

2009 MSERA Proceedings

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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
THIRTY-EIGHTH 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 4-6, 2009
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA**

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT Paramount Room

Elementary School Campuses and Beginning Teachers

Cynthia Martinez-Garcia and John R. Slate, Sam Houston State University

In this study, the researchers examined the five most recent years of data (2003-2004 through 2007-2008) from the Academic Excellence Indicator System of the State of Texas regarding beginning teachers on elementary school campuses. Research questions addressed in this study were: (1) What is the difference between the elementary school campuses with the highest percentage of beginning teachers and elementary school campuses with the lowest percentage of beginning teachers in their percentage of minority students, percentage of economically disadvantaged students, and percentage of at-risk students? and (2) What is the difference among elementary school campus accountability ratings in their percentage of beginning teachers, average salary of beginning teachers, and percentage of minority students? These questions were repeated for each year of data analyzed herein.

Of the 10 multivariate analyses performed, all 10 procedures resulted in statistically significant differences. Effect sizes ranged from small to moderate (Cohen, 1988). What these overall analyses revealed were that differences were present where beginning teachers were employed for each of the last five school years. Following the overall analyses, 34 univariate analyses were conducted, of which 33 yielded statistically significant differences. Effect sizes for these analyses ranged from small to large (Cohen, 1988). The large effect sizes were consistently present for the percentage of minority students enrolled on elementary school campuses and beginning teacher percentages. Elementary schools with the highest percentages of beginning teachers had an average of 70% of minority student enrollment across the five years of data analyzed. These percentages were substantially higher than the minority student enrollment for the elementary schools with the lowest percentages of beginning teachers. Similar results, though not so strong, were present for the enrollment of economically disadvantaged students. Elementary schools that had higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students also had higher percentages of beginning teachers.

Increasing College Opportunity: A Case Study of School Counselors

Jacquelin T. Broussard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this case study was to explore the role that school counselors play in students' educational experiences regarding preparing for post-secondary options. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) encourages school counselors to promote the academic development of all students in their preparation for the challenges of the 21st century. School counselors provide activities to support students with academic preparation, but the extent of these services vary by school, district, and state. Increasing opportunity to access and pursue post-secondary options has become an increasing top priority for middle and secondary schools. The ASCA National Model (2005) provides a framework for the development of school counseling programs that addresses the achievement concerns spelled out in NCLB. For this study, both the ASCA model and Perna and Thomas's (2006) conceptual model of academic success were used as the framework to understand student success as defined by college readiness, access, and achievement.

A convenience sample of 10 middle and high school counselors in grades 6–12 was selected using maximum variation sampling strategies. Interview questions were created to explore the role of school counselors in promoting the academic, career, and personal development of students. Data were transcribed and analyzed using both categorical and contextual coding procedures to identify emergent themes and patterns. The study provided valuable insights into the perceptions of school counselors regarding their role in providing activities that promote college opportunities.

The findings revealed that school counselors' influence on students' academic development was minimal. However, there was greater evidence that the career and personal development of students were addressed. To increase educational opportunities for students, counselors need to accept responsibility for implementing preventative programs and activities that address the academic, career, and personal development of all students.

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The Decline in Social Capital Among U.S. Teachers

Cheri H. Minckler, University of Louisiana Lafayette

Robert Putnam (1994/2000) sounded an alarm regarding America's decline in social capital, a fundamental asset of a democratic society. Because educators are charged with the responsibility to foster the democratic principles necessary to function in a democratic society and the social behaviors and attitudes necessary to be a productive member of one's community, it is important to know whether a similar decline in social capital is observed among teachers. This study addressed whether social capital has declined among teachers over the past 30-40 years as has been observed among the general population.

