise regression, and optimal data analysis were used in the research design. The alpha level of significance was set at .05 for all analysis methods. The proposed and sample population consisted of 1,000 first-time college freshmen in Louisiana Public four-year institutions. The random samples were from up to six universities. High school transcript (GPA, coursework), percentile rank, and ACT scores were collected. College Records included the cumulative GPA at end of first fall semester, second-year fall semester enrollment status, and the number of credits completed. Permission for the study and data collection was granted by the doctoral committee, the Human Subjects Review Board, and the Louisiana Board of Regents. High school records were collected from the Louisiana Board of Regents electronic transcript system. College records were collected from the Louisiana Board of Regents electronic transcript system. Extraneous factors related to persistence Social-Cognitive Demographic University environment.

Louisiana, E-Learning Attrition Factors in Higher Education: Demographics, Social Presence, and Sense of Belonging Matter

Mona Ristorv-Reed, University of Louisiana-Lafayette

Over 12 million American college students have taken an e-course (Pasad & Lewis, 2008). Additionally, 32% of all two- and four-year colleges have one or more degree programs that are entirely online (2008). E-learning morphed from traditional classroom framework and has reassembled in a digital format. Eighty percent of American colleges now have one or more e-courses. The other 20% who have not launched e-learning classes have published emergency contingency plans which include the switch to e-learning in the event of a major H1N1 flu or other imminent disasters (Allen & Seaman, 2009). While the increase of e-learning in higher education creates a positive growth factor, e-student attrition is also continuing to increase in direct proportion (Diaz, 2002; Allen & Seaman, 2008). The staggering figure of overall attrition rates ranges between 35%-57% for e-learners, while students in traditional ground classes have dropout rates of 14%-20% less for similar classes (Ulmer, 2009; Pursel & Bailey, 2007).

What are the causes of e-attrition? There is a conspicuous void throughout research on the interactions of e-students' attrition factors. Studies have pinpointed individual attrition factors which were broadly labeled as student characteristics (Boulton, 2002; Lim and Kim, 2003). This broad category includes student demographics, perception of social presence (Tu, 2005; So & Brush, 2008), and sense of belonging (Haggerty, 1994; McLean and Alem, 2009) which influences online community emergence (Preece & Maloney-Krichmar, 2003). It is this dynamic interaction of e-learners' attrition factors this research hoped to identified and understood through this on-going research that included data archives

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(National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE], 2009) and e-students' online surveys from two Louisiana university systems. This information helped bridge the gap in understanding attrition factors for e-learners, and this knowledge should lead to a pre-course assessment instrument that could reduce e-learning attrition in higher education.

The Perspectives of Older Americans on Successful Aging and Adult Education Programs Needed to Meet Their Aging Needs

Ilecia Cobb, Auburn University

With the aging baby boomer generation, an increasing number of older Americans have been seeking to gain access to specific adult education programs and services that assisted them in aging successfully. As a result, many have experienced difficulties in finding programs and services to meet their aging needs. Therefore, this study examined personal perspectives of older Americans in regard to aging and what characterizes successful aging. In addition, the study sought to determine what they perceived to be specific adult education programs and services to meet their needs in aging successfully. The first stage of this study involved identifying the self-advocacy older Americans had for themselves. Determining their perspectives on what characterizes aging successfully and how their needs translated into educational programs, a solid research base was provided for developing adult education programs specifically to meet their aging needs.

The study used a mixed research design, combining elements of both qualitative and quantitative research. The study involved administering an aging survey online and in person at local Area Agencies on Aging throughout southeastern Alabama, particularly in Lee and Macon counties, as well as faith-based, civic, community, and various other organizations that provide resources to older Americans. The sample size consisted of 150 older Americans aged 55 and older. The overall implications of the study supported advancing research in the area of aging to address the educational issues of older Americans, particularly the increasing baby boomer population. It also provided data to support making recommendations in regards to adult education programs that most appropriately meet the aging needs of this increasing population. This study sought to determine the measures deemed necessary for successful aging to this particular population, and what adult education programs were valuable to aging.

An Examination of the Factors that Influence Public Sector Human Resource Employees to Participate in Continuing Education

Jennifer Turk, Auburn University

The study examined those factors that may influence human resource employees in the public sector to participate in continuing education programs. Specific factors examined included perceptions of continuing education programs, certification, and agency support for participation. The field of human resources demands that practitioners remain current on applicable laws and statutes. Many professional organizations provide continuing education to their members as a service, as well as a means to receive and maintain professional certification. With tightened budgets and varied responsibilities, public sector human resource employees were the stewards of human resources policy within their tax payer-funded organizations. To that end, it is essential for these employees to be educated administrators of human resource policy and to assist in running effective and efficient public organizations. Program facilitators and trainers must understand what influences these employees to participate in continuing education programs so that they can tailor their programs and marketing efforts to meet human resource administrators' needs.

In reviewing the literature, the researcher examined the historical framework of continuing education. Further, the researcher explored continuing education as it relates to the professional development of modern employees. The role of certification and its maintenance plays a vital part in continuing education participation rates. Within this examination was an exploration of how professional organizations promote continuing education and certification through programming designed to keep its members at the forefront of their field. A look at the continuing education practices within the public sector, and, more specifically, within the field of human resources, was conducted along with an analysis of prevailing literature concerning agency support for participation in professional development and continuing education.

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10:30 – 11:20 A.M. **EVALUATION** **Captain**

Presenter: Greg Freeman, Baptist College of Health Science

Assessment of Implicit Evaluation Theories

Mary Hibberts and Burke Johnson, University of South Alabama

Guided interviews with professional evaluators and educators were used as a means to articulate personal evaluation theories that tend to remain implicit. The interviews were developed to cover the five components for good theories of program evaluation described by Shadish, Cook, and Leviton (1991). Interviewees were asked to discuss and describe their beliefs about social and organization programming, knowledge construction, valuing in evaluation, evaluation use, and evaluation practice. More specifically, the evaluators discussed topics such as their personal evaluation theories, evaluators' role in various aspects of evaluation, how evaluation is related to social change, communicating with evaluation clients, how evaluators acquire and share evaluative knowledge, research methodology, value statements, the usefulness of evaluations they have worked, and setting priorities in evaluation practice. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were analyzed to identify emergent themes among evaluator responses and differences between articulated evaluation theories. These interviews were considered part of a series of pilot tests for this newly developed evaluation theory instrument. The explicated evaluation theories of the three evaluators were discussed. The evaluation theory explication process was also evaluated with recommendations for future use.

A Thinking Approach to Change: Follow-Up of Implications of Program Evaluation

Pamela Scott, East Tennessee State University

The results of a participatory program evaluation of the doctoral program in School Leadership at East Tennessee State University led to significant program changes. The purpose of the program evaluation conducted in 2008-2009 was to assess the status of the program and make recommendations for improvement. The data gathered from key stakeholders centered around two concepts: (1) the curriculum content and (2) standards of quality. The analysis of the data revealed a disjointed curricula and the need for program improvement. The resulting program changes were explained in this follow-up of the program evaluation. Stakeholders collaborated to align the disjointed curriculum, increase rigor, and eliminate overlap in course content while focusing on needs of aspiring school leaders. Two major unintended outcomes of the program evaluation and subsequent redesign were the focus on the internship and residency experiences of doctoral students.

The data from the program evaluation informed the process of program change. The emerging changes provided the opportunity for probing questions about program improvement and implementation strategies. The process of change evolved to a thinking approach described by three core concepts: (1) change is external and may be a temporary state, (2) transition refers to the mental state of those involved in the change, and (3) transformational change requires a paradigm shift within the individual and group itself (Anderson & Ackeman-Anderson, 2001).

The Evaluation of an Education Program on Abuse and Bullying Prevention

Gayle V. Davidson-Shivers, Rebecca M. Reese, and Lauren F. Mininger,
University of South Alabama, and Joan Williams, Penelope House

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of a current prevention education program on abuse and bullying for school-age children and adolescents. This curriculum is mandated by the State of Alabama; however, the request for this evaluation came from a domestic violence shelter (DVS), which is a non-profit organization that provides the education to schools in a south Alabama district. The authors planned and conducted the evaluation during a six-month period and then reported findings and recommendations to the DVS staff. The plan was to: (1) obtain information about DVS current practices, (2) research other prevention education programs, (3) develop instruments

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and coordinate timeframe with DVS staff, (4) review educational resource materials, and (5) observe prevention education presentations given to various grade levels in schools.

The authors found the standard practice was for the DVS staff to work with counselors to schedule the programs. This scheduling was on a school-by-school basis and did not occur in a systematic manner. In addition to Prevention Education duties, the staff was often assigned other duties. The authors found the DVS, not the school district, purchased the educational resources. Their resources consisted of videos, workbooks, and worksheets for various grade levels. The review of materials found only three videos too outdated for continued use. They recommended the remaining videos to be used as is or with some modification. The authors observed one staff member presenting to students in classrooms at an elementary school over a two-day period. Strengths and a few weaknesses were noted, but, overall, the presentations were satisfactory, and students were attentive. Because of scheduling conflicts the researchers were unable to observe at a middle or high school level. At this session, the authors discussed how they planned and conducted the evaluation, and they shared the rubrics developed.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....Admiral

Presenter: John R. Slate, Sam Houston State University

A Typology of Verbs for Scholarly Writing

Rebecca Friels, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and John R. Slate, Sam Houston State University

Academic writing, or scholarship production, involves a fundamental and conscientious approach for “forging a commitment to become prolific” (Johnson & Mullen, 2007, p. (4). Scholars use the written language of syntax and grammar to convey intentionality and information (Gee, 2005). Challenges for writers successfully to conform to style guides, such as American Psychological Association (APA, 2010), combined with challenges of linguistic descriptions and conventional descriptions, can be vast. Further, clarity and precision are core principles of expository writing. The methodological process of writing entails the careful selection of words, including the appropriate use of verbs. According to the APA (2010) Publications Manual guidelines, “verbs were vigorous, direct communicators” (p. 77).

With these ideas in mind, the authors presented exemplars of scholarly writing and the use, inaccurate use, and overuse of the verb found. The authors expanded upon additional coming-to-know verbs (Meyer, 1997), using the Typology Lists of Verbs for Scholarly Writing (Friels & Onwuegbuzie, 2010) for authors to discriminate verbiage for meaning and clarity in writing. Additionally, they created a typology of verbs wherein an array of verbs is categorized and classified according to each major section of an empirical research article.

Were Assumptions Made in Regression?

Donna Harrison, Southern University

Certain assumptions must be met to ensure the data were appropriate for regression analysis. Using data that does not conform to the assumptions can produce erroneous conclusions. However, the documentation of the testing of assumptions is often omitted in the education research literature. Mathematics education research journals were reviewed for articles utilizing regression analysis to assess whether the assumptions for regression analysis were tested. Four journals from the preceding five years were selected to be reviewed. A summary of the findings was presented. In addition, the assumptions for regression analysis were discussed with examples of methods for testing and reporting.

Research in the Schools Journal: The Future of One Scholarly Journal

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

The authors examined the perceptions of 68 researchers who attended the 2009 Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA) Annual Conference regarding the future of the Research in the Schools journal, co-sponsored by the association. Respondents expressed the hope that the

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Research in the Schools journal would change from its current state as a paper journal to a more modern, acceptable, and more accessible state as an electronic journal. All respondents believed future articles published in the journal would definitely be downloadable and thus available to a wider audience than the current MSERA membership list. Almost all respondents (87%) definitely believed the journal should have downloadable articles available through a fee-based, online service. A higher percentage of respondents (99%) believed the manuscript submission process should be completed entirely online. Lastly, 65% of the respondents indicated they believed the journal should, in the future, publish a variety of non-traditional media such as video and audio. Finally, participants wrote that journal articles should be more accessible and available to individuals, and links could be present for related research.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. 40th ANNIVERSARY PLANNING SESSION.....Schooner

Presenter: Walter M. Mathews, Evaluation Association of New York

Next year, we'll be celebrating MSERA's 40th Annual Meeting. Founded in 1972 at the University of Mississippi, MSERA has maintained a continuous presence throughout the South. Countless members have presented papers and shared research and good times over the years. This session invited old and new members to participate in the planning of our celebration in 2011 at Ole Miss.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION.....Grand Bay I

Presenter: Suhana Chikatla, University of South Alabama

Eighth-Grade Social Studies Teachers' Perceptions of the Impact of Technology on Students' Learning of World History

Bridgett Griggs, University of Alabama

With the expansive amount of information, the job of social studies teachers is becoming more challenging. Instructional strategies can be employed, such as anticipation guides and concept maps. These items can help keep both students and teachers on task. Technological instructional strategies that can be used were WebQuests and virtual tours. These activities may increase students' ability to become active learners and construct their own knowledge. In the middle school, issues can cause teaching and learning to become problematic. High stakes testing is one of those areas. In elementary and middle school, only subjects being tested received attention, which led to a reduction and dismissal of social studies. Also in middle school, teachers became overwhelmed with the amount of information they had to teach, especially when social studies was tested. This caused social studies teachers to remain at the "just the facts" level in order to have enough time to cover everything. Eighth grade has been cited as a pivotal period in the life of the student, for it has the potential to determine how well students will do in high school, college, and their career. Eighth-grade world history teachers had much to cover with little time to spend on each topic. This causes both teachers and students to become overwhelmed and discouraged.

This research study was designed to examine the perceptions of eighth-grade social studies teachers on how they felt technology impacted their students' learning in world history. It was conducted in West Alabama with five eighth-grade world history teachers: Darlene, Daniel, Elijah, Trevor, and Caleb (pseudonyms). Teachers participated in three online focus group sessions and one face-to-face follow-up interview. After analyzing the results, four major themes emerged: (1) the role of the eighth-grade social studies teacher, (2) meaningful learning, (3) hands-on learning, and (4) barriers to technology integration.

Exploring the Use of 3D USA Today Charts to Improve Learning among Culturally Diverse Learners

Suhana Chikatla, University of South Alabama

The purpose of the study was to explore similarities and differences among the American and Indian participants in their preference, use, response accuracy, and response time in reading and interpreting embellished 3D and simple 2D charts. The participants for this study consisted of 100

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American and 100 Indian students studying at a university in the southern United States. A computer-based activity was designed that contained 80 pairs of charts presented on the same screen. One chart on each screen was an embellished 3D USA Today chart. A second chart was a simple 2D chart developed using Microsoft Excel. Both charts had the same content; thus the information corresponded.

The findings from this research revealed the following results. When preference only was the criterion, there was no statistically significant difference between American and Indian participants' preference of the chart dimensionalities (2D and 3D). When use only was the criterion, both the American and the Indian participants used significantly more embodied 2D charts compared to embellished 3D charts. When response accuracy was the criterion, the American and the Indian participants scored similarly when using both embodied 2D and embellished 3D charts. Interestingly, American participants were significantly more accurate than the Indian participants in both the simple 2D and embellished 3D environments. When response time was the criterion, there was no statistically significant difference in the amount of time spent by either American or Indian participants in both the embodied 2D and embellished 3D environments.

**2:00 – 2:50 P.M. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION Grand Bay II**

President: Betty Porter, School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans

Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive Parenting Style Scales: Psychometric Analysis

Stephan Miller, Western Kentucky University, and Juanita Lynes, Richardson and Associates

Several scholars have produced parenting style (PS) measures that purport to capture children's identity, e.g., self-discipline, motivation, persistence, and school success. Considerable variation exists among these efforts, both content and success in explaining outcomes. Feasibility (length) is also problematic. This report addressed the validation of educationally-focused self-report PS scales for adolescents/college students. In the parenting style literature, Baumrind's (1971) work is considered seminal. An authoritative approach (reasoned and firm, democratically based) generally provides positive effects on school outcomes whereas both authoritarian (autocratic, often harsh and unyielding) and permissive (lack of standards and consistency, capitulating to child demands) patterns have been associated with lower performance (Miller, 1995). Numerous critiques and problems exist, including differences across cultures/ethnicity. The current scales were adapted from C. C. Robinson, Mandeleco, Olsen, and Hart (1995). The PS measures were developed for a larger study of factors influencing students' college placement scores (CPS) at five historically African American colleges/universities (HCBUs).

After extensive data gleaning, descriptive statistics and extensive psychometric analyses were computed for a sample of 651 (474 had valid CPS). Six scales, each five items, were developed, with five-point Likert response (five high): (1) three authoritative -- Parental Involvement, Reasoning/Induction, and Democratic Participation, (2) two authoritarian -- Parenting Hostility and Punitive Strategies, and (3) one permissive -- Lack of Follow Through. Factor analysis of 30 items produced six factors, following originally intended scale groupings, explaining 58.12% of the variance. Some items loaded otherwise than intended; resulting constructs had 5, 4, 6, 4, 8, and 3 items, respectively, with Cronbach's alphas of .81, .84, .88, .75, .82, and .68. Interscale correlations ranged from .04 to .45, indicating scale independence. Regarding external criterion validity, two factors had significant betas in final hierarchical regression with CPS: Democratic Participation (.106), and Punitive Strategies (-.102). Results provided support for construct validity. Implications of select sample, direction of influence, need for new items, and achievement were discussed.

Priorities of Culturally Diverse Head Start Parents: A Focus Group Study

Jeanetta Riley, Jo Robertson, and Margaret Gichuru, Murray State University

The home-school connection is vital in supporting children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). NAEYC (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009), and DEC recognizes the influence of culture on children's development and how children interact within group settings. Families were key transmitters of cultural

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beliefs and practices to their children. Rather than providing superficial experiences, the insights teachers gain from families can help them develop culturally relevant activities that allow children to participate in experiences that validate their cultural background. When early childhood professionals strive to incorporate knowledge of children's family and community cultures into preschool settings, they can provide children with a bridge between the two contexts (Gilliard, Moore, & Lemieux, 2007).

This focus group study examined how families of diverse cultural backgrounds viewed their children's preschool experiences within Head Start environments. Participants were parents from culturally diverse backgrounds who had children attending Head Start at one of six sites. At four sites, some parents spoke only Spanish; therefore, translators were recruited from Head Start. A protocol was developed to ensure the systematic process of gathering data (Krueger, 1994). Two investigators attended each focus group. One investigator asked questions and facilitated the group; the other investigator took notes and summarized at the end of the session giving participants time to clarify. Each session was audio taped, and tapes were transcribed.

Data were analyzed by investigators through coding and recoding the tapes and notes. Three major themes emerged from the data: (1) lack of parent concern for culturally relevant experiences, (2) parents' desires for children, and (3) parents' trust of faculty and staff. The findings suggested the following implications: (1) although parents may not expect culturally relevant experiences, educators must be diligent in providing them. and (2) additionally, communication between educators and parents in the parents' language is key in helping parents learn about their child's experiences.

Student Perceptions of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Experiences

Sally Blake and Denise Winsor, University of Memphis, and Lynn Darling, Mississippi State University

Change, or the pressure to change, is in the air in our educational systems. Whatever decisions are made (and electing not to choose is itself a decision), the effects will touch everyone at all levels from national governments to students. This study investigated student perceptions of their experiences with Problem-Based Learning (PBL) as they moved from a traditional course delivery system with faculty directed content to PBL. PBL is an educational approach in which complex problems serve as the context and the stimulus for learning. PBL uses ill-structured problems with many possible solutions. Each student group within a class may pursue a slightly different domain of knowledge. Students can offer perspectives on their experience within the problem-solving group and may be able to reflect on their own growth across the experience. The course structure includes student-directed applications of learning: (1) students determine criteria for activities and products, (2) students identify resources and approaches to teaching and learning, and (3) students identify criteria for summary projects. The faculty assigns problems encountered in teaching, and students will develop solutions as instructional sequence.

Student weekly activity and reflective journals were collected from 48 early childhood students enrolled in two courses using PBL as an instructional approach. The journals were coded inductively to identify themes relating to student perceptions of this approach, and a matrix of identified patterns was developed for analysis. Practitioners were likely to find this perspective of the greatest use if they were engaged in the actual development of the innovation or if they were deciding whether (or how) to adapt the innovation to meet local requirements. This study informed teacher educators and practitioners of issues related to change with PBL and other similar approaches.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. TECHNOLOGY Commodore

President: Wilbur Rich, Wellesley College

Student Perceptions Related to Blended Course Delivery

Adrian Grubb, Kelly Woodford, Nancy Lambe, and Melanie Summerlin, University of South Alabama

Higher education is experiencing a shift from traditionally live lectures towards new, innovative methods of content delivery. Distance/on-line education delivery methods are not new media for teaching, learning, and sharing ideas; however, those methods are experiencing a transformation as they become blended with traditional class settings. One technological development being used is the

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use of podcasting. A number of universities are utilizing “blended” classes in which students spend a portion of the week watching the traditional lecture delivered via pre-recorded podcast and a portion of the week in a face-to-face classroom setting. Several studies have evaluated the outcomes of the blended format, but, to date, the results of the outcomes-based studies have been mixed. As a practical matter, technology-based delivery systems such as podcasting have been effective only if students perceive the delivery systems as useful.

This study examined the effectiveness of podcasting in a blended class by collecting data regarding perceptions from students in those classes. The objective was to gauge perceptions of students who were taking blended courses using podcasting to identify needs and foster further research. Participants were given a questionnaire on the first day of classes and another after 60-90 days. The survey instrument was designed to poll the participants on their expectations of the podcast on the first day and the degree that the podcasts met their expectations later. The researchers expected results to be similar to previous studies on innovative delivery methods. As in studies of other methods, the students had little to no expectations at the outset, but formed concrete opinions on the podcast method as they progressed in the class. Also, the researchers believed that the students would reject the medium initially, but as their comfort level rose the participants adapted to the new delivery method and formed a more favorable stance.

Building a Cohesive Community of Learners Within an Online Virtual Environment

Rebecca M. Reese and Stacia L. Weston, University of South Alabama

With the rapid growth in online courses, a common concern for instructors is the lack of face-to-face (F2F) interaction with learners and the difficulty in building a learning community in an online environment. The authors focused on social presence theory in the pilot study. As defined by Short, Williams, and Christie (1976), social presence is classified according to the different forms of communication into a continuum, where the degree of social presence is associated with the degree of consciousness towards the presence of others within an interaction.

Two groups were used in the study, both samples of convenience. The first was a graduate class in which students could “opt in” to tour assignments via a learning contract. Tours were given during the academic year related to the subjects covered in the class each week. Students responded to and discussed the tours in a class wiki. The tour guides surveyed the students in chat about the tours. The second group was less structured, with participants coming through a gateway in a well-known virtual world. These participants could opt out at any time because they were not receiving a grade. They were encouraged to discuss what they saw after each tour. This group was also surveyed via group chat to share their feelings about the tours.

Results showed students who regularly participated in the virtual world tours recognized each other as “friends” long after their class was completed. Some moved into other communities, while some took on additional virtual extracurricular activities. While virtual tours promoted a sense of shared experience, it seemed clear that additional tools (discussion boards, additional “fun” activities, etc.) were necessary to promote discussion and further bonding, moving students from being lurkers to full participants.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. MINORITY RECRUITMENT/RETENTION..... Commander

President: Susan Piper, University of South Alabama

Strategies for Providing Underrepresented Students Access to College

Monica Motley, Andre Green, and Joel Lewis, University of South Alabama

Today’s postsecondary institutions in our nation remain less reflective of the diverse communities they serve. Many estimate that more than 50% of African American children drop out of high school. Of the remaining 50%, only a portion of them continue on to pursue a postsecondary degree. One reason cited as why the remaining 50% of the students that graduate do not continue their education is limited financial resources. There are still a limited number of minority students represented in freshman classes among some postsecondary institutions in our nation (Gerald & Haycock, 2006). The literature indicates that limited financial resources are one of the main barriers for students from underrepresented

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groups achieving access to postsecondary education (Gerald & Haycock, 2006; Kahlenberg, 2006; Porter, 2006). This reason is a plausible explanation about why many higher education institutions were not representative of the racial demographics of their states and of this country.

Education has been identified as the key to breaking the cycle of poverty in our country, but in many instances children from impoverished families are not given the minimal resources needed to make the transition out of poverty. Additionally, strategies for assisting minority students gaining access to postsecondary options should be a collaborative approach that begins early among secondary schools and postsecondary institutions. Parents and students from underrepresented groups should be targeted for providing information on how their students may obtain access to college. The ACCESS (Acquiring College, Career, and Educational Success Skills) program is a University of South Alabama College of Education training program intends to close the information gap on access to higher education among parents and students from underrepresented groups by providing interactive financial awareness trainings in their community.

Factors Influencing the College-Going Rates of Rural Students

Stephanie King, Mississippi State University

Because factors influencing students' decisions to attend college include the education levels of their family and community, their parents' occupation, and the level of parental support, rural students are often at a disadvantage. In addition, their parents' inability to provide information about college admissions and financial aid or to financially support them may influence college-going rates. It has been shown that key strategies to improving the college-going rates of these students include providing the students and parents with information about the academic requirements of college, as well as assistance with the process of applying for college and obtaining financial aid.

This study examined the perceptions of leaders of 11 grant-supported projects aimed at increasing the college-going rates of high school students in rural Appalachian counties to find out which factors they felt had the greatest impact on increasing the college-going rates at their schools and which factors they felt had the least impact. By the end of the fiscal year, the leaders of all 11 projects were required to complete an annual report form developed for this grant, and the leaders of 10 of the projects agreed to allow their responses to be used in this research. The researcher analyzed the responses to the two items related to factors having the greatest and least impact given by each project and noted patterns in the data. Results showed that certain factors were more influential than others. Conclusions were drawn about the most and least effective practices, and the implications of the study may be important for high school and other personnel involved in efforts to increase the college-going rates in their communities.

Effects of Group Work on English Communicative Competence of Chinese Graduates in American Universities

Mo Xue, University of Alabama

The study investigated how Chinese graduates in American universities felt about group work which has been widely used as one type of cooperative learning in American higher education, as well as its effects on their English communicative competence in the following three aspects: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Some researchers investigated the effects of group work (Davidson & Worsham, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1994) and students' attitudes towards it (Gottschall & Garcia-Bayonas, 2008; Li & Campbell, 2006; Payne & Monk-Turner, 2006). Some researchers (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980; Campbell & Wales, 1970) studied communicative competence. Canale and Swain (1980) stated communicative competence included grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence.

In this qualitative study, convenience sampling was used. Seven Chinese graduates at The University of Alabama participated in the study. Seven semi-structured interviews, with each lasting up to 25 minutes, were used for data collection. The interviews were conducted in Chinese so participants could express themselves fully and clearly. During the interviews, a microcassette recorder was used for later transcription. The transcriptions were finished and translated into English. The transcriptions were analyzed for key words and emergent themes. Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were

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used to generate themes. The results showed participants' attitudes towards group work went through changes from dislike to like and the time for the adjustment ranged from half a year to one year. The results also revealed group work greatly improved their English communicative competence in grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. The findings of this study have some implications for educational researchers, Chinese graduates who are studying in American universities, and university teachers who are interested in group work for their teaching.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M.

READING/ SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

(Displays)Preconvene

Pedagogical and Inclusive Practices in Teaching Social Studies: General and Special Educators' Perspectives

Nina King, Celia B. Hilber, Debbie Weingarh, Elizabeth Engley, Lynetta Owens,
Melinda Staubs, and Roben Taylor, Jacksonville State University

The purpose of this action research was to investigate general and special educators' perspectives related to teaching social studies, incorporating technology, and collaborating for instruction. Participants were graduate students in early childhood, elementary, and special education courses, during the summer and fall semesters at a state university, who had teaching experience in either general or special education.

Data sources were two 20-item surveys designed to gather demographic information as well as participants' viewpoints and experiences relative to the topics. Although items on the two surveys were similarly worded, because of the differences in participants' professional roles, minor changes in phrasing were necessary. Survey questions focused on: (1) how social studies was taught in participants' schools (if at all), (2) how general and special educators incorporated technological skills in their instruction, and (3) to what degree general and special educators collaborated during instruction. Surveys were launched in an online format (LiveText), and participants were provided a description of the research and a link to the appropriate survey.

Data were examined both qualitatively and quantitatively because instruments allowed additional comments and/or explanation of answers. Investigators analyzed and coded participants' comments for commonalities and evaluated other survey items utilizing simple statistics. Preliminary conclusions indicated the need for reevaluating teacher preparation programs to emphasize collaboration and technology skills in the classroom. In addition, findings suggested expanding the research to include teachers not enrolled in graduate programs.

Using Learning Centers to Integrate Language Arts and Social Studies

Cynthia McCormick, Cheryl Edwards, and Mary Banbury, Southeastern Louisiana University

A major issue in the current classroom is accommodating different learning styles while maintaining rigor and reaching the needs of students that differ in ability, interest, and ethnic background. Whole class instruction is frequently inadequate with some students left behind and others left inattentive. Designing curriculum that can keep students engaged is a skill that all preservice teachers need to experience. One possible means of involving all students is providing learning centers or stations that concentrate on the curriculum and provide a variety of activities that keep the students occupied and enhance their understanding at their own level. These centers additionally provide the benefit of allowing the students to work independently while the teacher addresses individual needs of at-risk students.

In teams of three or four, preservice elementary teachers prepared learning centers for third-through fifth-grade students to enhance their understanding of specific social science concepts. Emphasis was placed on integrating language arts in the centers, considering student interest and accommodating student ability level. The preservice candidates were required to include both ELA standards and social studies standards that pertained to the theme of the unit. Themes included presidential elections, economy, Louisiana culture, and Louisiana history. Centers were presented in an array of styles and included a number of techniques such as choice boards and color-coding. Candidates presented their centers to their classmates in a mock poster session in class. Centers were peer-critiqued and ideas were

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exchanged. Subsequently, the centers were presented to actual students during a two-week practicum. Candidates indicated that, although the centers required substantial preparation time, they resulted in well-engaged students. Many indicated their own knowledge base had been substantially increased through preparing the centers and the mock poster session had provided ideas for future use.

Perceived Strategic Reading Instruction

B. J. Kimborough, University of West Alabama

A survey/questionnaire was completed to measure inservice (N=60) elementary teachers' perceptions of quality strategic reading instruction. The 36-item Likert scale instrument (Reading Perceptions Survey) had items that sought to identify the teachers' perceptions of their own teaching of reading strategies, textbook strategies, and student-selected strategies to increase reading comprehension and fluency. Furthermore, five teachers were randomly selected for open-ended questions during interviews which were analyzed qualitatively. Teachers reported that they developed a repertoire of strategies that they used frequently; some suggested strategies found in the textbook resources were used occasionally. Student-selected strategies were frequently not considered in the assignments and assessment of reading comprehension. From the qualitative portion of the mixed-method study, themes that occurred were: (1) lack of opportunities for teacher creativity, (2) lack of time for remediation, and (3) rigid scheduling of skill and strategies.

Preservice Teachers' Use of Read Alouds and Shared Reading to Build At-Risk Students' Self Concept as Readers During a Summer Enrichment Program

Jennifer Simpson, University of South Alabama

This study examined the impact of a summer enrichment program on elementary students' attitudes toward reading. During the summer of 2009, four of 14 preservice teachers were assigned to teach reading in an urban school summer enrichment program for rising third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students. The demographics included approximately 150 male and female African American elementary students and four Caucasian female preservice teachers.

The focus of the reading instruction was predominately two-fold. First was the goal of helping to prevent the "summer slide" by using children's literature to establish a positive classroom community. Developing a positive classroom community led to the second goal of the reading instruction: students valuing reading and thereby developing a positive self-concept about reading. To determine if this goal was met, the Reading Survey of the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996) was administered as a pre- and posttest to the participating students. Administering the survey both before and after the treatment of using reading instruction to develop classroom community would help to determine if the instruction was effective. The Reading Survey consisted of 20 items and used a four-point Likert-type response scale. Ten of the items measured the students' self-concept as a reader, and 10 of the items measured the students' value placed on reading tasks and activities. Ninety-seven students completed both the pre- and posttest.

The data were analyzed using the statistical program SPSS, paired samples t test, as well as examined for practical significance. Tentative conclusions were drawn, and results indicated being involved with a summer program can have a positive impact on students' self-concept of reading and reading-related tasks.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. ATTITUDES Captain

President: Brian Reid, School Transformation

What is Self-Efficacy? How Does it Affect Learning?

Andrea Yohn, University of South Alabama

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Self-efficacy, simply stated, is an individual's belief or perception of having the ability to accomplish a task. It is primarily the belief that one has the power to accomplish something (Ormrod, 2004). This paper was a review of literature regarding self-efficacy. Its focus was to identify what is self-efficacy and how it affects learning by reviewing numerous resources related to the topic. Learners, who consider themselves to be efficacious for learning and specific tasks, when compared to other learners who have the tendency to doubt their capabilities, appear to excel according to the literature. Learners tend to participate more often, work harder, stick with it longer in the face of obstacles, as well as achieve above those students who are not so efficacious. Not only does it affect how one might function in an academic setting, but it also affects one's social self as well. The higher the self-efficacy is the more motivated an individual is to challenge himself which tends to make an environment that is thriving and conducive to one's growth and education. This paper reviewed in detail self-efficacy by defining the term, establishing where it comes from, discussing how it affects a learner, identifying how it develops, discussing teacher self-efficacy, explaining how to assess it, and identifying research pertaining to the topic.

Chinese College Students' Gratitude and Well-Being

Wei Liu, Cecil Robinson, and Nathan Simmons, University of Alabama

Gratitude is the positive reaction towards benefactors or benefits after perceiving positive outcomes. The beneficiary is more grateful if benefits are intentionally given for their own good (McCullough, Emmon, & Tsang, 2002). Numerous research has linked gratitude to individuals' well-being and positive outcomes in social relationships (Emmons, & McCullough, 2003; McCullough et al., 2002; Wood et al., 2008). However, as an important component of positivity, gratitude has been studied primarily in the United States. Little research has been done across ethnic populations (McCullough et al., 2002; Fredrickson, 2004). To begin to address this gap, this study examined the validity of gratitude among Chinese (N = 847) college students. Students were recruited from six universities in China. All participants voluntarily participated in the study without incentives. Questionnaires consisted of the demographic information, the Gratitude Questionnaire (McCullough et al., 2002; GQ-6), and measures to validate the GQ-6: Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), Positive and Negative Schedule (Watson et al., 1988), Satisfaction with Life Scale (Deiner et al., 1985), and Subjective Vitality Scale (Ryan, & Frederick, 1997).

Results indicated all measures had moderately high reliability. The analysis of variance suggested consistent results with previous research on all measures except life satisfaction, but correlation analyses revealed the strength and direction of the relationship between gratitude and the other variables functioned similarly across populations. Within group analyses revealed Chinese students who participated in this study were generally homogeneous, but there were gender and developmental differences in emotion. These results showed evidence of the importance of gratitude in Chinese culture, 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 different ethnic groups if researchers are to develop gratitude interventions that will reach all students.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION Grand Bay I

Presider: Jane Nell Luster, LSUHSC-HDC/DAC

IDEA Data Use: From the Top Down and the Bottom Up

Jane Nell Luster, LSUHSC-HDC/DAC

This paper continued an examination begun last year with the Arkansas Department of Education, Office of Special Education, and personnel from local education agencies. The title of that exploratory presentation was Success: Assessment for Accountability and Success. The thought was that NCLB requires states to define the accountability plan for the state, identify the method of assessing for determining success, and make the data public; thus, there are top-down (state) and bottom-up (school) data. Applying this same framework to IDEA data, data originate at the student-school level, were aggregated to the local education agency (LEA) level, and then aggregated again to the state level. Once

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at the state level, the data begin to move back down as LEA performance is compared to state targets, and a report is made public about how the LEA compared to those targets. Then the LEA uses the data to identify which schools were performing above target, on target, and below target. IDEA requires that the USDOE determine the extent to which states meet the requirements of the law.

This paper compared the performance of four states categorized as meeting requirements of IDEA for three or more years to two states categorized as needing intervention and two states categorized as needing assistance to meet the requirements of IDEA for three or more years. The state comparisons were for three indicators of compliance with procedures of law and three indicators related to the law's emphasis on improved results. The second level of comparison was the public reports on the performance of LEAs in the state to determine to what extent the LEAs were meeting the state targets. The results provided a surprising picture of accountability at both the state and LEA level.

Building Effective and Efficient Technical Assistance: A Single Subject Case Study

Betty Beale, AUM/SERRC, and Jane Nell Luster, LSUHSC-HDC/DAC

This paper described the first stage of a single subject case study based on the Five Stages for Building Effective and Efficient Technical Assistance as described in the paper - A Framework for Collaborative Partnership in Providing Intensive Technical Assistance (2009). The five stages were Discovery, Planning, Initial Implementation, Transformation, and Sustainability. The stages spanned a period of one month to up to seven years to effect systems changes. Each of the stages is evidence- and research-based. This framework was conceptualized as a state-level change model. The intent of the framework was to build capacity and systematically change operational procedures. The stages have specific activities designed to support state personnel as they evolved and developed essential competencies. The framework was developed for states that have multiple and intensive needs requiring sustained and long-term technical assistance, although there is an expectation that a modification of these stages could be used with states with less intensive needs.

The USDOE/OSEP funds technical assistance centers to address a variety of needs of states. The state in this case study has had long-term problems in complying with the requirements, including IDEA, that have caused the USDOE/OSEP to impose a memorandum of agreement, special conditions on grant awards, and other compliance requirements. One of the challenges in developing a conceptual framework of technical assistance is the time it takes to test the framework. This case study first described the unique needs of the state to meet the requirements of the USDOE as context. It detailed the steps, technical assistance activities, and accomplishments throughout the first three years of intensive technical assistance. It outlined the steps to complete the remaining years of the framework.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. READING Grand Bay II

President: Dianne Richardson, University of West Alabama

An Exploration of Literacy-Instructional Coaching Conversations in an Interdisciplinary Learning Community

Kathleen C. York, Dana Thames, Stacey Breazeale, and Patsy McBride,
University of Southern Mississippi, and Carol Carter, Life Bound

Recent reading research has documented that literacy coaching leads to student success in reading in the early grades. Few studies have examined literacy coaching in postsecondary settings. This qualitative, in-depth case study examined co-constructed instructional/literacy coaching conversations in an interdisciplinary learning community. The program was designed to support student success for a special cohort of 14 struggling adolescent readers enrolled in a summer bridge program at a university. An instructional team of art, math, science, and literacy coaches worked together to develop and implement interactive conversations around the theme of "Art, Math, Science, and Your Life in Motion." A naturalistic design guided the investigation.

The study focused on the following three overarching research questions: (1) How do interdisciplinary coaches communicate during instructional conversations aimed at cultivating learning

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and content reading achievement across disciplines? (2) How do students respond to instructional conversations co-constructed between teachers and coaches? and (3) What is the impact of co-constructed conversations on faculty and student learning? Each participant coach from the fields of math, science, and reading completed a content literacy professional development program and co-coached a small study group of four to five students for four hours each week over a five-week period.

Three sources of data were produced: (1) audio-taped coaching sessions, (2) reflections on coaching, and (3) student verbalizations during instructional conversations. A constant comparative method guided the analysis of the data. The researchers examined each of the sources of data separately for significant statements. Categories were created using categorical aggregation, and emergent patterns were identified. Findings showed that metaphors, analogical statements, and reflective thinking questions initiated by the literacy coaches promoted higher levels of critical and creative discourse and student engagement during learning. Emergent themes shared provided insight into using coaching to build critical and creative thinking skills.

Building Community by Teaching Reading: Preservice Teachers' Experience in a Summer Program

Andrea Kent and Andre Green, University of South Alabama

This study examined preservice teachers' ability to develop classroom community using children's literature during a summer program. In the summer of 2009, 14 elementary preservice teachers served as classroom teachers in an urban school enrichment program for approximately 150 urban students in the third-through-fifth grades. This study examined the development of the classroom environment with four female, Caucasian preservice teacher participants that were identified to teach reading. The summer enrichment program was conducted for 13 days over the course of four weeks. The students were placed in classrooms by grade level and gender. The students rotated through the content areas in order to have one hour of instruction in reading and other content areas. Each preservice teacher had total autonomy over the classroom with assistance from professors and inservice/lead teachers. In an effort to triangulate the data, data were collected from multiple sources and in various formats. Two university reading faculty regularly visited, observed, and conferred with the four reading preservice teachers and the lead teacher and kept a journal of observations and conversations. An onsite lead teacher met each morning with the preservice teachers, as well as individually with them at various times, and emailed the researchers minutes, as well as questions and concerns from the preservice teachers. Finally, focus group meetings were held with the preservice teachers at the beginning and conclusion of the summer program.

All of the data were analyzed in an effort to determine any patterns of success or struggles in using children's literature to develop classroom community. Positive tentative conclusions were drawn in relation to the preservice teachers' ability to build classroom community using children's literature. The findings of the study suggested implications for both universities and public schools in the power of using literature to develop classroom community.

In School Independent Reading: What Does it Really Look Like?

Katrina Hall, Lunetta Williams, and Wanda Hedrick, University of North Florida

While there is a wealth of correlational evidence that the amount of reading affects reading achievement, the National Reading Panel indicated a need for more experiments suggesting causation. A reliable instrument measuring students' engagement during independent reading is needed when conducting such studies. This study investigated third-grade students' verbal and nonverbal behaviors indicating engagement with books during in-school, independent reading (ISIR) in two phases. During phase one, an observation instrument was developed using observations and videotapes of students during ISIR and individual interview responses. In phase two, the validity of the instrument was further established as the researchers assessed 15 third-grade students' engagement during ISIR using the observation instrument and students' comprehension of the books.

Results indicated that the interrater reliability statistic was Kappa = 0.90 ($p < 0.001$), 95% CI (0.504, 0.848), and students who were engaged according to the observation instrument also

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comprehended their books as noted by their interview responses. This instrument can assist educators in determining the effectiveness of ISIR for students. Having the information can allow teachers to use response to intervention-RTI or to differentiate the ISIR to impact their students' learning or to alter reading activities to better meet students' needs if they were not engaged during ISIR time.

**3:00 – 3:50 P.M. ON WRITING IN APA FORMAT: USING THE NEW
SIXTH EDITION (Training Session)..... Commodore**

John R. Slate, Sam Houston State University

Faculty and students in education, educational research, and psychology, as well as many other disciplines, use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) as their guide for scientific writing. Manuscripts submitted for journal publication, as well as master theses and doctoral dissertations, have to be written in compliance with APA's Publication Manual. For the past eight years, the Fifth Edition of the APA Publication Manual (2001) has been the standard. In July, 2009 the long awaited Sixth Edition was released. According to APA, this Sixth Edition contains substantial changes, particularly related to the digital world. Since the 2001 edition, many changes have occurred via the Internet and digital publication and storage of manuscripts. As such, the 2001 edition was not sufficiently directive to the use of digital resources. In particular, this 2009 edition consolidates "information on all aspects of reference citations, with an expanded discussion of electronic sources emphasizing the role of the digital object identifier (DOI) as a reliable way to locate information" (APA website).

Other revisions and updates include, but are not limited, to: (1) new ethics guidance on such topics as determining authorship and terms of collaboration, duplicate publication, plagiarism and self-plagiarism, disguising of participants, validity of instrumentation, and making data available to others for verification; (2) new journal article reporting standards to help readers report empirical research with clarity and precision; (3) simplified APA heading style to make it more conducive to electronic publication; (4) updated guidelines for reducing bias in language to reflect current practices and preferences, including a new section on presenting historical language that is inappropriate by present standards; (5) new guidelines for reporting inferential statistics and a significantly revised table of statistical abbreviations; (6) new instruction on using supplemental files containing lengthy data sets and other media; (7) significantly expanded content on the electronic presentation of data to help readers understand the purpose of each kind of display and choose the best match for communicating the results of the investigation, with new examples for a variety of data displays, including electrophysiological and biological data; (8) consolidated information on all aspects of reference citations, with an expanded discussion of electronic sources emphasizing the role of the digital object identifier (DOI) as a reliable way to locate information; and (9) expanded discussion of the publication process, including the function and process of peer review; a discussion of ethical, legal, and policy requirements in publication; and guidelines on working with the publisher while the article is in press (verbatim from the APA website).

In this training session, an overview of the major changes delineated in the Sixth Edition of the American Psychological Association's Publication Manual was provided. Specific objectives of the proposed training session: (1) examined the major revisions in the Sixth Edition that involved changes in professional writing; (2) contrasted the changes in the Sixth Edition from current professional writing practices; (3) provided participants with an overview of the differences from the Fifth Edition; (4) provided participants with a model research paper written in 99.9999% compliance with the APA 6th edition; and (5) provided participants with two recent editorials regarding common errors with APA writing and a best practices for writing abstracts. Participants were requested to bring their Sixth Edition of the APA Publication Manual with them. Powerpoint slides were matched with pages of the Sixth Edition to point out areas of particular concern. Discussion was encouraged regarding the major changes that needed to be incorporated into professional writing behaviors. The model research paper, written in strict adherence to the 6th edition of the APA Publication Manual, was thoroughly examined.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. MENTOR SESSION..... Commander

Presider: Linda W. Morse, Mississippi State University

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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 student and professional members of the Mid-South Educational Research Association.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. EDUCATIONAL REFORM..... Captain

Presenter: Jennifer L. Styron, University of Southern Mississippi

The Importance of School Culture for Instructional Leadership

Leslie Jones, Nicholls State University

One of the most popular themes (reoccurring issues) for K-12 school leaders, central office leaders, professors of Educational Leadership, other educators, and other pertinent stakeholders in education is: What are the important characteristics needed for school leaders to be effective? In 2000, Rakiz and Swason noted leadership was in a period of dynamic change. The skills required for leadership were very different from one era to the next (Sorenson & Machell, 1996). McEwan (2002) suggested providing a definition of leadership is not a problem; the real challenge is determining how to create and produce effective leaders. Bennis (1989) suggested it is difficult to conceptualize effective leadership but it is like beauty, "you know it when you see it."