Following the lead of Putnam (2000), Paxton (1999), and Fukiyama (2001), all of whom used the General Social Survey (GSS) as the data source to track changes in Americans' social capital over time, the researcher used the GSS as the data set to study the trend in teachers' social capital between 1972 and 2006. To ascertain teachers' disposition towards community or bonding social capital, the researcher used existing variables in the GSS that correspond to McMillan and Chavis' (1986) elements of community (membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection). Crosstabs were run for each of the variables relative to whether the respondent was a teacher, a non-teacher, or a non-teacher with 16-20 years of education (to control for education).

Results of the study indicated that, although teachers score higher than non-teachers in elements of bonding social capital, teachers experienced a decline in most of these indicators over time (1972-2006). The decline was observed among the three groups studied: teachers, non-teachers and non-teachers with 16-20 years of education. Declining social capital among teachers may indicate a decline in a sense of community that could negatively influence the school culture and, ultimately, student achievement. The findings suggested implications for both school culture and our American democracy.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. ACHIEVEMENT (Displays)..... Louisiana Room

**Evaluating Criterion-Referenced Achievement Tests in the No Child Left Behind Era:
The Arkansas Benchmark Examination, 2005-2008**

John D. Hall, D. Lynn Howerton, and Craig H. Jones, Arkansas State University

The No Child Left Behind Act and the accountability movement in public education have resulted in many states developing group-administered, criterion-referenced achievement tests. These tests are administered to students in select grades. The resulting test scores are often used to make high stakes decisions that may affect both students and schools. Unfortunately, many of these tests are not being subjected to independent psychometric examination.

The 2005 Arkansas Benchmark Examination (ABE), which was being used as part of the state accountability system, was evaluated based primarily on The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing and The Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education. This evaluation resulted in a number of concerns related to test development and data reporting. The current investigation extended previous work on the 2005 ABE by evaluating the 2006, 2007, and 2008 editions of the ABE in accord with The Standards and The Code. Using the Technical Manuals for the ABE obtained from the Arkansas Department of Education, the following test properties were examined: the model of test theory, the sample of students, item development, bias, item analysis, performance levels or cut-scores, reliability, validity, and the availability and content of the technical reports.

Recommendations based on this evaluation were offered to enhance the psychometric properties of the test, to increase accountability, and to prevent the misuse of the test.

A Template for Teaching the Multiple Linear Regression Technique

Robert L. Kennedy, University of Arkansas for Medicine, and Pamela M. Broadston,
Arkansas School for the Deaf

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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 are 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 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 directed toward 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, the 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.

Adolescents' Comprehension and Content-Area Education Students' Attitudes Benefit from One-on-One Tutoring

Bonnie Z. Warren-Kring, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

In an essay book review on knowledge to support the teaching of reading, *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* (Snow, Griffin, and Burns, 2005), authors Barone and Morrell concluded that teacher educators must address a research agenda that relates teacher preparation to student literacy achievement. This research analyzed the effectiveness of content-area education students' tutoring of adolescents in literacy strategies over two semesters. It also documented the changes in the attitudes of the education students toward implementing literacy strategies in content areas over the course of the semester.

Two premises were part of this investigation. The first was that adolescent students would benefit from the one-on-one tutoring that occurred as part of the adolescent literacy course on campus. The second was that, through the act of teaching literacy strategies to middle and high school students, education content-area students would show positive changes in attitudes toward implementing literacy strategies within the content-area classroom.

The Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005) assessment tool was used with adolescents who were tutored and with comparison adolescents who were not tutored. Originally, there were no significant differences between the pre-comprehension scores of the tutored and non-tutored groups. However, post-comprehension scores of the tutored group were significantly higher at the .05 level when compared to the non-tutored group using a paired t test. Changes in attitudes of the education students over the course of the semester were measured through the use of a literacy survey, entitled *Preservice Teachers' Literacy Perception/Attitude Survey*, designed for this research project. Significant gains were found pre- to posttest on 50% of the attitude survey items using a paired t test.

In summary, this study found that one-on-one tutoring impacted not only the comprehension of the adolescents but also the attitudes of the content-area education students.