In this paper, the presenter reviewed pertinent traits and skills of leaders, and perspectives of leadership from several theorists, and focused on multiple perspectives and the significance of instructional leadership. In the conclusion, the importance of culture was discussed as a variable that is prevalent in multiple perspectives of instructional leadership, as well as the link of culture in essential traits and skills of leaders.

The Evolution and Adoption of a Voucher: The Story Behind the Louisiana Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program

Belinda Canbre, University of New Orleans

Louisiana legislators have for years introduced proposals advocating voucher programs to no avail. Since the 1997 adoption of the state's educational accountability system, no fewer than 25 legislative bills have been proposed advocating public dollars to private schools for student tuition. Finally, in 2008, a program was passed allowing students in state takeover schools in New Orleans to attend private schools. Content analysis was applied to analyze the legislation put forth in the years where the voucher failed and leading up to the successful legislation. Kingdon's theories of policy streams and entrepreneurship were applied to examine the evolution and adoption of the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program. Vouchers were often discussed, even at the federal level, as a mechanism for parental choice in education. The national mood shifted when charter schools took favor, and Louisiana was no exception.

Following Hurricane Katrina, charter schools were used as the mechanism to reopen the New Orleans schools that were persistent failures before the storm. Kingdon notes that only rarely does a crisis or disaster elevate an issue to the policy agenda without an accompaniment of a preexisting condition or other event. In Louisiana, the issue of vouchers took a front seat following the storm. Although there were already choice options in place for parents of New Orleans schoolchildren, state legislators continued to offer vouchers as a solution to the city's ills. Religious organizations, especially Catholic schools, were financially impacted by post-Katrina and stood to benefit from additional funds.

This paper examined the role of the policy entrepreneur in the passage of the successful voucher initiative, Republican Governor Bobby Jindal. Jindal rode the momentum of his unchallenged election and declared the voucher a scholarship. Requiring only scholarship students to participate in state-mandated testing, Jindal brokered the support of the previously hesitant religious sector.

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8:30 – 9:20 A.M. MATHEMATICS/SCIENCE EDUCATION Admiral

President: Edward Shaw, University of South Alabama

The Nature of Science as Described by Fourth-Grade Students

Lynda Daughenbaugh and Edward Shaw, University of South Alabama

The study examined a group of fourth-grade students' perceptions of the Nature of Science using mixed methods. This study focused on identifying content and aspects of the Nature of Science these fourth-grade students were able to articulate, both orally and using a graphic representation. The guiding research questions included finding out: (1) what fourth-grade students' perceptions of the Nature of Science were, (2) which (if any) of the essential science concepts and information suggested by Project 2061 these fourth-grade students were able to articulate, (3) if any differences in attitudes towards science were influenced by the students' gender, and (4) how the state science educational standards compared with those of Project 2061's Fourth-grade Science Standards.

First, the students created concept maps depicting their knowledge and perceptions of science, and then they were asked individually to explain their graphic representations. Analysis of the concept maps revealed an equal number of nodes drawn by both male and female students. However, female students used a greater variety of colors to construct their maps. Next, students were asked to respond orally to 11 questions developed by the researchers. Data gathered from these individual interviews showed students chose science as a favorite subject, were interested in science careers, and perceived science as important. However, students had difficulty naming a scientist, identifying uses of science in everyday life, and listing scientific inventions.

Results suggested that science was being taught as abstract textbook concepts with little emphasis on connections to real world experiences, and a very small amount of time was spent teaching about important scientists and inventors. Researchers recommended trade books that present science topics in a narrative format, biographies of scientists written for children, and hands-on activities with greater frequency in science teaching and learning in the elementary school.

Impact of Constructivist Elementary Mathematics and Science Methods Courses on Preservice Teachers' Ability to Do and Teach Mathematics and Science

Kelly Byrd, University of South Alabama

Mathematics and science methods courses have many objectives, but from a preservice teacher's perspective, gaining the confidence to be able to do and teach the mathematics and science in the elementary classroom is a big concern. Some of the factors that can and do impact the teaching of mathematics and science are familiarity with and confidence in teaching the content, past experiences with the subject, and preservice teachers' pedagogy courses.

This study determined the effect of elementary constructivist methods courses on the beliefs and confidence levels of preservice teachers doing and teaching mathematics and science. Subjects were 45 elementary preservice teachers concurrently enrolled in undergraduate mathematics and science methods courses. Data were collected through a pre-autobiography conducted at the beginning of the semester and a post-autobiography at the end. The pre-autobiographies asked the students to reflect on their past experiences as a learner of mathematics and science and how those experiences influenced their teaching of each subject. The post-autobiographies asked the students to reflect on the effects of the methods courses on their confidence to both do and teach mathematics and science.

Results indicated, after their experiences in the methods courses, students felt as though they moved from being a confident learner to a confident teacher of mathematics and science. Additionally, the negative views held by the preservice teachers decreased as a result of the hands-on instruction in the methods courses. The researchers recommended a further investigation to determine if the beliefs expressed at the end of the semester were reinforced during their student teaching experience.

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8:30 – 9:20 A.M. FINE ARTS EDUCATION Grand Bay I

President: Paige Baggett, University of South Alabama

Music Participation and Leadership Roles and Their Relationship to American High School Seniors' Mathematics Achievement and Their Socioeconomic Status

Nathanial James and Mary Nell McNeese, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether there was a significant difference in mathematics achievement of American high school seniors based on music participation and leadership roles. Additionally, the study investigated whether there was a significant difference in the participation of American high school seniors in music leadership roles based on their socioeconomic status (SES). The representative sample was comprised of 12,400 seniors from across the United States in 2004 who participated in the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS2002) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

The sample included a balance between male and female students. Less than 1% were American Indian, 4.8% were multiracial, 10.2% were Asian, 13.4% were African American, 15% were Hispanic, and 55.8% were white. Approximately 23.9% were of the lowest SES, 23.8% were of the second lowest SES, 24.3% were of the second highest SES, and 27.9% were of the highest SES. About 68.5% of the students did not participate in music, 13.7% participated in music but not in a leadership capacity, 4.6% participated in music in a leadership capacity, and there were missing data on 13.3% of the sample.

Music students in leadership roles achieved significantly higher mathematics scores than non-music students and music students who were not in leadership roles. The latter two groups were not significantly different from each other. Additionally, a significant difference was found in the participation in music leadership roles by students based on their SES. The authors had expected more students from the lowest and the next to the highest SES groups to have become music leaders, while expecting fewer student music leaders from the highest and the next to the lowest SES groups.

The Effects of an Interdisciplinary Program on Secondary Arts Students' Performance

Beth Hopkins, Milligan College, Kay Hess Grogg, David Crockett High School,
and Patrick N. Kariuki, Milligan College

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of an interdisciplinary program on the secondary art students' performance. The sample consisted of 17 students enrolled in a high school advanced photography class. The students in the sample varied in their chemistry background. The sample was randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group had seven students, and the control group consisted of 10 students. The students in the experimental group participated in three days of intensive hands-on chemistry instruction relevant to a photography project based on van Dyke brown process. The control group did not participate in the chemistry instruction. After the instruction, both experimental and control groups were assigned a photography project.

Data were collected using a rubric to quantitatively score the performance on the photography project. The rubric consisted of several subscales. Data were then analyzed using t-test for independent means. The results indicated a significant difference between the experimental and control group on their performance. The experimental group outperformed the control group in the overall scores and on the measures of concepts taught and craftsmanship. The findings of the study suggested secondary school students could benefit from an interdisciplinary program

CASE Curriculum: Implementation of an Integrated Character, Art, Self-Esteem Curriculum in an Urban Summer Enrichment Program

Paige Baggett, Andre Green, Joel Lewis, Lauren Stabler,
and Monica Motley, University of South Alabama

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A summer enrichment program for students from urban elementary schools was initiated by a local university and the local chapter of 100 Black Men of America. It was designed to develop an intervention curriculum that supports African American students during the summer months and gives preservice teachers extensive field experience with students from urban communities. The program provided academic and social experiences for approximately 150 third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students from urban elementary schools. The curriculum of the enrichment program focused primarily on the areas of science, math, and reading but also included a daily integrated character, art, and self-esteem education (CASE) curriculum which was developed by assistant professors in art education, counseling, and instructional design. The goals of this curriculum included providing the preservice teachers with experiences integrating these often neglected areas of education and providing the elementary students with educational opportunities they may not have experienced during the traditional school year. The faculty designing the CASE Curriculum focused on developing student intrapersonal, as well as interpersonal intelligences.

In this paper, the design and implementation, including preservice teacher training, mentoring, and student engagement, were described. Through the analysis of quantitative data, blogs, and videos, the content knowledge and attitudes of preservice teachers and participating elementary students related to the CASE Curriculum was presented.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. LANGUAGE ARTS EDUCATION..... Grand Bay II

Presenter: Susan Piper, University of South Alabama

Deconstructing Kentucky's Fourth-Grade Reading Gains: 2007-2009 NAEP Data

Beverly Klecker, Morehead State University

The purpose of this study was to examine the increase in Kentucky's fourth-grade Reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) from 2007 to 2009 after a 15-year period of no change. This analysis examined NAEP 2007 and 2009 overall and the two subcategory scores defined as Literary and Informational Texts (NAGB, 2010). Literary texts included fiction, literary nonfiction, and poetry. Informational texts included exposition, argumentation, and persuasive text, and procedural text and documents. Gender was included as a variable because gender gaps have been persistent in NAEP and other reading assessments across time and geography (Klecker, 2006). NAEP scores have been used in validation studies of Kentucky's accountability testing system since 1999 (Koger, Thacker, Koger, & Deatz, 2003). Between 1992 and 1998, the NAEP mean scaled score on Kentucky's fourth-grade reading assessment increased only five points (Educational Trust, 2002). There was no significant ($\alpha = .05$) difference in the average scale score from 1992-2007 (Klecker, 2008). In May, 2009, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) reported that Kentucky was one of three states that had a statistically significant ($p > .05$) increase in fourth-grade reading scores from 2007-2009. Scale scores for Kentucky in 2009 surpassed the national average (KDE, 2009). This secondary analysis used NAEP Data Tool (NCES, 2010) with additional calculation of effect size (Cohen's d). There was a significant ($p < .05$) increase in Kentucky Fourth-Grade Reading Scores from 2007 and 2009 with a small effect size ($d = 0.12$). The differences by gender were significant ($p < .05$) in 2007 ($d = 0.21$) and 2009 ($d = 0.21$). Females' mean scale scores were higher than males' in both 2007 and 2009. Differences by subcategories by year and gender were also reported with effect sizes. The analyses by subcategories by gender informed the areas for growth for continued improvement in Kentucky's reading achievement.

Language Attrition, a Real Issue: Factors Affecting Language Loss and What May be Done to Prevent It

Susan Piper and Ling Zhao, University of South Alabama

The study examined language attrition, or the loss of all or parts of a language by an individual. Fifty internationals were selected for the study based on their levels of English language fluency. All participants were associated with a major southeastern university and its affiliated local K-12 school system. Participating university students had all met the required level of proficiency on the

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TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) for admission to the university, and participating students in grades 1-12 had all met the proficiency requirements to be considered “fluent speakers of English” by the WIDA (World Class Instructional Design in Assessment) Language Proficiency Test. Fluent participants were chosen for the purposes of this particular study since a review of the current research suggested there is a link between second language acquisition and first language attrition. Both chi square and t-tests were used to analyze the data. Case studies, looking carefully at language loss within individuals, provided more detailed insight on contributing factors. Conclusions from the data set suggested language attrition is a statistically significant problem. While many factors may contribute to language attrition, the most common reason for loss seems to be lack of active usage and language suppression. Some language attrition is centralized within a particular mode; a person may lose one or more of her/his skills in oral or written communication or reading comprehension. For other people, all parts, save for trace elements of a language, may be lost. As a result of the study, a matrix for identifying tendencies of language loss was created, and an online module for language loss prevention has been developed. Additionally an extensive review of literature for both first- and second-language attrition resulted from the study and from the development of language attrition prevention measures.

What Does a Foreign Language Teacher Need To Know? Teacher Perceptions as Test-Takers of the Praxis II

Kelly Moser, Mississippi State University

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of four foreign language educators who had previously taken the Praxis II exam(s). Although these particular content assessments and second-language proficiency have been topics of several opinion pieces and newspaper reports, no empirical study has been conducted from a test-taker’s perspective. Therefore, this study addressed a gap in foreign language, as well as educational research by delving into concerns, attitudes, and recommendations related to the Praxis and second language acquisition. The participants of this study were all employed by one foreign language department at a public university in the southeastern United States. Two of the participants were required to take the Productive Language Skills assessment. One participant was required to take the Content Knowledge assessment. The final participant was required to take both foreign language Praxis assessments. Two participants were unsuccessful on their first attempts on the aforementioned assessments. According to the results, several trends emerged related to factors contributing to Praxis success. Among these were enrollment in graduate-level, foreign language coursework; study abroad; student teaching; and passion for the language. Several recommendations for language learning were included as well.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. ON PUBLISHING IN RESEARCH IN THE SCHOOLS: SUGGESTIONS FROM THE EDITORS (Training Session) Commander

John R. Slate, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Rebecca Friels, Sam Houston State University

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 by 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, these three editors immediately return manuscripts to authors if these guidelines are not met.

In this symposium, participants also were presented with detailed information concerning errors that increase the likelihood of manuscripts being rejected for publication. For example, citation errors, though present in most manuscripts submitted for review, were much more frequent in manuscripts that were rejected than were 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 opportunities to discuss their own manuscripts and

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their own experiences in the publishing field. Particular emphasis, however, in this symposium was on 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 had an enhanced likelihood of having manuscripts submitted to the journal accepted for publication.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....Admiral

Presider: Jean Clark, University of South Alabama

A PLC Lesson Study Group: First-Grade Elementary School Teachers Take Charge of Their Professional Learning

Dana Thames and Kathleen C. York, University of Southern Mississippi

Current interest in Japanese lesson study is growing, yet U.S. teachers are not often experienced in this deep problem-solving approach to professional development. This qualitative, in-depth case study explored the conversations of first-grade teachers experiencing Japanese Lesson Study under the guidance of a first-grade literacy coach/facilitator. Lesson Study conversations took place biweekly during PLC meetings throughout the academic year and centered on creating a student-centered math and reading literacy learning environment in their first-grade classrooms.

The study focused on the following four overarching research questions: (1) What do first-grade teachers learn about the content they teach during lesson study? (2) What pedagogical knowledge and understandings emerge in lesson study conversations? (3) What do first-grade teachers' discussions about student learning during the examination of their practice and the practice of others as captured in video-taped lessons reflect about their ability to develop analytical and critical thinking skills for planning, implementing, and continuously improving instruction for student success? and (4) How do lesson study discussions change formative assessment practices?

Three data sources were collected during biweekly meetings: (1) audio-taped conversations, (2) teacher/researcher professional learning community lesson plan notebooks, and (3) written participant-generated reflections. A constant comparative method guided the analysis of the data. The researchers examined each of the sources of data separately for significant statements. Categories were created using categorical aggregation, and emergent patterns were identified. Findings showed that lesson study conversations reflected deepened content and pedagogical knowledge and sustained participant interest and commitment to problem-solving aimed at continuous improvement of instruction and improved formative assessment practices. Critical components to the process included debriefing, reflection, refinement, and reteaching. In instances where these components were shortchanged, teachers' verbalizations were more likely to skirt problem-solving efforts and not reach their full potential.

Leadership Implications for Professional Development to Address Mathematics Education

Heloise Morgan and Gwendolyn Autin, Southeastern Louisiana University

Despite mathematics reform efforts, mathematics achievement in the United States has not reached desired levels. Research suggests that instructional leaders play a significant role in improving student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004). Often, this influence is a result of instructional leaders' decisions regarding the support and professional development that they provide to teachers. These decisions should be data driven (U. S. Department of Education, 2005). Because research suggests the instructional practices of teachers were the most influential school factor in student achievement, instructional leaders need data to guide professional development that addresses these practices.

The purpose of this study was to determine the levels of mathematics teachers' value, knowledge, and comfort with respect to pedagogical strategies advocated by mathematics reform and to determine what meaningful professional development can be offered to enhance these levels. Louisiana's Components of Effective Teaching, Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, and the Standards for Teaching and Learning Mathematics provided a conceptual framework to construct an instrument to measure mathematics teachers' value, knowledge, and comfort levels with respect to pedagogical strategies advocated by mathematics reform.

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The researcher collected data from Pre-K through 12 mathematics teachers in a southeastern Louisiana school district. Based on the statistical analyses of the survey data, there was a statistically significant difference among the scales (i.e., Value, Knowledge, and Comfort) with all scales being moderately positive. Statistically significant differences were also found between the subscales (i.e., Planning, Management, and Instruction) for each scale despite the fact all of the subscales were moderately positive. Additionally, several interesting patterns were found in the interactions across scales and subscales. Results were discussed in detail in the paper. The results obtained from this study provided leadership implications for professional development to address mathematics education. These implications were also discussed in detail.

Results from a Large Scale Study of Online Professional Development

Lynne Meeks, Michael Russell, and Sheralyn Dash, Boston College

The eLearning for Educators (eFE) project is a unique, collaborative, multi-year, grant-funded effort to establish and sustain a system of effective online professional development for K-12 teachers. eFE research efforts, led by Boston College (BC), focused on assessing the effects of high-quality OPD on three areas: (1) improvements in teacher content knowledge, (2) improvements in instructional practice, and (3) subsequent improvements in academic achievement for students. The studies addressed the limitations and shortcomings noted about prior research of online education in general and online professional development particularly, and notably, focused on both teacher and student outcomes. A set of four randomized trials was conducted. Two trials focused on mathematics OPD, and two trials focused on ELA OPD. For each trial, teachers completed a series of three OPD courses during a 15-month period. Across the four trials, pre- and post-course data were collected from 369 teachers and 21,217 students.

Within each trial, data focusing on: (1) teachers' and students' knowledge in the targeted content area (math or English) and (2) teaching practices (the teacher's instructional methods, strategies and techniques in teaching specific content; students' practices in computation, writing, etc.) were collected. An online data collection system was custom-created to accommodate the extremely large quantity of data. Besides teacher instruments, custom-designed tests were administered online to students to assess the effects on student knowledge. ANCOVA and multi-level modeling techniques were applied to examine effects of the series of courses on teacher knowledge, teacher practices, and student achievement. Only data from teachers and students who completed both pre- and post-course surveys were analyzed. All trials found strong evidence that the series of courses had positive effects on teacher knowledge and practices. Positive student effects were found in three trials. Results have implications for policymakers, school leaders, and teachers.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION/ASSESSMENT Grand Bay I

President: Nancy Fox, Jacksonville State University

A Comparison of Basic Subject Area Content Exams for Two Consecutive Semesters

Ava Pugh, University of Louisiana-Monroe

One of the new requirements of NCATE is that preservice candidates demonstrate knowledge in basic subject areas – science, social studies, reading/language arts, mathematics, health education, physical education, and the arts. For this research all seven subject areas (science, social studies, reading/language arts, mathematics, health education, physical education, and the arts) were used with a sample consisting of 57 preservice candidates enrolled in the Professional Block semester, which is the semester prior to student teaching. Candidates were administered a content exam totaling 105 questions at the conclusion of the Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 semesters.

The purpose of this study was to compare basic subject area content scores for two consecutive semesters. Preliminary analysis indicated there was a significant difference in the main effect for the content areas, $f(d. f. 6,50) = 68.08, p < .001$, for everyone who took the test, significantly higher in one area, or areas and low in another area, or areas. The difference between math and the arts could be

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the areas of main effects. There was a significant interaction semester X content areas, $f(d.f. 6,50) = 3.37, p < .007$. This was for both semesters. The differences among the content areas were dependent on the semester the test was taken.

Development of Course Embedded Assessments Within a School of Education

Jeffrey Dupree, Victory University

This project was the effort of a Teacher Education Program within a small university in Memphis Tennessee to align courses and their embedded assessments used in their Teacher Education Program (TEP) with INTASC standards and outcomes listed as goals by the university.

The goals for this project were: (1) similar learning experiences for all students in the TEP, (2) improved data collection possibilities, (3) improved data collection of TEP students, (4) alignment of instruction to INTASC standards, (5) codifying the instructional goals of the TEP department, (6) increased organizational efficiency and efficacy, (7) improved student achievement on Praxis II scores, and (8) increased student resiliency within the TEP. It was believed this study would be of practical importance to the university along four major objectives: (1) increased resiliency and success of those students enrolled in the education department, (2) increased performance on PRAXIS examinations, (3) provision of a large body of data to guide instructional practices, and (4) certification by NCATE. It was also believed that this study would add to the body of educational literature regarding measures that can be undertaken by institutions to increase student achievement, student resiliency, and to the body of literature regarding curriculum design methodologies.

The first objective for this project was to develop a rubric that measured student competency within particular domains of the general program outcomes. Data from the Spring 2010 semester were gathered and underwent preliminary analysis. From this data, various statistical analyses were performed to indicate differences in means, correlations among the variable and predictive data for student success. In addition, interviews that measured the extent successful TEP candidates have incorporated the stated outcomes of the department were conducted. The data from these interviews were analyzed to identify emergent themes, patterns, and discrepancies which arose.

Relationship Between Students' Formative Exam-Taking Strategies and Summative Exam Scores

Beverly Klecker, Morehead State University, and Richard L. Klecker, University of Kentucky

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between graduate students' formative exam-taking strategies and their scores on the summative exam. The study added to the growing body of research on formative assessment (e.g., Brookhart, 2004; Chappius, Chappius, and Stiggins, 2009; Guskey, 2010; Linn & Miller, 2005; Ricketts, & Wilks, 2002; Author, 2003) and assessment in online classrooms (Benson, 2003; Author, 2005). The research questions were: (1) What formative test-taking strategy did students use? and (2) Was the strategy used related to scores on the summative exam? Participants were master's-level students ($n=50$) from varied programs who enrolled in a measurement class one semester during 2009-2010. Course evaluations included: (1) 16 weekly 20-item, multiple-choice, formative exams, and (2) a 60-item, multiple-choice comprehensive summative final exam. Formative exams were available each week in two formats: (1) printable, and (2) identical exam in Bb to be used to submit answers for immediate feedback. Students took formative exams to mastery of 20/20. Students could either: (1) print test and mark the answers while reading the assignment then enter answers on Bb, or (2) use iterative process by entering answers directly on Bb. The four alternatives for each multiple-choice question randomized with each re-entry. The final exam was in printable and answer sheet form; students could enter answers only once. The data, collected at the end of the semester after student grades had been submitted, consisted of the number of iterations each student used for the 16 formative exams and her/his final exam score. Data analysis included descriptive statistics for: (1) the number of iterations for mastery, and (2) students' scores on the final exam. A correlation for the data revealed that the mean number of iterations and the final exam scores were statistically significantly related, $r=+0.68, n = 50, p < .001$, two tailed.

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9:30 – 10:20 A.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS: K-12 ISSUES..... Commander

Presiders: Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Educational Consultant

**Sustaining Inquiry-Based Teaching and Learning Methods
in the Middle School Science Classroom**

Amy Murphy, University of Alabama

Reform efforts in science education in the United States currently focus on the move from traditional to inquiry-based teaching and learning methods. Many studies in the literature focus on the need for reform in science education and factors that support or hinder reform efforts in general, but a need exists to fill a gap in the literature with studies that examine the reasons teachers of science were willing or able to maintain their commitment to the inquiry reform over time. Insight gained from such a study would be useful for science education stakeholders that wish to implement and sustain classroom reform. The use of inquiry-based methods of teaching and learning are rooted in the constructivist theory of learning, that serves as the theoretical model for this proposed study. Jean Piaget formalized the theory of constructivism by taking the notion of adaptation in biological sciences and applying it to knowledge. In his view, knowledge became a “mapping of actions and conceptual operations” that were practical in the “knowing experience” of the subject.

The research was on teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge, and beliefs about inquiry, stems from cognitive constructivism. Four critical elements that constructivist lessons must address include: (1) elicits prior knowledge, (2) creates cognitive dissonance, (3) applies knowledge with feedback, and (4) reflects on learning. The inquiry learning cycle incorporates these critical elements into lessons educators can use to apply the constructivist theory to their daily practice in the classroom. The researcher used a multiple-case study design in which the units of analysis were the individual middle school science teachers that have incorporated inquiry-based methods for one to four years. The study incorporated multiple sources of data, both qualitative and quantitative, in an effort to develop converging lines of inquiry, data triangulation, and construct validity.

The Graduation Rate of Career and Technical (CTE) Concentrators

Bo Shadden, East Tennessee State University

Increased demands are challenging public schools throughout our nation to increase academic achievement in many areas of the educational realm. Many of these requirements are federal mandates affiliated with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB has set benchmarks for schools to increase achievement in the areas of math, reading/language arts, attendance, and graduation rates. With increased demands being placed on achievement, one may wonder about the future of Career and Technical Education (CTE), formerly known as vocational education. Like academic programs, CTE programs are challenged, as well to include coherent and rigorous content into their curriculum. CTE programs may serve as a buffer to traditional academic programs in order to meet these augmented standards. One benchmark set for high schools across Tennessee is that they must meet a 90% graduation rate. This benchmark will increase each year in an effort to reach a 100% goal for graduation rate by the year 2014.

The purpose of this study was to examine the graduation rate of CTE concentrators who had completed at least three vocational courses in the same area of study. This study included six public schools located in Upper East Tennessee and evaluated each CTE concentrator that graduated over a three-year period. Data were collected on the total graduation rate of each system included in this study, and the graduation rate of twelfth-grade CTE concentrators, from the State Department of Education for the years of 2008, 2009, 2010. The six school systems individually provided the following data for the three years used in this study: total number of twelfth-grade concentrators, number of male concentrators that received a diploma, number of female concentrators that received a diploma, and the number of male and female concentrators that did not receive a diploma.

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9:30 – 10:20 A.M. SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION (Displays)Preconvene

**A Comparison of Elementary Education Teachers' Images
to Elementary Students' Images of a Scientist**

Dale Campbell, Patricia K. Lowry, and Karen Nemeth, Jacksonville State University

What does a scientist look like? Does he/she wear a lab coat? Does he/she wear safety goggles? Does he/she have scientific instruments readily available? Does he/she work in a lab area? When a person answers these questions, he/she reveals personal views of science or a scientist. Drawings of scientists reveal stereotypical images of an individual in a scientific setting.

The implications of how a teacher or student views science is somewhat representative of her/his attitude toward science. It is important to have both teachers and students determine what a scientist is and what he/she looks like in a laboratory setting. If their drawings reveal the stereotypical images, they have an incorrect idea of what a scientist is or does. This indicates an intervention program may be necessary to eliminate these stereotypical ideas. One way both teachers and students can overcome these ideas is through participation in inquiry-based science classes. Then, the teachers should affect the students' attitudes. In addition, science curriculum materials could be affected by the enjoyment or dislike of science teaching.

A comparison of teachers' drawings of a scientist (elementary education students enrolled in a graduate science methods course) and students' drawings of a scientist (from grade three) was made using the Draw-A-Scientist Test (DAST). Using the Draw-A-Scientist Checklist (DAST-C), stereotypical characteristics identified on the checklist were compared for similarities and differences. The more items checked on the DAST-C, the more stereotypes appeared in the drawings.

Alabama Hands-On Activity Science Program: Project Description and Evaluation

Marcia O'Neal, Beverly Radford, Joan Dawson, Scott Snyder,
and Tom Ingram, University of Alabama-Birmingham

The mission of the Alabama Hands-on Activity Science Program (ALAHASP) is to provide opportunities for teachers and administrators to extend their understanding and practice of inquiry-based teaching and learning as they help students explore, question, and construct scientific understanding of the world around them. For 16 years, ALAHASP has provided professional development for teachers, consultation and guidance for school administrators, research-based materials that meet Alabama Course of Study objectives for professional development workshops and support for systemic reform. The goal is to move teachers from novice to mastery in the area of inquiry-based teaching and learning.

During 2009-2010, ALAHASP documented 655 participations in 60 workshops or professional development settings, logged 79 visits to five local classrooms, and leveraged \$605,422 in external/in-kind support. ALAHASP staff planned and directed inquiry science workshops and/or follow-up meetings for 338 teachers, including 32 teachers in the ALAHASP Leadership Academy, and provided classroom technical support for five elementary teachers. ALAHASP staff collaborated with 24 system administrators regarding long-term science reform and directed a bi-monthly forum for these administrators to plan professional development and to address current issues in science education, especially for teachers who were not highly qualified to teach science.

Evaluation for 2009-2010 examined gains in teacher subject matter knowledge, changes in teacher attitudes and anticipated teaching methods, and satisfaction with workshops. Results from content tests, learning reflections, and 331 professional development surveys from 32 workshops revealed significant content gains, self-reported acquisition of content knowledge and learning strategies, increased confidence in teaching and learning, and high levels of satisfaction with professional development activities. This poster session was of value to administrators, curriculum coordinators, and teachers interested in exploring for their school systems an inquiry-based approach to teaching that is embedded in science and math and applicable across the curriculum.

**The Effects of Incorporating Children's Literature on Fifth-Graders'
Enjoyment of Mathematics and Geometrical Knowledge**

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Cynthia Mayfield, Edward Shaw, Lynda Daughbaugh,
and Rebecca Giles, University of South Alabama

This study examined the effects of incorporating children's literature depicting mathematical content on students' enjoyment and knowledge of geometry. Thirty-six fifth-graders from a public elementary school in southern Alabama participated in this study. Three books presenting geometrical concepts were used with a treatment group ($n = 18$) to supplement information from the required mathematics textbook. The comparison group ($n = 18$) received the math instruction using only the mathematics textbook. Participants completed a five-item interest questionnaire and a 20-item test of geometric knowledge as pre- and posttest measures. Participants also completed the test of geometric knowledge two weeks after the treatment as a delayed posttest. Data were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to compare the treatment and comparison groups' pre-, post-, and delayed posttest means on the questionnaire and test of geometric knowledge. Findings suggested that incorporating children's literature with mathematics may increase students' enjoyment level without impacting their gain or retention of knowledge.

A Template for Teaching the Chi Square Technique

Robert Kennedy, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Educational Consultant

A template is a pattern that might be used for building mosaics, for sewing a quilt, for constructing a dog house, or for guiding the gathering of information for a report. Over the past couple of decades of teaching, this teacher has found that the use of templates for instructional purposes has been advantageous for communicating relatively complex topics efficiently and clearly. Any number of ways of teaching the chi square test might be tried. Examples that have been derived from the literature include graphic display calculators, videotapes, interactive scattergrams, animation, web pages, and simulations. All were reasonably effective tools for teaching the chi square test and other statistical techniques.

However, another tool for teaching that is widely marketed is the template. Templates are distributed and/or sold for worksheets, calendars, organizers, surveys, gradebooks, rubrics, and online tests, as well as for other purposes. They save time, not only for the less-experienced (or even experienced) teacher using them, but can also benefit students by allowing a more efficient approach to learning. They may be available as open-source documents, freeware, trialware, demoware, commercial software; immediately downloadable from a website or available on CD through snail mail; and in common word processing or PDF formats.

In particular, the template presented in this session was designed to help with teaching the chi square technique. The primary components included an abstract of the scenario to be investigated, the reference or citation for the source of the scenario, number of cases, variables, data, rationale for the statistical technique chosen, null hypothesis, assumptions to be tested, steps in testing the assumptions, reading and interpretation of the findings, and a conclusion relative to the hypothesis. Because of the data files, the materials were available on computer media.

9:30 – 10:20 A.M. AN ANALYTIC TOOL FOR IDEA DATA USE (Training Session)..... Captain

Jane Nell Luster, LSUHSC-HDC/DAC

This training session was aimed at any MSERA member interested in mining extant data, especially in the area of special education. Data on students with disabilities have been collected and reported for more than 30 years through the Annual Report to Congress. In late 2009 a new web-based tool was launched by the Data Accountability Center (DAC), a project funded by the U. S. Department of Education to assist states in collecting, analyzing, using, and reporting high quality IDEA data, to allow anyone with access to the internet to explore certain IDEA data. The tool allows the user to view data trends, generate data reports, use data for spreadsheet and graphic development, and run cross tabulations for selected variables.

During the training session, participants were shown the capabilities of the Analytic Tool and given an opportunity to ask questions of the data to further demonstrate how the tool works and how it can be applied to research and practice. They were also asked to identify additional capabilities they

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would like the tool to encompass. The importance of this tool and the database from which it draws is that researchers can analyze trends by examining up to four years of data to make comparisons. Additionally, the Analytic Tool is automated, yet flexible enough to allow exporting of data to spreadsheets for more sophisticated comparisons. Given that IDEA 2004 emphasized improved results for children and youth with disabilities, as well as increased compliance or meeting the requirements of the law, the Analytic Tool provides researchers with the opportunity to more rapidly explore and examine the extent to which improved results are becoming a reality rather than a slogan.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. TEACHER EDUCATION.....Admiral

President: JoAnna Dickey, Eastern Kentucky University

Best Practices for Co-Teacher Training: A Pressing Need Arising from the Response to Intervention Model

Karen Franklin, University of Tennessee

The dramatic change in special education law that introduced the Response to Intervention (RTI) model for the identification of students with learning disabilities has had a profound affect on both public school students and their teachers. While much of the current literature has focused on student outcomes in the RTI model, there is a growing body of research examining the skills and dispositions that public school teachers must adopt in order to facilitate the RTI process within the general education setting. The diverse practices of co-teaching, whereby a general education teacher and special education teacher share the responsibility for educating a group of students, were the focus of a systematic review of literature. The literature was approached from three specific directions: (1) studies that examined co-teaching models, (2) studies that analyzed co-teaching effects on student outcomes, and (3) studies that included co-teaching as a significant variable. The body of research was organized into these three categories, and an evaluation of this collection of data revealed a lack of specific skills and collaborative training of both general education and special education teachers working within the RTI framework.

Findings indicated that, while various models of co-teaching were being practiced in public school settings with mixed results in student outcomes, a scant few programs exist to train teachers in the emerging best practices of co-teaching. Implications from the present review of literature advanced a model for best practices in co-teacher training and included a call for co-teaching professional development and preservice coursework. Implications from the literature demonstrated a pressing need for general education and special education preservice teachers to collaborate during their university coursework, engaging in collaborative skills and disposition development together. Professional development for practicing teachers, capitalizing on their collective experiences working with students who were receiving interventions within the RTI model, was also addressed.

PLT/TIAI Study of Elementary and Special Education Teacher Interns

Anne E. Sylvest, Rose B. Jones, and Mary Nell McNeese, University of Southern Mississippi

The Mississippi Department of Education requires all teacher interns to be evaluated by the Teacher Intern Assessment Instrument (TIAI) and Praxis II, Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT). This research study investigated the interrelationship between elementary and special education teacher interns' scores on the PLT and TIAI and whether the PLT scores could significantly predict TIAI scores. The 112 elementary and special education teacher interns, ages 21-56, were enrolled in their capstone experience for their teacher licensure program during the fall of 2009. Of the 107 females and 5 males, 80.4% were Caucasian, 12.5% were African American, and 7.1% were other or not specified. Archival data were used to report the PLT and TIAI scores. These data were collected from University Supervisors who based their assessment on teacher interns' second field experience.

Results of the data analyses were used to determine how well university interns demonstrated best practices of teaching and learning. Examining their association allowed researchers to assess how closely linked these two instruments were. Data analysis revealed the PLT scores were not a significant predictor of the TIAI scores, $F(1, 111) = .11, p = .74$. Further analysis showed the PLT scores

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were not significantly related to the students' GPA, $r(110) = .09$, $p = .32$; however, there was a significant relationship between GPA and the TIAI scores, $r(110) = .27$, $p = .003$. The GPA and TIAI scores may be significantly related because the TIAI scores were both based on university faculty assessments which may tend to be more similar since both test what students know and were able to do. PLT scores, which were norm-referenced scores, tested how students compared to one another. Implications of these results were discussed.

Sharing Responsibility for the Learning of Students: A Case Study

Pamela Scott, East Tennessee State University

The current status of issues related to school reform in general education and special education provides the unique opportunity for the creation of an educational delivery model that encompasses the goals of both groups in a cohesive manner. Many reformers recommend inclusion, a strategy characterized by general education and special education sharing responsibility for the learning of students. This case study examined how one middle school used the framework of self-governance to generate and implement changes in the organizational culture and instructional practices with respect to the change from a non-inclusionary school to a school that practices inclusion.

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 as inclusion was implemented. A variety of evidence and multiple research techniques were used to retain the holistic characteristics of organizational processes and ensure validity. Analysis focused on the theoretical proposition that elements inherent in self-governance of a school foster the process of change. The data revealed that the change process of implementing inclusion was influenced by a complex set of circumstances. Three stages of change were identified: (1) the decision making stage, (2) the implementation stage, and (3) the refinement stage. Four general themes emerged from the analysis of the data: (1) the fluidity of leadership, (2) the importance of professional knowledge, (3) the capacity for professional learning, and (4) the organization's readiness for change.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP Grand Bay I

Presenter: Jennifer L. Styron, University of Southern Mississippi

A Study of Superintendents' Expectations of Principals' Leadership Skills

Kathy Campbell and Mindy Crain-Dorough, Southeastern Louisiana University,
and Rayma Harchar, University of Louisiana-Lafayette

Graduate degree programs in educational leadership that prepare candidates for school principalship are beset with a number of competing entities vying for the same students, including alternative master's and certification programs and those administered by private providers. However, the most recent phenomenon is the plethora of online degree programs in principal preparation. Which programs train aspiring candidates most effectively to assume the role of school leader? What knowledge and skills do superintendents expect their school principals to possess? This paper was a study of superintendents' expectations of the principals they hire and their opinions of the programs that best prepare principals to lead schools in the 21st century. Theoretical Framework University-school district collaboration was the theoretical framework used. Among the enabling conditions for successful collaborations were: (1) the university's mission of outreach to the local community and (2) the university's resources to support the collaboration.

School district superintendents throughout the South were interviewed regarding the knowledge and skills they look for when hiring school principals and their perceptions of the effectiveness of principals who have been prepared by redesigned university programs and those who have been prepared by online degree programs. The data were unitized and categorized to find emerging themes. The results were reported in tables: (1) depicting superintendents' expectations and (2) comparing their opinions of university versus online principal preparation programs. Selected narratives of their experience with both kinds of principals were included. The study revealed the specific skills and knowledge superintendents expect, a factor which will either validate university programs or offer

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suggestions for improvement. Superintendents' perceptions of online versus university programs help universities considering any changes to compete with online programs.

A Comparative Analysis of Critical Issues Facing School Principals

Ronald Styron and Jennifer L. Styron, University of Southern Mississippi

This longitudinal study further extended the research on critical issues that K-12 school leaders are currently facing. It involved data collection from school principals to discover what issues they self-identified, the significance level of these issues, and the rationale behind the one they deemed most critical. The researchers deployed a questionnaire developed specifically for the study. These questionnaires were distributed by postal mail to approximately 600 K-12 school principals in Mississippi as identified by the Mississippi Department of Education. Questionnaires consisted of five closed-form items for collection of demographic data and two open-ended questions asking respondents to identify in rank order their 10 most critical issues and provide a rationale for the one they determined to be the most critical.

Data from this study were transcribed and coded using a selective coding technique to develop topical categories for each response. This methodology was deployed to determine if any themes existed and to provide insight to the phenomenon surrounding the self-identified issues. Data gathered from a previous study conducted in 2003 were also used to cross examine and ascertain whether or not the same critical issues currently challenge K-12 principals and if the significance of those issues has changed over the past several years.

Findings from this study fostered a greater understanding of the critical issues currently facing school principals and the strategies needed to address these issues while attending to the improvement of student achievement. Findings were also used to inform curricular decisions pertaining to principal preparation programs and help school districts evaluate the skills of administrative applicants relative to the problem-solving abilities needed to address these issues. Furthermore, findings helped inform professional development choices for both school districts and individual administrators.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. FIELD EXPERIENCE Grand Bay II

Presenter: Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

The Impact of an Interdisciplinary Approach to Lesson Planning in Methods Courses for Elementary and Upper Elementary Teacher Candidates

Deborah McCarthy, Flo Hill-Winstead, and Paul Simoneaux, Southeastern Louisiana University

Methods courses for teacher candidates were a standard component of the curriculum. What about the methods courses in Curriculum and Instruction in the Elementary School and Upper Elementary Curriculum and Instruction offered at the University is worthy of attention? Emphasis placed on the integration of science, social studies, and language arts instruction in implemented lesson planning warrants their singularity. The instructors' aims were to encourage teacher candidates to be better prepared, incorporate skills from each discipline, and meet learning preferences in planning and in the field.

The instructors wished to determine if these methods courses for teacher candidates impacted planning and implementation as student teachers. William Bennett (1986), former U.S. Secretary of Education, in "First lessons, a Report on Elementary Education," supported the idea of an interdisciplinary approach to instruction. This methodology can be traced to such Goliaths in the field of educational theory as Rousseau, Herbart, Pestalozzi, Piaget, Kant, and Dewey. Placing scientific discoveries in historical context is supported by The National Science Education Committee on Science Education Standards, Project 2061's Benchmarks for Scientific Literacy, The National Research Council, and the National Academy of Sciences.

To conduct the study, seven Likert-style items were embedded in the exit survey, Reflective Practice, completed by student teachers in the web-based assessment system, PASS-PORT. Data from Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 of 80 student teachers, the majority being white females ages 22 to 30 years,

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were tabulated and percentages generated. Results showed that over 80% of the respondents continued to integrate instruction and either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. The researchers concluded that their objectives were met. The study implied that an interdisciplinary approach to lesson planning and implementation has a positive impact on instruction. Consequently, results could be shared with other colleges of education and perhaps influence curriculum changes.

Teaching Within a Zone of Safety: The Role of Reflection in Teaching

Franco Zengaro, University of West Florida

The purpose of this research was to investigate how a group of 17 preservice teachers in an elementary physical education methods class utilized post-teaching reflection as a tool for informing their teaching practices. The theoretical framework was based on teacher cognition and teacher practical knowledge. The following questions guided the study: (1) How did the preservice teachers perceive the purpose of reflection? and (2) To what extent did reflection help the preservice teachers change their teaching? Data were collected through observations, documents, field notes, and interviews. Data analysis was conducted using constant comparative methodology. The results indicated that reflection was important as a classroom requirement, but not as a catalyst for change. This was demonstrated by the lack of changes in their teaching based on reflections. The majority preferred to teach within their comfort zone regardless of feedback, debriefings, or their reflections, and only a few preservice teachers actually incorporated new ideas in their teaching. Reflections were useful in helping preservice teachers identify areas for change; however, when the reflections were seen primarily as hurdles to overcome rather than instruments for improvement, the benefits preservice teachers received from reflections may be limited. This research was important because it contributed to a dialogue on the pedagogical role of reflections for less experienced teachers.

Field Based Courses and Reflection Help Preservice Teachers Learn the Value of the Intangibles in Successful Teaching

Danjuma Saulawa and Parichart Thornton, Alabama State University

In this study, a group of 60 African American undergraduate teacher candidates were enrolled in two field-based courses on teaching reading. The classes met on the campuses of the partner schools. Candidates were assigned to work directly with individual or dyad students. Each candidate kept a reflection journal based on four prompts, two of which were analyzed for the purpose of this report. Specifically, they were required to reflect on what they learned each day and what they felt were their growing space. A preliminary analysis of the entries revealed that, as a result of working intensively with students, candidates learned the importance of good preparation, planned learning activities, the value of team work, and the behavior patterns of young children. In their assessment of their growing space, candidates seemed to emphasize the intangibles, such as patience, altruism, and positive attitude toward children. The results of this study provided a model of a student-centered teacher education program that is effective in helping preservice teachers grow into their profession through direct experience with children and engaging in reflective practice.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. TECHNOLOGY Commodore

President: Misty Haynes Cobb, Jacksonville State University

Efficacy vs. Proficiency: Were Students Prepared for the Technological Demands of College?

Kathleen Morris and Vivian Wright, University of Alabama

Today's college students are often labeled the "Net Generation" and assumed to be computer savvy and technologically-minded. Exposure to and use of technologies can increase self-efficacy regarding the ability to complete desired computer tasks; however, students arrive on campuses unable to pass computer proficiency exams. This is troublesome because some colleges and universities

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have eliminated introductory computer for multiple reasons. This study investigated relationships between computer self-efficacy and computer proficiency and determined whether students were prepared for the technological demands of college.

The sample included students (N = 2,180) enrolled in introductory computer courses at one southeastern university. The courses used the competency-based training product, SimNet for Office 2007, to train and assess students in Office 2007 applications. Participants completed precourse online surveys measuring general and task based self-efficacy ratings prior to completing precourse proficiency exams measuring task proficiency. After completing the computer course, participants responded to a postcourse online survey that gathered computer self-efficacy ratings and a postcourse proficiency exam that determined postcourse proficiency scores. Ratings and scores were analyzed.

Results indicated general computer self-efficacy (GCSE) ratings were highest for students that had taken three or more computer classes in high school. GCSE was higher than task-specific computer self-efficacy (TSCE) for Excel and Access applications, but lower than TSCE for the Vista operating system and Word. TCSE was found to be higher than performance scores for Vista, Access, Excel, PPT, and Word. Completing an introductory computer class was found to increase computer self-efficacy ratings and computer proficiency scores. Results from this study indicated college-age students lacked many computing skills identified as essential at the college level despite heightened levels of computer self-efficacy. Findings of the study suggested implications for college administrators and technology instructors at both the secondary and postsecondary level.