Educator Attributional Style: A New Measurement Model

Amy C. Fineburg and Cecil Robinson, University of Alabama

Attributional style is one's dispositional explanation of good and bad events (Seligman et al., 1978). Although well-established in the literature, two problems exist. First, research highlights the domain-specific nature of attributional style. This study developed and cross-validated the Educator

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Attributional Style Questionnaire (EdASQ), a content-specific measure developed from the Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ; Peterson et al., 1982). Second, measures of ASQ do not always load on three factors, as theory suggests. Most measurement focuses on negatively worded items and ignores positively worded items. This study tested a new six-factor measurement model—three negatively worded and three positively worded. The original ASQ was modified to create the EdASQ. K-12 public school teachers from three districts participated in two studies.

The first study involved half of the teachers from a suburban district in Alabama (N = 169) taking the EdASQ and ASQ, and the other half taking only the EdASQ. All teachers also took the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1967) as a validation measure. In the second study, teachers from an urban district in Nebraska (N = XXX) and a rural district in Alabama (N = 182) took the EdASQ and RSES to cross-validate the measure further. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis revealed that the EdASQ had similar reliability and validity as the ASQ across teacher samples. Confirmatory factor analysis with structural equation modeling indicated that the measurement model with three factors for positively and negatively worded item sets was a better fitting model than the original three-factor solution.

These results lent support for the domain-specificity of attributional style and introduced the hypothesis that positively worded and negatively worded item sets measure explanatory styles that are distinct from each other. These findings have implications for attributional style theory and introduce a new measure of attributional style for teachers.

Visual Skills as a Predictor of Student Outcomes in Statistics Coursework

Terry E. Brumback, Vivki Schmitt, and Randal Schumacker, University of Alabama

This study attempted to estimate performance outcomes in statistics coursework using the Rasch Partial Credit Model. A 27-item instrument was designed and administered to 30 nursing students who had completed an introductory statistics course. Each line item was designed to evaluate the student's ability to view, retain, and apply numbers and formulas in the solution of a statistical problem. Subjects were then evaluated using an item-response matrix fitted into the Partial Credit and Rating Scale models. Results showed that subjects who scored higher in visualization skills performed at a higher level in statistics coursework than those who did not.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. FIVE-STATE LEADERSHIP CONSORTIUM: TEACHER LEADER DEVELOPMENT MATERIALS (Training)University Room

JoAnna Dickey, Eastern Kentucky University, and Debbie Daniels,
Kentucky Department of Education

This workshop was developed to provide information about materials and activities available for a teacher leader course or professional development. A five-state consortium was organized and funded by the Wallace Foundation and participating state departments of education to develop a resource set of materials in the area of teacher leadership. The five states included Kentucky, Ohio, Delaware, Alabama, and Kansas. Fourteen courses/professional development units were created in the areas of: developing an understanding of the whole school, working productively with others, deepening the instructional capacity of colleagues, and leading school improvement. Information about the purpose, participants, and materials was provided. Sample activities were demonstrated, and a CD of the complete set of materials was distributed to each participant.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. READING King Room

Teaching Multiple Perspectives with Children's Biographies

Hani Morgan, University of Southern Mississippi

In today's culturally diverse society, it is important for young students to develop multiple

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perspectives. Some of the standards today's teachers are required to adhere to include an understanding of different cultures. The National Council for the Social Studies, for example, indicates that teachers should provide instruction that complies with various thematic standards that include teaching about global connections and cultural diversity. To encourage young students to develop multiple perspectives, teachers need to pay attention not only to how they teach, but also to what they teach. Educators can guide students to develop cross-cultural understanding at an early age by using culturally authentic children's biographies representing a wide variety of cultural groups.

This position paper explored strategies that are designed to help educators select children's biographies that contribute to the accurate understanding of different cultural groups. It offered guidelines for teachers to help them recognize and avoid books that are stereotypical or offensive. The article included a list of recommended children's biographies and referred to various websites educators can visit to find annotated lists of culturally authentic children's biographies and additional guidelines for choosing culturally authentic children's books. This article explained what multiple perspectives are and offered research-based teaching strategies for educators that can help children develop an understanding of frames of reference that different groups of people hold. The paper also emphasized the importance of developing multiple viewpoints at a young age and referred to educational research indicating the need for children to develop positive cross-cultural attitudes during their early years of schooling.

Some of the research-based teaching strategies discussed included group projects, read-alouds, and independent reading. A discussion referring to research on childhood education indicating how each strategy was implemented, and why these methods are likely to lead to positive cross-cultural understanding was provided.

Developing Family Literacy Connections to Foster Reading Engagement and Improvement

Jo Anne Heisterkamp, Camille Branton, and Theresa Dumas, Mississippi Valley State University

An individual's ability to read affects her/his economic situation and likelihood to succeed. Our nation's current financial status makes the improvement and development of literacy, at every level, an imperative priority. Over the years, family literacy programs have proven to be significant contributors to the solution of this universal dilemma. Many states have successfully imparted individual and family education goals through governor-supported, as well as, auxiliary family literacy programs. Traditionally, the seeds of family literacy programs have originated in schools that comprehend the significance of parental and community partnerships. The success of these family literacy programs has proved to be contingent on the implementation of goals and objectives tailored to the specific geographical, social, and academic needs of communities, schools, and participants.

The existing economic crisis in our nation demands an assault on the rudiments of literacy attainment that was made available and attractive to disadvantaged children and families who dwell in poverty stricken areas. Effective family literacy programs are valuable components of this assault that can be launched and maintained to aid in the support of an economic recovery. This position paper highlighted a review of family literacy strategies. Dialogue emanated from this session that motivated increased parental and community involvement toward the development and preservation of successful family literacy initiatives.

Bibliotherapy: Another Coping Mechanism

Theresa Dumas, Jo Anne Heisterkamp, Camille Branton,
and Sonya Walton, Mississippi Valley State University

Children are often faced with various devastating emotional issues that can sometime render them helpless and unable to cope from day to day. Frequently, these problems overflow from home to the school environment causing a lack of concentration and failure in school. With this in mind, teachers have been compelled to find other techniques or solutions to help alleviate problems caused by these disturbing issues.

An option that some teachers have used to help children deal with distressing problems is a technique identified as bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy uses books or stories to inform, instruct, and reassure children who are having difficulty managing traumatic experiences. Bibliotherapy is not a new

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technique. Using bibliotherapy as a coping mechanism dates back to the time of Aristotle. Reading children's literature has been a restorative catalyst in dealing with traumatic issues such as divorce, death, bullying, abuse, and alcoholism. Reading about characters who have effectively resolved predicaments similar to problems children are currently experiencing have opened new avenues of personal self-discovery and promoted healing. Bibliotherapy also gives children the opportunity to travel with story characters in discovering that they are not alone when confronted with challenging circumstances.

This position paper drew attention to the use of bibliotherapy as an additional teaching resource. This session called attention to another method in assisting children who are dealing with traumatic experiences and that a channel of communication would develop among educators, parents, children, and the community pertaining to this issue.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. EDUCATION REFORMGovernor Room

**Alternative Teacher Certification Programs as Policy Response
to Teacher Shortage: Foresight or Folly?**

Mary Catherine Hammon, University of Tennessee at Knoxville

Historically, colleges and universities have shouldered the task of preparing the nation's teachers for service in K-12 school settings. Amidst calls for school reform in the 1980s, however, the teacher education landscape in America was forever changed. As a matter of public policy, states began introducing alternative teacher preparation and certification programs. These programs have grown significantly over time and are now providing one-fifth of the nation's K-12 teachers.