A Study of the Incorporation of Podcast Content in Higher Education Courses

Misty Haynes Cobb, Kerri Anne Reese, Franklin L. King,
and J. Gordon Nelson, Jacksonville State University

The study examined the faculty and student usage patterns of instructional podcasting and the impact of instructional podcasting on student outcomes: (1) student attendance in face-to-face courses, (2) student withdrawal rates, and (3) cumulative GPAs. Of the 16 faculty invited to participate in the study, seven agreed and participated for the duration of either a four-week or an eight-week summer term.

Faculty were asked to determine what learning objectives could best be represented by podcast content and then to create the content appropriately. Faculty were provided assistance selecting the best type (audio, video, or screencast) of podcast to use as well as the most appropriate category (lecture, demonstration, instructions, elaboration/clarification, feedback, interview or social presence) of podcast to use. Faculty provided attendance records (in face-to-face or hybrid courses), withdrawal rates, and cumulative GPAs for the course that included podcast content and the same course taught without podcast content in a previous summer semester. Faculty and students perceptions of podcasts were measured using a presurvey before the study began and a postsurvey after the study was completed. A literature review of podcasting in both online and traditional courses in higher education was also included.

The review examined the literature to define podcasting, provided a historical overview, described briefly new ways that podcasts were being used, determined benefits and challenges of podcasting, explored the types of podcasts, identified varied uses and instructional examples of podcasting, and recommended the best practices for the use of podcasts in higher education.

Student Response to Podcast Lectures in Quantitative Courses

Nancy Lambe, Fred Baker, and Melanie Summerlin, University of South Alabama

With advances in technology and the many uses and applications available, the delivery of instructional material is changing to keep up with the methods available. While standard, lecture-type courses have progressed to using podcasting as a method of delivering course content, quantitative courses seem to have lagged in embracing the newer technologies and continued to rely on the old style methods of "chalk and talk."

As part of a campus-wide initiative to implement podcasting as a method of lecture delivery, two quantitative courses utilized the podcasting approach over two semesters in an effort to learn both how to create the podcasts with existing resources, as well as how to develop the podcasts to best serve

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the students who would rely on them for learning. Over the course of the two semesters, undergraduate students in several sections of Business Statistics I and Business Calculus were provided with podcasts of both course content (lectures) and solved example problems. At the end of the semester, students were given a questionnaire that asked specific questions related to their use of the podcasts, the helpfulness of the podcasts, and how the podcasts might be improved for future use.

The results showed that students had an overall positive reaction to the usefulness of the podcasts as study tools, and they had relatively consistent recommendations regarding improving the podcasts. Future study is needed to continue to improve the development of lecture podcasts and to create more supplemental podcasts (solved problems, FAQs, and others). The study suggested that, while there will likely be a continued need for face-to-face interaction between students and instructors in quantitative courses, the application of podcasts as a means of delivering lectures, as well as providing supplemental and supporting materials to students, should continue to be investigated.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. MENTOR SESSION Commander

President: 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.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION: GIFTED EDUCATION Captain

President: Jennifer Hadley, University of South Alabama

The Effect of Response to Intervention (RTI) on Elementary Science and Social Studies Instruction and Student Achievement in the Gifted Classroom

Carmen Kelsey, Union University

This literature review examined research surrounding the effects of response to intervention (RTI) on the elementary classroom and its impact on science and social studies instruction, as well as RTI's impact on the achievement of the gifted. One of the most controversial political topics for the past century has been education, specifically, American education, and how to improve the United States' student rankings in the worldwide arena. This has led to the adoption of response to intervention (RTI) as a means of improving reading achievement to improve overall performance on high stakes testing, as mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

While response to intervention has proven effective in improving the scores of low-responders, it has shown unexpected negative effects in other aspects of education. These areas include: (1) the time devoted to reading at the expense of other subjects, (2) the occurrence of curriculum narrowing, (3) time spent teaching gifted students decreasing, and (4) teacher training focused solely on low-responders. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) forced the focus on reading, writing, and math subjects because standards-based, high-stakes testing focused on these core subjects at the expense of science and social studies. This focus on core subjects led to a narrowing of curriculum with extended time given to language arts and math while the other subjects were virtually ignored. Another unintentional impact of NCLB was the lack of attention given to high performing students. The high performing, gifted, and exceptional students were, in effect, getting left behind because they were not in need of the extra attention to get the proficient standardized test scores, as demanded by NCLB.

Gifted Education: A Mixed Methods Study of the Literature

Nancy Leech, University of Colorado-Denver

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educational system, data from the PISA, and the author's experiences visiting Finland, observing classrooms, teacher training programs, and meeting with teacher educators, and researchers. Several different factors may account for Finland's success include: teacher training, culture, curriculum, the structure of schooling, and pedagogical practices. It was argued that, while there were elements of Finnish success that were culturally and historically determined, there were other aspects of their successes that would be worth thinking about in relation to the educational systems in the United States.

Creating a Better School System in America: Modeling the Leading Countries in Education is the First Step

Hani Morgan, University of Southern Mississippi

This position paper explored the way the leading countries in education organize their school systems and compared this with the American educational system. American students have often been found to score lower than students in the leading countries in some important subjects taught in school, such as math and science. International tests that evaluated students on these topics, such as the TIMSS test and the PISA test, have recently indicated this fact. Different components of the educational system in the United States, such as teacher pay, teacher recruitment, teacher training, and teacher distribution, were compared with those of the countries that outperform American students on international testing. The paper also explored what international tests often do not reveal. For example, critics of international testing have complained that many students performed well on these tests, but as a result of inner-city schools that have not provided low-income students with equal educational opportunities, national averages were often lowered.

This paper documented the poor condition of schools in low-income areas and explained how schooling in these areas contributed to a gap in academic achievement between minority students and white students, which lowered the overall test results of American students on international testing. It explained that, although many of the top-performing countries had a lower percentage of students coming from poor families, this was not the case in all of the top-performing countries and that there was at least one country with a higher percentage of low-income students than the U.S. whose students did much better on international testing. The concluding section of the paper recommended the educational system in the U.S. be improved by implementing policies that would change various components in the infrastructure of the school system so it would be similar to those of the leading countries in education.

1:30 – 2:20 P.M. TEACHER EDUCATION.....Grand Bay II

President: Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University

A Fifth-Year Evaluation of a Master of Arts in Teaching Program

Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University

This study described a fifth-year program evaluation of a Master of Art in Teaching alternative certification program. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the success of the McNeese State University MAT program in terms of teacher placement, teacher retention (particularly in high needs schools), administrative satisfaction with the MAT candidates, teacher attitudes concerning their teacher preparation programs, and teacher pedagogical knowledge.

Two data collection methods were used: an online survey, and a mailed survey. An online survey link was first emailed to all of the McNeese MAT program completers, of which there were nearly 115, and then a paper survey was mailed to participants who were known to have not yet completed their online surveys. Initial candidate demographic data, state provided data; a teacher survey and an administrator survey were used in the study. Descriptive statistics were used to describe quantitative data gathered, and any areas of weakness found were further analyzed to determine if scored responses in the weak areas were significantly different from stronger areas. Content analyses were used to analyze open-ended survey responses. Implications for improving the program based on the findings were discussed.

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Professional Development for the Novice Teacher: One University's Initiative to Support the Alternatively Certified Educator

Marclyn Porter, University of Tennessee-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. This program evaluation added to the research in the areas of teacher preparation and alternative licensure programs, and it provided a better understanding of the methods by which institutions support and prepare the alternatively certified teacher. Course participants were employed as the teacher of record, on a transitional teaching license, and were enrolled at The University of Tennessee-Chattanooga while seeking initial teaching licensure through an alternative licensure program. Per the Tennessee State Department of Education, alternative certification candidates must complete six hours of "teaching experience" as part of the course work leading to permanent licensure. In addition to university supervisor observations, an online course component was developed to provide additional support and instruction.

Course focus was on the practical application of instructional planning, implementation, and evaluation, educational psychology, and pedagogy. The course was structured around the following themes: Reflective Practitioner, Education Professional, and Practical Application. This program evaluation examined, from the participants' perspective, the effectiveness of the online component, as measured by the original program goals and objectives. It also: (1) identified the program's effects on learners and participants and (2) provided evaluation findings that cite the strengths, deficiencies and suggestions for program improvement. An end-of-course survey was completed by course participants via the course Blackboard site. The survey generated program evaluation data as well as student responses to open-ended questions. 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.

Culturally Responsive Preservice Teachers: Comparing the Evaluation Results of Classroom Teachers and University Supervisors

Audrey Bowser, Arkansas State University

Because schools are becoming increasingly diverse, a significant role of teacher preparation programs is to prepare its teacher candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. Within the context of teacher education, this research is rooted in social reconstructionist theory (Sleeter & Grant, 2008) 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 & Bode, 2008; Sleeter, 2001; Zeichner & Hoefft, 1996).

This research study compared two years of assessment results of teacher intern self-evaluations and collaborative evaluations by clinical supervisors regarding teacher candidates' preparation in diversity. Assessment of performance during field experiences is an integral part of a teacher education preparation program. During the internship semester, teacher interns were assessed by their classroom teacher and university supervisor collaboratively. During and at the end of the semester, the interns assessed their teaching ability based upon the nine outcomes of the teacher education program.

The Summative Evaluation of Teaching Performance for Teacher Interns was used to assess the performance indicators of diversity for the 576 participants. Alignment in rating was analyzed and compared with respect to purpose of assessment. Overall, the results revealed that the preservice teachers in this study scored significantly positive on multicultural understandings; however, intern self evaluation tended to conceptualize diversity at lower rates. These data provided the guidance for subsequent, in-depth, longitudinal investigations about the ways in which preservice teachers' perceptions inform their thinking about their ability and effectiveness to implement culturally responsive curricula.

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1:30 – 2:20 P.M. **HIGHER EDUCATION: DOCTORAL STUDENTS.....Commodore**

President: Sherry Shaw, University of North Florida

Exploring First-Generation, Underrepresented Graduate Students' Motivating Factors for Pursuing a Doctorate or Professional Degree

Stephanie Adams, University of Arkansas

The study examined factors that motivated first-generation, underrepresented students' interest to pursue a doctoral degree. Specifically, the researcher sought to find out who encouraged or influenced them, what challenges they had to overcome, and if they felt it necessary to further their education. The NCES 1992-2000 report provided data that states only 24% of this population who enrolled in college completed a bachelor's degree; 43% dropped out. Therefore, the research does not track this group much beyond the bachelor's degree.

Eighty doctoral students were solicited to participate, and six agreed. All six were first-generation, underrepresented students pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Arkansas. Of the six students (two females, four males) participating in the study, five were African American, and one was Latino. The researcher met with the students for a one-time interview. Each interview followed a similar format: (1) a review of the study's purpose, (2) each student filled out a demographics questionnaire and signed the consent form, and (3) the researcher then asked questions about the students' family background, undergraduate experiences, mentors, and personal motivators for them to apply and persist toward obtaining their graduate degree. The amount of time spent in each interview varied. An hour was allotted. Each interview was audio-taped and transcribed. Each student was given a copy of the interview to review for corrections and/or clarification of the responses. Each interview was analyzed and coded for common emerging themes. Previous research on this topic was used to compare and contrast the themes from the study.

Conclusions were drawn based on this sample group. Family upbringing, mentorship, undergraduate experiences, and internal motivation were the commonalities for persistence. The findings of the study suggested implications for higher education professionals. Future research topics and questions were provided.

Understanding the Impact of a Formal Mentoring Program on Graduate Student Success

Mary Caldwell, University of Alabama

This study reported on an evaluation of a formal mentoring program for doctoral students. Data were drawn from a longitudinal evaluation of the program that was designed for first-generation college graduates and students from underrepresented ethnic minority backgrounds. The mentoring program was developed at a public, state, flagship university with the goal of assisting graduate students in attaining the personal and academic skills needed for degree completion and professional success. Mentoring, as defined for this project, occurs when a student works with an established member of the profession in order to gain required skills, expertise, and values.

Evaluation data were comprised of participant surveys and interviews. In addition, the research team analyzed participant journals and conducted observation at various social and academic gatherings. Survey data focused on participant demographics, individual motivation, mentoring expectations; and social and academic interaction with peers. Interviews followed a consistent protocol with questions related to educational background and projected plans, expectations and motivation for program involvement, experiences and reflections on program participation, and relationships with their individual mentors and program administrators. Qualitative data were analyzed via the constant comparative method, which required identifying key areas of focus early in the data collection process and expanding on those areas throughout data collection.

The conclusions drawn from this evaluation support the significance of positive interactions between doctoral students and faculty. These interactions can occur both inside the academic department and across the institution. In addition, doctoral students who engaged with a diverse group of peers reported a high satisfaction with the graduate school experience. The influence of institutional support (including professional, financial, and social) was emphasized. The study concluded with

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implications for practice and recommendations for other institutions interested in mentoring programs for graduate students.

Doctoral Students and the Conditions of Their Education: Were They Satisfied?

Tiffany 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 it has 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 the services and tools necessary to complete their degree to be 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 included financial funding, 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.

1:30 – 2:20 P.M. SCIENCE EDUCATION / TEACHER EDUCATION Commander

President: Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

Comparing Faculty Perceptions of Teaching with Outcomes in Undergraduate Science

Donna Turner, Cynthia Szymanski Sunal, Dennis Sunal, and Erika Steele, University of Alabama; Cheryl Mason, San Diego State University; and Dean Zollman, Kansas State University

The National Study of Education in Undergraduate Science (NSEUS), funded by the National Science Foundation, investigated the question of whether science pedagogical content knowledge of undergraduate science faculty was related to their classroom teaching quality and to the science pedagogical content knowledge of inservice elementary teachers, who, after completing these science courses, graduated from the institution. On-site case studies were completed at 12 higher education institutions with 19 faculty teaching entry-level undergraduate science courses and classroom teachers in 46 elementary schools. The sample was selected from a national population of 103 diverse colleges and universities that had undergone reform in some of their undergraduate science courses. The data collection protocol involved observations, interviews, artifact analysis, semi-structured interviews, and field notes from multiple instruments and sources.

Data were collected during on-site visits from instructors, graduate students, and classrooms. Quantitative and qualitative analysis identified variations in faculty, as well as inservice teachers, perceptions and observations of the intended and enacted teaching goals, instruction, concept representations, and student difficulties in observed science lessons. These perceptions and observations, identified as science pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), varied significantly in similar important learning/teaching dimensions among both faculty and inservice teachers who participated in the reformed and comparison science courses taught by the same faculty. The level of faculty PCK was significantly related to their observed science classroom teaching actions, teaching/learning experienced by students, classroom culture, and the long-term learning outcomes of students who upon graduating became inservice elementary teachers responsible for teaching science in their classrooms. Findings indicated that the science pedagogical content knowledge of undergraduate science faculty predicts patterns in their science classroom teaching.

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Effect of Type of Science Instruction on Undergraduate Student Attitudes Toward Science

Erika Steele, and Dennis Sunal, University of Alabama; Cheryl Mason, San Diego State University, and Dean Zollman, Kansas State University

This study examined the impact that reformed teaching has on students enrolled in undergraduate science courses. Questions addressed in this study were: (1) Is there a difference in students' views of the nature of science after experiencing reformed teaching? and (2) Does the level of reform experienced in the classroom relate to students' views on the nature of science? The National Study of Education in Undergraduate Science (NSEUS) examined the impact that reforms made under the undergraduate faculty professional development program, NOVA (NASA Opportunities for Visionary Academics). The sample in this study included courses at nine higher education institutions selected from the national sample of 103 institutions in the NOVA program spread geographically across the US in eight states. The science discipline content of the courses varied and included nine courses reformed under the NOVA program and six comparison courses at the institutions examined.

The Thinking about Science Survey Instrument (Cobern, 2001) was administered to examine students' views on the nature of science pre. and post. in each of the 15 courses. The differences between faculty instruction in the science classes were that the experimental course faculty had implemented reforms under the NOVA program, while comparison courses were taught as they were normally. The Reformed Teaching Observation Protocol (Sawada et al., 2002) was used to assess faculty teaching observed by the researchers and the Constructivist Learning Environment Survey observed by students (Taylor, Fraser, & Fisher, 1997).

The scores on each of these instruments were analyzed and statistically compared with student scores on the TSSI. There was a statistically significant relationship between the amount of reform observed in the classroom and student scores on the TSSI.

Understanding Through Reflection: The Importance of Written Reflection Assignments for Inservice and Preservice Teacher Development

Franco Zengaro, University of West Florida

The purpose of this research was to investigate the creation of meaning in two college classrooms using written reflections. The study was based on a theoretical framework of teaching for understanding based on reflective engagement. The research was guided by two questions: (1) Did reflective writing assignments encourage students to engage closely with the course content? and (2) What cognitive shifts, if any, occurred over the course of the semester? Fifty-five undergraduate and graduate students participated in this study. Participants were asked to write reflective paragraphs each week in response to class readings and discussion. Data were collected electronically through the university e-learning website. Data were analyzed through constant comparative analysis for common themes emerging from the reflections. In addition, reflections were analyzed for evidence of cognitive shifts highlighted by the participants.

The findings showed most participants wrote more engaging and longer reflections over the semester. Many participants also experienced cognitive shifts in understanding. These reflections emphasized particular insights and personal revelations participants experienced as they thought about and wrote their reflections. Most students discussed how reflections helped them understand more deeply the course content and encouraged them as inservice and preservice teachers to change their teaching in response to new awareness. These findings suggested implications for teachers at all levels in education.

1:30 – 3:20 P.M. PEDAGOGICAL PODCASTING: USING PODCASTS TO ENHANCE INSTRUCTION (2-Hour Training Session) Captain

Alexis Mayfield, Catherine A. Cochran, Jenelle M. Ouimette, and Stephanie I. Hulon, University of South Alabama

The Pedagogical Podcasting workshop was a two-hour workshop designed to combine pedagogy and technology in order to help faculty develop resources to augment web-enhanced and fully

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online courses. Including podcasts as a resource for a face-to-face or online course addresses the need to deliver instruction in more than one modality (audio and video) and also provides an opportunity for students to access and review course material remotely. The workshop was conducted in an internet-ready PC computer lab using the following programs: Audacity, an open-source audio recording/editing software; Movie Maker, a video recording/editing software; and Pod Bean, an online podcast hosting website. During the workshop, participants created audio and video files and uploaded them to an online podcast hosting site that could be accessed online through a computer or a mobile device.

At the completion of this workshop, the participants were able to: identify research to support the delivery of instruction using podcasts, record and edit audio using Audacity software, export audio files that can be accessed online and played through a mobile device, record and edit video on a PC using Movie Maker software, export video files from Movie Maker that can be accessed online, convert video to files that can be accessed on a mobile device, and upload audio and video files to the Pod Bean podcast hosting website.

2:30 – 3:20 P.M. MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION.....Admiral

President: Ronald Styron, University of Southern Mississippi

2010 Teacher Leader Institute: Knowledge Transfer to Improve Student Achievement

Ronald Styron, John Bishop, and Stacey Reeves, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of the Teacher Leader Institute was to improve student achievement in grades six through eight Language Arts utilizing embedded literacy strategies as measured by the Mississippi Curriculum Test. Institute content was developed around Understanding by Design (UbD), Depth of Knowledge, The Differential Impact of Leadership and Change, and embedded literacy strategies. The Institute consisted of 20 summer sessions with two follow-up sessions during the academic year. Twenty Lead Teachers and Assistant Principals from low achieving and high poverty schools participated in this project by developing at least one Language Arts unit during the Institute and contributing to a bank of units posted on a wiki they developed. The conceptual structure of modified action research, including the cyclical process of problem identification, planning, acting, evaluating, and re-planning, was used as a framework to guide the methodology employed in this project. Modified action research was selected for this project because it fulfilled: the need for the research to be relevant, the need for the researcher to be involved in the research, the need for the research to help improve school effectiveness, and the need for the research to stimulate reform and ultimately meet the needs of middle school students.

Data gathered from participants, upon conclusion of the Institute, appeared to indicate professional growth and satisfaction with the skills and knowledge gained as a result of Institute activities. Furthermore, it was expected that 2010-2011 Mississippi Curriculum Test student scores of Institute participants would show a decrease of no less than 10% of students scoring at the minimal and basic levels and an increase of no less than 10% of students scoring at the proficient and advanced levels in Language Arts as compared to 2009-2010 Mississippi Curriculum Test scores.

Middle Grades Instructional Practices Project

Cherie Gaines, Ginger Teague, Jennifer L. Beavers, Nicole Wilson,
Victoria Henley, and Vincent Anfarra, Jr., University of Tennessee

Instruction in middle schools is grounded in the belief that the education of young adolescents should be developmentally appropriate. Moving beyond a simple definition, a review of the principles of learning reveals students must be actively engaged in independent study, participate in cooperative learning, and receive regular, developmentally appropriate feedback. Teachers, in turn, must establish and maintain high expectations for learning and must employ the instructional methods that are developmentally and intellectually appropriate, minimizing time spent on teacher lecture, mastery learning, note taking, and drill and practice (Callahan, Clark, & Kellough, 1998; Kellough & Kellough, 2003). The quantitative data presented were part of a larger mixed-methods case study in East Tennessee which explored the regular instructional practices of core academic middle grades teachers.

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Data were collected using questionnaires completed by teachers to indicate the incidence of certain instructional practices in their classrooms and 15-20 minute observations during regular instructional practices utilizing The Instructional Practices Inventory. The data were then triangulated to provide a more complete picture of the instructional practices being employed in the typical middle school classroom. Although teachers reported a majority of the classroom practices being active teaching/learning (35.9%), this conclusion was not supported by the observation data in which teacher-led instruction and student seatwork-teacher engaged were most commonly documented (32.8% each). Total teacher disengagement, however, was the least reported by teachers (1.2%) and the least observed (1.6%). Common occurrences included student review at beginning of class, teacher lecture with question/answer time, and student seatwork teachers correcting, suggesting, and encouraging students. Further research should focus on qualitative methodology. Middle grades teacher interviews offered greater insight to the current instructional practices and the school environment which affected these practices. This study increased the level of understanding on the impact of effective instructional practices and its link to student achievement.

2:30 – 3:20 P.M. NOVICE/EXPERT TEACHERS: MENTORING Grand Bay I

Presider: Randy Parker, Louisiana Tech University

Learning Together: Advancing the Training of Preservice Teachers While Training Mentor Teachers to Lead

Susan Piper, Andrea Green, and Susan Santoli, University of South Alabama

Although there have been many changes in educational procedures, research still supports the student teaching experience as the most valuable experience within the teacher preparation program. Three secondary education faculty members at a public university in the Southeast designed and administered a survey among middle and high school teachers in the two major counties in which the university places its secondary student teachers. They also surveyed preservice teachers who had just completed their student teaching and internship experiences. The purpose of the survey was to gather information to improve the teacher education program and the training of teacher supervisors.

Based on the results of the survey two major objectives were identified as areas of needed improvement: (1) the training of supervising teachers and (2) more and higher quality preparation of preservice teachers. The feedback on student preparedness is an indicator from the field of what needs to be reinforced in the coursework portion of the student experience prior to entering the classroom. As a result of the study, the faculty has been working to achieve these goals through more time spent in the field prior to the student teaching experience, as well as more specific reflection and reaction by students to field experiences. Further, the team has been working with the university to improve the quality and confidence of supervising teachers while recognizing their dedication and time spent helping to mentor new teacher candidates. These goals have been being actualized through innovative coursework, specifically structured field placement, and professional development institutes.

Alternative Means of Recruiting, Training, and Maintaining a Pool of Qualified Teachers

Abraham Andero, Albany State University; Clemon Chester, Peach County Schools;
and Lacey V. Favors, Calhoun County Schools

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the TAPP Program and provide a level of awareness to state, local, and building stakeholders of the high level of stress that were simultaneously placed on the candidates. Additionally, this project was conducted to offer positive criticism and innovative procedures to administrators at all levels to more effectively recruit and retain TAPP candidates. The first year of teaching is a frustrating time of self-doubt and can often lead to stressors that are not experienced in many other professions. For the above listed reasons and many more, it is necessary to explore policies and examine procedures to effectively retain quality new teachers. The strategies for collecting data and its compilation for this study involved the use of surveys, questionnaires, and personal interviews reported in the form of case studies. This cluster sampling took place over a period of two months.

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Latino College Students' Enrollment in Higher Education in Kentucky: Impact of Social Factors

Gioconda Guerra Perez, University of Louisville

Latinos, the fastest growing, largest, and most poorly educated minority in the U.S. (Fry, 2002; Gandara, 1994), face many educational and demographic challenges: immigrant status, dropouts, learning English, and standard of living. Most research in this area is demographic, focused on projecting trends. Too little is known about why Latinos lag behind other groups in enrolling and graduating from college, particularly investigations of Latino sentiments and dispositions.

The central research question from a larger study captured the purpose of this paper, "To what extent do social, cultural, and institutional factors influence the transition from high school to postsecondary education for Latino students?" Only one research question was reported here in the effect of social factors (socioeconomic status, racial issues, gender) on enrollment. For this study, LatCrit Theory (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Fernandez, 2002) frames Latinos' perspectives on how existing institutional policies and practices affect recent immigrants and minorities through multiple lenses: language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, and gender orientation.

Focus groups from three universities and three community colleges in Kentucky provided the data (semi-structured interview schedule) to explore differences between four- and two-year institutions. From 59 preliminary questionnaires answered by freshmen Latinos who met criteria, 35 were selected; 28 participated. Researcher field notes supplemented session transcripts. Regarding results, SES, family income, occupation, and education were pivotal. The lower status CC families were decidedly disadvantaged in all aspects of access to college. Nearly all students attached the concept of race to their heritage or culture rather than physical or salient features. Gender had minimal personal effect on applying for college, but older and extended families exerted considerable negative pressure about girls going on to school. The paper included extensive quotations, relating discussion of sense of injustice to the wider literature. Implications focused on higher education access, financial exigencies, and policy.

An Investigation of the Communication Strategies Used by Chinese Graduates in American Universities and its Enlightenment on University EFL Instruction in China

Mo Xue, University of Alabama

The study investigated the communication strategies used by Chinese graduates in American universities in daily English communications and the enlightenment on university EFL instruction in China. The term communication strategy was first coined by Selinker in 1972. Then, many scholars (Tarone, 1977 & 1980; Canale & Swain, 1980; Faerch & Kasper, 1980 & 1983; Poullisse & Schils, 1989) gave different definitions and classifications. So far, the effects of communication strategies on ESL learners' communicative performance were addressed by many researchers (Rossiter, 2003; Nakatani, 2005; Zhang & He, 2002; Ding, 2009).

In this quantitative and qualitative study, both questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. Twenty-three Chinese graduates from one American university were selected through the method of convenience sampling to finish the questionnaire. Twenty responses were rendered valid. All the data were input into SPSS for analysis. Afterwards, five students were randomly selected from these participants to participate in a focus-group interview that lasted up to about 45 minutes. This semi-structured interview was conducted in Chinese so that they could express themselves fully and clearly. During the interviews, a microcassette recorder was used for latter transcription. The transcriptions were finished and translated to English by this researcher, and then were analyzed through open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to generate the themes.

The results showed that Chinese graduates used reduction strategies more frequently than achievement strategies, which included non-linguistic, paraphrase, cooperative, delay, and borrowing strategies. They also explained the reasons for this kind of phenomena. Based on their English communication experiences in America, they also gave some suggestions on university EFL instruction in China. The findings of this study have some implications for educational researchers; Chinese students who were studying at home, in America, or in other English-speaking countries; and for the university EFL instruction in China.

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2:30 – 3:20 P.M.

WHAT WE DIDN'T LEARN IN CLASS: FIELD TESTING EXPERIENCES OF DOCTORAL CANDIDATES (Symposium) Commodore

Organizer: Jeffrey Oescher, Southeastern Louisiana University

Heloise Morgan, Jason Hanks, Jeanne Ebey, and Shelly Chauvin,
Southeastern Louisiana University

Any doctoral candidate is required to develop a sound knowledge base related to the content being studied as well as set methodological skills necessary for conducting research. Most candidates start their studies with some interest in a particular topic and focus many of their efforts in areas related to it. As sound research questions evolve, candidates begin planning their dissertation studies. Variables and relationships among them were specified, populations and sampling procedures were considered, and methods for collecting and analyzing data were specified. In this process candidates become aware of the importance of the instruments that were used. Searches for existing measures were made or steps were undertaken to develop appropriate scales. In all cases, attention was paid to the technical quality of these instruments (i.e., validity, reliability, and score interpretation). Field testing an instrument is often overlooked for the expediency of "getting on with the study."

This symposium has been developed around the field tests of the instruments being considered for use in the dissertation research of four students. In each case, the technical merit of the instruments was established during the field test. However, the students' "stories" of their field tests illuminate some very interesting and unexpected insights into the research process.

Tell Me Again Why I Need A Conceptual Framework

A sound conceptual framework is critically important to a credible research study. In this paper, the author discussed the difficulty behind developing her conceptual framework and its translation into a technically sound instrument. Of most interest was the manner by which the framework was reflected in specific sets of items and the formatting of them on the survey.

Forward, Backward, and Forward Once Again

The search for an instrument to measure school culture and climate identified a related construct that was deemed much more appropriate for the focus of the study. In addition, a technically sound instrument was found to measure this construct. In this paper, the author discussed the non-linear interaction between her research questions and instruments.

What Factors?

Often, existing instruments provide a good starting point for researchers. An instrument addressing data-driven decision making appeared to have sufficient face validity to warrant field testing. Unfortunately, the analysis of field test data forced the author to reevaluate the underlying assumptions about the construct. The paper provided great insight into the ways by which evidence of construct validity is typically established.

The Best Laid Plans

A survey was developed to provide guidance in professional development planning for paraprofessionals working in the author's school district. The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) performance standards for paraprofessionals provided a framework for the development of the survey. The analysis of field test data did not confirm the framework, leading the author to question whether the problem was related to her interpretation of the CEC performance standards, the survey items, response scale, or formatting. More importantly, the author was forced to debate the merits of content and construct validity evidence.

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2:30 – 3:20 P.M. **PLANNING FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSROOMS (Training Session)..... Commander**

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

Traditionally, the major function of classroom assessment in undergraduate and graduate university courses has been to measure the individual student's learning in order to provide feedback to the student and to spread student scores (norm-referenced grading) to assign grades. Classroom assessments can measure the student's achievement of intended learning objectives if, and only if, great diligence is used in their construction. The objectives of the workshop were to: (1) introduce the participants to the theoretical framework for formative and summative classroom assessment in higher education (e.g., Bloom, Brookhart, Guskey, Stiggins, Tyler) and (2) provide instruction for developing course objectives, test blueprints, and valid measures of learning. Multiple examples of research-based assessment strategies for varied higher education courses were presented.

The presenters of this one-hour workshop had extensive teaching experience in higher education. They designed this workshop to invite MSERA members to share their own experiences with formative and summative classroom assessment strategies. Participants were encouraged to bring a current syllabus from a course for which they have developed formative and summative assessments. The presenters hoped that this free workshop presentation would increase enthusiasm for using both formative and summative classroom assessment in higher education and would help to create a "critical mass" of MSERA members interested in participating in research in this field.

2:30 – 3:20 P.M. **TEACHING METHODS (Displays)Preconvene**

The Heart/Core Diagram: A Critical Thinking Tool

Elisha LeBlanc, University of South Alabama

The author displayed a critical thinking model called "The Heart/Core Diagram" (previously referred to by the author as the Heart Diagram). The display session defined the eight basic parts of the Heart/Core Diagram (Name, Feelings, Attitudes, Behaviors, Context, Purpose, Relationships, and Logic) and discussed how it has been used in the author's English classroom to teach students to conduct analysis of literary characters and authors. Other applications of the Heart/Core Diagram (specifically, its possible use in assessing organizational and instructional systems) were presented. Finally, the origins of the Heart/Core diagram (it is based on the Teacher Decision Making Model presented by Phil Riner, as well as the work of Henry Cloud and John Townsend) was presented in detail. Brochures repeating the above information were available at the display.

A Template for Teaching the Multiple Linear Regression Technique

Robert Kennedy, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Educational Consultant

A template is a pattern that might be used for cutting out sections of material for recovering a couch, for sawing wood into pieces to assemble into a toy box, or for guiding information gathering for a report. Over the past couple of decades of teaching, this teacher has found that the use of templates for instructional purposes has been advantageous for communicating relatively complex topics efficiently and clearly. Any number of ways of teaching multiple linear regression might be tried. Examples that have been derived from the literature include Java Applets, various other software programs, graphs, statistical labs, puzzles, and worksheets. All were reasonably effective tools for teaching regression and other statistical techniques. However, another tool for teaching that is widely marketed is the template. Templates are distributed and/or sold for quizzes, certificates, posters, surveys, course management, syllabi, electronic portfolios, and interactive exercises, among other purposes. They save time, not only for the less-experienced (or even experienced) teacher using them, but they also benefit students by allowing a more efficient approach to learning. They may be available as open source documents,

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freeware, trialware, demoware, commercial software; immediately downloadable from a website or available on CD through snail mail, and in common word processing or PDF formats.

In particular, the template presented in this session was designed to help with teaching multiple linear regression. The primary components included an abstract of the scenario to be investigated, the reference or citation for the source of the scenario, number of cases, variables, data, rationale for the statistical technique chosen, null hypothesis, assumptions to be tested, steps in testing the assumptions, reading and interpretation of the findings, and a conclusion relative to the hypothesis. Because of the data files, the materials were available on computer media.

Analysis of Web-Based Models to Design Effective Instruction

Meggie Wheat, and Joel Lewis, University of South Alabama

Web-based learning is increasingly becoming accepted as the platform to deliver training. In some cases, the designers may not have training or experience in designing instruction, implementing courses, or evaluating its effectiveness. The end result of training should be pragmatic learning combining embedded procedural requirements and cultural systems. This research addressed web-based models for online instruction. Because of the popularity of online as a medium for instruction, the use of models may be an effective way to structure the design of instruction. Models are conceptual frameworks that assisted designers in understanding and applying theoretical framework, to outline ways to apply instructional theory.

The three models explored were ASSIST-ME, Web-Based Instructional Design, and the Recursive Model for Knowledge Development. To reach expected outcomes, each of these models provided structure, reduced trial and error, and created a framework that enhanced comprehension. Emerging technology changes the way people interact; therefore, new models are required to assist in organizational communication, competency in using the technology, and delivery modes. Face-to-face interactions engage learners in conversation that stimulate prior knowledge, identify misconceptions, and conduct active dialog. Body language, tone, and facial expressions help learners decipher new information and implement social interaction. Principles of learning and schemas create a sociomoral atmosphere, making face-to-face training effective.

However, the researcher believes the Internet can provide these interactions in an effective and efficient manner when certain interactions take place. Three types of interactions should take place in online learning environments: (1) interaction with content, (2) interaction with instructors, and (3) interaction with peers. Emerging technologies, e.g., video conferencing, voice over IP, and podcasting, are effective. A lack of structure and theory, however; can make online training complex. This research showed models help provide a guide for designing effective instruction to enhance tacit knowledge, incorporate media richness, and identify assessment criteria.

3:30 – 4:20 P.M. MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION.....Admiral

President: Bobby Franklin, Mississippi College

The Effect of the Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) on Middle School Science Students' Scores

Toni Ramey and Thelma J. Roberson, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the application of the Alabama Mathematics, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) program in middle schools reduced the gaps found between students' CRT scores; specifically, Did the gaps found in the science CRT scores within the respective subgroups race, gender, SES, and special/regular education narrow? Examination of national NAEP data revealed stagnant science scores, as well as persistent differences in standardized tests scores within the subgroups: race, gender, SES, and regular/special education classifications. Alabama's scores and gaps were equal to or greater than national scores. Subsequently, the Alabama State Department of Education created and implemented an inquiry-based program (AMSTI) in an effort to increase standardized science scores for Alabama students. Independent research into results

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produced by the use of the AMSTI program revealed significantly increased science scores but did not include research on the program's effect on the differences found in the subgroups' scores.

This paper presented student-level data collected and examined for longitudinal changes over a three-year period in which the AMSTI program was implemented at two participating public middle schools. The independent variables were race, gender, SES, and special education classifications; the dependent variable was science CRT scores of sixth- through eighth-grade students. Three repeated measures, ANCOVAs and one ANOVA, were conducted to examine possible longitudinal changes in science scores of the student population, as well as for changes in the gaps between student scores in the subgroups. Significant decreases were found in the differences between scores of students in the subgroups: race, SES and special education. No significant change was found in the subgroup gender. Findings suggested that the use of inquiry-based learning in the classroom may decrease differences in middle school students' science scores within the subgroups: race, SES, and special/regular education classifications.

Sports Participation and the Acceptance of Aggression in Adolescents: A Multiple-Source Perspective

Sally Zengaro and Ashgar Iran-Nejad, University of Alabama,
and Franco Zengaro, University of West Florida

This presentation reported the results of two studies investigating adolescent attitudes toward the acceptance of aggression in sports. The following question guided the research: Can moral disengagement, maturation, affect, and sports experience predict the acceptance of aggression in sports? Acceptance of sports aggression was predicted by an integrated theory of dispositional modes of biofunctional performance and measured by three factors identified in the Attitudes on Moral Decision making in Youth Sport Questionnaire (AMDYSQ): cheating, sportspersonship, and keeping winning in proportion. It was hypothesized that a dispositional mode of unconstructive performance would be a better predictor of acceptance of sports aggression than a constructive mode. In study one, 332 Italian adolescents ages 13 to 19 from two high schools in northern and southern Italy participated in the study. Participants completed five questionnaires on moral disengagement, affect, moral decision making in sports, the DIT-2, and general aggression.

Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling, and an integrated model of performance disposition was compared with a piecemeal model of aggression based on traditional constructs of physical maturity, affect, sports experience, and moral judgment. Only the integrated model was an acceptable fit in ($\chi^2(45) = 60.437, p = .062, RMSEA = .032, 90\% CI [.000, .052]$). The model was then confirmed in a second study with 96 U.S. high school students ($\chi^2(34) = 41.014, p = .19, RMSEA = .047, 90\% CI [.000, .092]$). The findings indicated that general aggressive tendencies, a negative emotional state, and moral disengagement strategies combined to predict acceptance of sports aggression better than a multiple-source combination of positive affect, maturity, moral reasoning, and a background of playing sports. This research presented a new way of understanding adolescent attitudes toward sports aggression with implications for social and moral development.

3:30 – 4:20 P.M. TOOLS FOR DOSSIER SUCCESS: A GUIDE FOR PROMOTION AND TENURE (Training Session) Grand Bay I

Vivian Wright, Joy J. Burnham, and Lisa M. Hooper, University of Alabama

This professional development/training session was conducted to help junior faculty and graduate students understand the dossier preparation for promotion and tenure.

3:30 – 4:20 P.M. STATISTICS..... Grand Bay II

Presenter: Betty Porter, School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans

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Continuous Improvement in Training and Education Using Instructional Design Technologies

Gholamreza Tashbin, Alan Chow, Kelly Woodford, and Nancy Lambe, University of South Alabama

The push for Continuous Improvement (CI) has been the driving force of competitive business for several decades. Six Sigma, the operating philosophy of CI, is often thought of as including the entire collection of quality improvement tools that are applied in the DMAIC (Design, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) cycle of CI. Practitioners have taken the tools typically associated with CI and adapted them to other disciplines and areas of research/application. The philosophy of Continuous Improvement requires the organization to work toward using every avenue available in order to consistently and repeatedly perform at a higher level each and every time. If the tools of CI are so readily applicable in other disciplines, is there any reason not to adapt and utilize tools and methods from other disciplines in the quest for CI?

The application of tools from other disciplines, used to meet this overall need to continuously improve, leads us to the concept of utilizing models and methods from the discipline of instructional design and technology toward that elusive goal. Using Instructional Design and Technology (IDT), methods and models can enable the organization to better identify the learning needs of the organization based on a gap analysis performed, and a thorough assessment and determination of how to close that gap and meet those needs. The overall instructional development process can also benefit from the introduction of CI tools. The results of blending the methods of instructional design and technology with continuous improvement will result in a better training and educational program. The field of IDT offers an assortment of strategies, models, and methods for the design and development of instructional materials in the classroom, as well as the training room. Incorporating the tools of IDT into CI seems a logical step for improving the training and educational process.

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory: Factor Analysis of Forced-Choice, Likert-Style Scaling, and True-False Response Formats

Mary Hibberts, Joshua Foster, and Burke Johnson, University of South Alabama

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) is the most widely used and most researched measure of narcissism in nonclinical populations. The currently accepted and most used version of the NPI consists of 40 forced-choice, dichotomous items. However, the forced choice format of the NPI has been criticized in the literature. From a psychometric viewpoint, the Likert-type item format has more advantages than a forced choice dichotomous item format. Four- and seven-factor solutions have been reported for the NPI instrument in the past. The present study compared factor structure and variance explained by extracted factors from the NPI forced-choice format with a Likert-type format and a true-false format of NPI.

Data were collected from 700 college students on each of the three instruments. Seven factors were extracted for each of the three instruments using orthogonal rotation. Items loading on the seven factors support the common seven components of narcissism identified as Authority, Exhibitionism, Superiority, Vanity, Exploitativeness, Entitlement, and Self-Sufficiency (Raskin & Terry, 1988). Analyses of simple structures favored the true-false format. All items had primary loadings over .3, and only six items had cross loading above .3. Responses from the Likert-type NPI resulted in the highest variance explained by the seven extracted factors. The seven factors with the Likert-type format explained 53.16% of the variance compared to 43.96% explained with the true-false format and 44.41% explained with the forced choice format. Taken together, the results of the simple structure analysis and variance explained provided evidence to support the use of alternative response formats in narcissistic assessment in educational research.

Psychometric Analysis of the Infidelity Predictor Scale

Stacey Rosati, Dana Fuller, and Jwa Kim, Middle Tennessee State University

Though many studies have investigated infidelity, unfaithfulness to one's partner, the percentage of the population identified as unfaithful to current or past partners is influenced by the way it

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is defined. The author designed a scale to measure the different factors that lead to infidelity. This study aimed to conduct psychometric analysis on the Infidelity Predictor Scale, to measure how well the scale and items were performing, and how reliable it is overall. Both item response theory and classical test theory were used to analyze the scale, which focuses on both emotional infidelity and physical infidelity, taking into consideration that they were two separate entities.

Factor analysis indicated a three-factor structure to the scale: emotional satisfaction, physical satisfaction, and an external factor. Twenty-two percent of the participants admitted to being emotionally unfaithful, and 13.4% admitted to being physically unfaithful to their current or most recent past partner. Twenty-two percent of the participants also admitted their current or most recent partner had been emotionally unfaithful to them, whereas 16.2% admitted their partner had been physically unfaithful to them. Overall, the scale performed well; Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was very high with a value of .90, and every item but one proved to be performing consistently with the rest.

Development of a Comprehensive Commitment Scale Using Item Response Theory

Megan Lunsford and Jwa Kim, Middle Tennessee State University

Several researchers have conducted studies involving commitment. Commitment scales, such as the Investment model and the Life-Role Salience scale, have been developed to measure commitment, as well. While these studies have focused primarily on measuring commitment to one specific area (i.e. career, romantic relationship), the goal of the current study was to formulate a measure designed to assess a person's overall commitment level using different areas of her or his life. This scale, the Comprehensive Commitment Scale, was evaluated using Classical Testing Theory (CTT) and Item Response Theory (IRT) principals in order to validate the scale and analyze the results. While a few of the items included in the measure proved useful in discriminating between higher and lower levels of commitment in individuals, researchers found that many of the items required further evaluation to determine their usefulness.

3:30 – 4:20 P.M. TECHNOLOGY Commodore

Presider: Angela Rand, University of South Alabama

MSERAhead in 2021

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

The authors examined the potential role of technology in future Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA) conferences as reported by 73 attendees at the 2009 MSERA Annual Conference. Survey responses were collected and analyzed, yielding results which indicated that attendees perceived technology to play an integral role for: (1) MSERA presenters, (2) MSERA attendees, (3) gaining online access to conference proceedings, and (4) supporting session presentations through the use of various multi-media. Perceptions from the attendees were representative of the responsiveness, adaptability, and foresight to emerging technologies that were becoming essential in today's global society. Finally, attendees offered unique perspectives and foresight on how emerging technologies will influence, and ultimately change, the traditional format of future MSERA conferences.

Second Life in Higher Education

Angela Rand, University of South Alabama

Second Life (SL) is a virtual world gaming platform that offers a 3D immersive experience to participants. Second Life has gained the attention of K-12 and higher education. These institutions create and sustain a virtual presence in Second Life that offers visitors an alternate means of exposure to information and collections. Thousands of Second Life residents log in daily to build, compete, perform quests, and socialize in an environment that promotes creativity and exploration. The 3D immersive experience is most often cited as the reason for hosting a presence in SL because it offers a feeling of

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being there through the projected experience of an avatar. A significant number of higher education institutions use SL because of perceived pedagogical affordances. Increasing numbers of courses were taught online, and SL is sometimes an exploratory component of the learning strategy even in the absence of substantial pedagogical prescription. A hallmark of SL educational practice is its exploratory nature. Pedagogical applications for SL were in the nascent stage of development.

This paper considered the pedagogical, technological, and cognitive implications of using Second Life as an instructional strategy. These three elements were interrelated when considering learning at any time, but they took on a special importance in SL teaching practices. The adoption of a virtual world platform as the e-classroom of the future was explored. Instructional designers considered the design of learning strategies in light of their pedagogical application to the learning objectives. Using SL as part of a learning strategy is problematic because there is a dearth of empirically sound research prescribing the use of virtual worlds in education. A preview of the literature indicated a burgeoning collection of exploratory pedagogical applications to be investigated. What remained obscure were clear guidelines and a good instructional model when using this new learning environment.

3:30 – 4:20 P.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS: DIVERSITY Commander

Presiders: Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Educational Consultant

Increasing Intrinsic Motivation for African American Males

Otis Clayton, Tennessee State University

The study examined at-risk African American male students at the secondary level to find out: (1) the factors most intrusive to their academic success, (2) the social characteristics associated with increasing intrinsic motivation, and (3) preemptive strategies for dropout prevention. The initial sample consisted of two schools in the Memphis City Schools district: Westwood High and Mitchell high. Because of the size of the sample (750), all students were used. All students in this population met the participatory requirement of being on free or reduced lunch. The methodology to investigate this study was a cross sectional survey design, so that educators could use this information to learn more about how African American males and the stakeholders that influence their environments were influenced by the factors outlined in Deci and Ryan's SDT. The researcher met with the guidance counselors and the English teachers at the beginning of the fall semester to train them on how to administer the questionnaire and make accommodations for students who have IEP's. These questionnaires were administered in the same way at the end of the semester and at the end of the school year.

The data were analyzed to address the research questions and hypotheses by z tests. Some of those questions included: (1) Will consistent measuring of intrinsic motivation increase students' awareness of their motivation and ultimately their graduation rates? and (2) If social support groups for black males utilized external motivation practices that support autonomy, will students increase their intrinsic motivation? The findings of the study suggested implications for classroom practice, teacher educators, and cultural mentoring.

Exploring African American Females Transition from High School to Higher Education

Jeena Owens, University of Alabama

In recent years, scholarship exploring ways to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment for African American students has focused on initiatives for African American males. However, according to data gathered from the U.S. Department of Education, from 2005-2009 there has been a 1.60% rate of increase in the number of African American females aged 25 years and older who have not earned a bachelor's degree. From the literature reviewed, there is limited scholarship exploring African American females' transition to higher education. Much of the literature discussed the importance of developing programs for African American males to stay in school, or dropout rates for African American students, specifically African American males.

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The purpose of this literature review was to investigate factors that influence the transition to higher education for African American females. To obtain information pertinent to African American females in the United States, the body of literature was queried for research involving African American females and education. While searching for information relevant to this topic, a search was administered on the following databases: JSTOR, ProQuest, and ERIC. Terms, including "African American," "females," and "identity," were combined to gain literature linked to the lived experiences of African American females and factors that contribute to a successful transition from high school and higher education. From this search, selected articles included seminal scholarship or studies that were published within the past 10 years. This information is significant because it provides parents/guardians, educators, and other stakeholders with information about the number of African American females in higher education to begin to explore the factors that influence their transition. A possible implication was that educators needed to be aware of these numbers for African American females in order to make changes that will help this population successfully transition to higher education.

**What's Love Got to Do with It? Reframing Educational Discourse
with Love as the Aim of Curriculum**

Timothy Nelson, Tennessee State University

Defining aims of education is a philosophical debate that dates back to Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and can be traced through many revered educational theorists. Yet, while research abounds regarding motifs in education, such as multicultural education, inclusiveness, service learning, and collaboration, there is a lack of focus and unity in current research related to the overarching "why" question. This presenter proposed love as the chief aim of education and proposed ways that the discourse on the above named motifs in education can be reframed under this guise.

The study offered a brief review of current literature dealing with the discussion of educational aims as it relates to specific motifs. The study presented a working definition of love based on an interdisciplinary study of the subject. The definition involved viewing love as a creative force that is the basis for inclusive community and social action. Discussion was offered in regard to how this definition of love could be offered as an underlying theme shaping educational practices. The final literature review examined case studies that illustrated the power of love in education. The presenter contextualized the study to his own educational community - a faith-based private school - and related the discourse to his own tradition.

Interpreter Training Program Graduates' Preparedness for Specialized Settings

Jamie Walker, University of North Florida

Interpreters who begin work soon after graduating from training programs may be vulnerable to unique challenges for which they are inadequately prepared, especially if they work as community interpreters in specialized settings (healthcare, legal, deaf-blind, mental health, K-12, and postsecondary educational). There has been no research concerning this readiness-to-work gap, which can be detrimental to the interpreters but, most importantly, to consumers of interpreting services. This study addressed the degree to which graduates perceive themselves to be sufficiently ready to work in settings that require complex skill sets. The research problem was that new interpreters were assumed to be qualified when they were contracted to work in specialized settings, even though they may not be aware of how underprepared they were until they were in the midst of an assignment.

This study explored the readiness-to-work time span for interpreter training program graduates to work in specialized settings and sought to answer the question: What were the perceptions of interpreter training program graduates on their preparedness to interpret in these specialized settings? Participants were graduates from two- or four-year interpreter training programs within the U.S. eastern region who have been out of their programs at least two years. Following IRB approval, data were collected from participants who were recruited from online directories and interpreter training programs. The online survey was designed through the university's survey system, piloted with five participants for content validity and readability, and modified. The qualitative data were coded to discover what experiences caused new interpreters to realize any skill deficits and how they strategized to obtain these

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8:30 – 9:20 A.M. LANGUAGE ARTS EDUCATION..... Grand Bay I

President: Jean Clark, University of South Alabama

An Unmet Need: Advancing the Fluency of English Language Learners Through Preservice and Inservice Education

Susan Piper and Gahan Bailey, University of South Alabama

The southeastern region continues to host a growing number of speakers of English as a second language. While the number of P-12 students rapidly increases, the number of teachers trained to meet the needs of English-language learners is miniscule. In order to better meet the classroom content needs of English-language learners, more training needs to be done among preservice teachers and classroom teachers.

A survey was conducted among preservice teachers to identify those who were willing to receive additional training in working with English-language learners. Preservice teachers who received additional training agreed to work closely with the content area teachers to whom they were assigned in order to advance the fluency of English-language learners and train the content area teachers using the content area standards for teaching English to speakers of other languages. The preservice teachers also agreed to work closely with the English-language learners in the classrooms of their field service placements in order to accommodate and advance the fluency of the P-12 students.

A case study was begun to follow the experiences of the preservice teachers, classroom teachers, and English-language learners involved in the study, the results of which, at the conclusion of the study, better informed preservice and current classroom teacher training for making accommodations for English language learners, as well as indicating the change in fluency of the English-language learners involved in the study.

The Writing on the Wall: Implications of the Removal of Cursive from School Curriculum

Jean Clark and Rebecca Giles, University of South Alabama

The problem being researched is the national trend to delete instruction in cursive handwriting from the curriculum of schools across the United States and the potential positive and negative implications. As people become increasingly dependent upon technological advances such as social networking, text messaging and email, cursive writing is no longer a highly regarded skill attesting to an individual's intelligence and standing within society. As a result, children are experiencing a decrease in or absence of cursive writing instruction in schools. Is the elimination of cursive writing in American education an injustice that will deny future generations direct access to significant primary sources? Or, is cursive writing just another casualty of progress, along with wood burning stoves and chalkboards, no longer necessary in today's classrooms? The authors combed professional journals through EBSCO and related search engines, conducted traditional "Google Searches" using seven key words and phrases, and obtained secondary references found in this first search. In addition, literature involving the neurological roots of cursive communication was reviewed. Finally, cross referencing of authors, subjects, and key words was conducted using Citation Database.

Findings included five major categories of positive impact (time, academic reformation, literacy, universal communication enhancement, and social factors) and five potential negative effects (historical values, flow of speech-to-orthographic development, communication barriers, cognitive development, and social factors). The resource-rich presentation included the history of cursive, the complex neurological integration of auditory-visual-kinesthetic skills in learning to communicate, and a detailed description of factors included in the categories listed above. While this review of literature did not attempt to resolve the debate surrounding the role of cursive writing in 21st century American elementary schools, issues related to this timely topic were thoroughly examined and discussed.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION Grand Bay II

President: Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

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International Investigation of Inquiry Interactions of Young Children

Sally Blake and Denise Winsor, University of Memphis

The study examined observations and interviews of young children in five countries to determine the presence of inquiry interactions to find out: (1) if young children use inquiry as defined by scientists during play explorations, (2) the indication of higher order thinking levels among young children engaged in inquiry interactions, and (3) if there is a difference among interactions based on cultural environments of educational programs. Of the 25 students composing the initial sample, all participated in the study for its duration. Of the 25 children (ages four to six) participating in the study there were five each from the United States, Japan, Taiwan, Mexico and Chile. The data collection was done by researchers in each of the five countries who observed the individual students for four, one-hour sessions during play activities in their programs and conducted one interview individually with each child. The observations were recorded on the Children's Inquiry Investigation Observation Instrument (CII) developed by the SPIRIT Research team, and interviews were recorded by researchers.

The research questions guiding this study were: (1) Is there evidence of inquiry thinking in young children? (2) To what extent is Inquiry Reasoning evident in students across diverse learning environments (populations, settings, and measures)? and (3) What levels of higher order thinking were evident when young children use inquiry to explore play environments? The data were analyzed according to five identifying stages of inquiry behaviors with 27 specific indicators within these areas. The Level of Presence of Indicators was separated into three levels: (1) Great Indication (more than three actions), (2) Some Indication (one or two actions), and (3) No Indication. Higher order thinking evidence was coded for agreement within each of the five identifying stages. The findings of the study suggested implications for curriculum, instructional practice, and teacher educators.

Video and Television Exposure of Very Young Children

Stephanie Jackson, University of South Alabama

This paper took the position that as a general rule it is most ethically responsible to oppose the exposure to television and video by very young children because of the potential negative impact it can have on cognitive development. Viewing by this age group has been associated with attention problems later in life (Christakis, Zimmerman, LDiGuiseppe, & CMcCarty, 2004; Landhuis, Poulton, Welch, & Hancox, 2007; Zimmerman & Christakis, 2007). Television viewing by very young children has also been found to disrupt opportunities for engagement in other proven learning activities that stimulate cognitive development (Schmidt, Pempek, Kirkorian, Lund, & Anderson, 2008). Finally, though the benefits of educational programming have been distinguished from the potential harm of entertainment programming (Wright, et al., 2001; Zimmerman & Christakis, 2007), it is not easily identifiable by the general public because of conditions such as the lack of media literacy, the lack of public education regarding brain development, the pervasiveness of television and video in society, the persuasive power behind marketed video products.

With the intention to first do no harm it is advisable to oppose viewing of video and television by infants and toddlers. This paper concluded suggesting instructional designers participating in the creation of video instruction for very young children have an ethical obligation to actively engage in the following: advocacy of media literacy, public education on activities that foster cognitive development in very young children, creation of program viewing guides, and further research on causality of attention problems.

Review of Children's Development in Prosocial Moral Reasoning

Hong Jiang, University of Alabama

Prosocial moral reasoning is believed to concern reasoning about conflicts in which the individual must choose between satisfying her or his wants and needs and those of others in a context in which laws, punishments, authorities, formal obligations, and other external criteria are irrelevant. Studies were carried out to examine the development of children's reasoning about prosocial moral dilemmas, to

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determine the relationship of structure of prosocial moral judgment to stories solution, and to explore influence of social environment on prosocial moral reasoning. Self-report obtained through interview, objective measures through paper-and-pencil test with prosocial dilemma stories, scales with rating response to dilemma contexts, and questionnaires containing questions including gender, age, race, education, family, were widely employed to explore children's development of prosocial moral reasoning. According to cognitive developmental perspective, theorists found that children's social cognition and their emotion were highly related to prosocial moral reasoning.

Findings suggested that there were five levels of reasoning, including self-hedonistic orientation, need of others, approval and stereotyped orientation, empathic orientation, and internalized orientation. Also, it was found that prosocial moral reasoning increased with age and had a positive relationship with family rearing and perspective taking. Children growing up in a supportive, authoritative, and less restrictive environment behaved more prosocially and reasoned at a higher level about prosocial moral issue. Additionally, empathy and sympathy were believed to be related to level of prosocial moral reasoning, which in turn motivate people's prosocial behaviors. Furthermore, prosocial moral reasoning was found to be related negatively to adolescents' reports of aggression and delinquency. In summary, the findings supported the conclusion that there were individual differences, as well as general developmental stages, in prosocial moral reasoning. Moreover, the findings suggested that prosocial moral reasoning plays an important role in prosocial tendencies and empathy-related response facilitates prosocial behaviors.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION Commodore

President: Randy Parker, Louisiana Tech University

College Textbook Reading Assignments and Class Time Activity

Lola Aagaard, Ronald L. Skidmore, and Timothy W. Conner II, Morehead State University

It has been reported (Lei, Barlett, Gorney, & Herschbach, 2010; Sikorski et al., 2002) that only a minority of college students actually read the course textbook or other assigned readings in preparation for examinations. Suggested strategies to remedy this situation include quizzes (Ruscio, 2001; Ryan, 2006), study worksheets (Aagaard & Skidmore, 2009; Ryan, 2006), shorter reading assignments, and use of the textbook during class time (Aagaard & Skidmore, 2009). A convenient cluster sample of 105 undergraduate students at a regional university in the mid-south completed a survey regarding their use of college textbooks, what strategies might increase the likelihood of their reading textbook assignments, and their preference for how class time was used. Participants were 60% female and fairly evenly distributed across the four years of college experience. Chi square was run on 25 selected comparisons, with a Bonferroni correction of the resulting alphas.

A majority of students (52%) reported they do read the assigned textbook readings. Freshmen were significantly more likely to report outside reading should not be required and less likely to report having used or known about e-textbooks. Strategies reported to most likely prompt reading the textbook included: (1) in-class quizzes over text material (73% overall, but females were significantly more likely to read because of quizzes), (2) assigning graded study-guides to complete while reading (77%), (3) testing over material found in the textbook but not covered in class (81%), and (4) assigning shorter reading assignments (77%). Sixty-four percent of respondents overall preferred group presentations, but sophomores and seniors opted for individual work, while juniors preferred groups. Additionally, students reported preferring the use of PowerPoint lectures to notes on the chalkboard, and generally preferred the use of group discussion and application of material to real-life situations rather than just lecture over textbook content. Implications for teachers' classroom practice were discussed.

Developing Learning Communities Within Tutoring Programs Through Learning Preference Inventories and Active Learning Events

James Johnston, Harding University

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The study researched data gathered over a six-year period focused on the outcomes of a student support services tutoring program at a private, four-year institution. The data gathered during the program included total hours of contact with each student in addition to total hours of tutoring averaging 1,659 hours per year with an average of 121 students tutored per year. There was a total of 9,956 hours of tutoring for the six years. In addition, the data revealed an increased retention in tutor personnel, as well as client participation. The researcher facilitated tutor training that demonstrated methods of bridging personal, social, and academic diversity through the use of a learning preference inventory and active learning events (team challenges – short ropes course). The impetus for improved training came through the researcher's awareness of the influence of negative, accepted realities toward clients and how these subtleties interfered with the continuity and effectiveness of tutoring session.

The outcome of the training and active tutoring created tutors who have a greater understanding of practices and methods needed to create authentic relationships and intentional empathy toward clients. Creating common events and experiences that were new to both client and tutor led to new language, new thinking, and new values that created a "new" culture - a Learning Community. Each area of training increased evidence that by assisting tutors in the process of transferring learning to actual skills in serving others leads to the development of lasting personal relationships within a professional context. The findings of the study suggested implications for effective tutoring training and practices especially in Learning Centers and other First-Year Experience programs seeking increased retention.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS (Poster Session)..... Commander

Presiders: Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University,
and Pamela M. Broadston, Educational Consultant

The Interaction Between Reading Fluency and Comprehension: Analysis of DIBELS and SAT Results

Jennifer Nelson and Paige Baggett, University of South Alabama

The purpose of this study was to compare the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) scores to the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) reading comprehension scaled scores for third-grade students in an Alabama, suburban, elementary school. DIBELS ORF is widely used for making curriculum decisions; however, the current body of literature raises concerns about using the DIBELS ORF score alone. While the DIBELS ORF test evaluates accuracy and speed, it does not evaluate a child's ability to understand what has been read. Previous literature shows that the relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension is complex and not clearly understood.

The participants in this study were students from six different third-grade classrooms. Third-grade students were chosen for this study because the SAT testing begins in third-grade, and DIBELS ORF testing ends in third-grade. Data were collected from the school years of 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07, and 2007-08. Both assessments in this study were administered in the spring of each year; therefore, the use of concurrent validity minimized the impact of uncontrolled variables. The DIBELS ORF and SAT scaled scores were obtained through a data storage system: TestTrax. Each group of students, including the at-risk, some-risk, and low-risk, was analyzed individually and as a whole group.

Implementation of New Strategies or Learning Tools: A Test of a Literature-Based, Grounded, Theoretical Model

Jenelle M. Ouimette, University of South Alabama

The author has developed a grounded theory model concerning the phenomenon of how comfort level, value level, and organizational culture and climate effect the implementation of new strategies and learning tools in an educational environment. The research hypothesis for this study was that with specific causal conditions, self-efficacy, experience, and personality, the core conditions of participant comfort level and participant value level, as well as organizational culture and climate, can be increased through the use of specific strategies, such as mentoring programs, resources, and

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professional development opportunities with follow-up options, having a positive impact on participant readiness and motivation which will lead to the successful implementation of new strategies and learning tools, as well as increased work satisfaction and learner performance. The idea that these different elements were linked is not a new one. Many have even suggested they connect to change or implementation of change. Hamilton et al. (2009) found “motivation for change, organizational climate, staff perceptions, and beliefs, and prior experience with change efforts contribute to readiness for change in specialty mental health” (p. 27). It has also been found often that motivation and readiness lead to successful implementation of change, work satisfaction and/or performance. “Among several motivational constructs, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and task value have consistently shown strong relations to achievement related behaviors in learning contexts” (Yang et al., 2006).

This study examined how these different elements were all linked and to what degree in an effort to improve the delayed outcomes of implementation of new strategies or tool, work satisfaction, and learner performance. Data were gathered to test the theoretical model using mainly qualitative and quantitative methods. The instruments that were used included questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and observations. The participants were faculty at a school of education.

Exploring the Relationship Between Continuous Professional Development Programs and the Development of Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Proposal

April Nelms, University of Alabama

Teaching science content to teachers for the development of their science pedagogical content knowledge is not a clear-cut process. Understanding teacher knowledge in general is still an all-encompassing feat that has yet to be accomplished. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between understanding science teacher knowledge using the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) construct and professional development programs as a setting to accomplish it. The researcher conducted a comprehensive review of literature to theoretically frame the study, identify instruments that were proven successful in other research, and support the professional development context utilized in the study.

In order to answer the research questions posed in this study, multiple quantitative and qualitative instruments and data sources were utilized to create a holistic view of the relationship between science content professional development and development of teachers' science PCK. The significance of this relationship could be used to affect how teachers teach science and could ultimately lead to changes in how students learn science. A further benefit of this research is the potential for the educational researcher community to gain insight into the area of understanding teacher knowledge through the PCK construct. Educational researchers could achieve this goal by studying how PCK develops in each teaching discipline. With research results across education disciplines available, researchers could theorize PCK development and apply this theory to preservice teacher learning.

Factors Related to Educators' Decisions to Pursue National Board Certification

LaShanda Simmons, Union University

A growing number of states and school districts offer financial supplements for teachers who successfully complete merit pay programs, specifically the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Amid some of the highest rewarding school districts is an urban public school district in West Tennessee. Teachers from this West Tennessee school district who attain National Board Certification earn salary compensations of up to \$100,000 over the 10-year life of the certification. Although this district employs over 6,000 teachers, only 162 of them were National Board Certified (Memphis City Schools, 2008; NBPTS, 2009a). Despite the district's impressive pecuniary compensation, a disproportionate number of eligible teachers chose not to pursue National Board Certification. Much of the existing research regarding National Board Certification is based largely on the impact of National Board Certified teachers on student achievement and improved teaching practices (Allen, Snyder, & Morley, 2009; Boyd & Reese, 2006; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007; Humphrey, Koppich, & Hough, 2005; Koppich, Humphrey, & Hough, 2006; Mackenzie & Harris, 2008).

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Some major studies have contended that students, especially low-income and minority students, of teachers who have earned National Board Certification perform better on standardized tests than students of non-National Board Certified teachers (Cavalluzzo, 2004; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007). As a result, large urban school districts go to great lengths to reward teachers who attain National Board Certification. Retrospectively, very little information can be found concerning factors affecting teachers' decisions to pursue National Board Certification. The participants in this mixed-methods study included teachers employed in a large urban school district in West Tennessee who were eligible to participate in the National Board Certification (NBC) process and teachers who have earned NBC. Data collected from questionnaires and interviews were analyzed holistically and analytically.

The Impact of Cultural Intelligence on Preservice Teachers' Overseas Student Teaching

Christine K. Holland, University of North Florida

Acknowledging the reality of cultural diversity prevalent, many of the colleges and universities in the United States have developed some form of study abroad programs to enable their students to complete a learning experience. These programs are designed to provide opportunities for students to develop insights into and understandings of those whose perspectives differ from their own. Cushner (2008) stated that a deep understanding, skill and commitment to living, and working with diverse others is not achieved in the cognitive-only approach to learning that characterizes much of education. The merits of overseas study and its potential to promote the transcendence and transformation of students have been well documented. As Merryfield (2000) suggested, most teachers have not been prepared to teach for diversity and do not understand the impact of globalization in the classroom and communities in which they teach. Merryfield found there were significant differences between the experiences of people of color and European Americans that reflected the importance of an impactful, experiential learning experience.

Most American teachers of color have an awareness of a double cultural consciousness (DuBois, 1989). Many have developed a consciousness of both their own primary culture and have experienced discrimination and being an outsider by virtue of living in a society characterized by white privilege and racism. Middle class, white, teacher educators who were effective at teaching amidst diversity had their most profound and impactful experiences abroad. According to Merryfield, these teachers had encountered discrimination by being an outsider within another cultural context, and they had found ways to bring this to their teaching. The examined literature provided the framework for the development of a proposed mixed methods approach to assessing the impact of a short-term overseas student teaching experience in the development of intercultural competency in preservice teachers.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. ISSUES IN PK-12 EDUCATION (Displays).....Preconvene

Treatment Acceptability of a Behavior Modification Bracelet

Carlos Crutch, Mississippi State University

This study examined 62 teachers, assistants, student teachers, and former teachers with experience teaching kindergarten through second-grade to assess teachers' perceptions of a behavior modification bracelet in their classroom with children in lower elementary grades. The chosen treatment technique utilized a bracelet that served as a reminder to the student about their daily progress on behavioral goals. Students were given behavioral goals that were directly stated on a behavioral note included with the treatment package. The techniques that were reviewed rely on reinforcement from teachers. Reinforcement should be based on progress with the bracelet with students in their classrooms and other school settings.

The 62 participants included in the study were from the northeast region and the central portions of Mississippi. Of the 62 participants, 59 participants were female and three were male. The participants who were surveyed varied in teaching experience, consultation experience, and age. Teaching experience, consultation experience, and age were the variables of interests among the survey questions that were selected to be the focus of the study. Researchers met with teachers to present the survey about the treatment acceptability of the interventions. Teachers were given the treatment

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packages and surveys explaining the treatment in its entirety. The survey included 15 questions which were presented on a five-scale Likert format. Participants rated items from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Findings from the study suggested there is a relationship between age and years of teaching and the acceptance of the intervention package. As years of teaching increased there was a slight lessened acceptance of the intervention, but treatment acceptability was high across all areas. The findings from the study implied there was an acceptance for interventions that included visual reminders of progress and included a packaged approach.

Evaluation of Academic Interventions in Children with Special Needs

Heather Wolf, Carlen Hennington, Carlos Crutch, Holly Barnhart, Rebecca Roberts, Sara Hickerson, Susan Beveridge, Tony Doggett, and Umbreen Iqbal, Mississippi State University

The study evaluated the effectiveness of two brief academic intervention packages for improving oral reading (Reading to Read; RTR) and math fluency (Math to Mastery; MTM) with added components in students with a special education diagnosis. Although research has shown effectiveness of these scientifically-based interventions in children without a special education ruling, there is a need to determine the effectiveness of the interventions with special education students. The study focused on the addition of vocabulary building activity (flashcards with definitions) to RTR on participants' reading fluency and a comparison of short (25 math problems) and long (50 math problems) worksheets in MTM on math fluency using an alternating treatments design. Participants were four male elementary students, seven to nine years of age in grades two to four. Each child had previously received a special education diagnosis including: (1) mixed receptive/expressive learning disorder, (2) autism spectrum disorder, and (3) learning disabilities in reading and math.

Results indicated for RTR intervention that there was an overall increase for all participants in reading competency, as measured by words correct per minute (WCPM), across both conditions (with or without vocabulary exercises), and suggested that overall RTR with the added vocabulary activity was most effective in increasing reading abilities with the exception of one child. Results also indicated that MTM is an effective intervention for these participants, as measured by digits correct per minute (DCPM). Overall, MTM was seen to be an effective intervention for participants regardless of whether the worksheets were long or short, with the median growth of 10 DCPM across the three weeks of intervention. The rates of improvement were greatest for three of the participants under the long worksheets. Discussion was provided regarding the differences in response to intervention conditions. Implications for use in the educational setting were also presented.

What do Students in Grades PK-12 Think About Teacher Effectiveness?

Jan Miller, Dana Harwell, and Denise Knight, University of West Alabama

The purpose of this study was to determine if students in grades PK-12 could identify characteristics of effective teachers. Much of the recent research on teacher effectiveness focuses on relating teacher behavior to student achievement. Quite a bit of research, however, has delved into stakeholders' perceptions of good teaching – what students, administrators and teachers themselves think makes an effective teacher. Studies suggest that instructional and management processes are keys to effectiveness, but many interview and survey responses about effective teaching emphasize the teacher's affective characteristics, or social and emotional behaviors, more than pedagogical practice. Teaching is the essence of education, and there is almost universal agreement among researchers that teachers have an outsized impact on student performance. It is known that improving teacher quality is one of the most powerful ways, if not the most powerful way, to create better schools.

Participants in grades four to 12 completed a survey to ascertain their perceptions of teacher effectiveness. Students in PK-3 illustrated and dictated a response to the prompt, "What do GREAT teachers do?" The body of data, both qualitative and quantitative, was compared to current research. The results from the study indicated a strong correlation between the body of literature on teacher effectiveness and the actual perceptions of the PK-12 students survey. Amazingly, even young learners could identify characteristics of effective teaching.

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The poster session shared with participants the results from the surveys and the correlation to the body of research on teacher effectiveness. Implications were that a teacher's influence is far reaching, so it is challenging to define what outcomes might show effectiveness and how those outcomes should be measured. In addition, many variables outside the teacher's control also affect each of the potential measures of effectiveness.

Positive Approaches for Prevention of Childhood Obesity: A Proactive Method for Teaching Nutrition to Preschoolers

Debra Goodwin and Paula Napoli, Jacksonville State University

This presentation addressed an approach to nutrition that involved positive learning approaches for children and the involvement of families. The purpose of this research was to address the topic of obesity in early childhood education. A positive approach curriculum was designed for the children through the domains of music (original songs), literature (original stories), physical activities, hands on activities (cooking and crafts), and science. Initially, a convenience sample of 15 pre-school children aged three to five years participated in a six-week nutrition program. To determine if the program had an appreciable effect on the subjects' food choices, a mock grocery shopping activity using a classic pretest-posttest design was conducted. A grocery store, containing a wide variety of both healthy and less than healthy foods and beverages, was set up. Prior to the nutrition education intervention, the subjects went "shopping" in the mock grocery store and were instructed to select five food items. After the nutrition education intervention, the grocery shopping activity was repeated, with the subjects again selecting five food items. The subjects' food and beverage selections at the pretest shopping and the posttest shopping were compared in terms of calories, fat, fiber, sugar, and number of fruits and vegetables. More recently, the education component has been expanded to include teaching children appropriate portion sizes.

Preliminary research was conducted with a small population of preschoolers and was continued to determine if portion/serving size is a concept that preschoolers can comprehend and implement. Records of their intake were used in the evaluation and also shared with parents. Results indicated that 92% of the children in this study made at least one positive change (e.g. reduced calories, decreased fat, increased the number of fruits and vegetables) in their choices. More specifically, 69% of children decreased calories, 54% decreased fat, 54% increased fiber, and 46% increased the number of fruits and vegetables selected. For the sample as a whole, there was a mean decrease of 156 calories and 4.78 grams of fat between pretest and posttest. There was a mean increase of 5.21 grams of sugar from pretest to posttest.

Overall, the results of this small pilot study were promising and suggested that the program may be effective with regard to improving the food choices of young children. Although the amount of sugar increased, the finding is likely attributable to the fact that several of the children selected substantially more naturally sugar-laden fruits during the posttest. The program appeared to be particularly effective in teaching children to select foods containing fewer calories and grams of fat. Also, all results were shared with parents to assist parents in their child's eating habits.

8:30 – 9:20 A.M. LEARNING Captain

Presider: Charles Notar, Jacksonville State University

Is Connectivism a New Learning Theory?

Sylvia Rogers, University of South Alabama

George Siemens, currently of Athabasca University, introduced the idea of connectivism in late 2004. Stephen Downes, a scholar at the University of Brunswick, has also written several papers in support of connectivism. The first article by George Siemens was entitled "Connectivism: A Learning Theory for a Digital Age." Downes followed with "Learning Networks and Connective Knowledge" in 2006. Connectivism is based on learning by means of a network. In connectivism, learning is not about the destination, but the roads that you take to get there. The majority of articles by Siemens and Downes have been in the form of blog posts, conference presentation, and papers posted to forums. As of the writing of this paper, there has yet to be significant writing on the topic. However, there has been some

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judgments included Ease of Learning judgments (EOLs) prior to the presentation of the multimedia material and separate immediate and delayed Judgments of Learning (JOLs) about the text and the graph following the presentation of the multimedia material. Retrospective Confidence judgments (RCJs) were made after responses to each of the 12 inference questions. Metacognitive judgments were made using a 0-100 percentage scale increasing in increments of 20%. Each of the 12 trials included three paragraphs (approximately 246 words) and one graph about a particular science topic. Participants' responses to 12 inference questions were scored using a four-point scale, and time spent studying each topic was recorded.

Preliminary results indicated significant differences among participant metacognitive judgments and study-time allocation when discrepancies were present. Overall, participants spent less time studying and provided lower metacognitive judgments for content that contained discrepancies. However, Retrospective Confidence Judgments (RCJs) remained consistently high across the conditions. These findings were discussed as they related to participants' metacognition and self-regulated learning.

The Multidimensional Measure of Conceptual Complexity: Elucidating Misconceptions Research in Science

Gerald Calais, McNeese State University

Given that successful reform is contingent upon the pivotal development of appropriate assessments, it is crucial that assessment instruments match current attempts to augment students' conceptual understanding of science. It is with the aforementioned in mind that the Multidimensional Measurement of Conceptual Complexity (MMCC) was designed specifically to measure students' conceptual understanding of chemical equilibrium. Information gleaned from articles and empirical studies was selected from researchers, including, but not limited to, the following: Susan M. Barnett, Nathaniel J.S. Brown, Stephen J. Ceci, Michelene M. T. H. Chi, Andrea A. DiSessa, John R. Frederiksen, Joshua P. Gutwill, Robert S. Siegler, Stella Vosniadou, and Benjamin D. Wright. Rasch measurement, which is employed by the MMCC, was shown to be uniquely adept at resolving the intrinsic weaknesses of diagnostic inventories claiming to assess one's ability to conceptually understand distinct scientific concepts. This distinct advantage allowed the author to locate students' understanding of a concept by describing the various potential hierarchical and qualitative levels underlying latent variables. The MMCC's two-dimensional space of conceptual complexity reflects hierarchical continua manifesting six distinct levels of conceptual breadth and four distinct levels of conceptual depth. The instrument's validity and reliability have been established.

The MMCC has implications for assessing K-16+ learners' conceptual understanding in virtually any topic in science, mathematics, social studies, literature, or in other disciplines. The instrument also has implications for classroom instruction at all levels because teachers need to ascertain learners' misconceptions on any topic during all phases of instruction for enhancing learning and transfer of learning. Ultimately, the ability of the MMCC to successfully pinpoint where learners' understanding of a concept lies is viewed as manifesting order out of chaos regarding the nature of conceptual misconceptions.

The Impact of Professional Learning Communities on the Rejuvenation of a State Social Studies Council

Ruth Busby, Troy University, and Janie Hubbard, University of Alabama

This case study examined how a state social studies council was rejuvenated from a stagnant, non-participatory council into a thriving professional learning community. The question considered in this investigation was: How do social studies professionals construct and reconstruct professional learning communities, outside the parameters of the school, to support and advocate for social studies education? Professional Learning Communities (PLC) were linked to transformative changes in education and schools. Some schools have begun to experiment with these as options to traditional professional development activities such as teacher workshops. Researchers indicate that important PLC attributes are: (1) supportive and shared leadership, (2) collective learning, (3) shared values and vision, (4) supportive conditions, and (5) shared personal practice. The participants consisted of 12 (10 responded) social studies professionals drawn from K-12 and higher education, non-profit

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organizations, and state-supported organizations. There were two investigators, both participant observers, throughout the project and beyond, and they served as members of the Council's Advisory Board.

Multiple methods of data were collected for this study including documents and interview questionnaires. The qualitative data were analyzed through methods influenced by content analysis and narrative analysis. The major umbrella theme that emerged was participation. Three main categories surfaced within this theme, and they were participation before, during, and after revitalization of the Council. In this time of lean educational funding, this study is timely in illuminating ways to revitalize state social studies councils and provide relevant professional development opportunities for social studies educators. Data indicated that attributes of professional learning communities emerged as major determinants of the success of the rejuvenation process. While this study is unique, the successes and challenges experienced by the members may be relevant to other state social studies councils seeking to build or rebuild their own state councils or other such professional learning communities.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION Commodore

President: Wilbur Rich, Wellesley College

Voices from the Field: Gender Experiences in Higher Education

Susan Santoli and Lauren Mininger, University of South Alabama

This study was phase one of a larger study that examined the phenomenon of globalization and experiences of gender at a public university in the Southeast. Some research has suggested that women in higher education experience less success in achieving tenure and promotion than men, and that fewer women than men continue on to postsecondary faculty positions from Ph.D. programs. Additionally, there is research to support the belief that, as universities turn more and more to grant production, there is additional pressure experienced by female faculty members to be more productive in this area as well as in the traditional academic triad.

In this study, male and female faculty members at the instructor, assistant, associate, and full ranks participated in a survey focusing on these and other issues where gender might be a factor. A list of faculty emails was retrieved from the university directory and from department websites. Faculty were asked via electronic mail to volunteer to participate. All participants received and signed consent letters that spelled out procedures for safeguarding anonymity. The survey was posted online and taken electronically. Questions related to personal and professional experiences were included on the survey. The majority of questions were multiple choice, but some open-ended questions were included. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were used. Multiple choice questions were analyzed using statistical measures, while open-ended questions were analyzed using the grounded theory categorization method. Tentative conclusions were drawn, and data were compared to national and international data. The next phase of the study involved conducting the survey at comparable regional universities, and eventually nationally and internationally. The findings of the study highlighted needs for better ways to mentor new faculty and suggested areas for gender awareness in developing policies and procedures in departments and throughout this university and others.

The Climate and Culture on Christian College Campuses

James Lampley, Donald Good, and Heather Moore, East Tennessee State University

Research has indicated that many factors influence students' choices to attend private, Christian-affiliated universities. The most important factors in the decision to attend a Christian college may be the academic reputation of the college and the religious affiliation of the college. Both the academic reputation and religious affiliation of the college are found within the perceived climate and culture that exists across the campus. Understanding the climate and culture on Christian college campuses may provide significant information for undergraduate and graduate enrollment issues at these private institutions. There were approximately 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States. Of this number, 1,600 were considered private or non-profit institutions, and of those about 900 have a Christian affiliation at some level. Approximately 10.3% of all college students in the United States attend a Christian college.

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The purpose of this study was to measure students' perceptions of the culture and climate on Christian college campuses. Data were collected using an online survey. The survey, developed by the lead researcher, consisted of 20 Likert-type and open-ended questions. There were approximately 1,015 participants from eight Christian colleges located in Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, and North Carolina. Christian colleges and universities that held dual membership in the Appalachian College Association and the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities were targeted for inclusion in the study.

The findings included information about the culture and climate on Christian college campuses. Over 73% of the respondents considered non-Christian colleges or universities when making their college choice. However, 54.5% indicated that the religious affiliation of the college of their choice was an important issue when making enrollment decision. Over two-thirds of the students (69.1%) agreed to strongly agreed that the atmosphere on campus was what they expected before attending. Most importantly, 88.6% of the respondents agreed that their choice of a Christian college was the right choice. It was interesting that 66.5% of the Christian college students reported their faith had increased as a result of attending a Christian college.

The President's Role and Executive Responsibilities in Institutional Fundraising and Advancement

Celeste Wheat, University of Southern Mississippi

The topic of finance and funding takes precedence as one of the greatest issues of concern in American public higher education today (Bornstein, 2008; Gumpert, 2001; Johnson, 2005; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). Since the early 1990s, public colleges and universities have often experienced "shrinking and unpredictable state support for higher education" (Zusman, 2005, p. 116). As a result, over the past 20 years fundraising has increasingly become one of the most important duties and responsibilities in carrying out the presidential role. Thus, the goal of this research was to conduct an in-depth examination of the president's role and executive responsibilities in institutional fundraising and advancement.

The review of literature involved a selection of scholarly resources relevant to: (1) a historical perspective on the president's role in fundraising, (2) current trends and patterns concerning the president's fundraising role, and (3) best practices for presidential success in fundraising. Additionally, an in-person interview was conducted with Aubrey K. Lucas, The University of Southern Mississippi President Emeritus, concerning his perceptions of the president's role in fundraising. The results indicated: (1) from a historical perspective college presidents have played a crucial fundraising role in the establishment of American higher education, (2) there is an increasing priority of presidential fundraising in institutional advancement, (3) the importance of fundraising qualifications in the presidential search and selection process, and (4) strategies and best practices for success in presidential fundraising. Also, the interview with Lucas served to reinforce the major themes and current issues found in the research literature. Altogether, the implications of this research revealed a number of practical implications relating to the president's role in: (1) successfully implementing institutional advancement priorities, (2) cultivating donor relations, and (3) promoting a vision and culture that enables donors to view the institution as worthy of investment.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. ADULT EDUCATION..... Commander

President: Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

Age as a Factor in Career Decision Making in Non-Traditional Versus Traditional Undergraduate Students

John Harrell and Janice Patrick, Troy University

This study examined differences in different age groups in the career decision making process, when comparing traditional aged undergraduate students to nontraditional aged undergraduate students. The study employed the Career Decision Making Survey (CDMS) to compare responses of the different age groups. The CDMS is composed of portions of five different instruments: Myer's-Briggs, Strong Interest Inventory, Values Driven Work Card Slot, Life Values Inventory, and Self-Directed Search.

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The sample consisted of 350 undergraduate students, 135 traditional aged students (18-25) and 215 nontraditional (26 and older). The nontraditional aged students were subdivided by age categories: 26-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50- 59. The responses of each of these subdivisions were compared to those of the traditional aged students. The CDMS has six categories of questions related to different aspects of the career decision making process. These are important factors in career decision making, parents opinions and views, sources of information, credibility of information sources, response to input, and decision viewpoint and decision making. All questions were scored on a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using a t-test for independent samples to compare traditional-aged students to each age category of nontraditional students for each of the six CDMS categories.

Results revealed that the 30 to 39 age category differed significantly from the traditional-aged group on three of the six CDMS question categories. None of the other nontraditional age groups differed from the traditional-aged group on more than one CDMS question category. These results were in line with previously reported findings and suggest that there may be a specific age-related need for specific types of career decision making information. This would have implications for the career counseling of nontraditional students in general.

The Career Possible Selves Construct as a Mediating Variable of Support Services and Adult Students' Motivation to Persist

Rhonda Westry, Troy University

The only conceptual model that focuses on the characteristics of nontraditional students and a trajectory to college persistence is Bean and Metzner's model of nontraditional student attrition. The model described a drop-out process that considered some of the factors found in traditional student attrition models and various behavioral theories. Unlike traditional student models that focus on student involvement as a necessity for persistence, Bean and Metzner's model primarily focuses on background, academic, environmental and psychological variables as most significant to nontraditional students' college completion.

In order to understand latent psychological outcomes in the nontraditional student trajectory, this study examined the degree of relationships among the following variables in the attrition path analysis: (1) career possible selves construct, (2) institutional support services effectiveness, and (3) an adult student's motivation to persist. A demographics questionnaire and researcher-developed survey instrument were used to measure adult students' perception about the academic support services available at their institutions, their career intentions, and their motivation to persist. A pilot study was conducted to test the instrument's validity. The actual study comprised a sample population of 108 (N=108) nontraditional age adult students enrolled at a community college. Partial correlation (pr) analysis was used to examine the relationships among the three research variables. ANOVA analysis was conducted to measure if there were statistically significant differences among four demographics factors as they related to the overall score from the survey.

The results showed that the relationships among all three variables were statistically significant when all were present in the path analysis. However, when the career possible selves construct was controlled, the institutional support services effectiveness and an adult's motivation to persist variables did not show a statistically significant relationship. Additionally, ANOVA showed that gender was the only factor that indicated a statistically significant difference among the demographic variables.

The Impact of Church-Based ESL Classes on Adult Immigrant Learners' Language Development and a Sense of Community

Xia Chao, University of Alabama

Through the use of surveys and interviews, this study examined the role of church-based ESL (English as second language) classes in supporting language learning, cultural adjustment, and community involvement of newly-arrived adult immigrants in a U.S mid-southern city. This study demonstrated the significant role that community-based organizations play for immigrant adults in providing them with opportunities to contribute to their language development and social integration the host culture. McMillan and Chavis's sense of community index and several other instruments were

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administered to 200 immigrant adult participants who were randomly recruited from six churches. ANOVA of all participants' data showed that church-based ESL classes serve as a bridge to help immigrants get involved into the local culture, improve their sense of community, and enhance communicative ability. This study concluded with a list of recommendations for integrating church-based, ESL activities into the school ESL curriculum.

10:30 – 11:20 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION Captain

President: Greg Freeman, Baptist College of Health Science

Choosing Involvement: The Experiences of Community College Student Learners

Jennifer Miles, University of Arkansas

Student involvement is encouraged at contemporary institutions of higher education. Involvement assists with integration into the campus environment, promotes interaction with faculty and staff, and may support retention and persistence. Students can become involved through their academic programs and co-curricular activities. Examples of co-curricular activities may include student organizations, intramurals, and community service. One form of involvement is student government.

Student government associations serve as the voice of students in the decision making process at colleges and universities. Typical responsibilities of student government associations include allocating student fees, recognizing student organizations, and assigning student representatives to college and university committees. In order for a student government association to be effective, students must choose to join the student government and must choose to spend their time with the organization.

The current study was conducted to describe the experiences of the student government presidents at community colleges. Five students were interviewed. All students were serving as student government president at the time of the interviews. The students were asked about their transitions to the role, their relationships with administrators, and challenges associated with the position. Data analysis revealed three themes: institutional loyalty, developing relationships, and support of administration. Implications of this study may affect the work of community college administrators and others charged with creating leadership opportunities for community college students.

The Influence of Campus Recreation Beyond the Gym

Alexandra Henchy, University of Kentucky

One problem facing college faculty, administrators, and researchers is how to reduce student dropouts. Many researchers examine the classroom to seek ways to promote student success; however, non-academic aspects of campus, such as campus recreation, can also positively influence student success. Astin's (1984) theory of involvement contended that participating in extracurricular activities contributes to the success of students. According to Astin, the amount of student learning that takes place is related to both the quality and quantity of student involvement in a program.

After receiving IRB approval, 2,500 students at a southeastern university were randomly selected to complete the campus recreation survey. The survey was based upon the NIRSA/Student Voice Campus Recreation Impact Study survey. The students were sent an e-mail informing them of the purpose of the survey which included a link to the survey; students were also sent three reminder e-mails. There were 343 students who began the survey. Of the students who answered the demographic questions, 45% were graduate/professional/continuing education students, and 55% were undergraduate students; 43% were male, 56% were female and <1 % transgender; and the majority of the sample was white (92%).

Preliminary analysis showed that the recreational facilities had a strong or moderate influence on students' decisions to attend (28%) or continue (31%) at the university. Participating in campus recreation activities and programs had a positive influence on a variety of aspects of students' lives including, but not limited to, their well-being, fitness levels, and stress management. The analysis showed that there was not a strong relationship between students' class status and whether they have

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ever used any of the campus recreation facilities, which demonstrates that a variety of students was using the facilities. These results demonstrated that campus recreation activities and programs have a positive influence on students' lives.

Reflections of Student Government Association Presidents: Implications for Advisors

Jennifer Miles, University of Arkansas

Student organizations serve as a way for students to become engaged in institutions of higher education. Organizations include honor societies, service clubs, academic organizations, and political and cultural organizations. Through serving as student organization leaders, college and university students gain experience in conflict mediation, delegating, and planning. They also must interact with their fellow students, faculty and staff, and administrators. Customarily, colleges and universities require each recognized club and organization to have a faculty or staff advisor. Advisors work with student organization members and officers to determine goals, plan activities, and follow university rules and regulations.

In this qualitative study, student government association presidents were asked to describe their experiences. Thirteen student government presidents were interviewed. The 13 institutions included two-year colleges, four-year regional institutions, a faith-based university, and a women's college. In each hour-long interview, the students described their experiences as student government president. A data analysis revealed what students learned through their student government presidencies. Themes included developing relationships with their advisors, learning from their experiences, and serving their fellow students.

The results have implications for staff and faculty who advise student government associations. Although considered student organizations, student governments are given more responsibility than typical student organizations and are often scrutinized by the student body and other constituencies. Based on the findings, student government advisors may rethink how they advise these particular organizations as well as how resources are allocated to student governments.

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