This paper was a review of the literature on the origins of alternative teacher preparation programs, the public policy problems they were designed to address, and the effectiveness of the programs in producing intended policy outcomes. Three mature programs - New Jersey's Provisional Teacher Program, Teach for America, and Troops to Teachers - were examined in more depth for program history, organizational purpose, and program features. Program effectiveness in light of stated goals was characterized using available evidence. Implications for the field of teacher education were discussed.

**The Impact of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education on the Teaching
Profession of the United States - A Review of Evidence and Perspectives**

Mary Catherine Hammon, University of Tennessee at Knoxville

Given its role as an accreditor of teacher education programs, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has had over 50 years to contribute to the teaching profession. The nature of NCATE contributions, as well as the organization's overall value to the profession, was explored from multiple perspectives and various stakeholders within the larger educational community.

The review was situated historically and structurally by providing summary and context for the origins of accreditation of higher education in the United States and the evolution to accrediting specific professional programs. Issues associated with whether teaching is a distinct profession were characterized and served as backdrop for the discussion about NCATE's specific impact. Included in the review was the eventual creation of the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) in 1997 as an alternative accreditation option. NCATE and TEAC governance structures, organizational goals, and accreditation processes were compared and contrasted. Implications for NCATE's likely future were discussed.

Good Schools and Bad Schools: A Current Review of the School Visitations Literature

Brian R. Beabout, University of New Orleans

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This paper presented the results of a review of the literature on school-site visitations as modes of gathering both formative and summative assessment data on school performance. This work was motivated by two forces: (1) it seems clear that our math-English-only accountability system measures only a fraction of what one expects schools to accomplish and (2) the local context of New Orleans, in which charter schools and state takeover schools must be evaluated on a 3-5-year cycle. Articles were selected for review based on using the titles of a number of well-known site visitation processes: Baldrige Quality Award visits, regional accreditation visits (SACS, NEASC, MSACS, NSACS, NAAS, and WASC), Elaine Fink's intervisitations and learning walks, Rhode Island's SALT visits, as well as the British school inspection system. Articles returned from a search of general visitation terms (site-visits, visiting committees, accreditation visits, etc.) were also included.

The analysis of the collected literature (currently ongoing) revealed an over-reliance on standards created outside of the local community and a lack of participation from local community members in the visitation process (parents, students, and other community members). These visits also showed an admirable attention to the classroom activities of these schools and not making judgments on more superficial features of the school.

The implications of these findings were that, while there are a number of visitation models that attend to instruction as a primary focus, the standards by which this instruction is evaluated are generally standards created outside of the local context. This may lead to visitation models that unintentionally seek to homogenize instructional practice without regard for variations in student populations and community goals. The creation of visitation teams that are a mixture of expert educators and local community members would engender a useful dialogue about the purposes of school in a given geographical context.

Perceptions of Core Secondary Teacher-Coaches: A Critical Review of Literature – 1920 to 2009

Alan Brown, University of Alabama

In describing her work with students, Shirley Brice Heath (1983) once wrote, "We read and write a lot of the time, lots of places. School isn't much different except that here, we work on techniques, and we practice a lot – under a coach. I'm the coach" (p. 289). The role of coach is becoming increasingly prevalent in current educational arenas (Knight, 2009). However, one type of teacher-coach seems to be taking a hit in the academic court of public opinion. Although physical education coaches have been a popular research topic for years, very few studies exist pertaining to teacher-coaches in core content areas. Despite this lack of research, there is a common perception among educators and non-educators alike that those who coach are not so effective in the classroom as non-coaching teachers and that teacher-coaches are more interested in coaching first and teaching second (Chiodo, Martin, and Rowan, 2002; Figone, 1994; Hill, 1997; Hogan, 1980; Millslagle and Morley, 2004).

The question that guided this review was: How does educational literature portray the perceptions of core (mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies/history) secondary teachers who also serve as athletic coaches? The purpose was to synthesize the available literature since 1920, the year the National Federation of State High School Associations, the governing body of all education-based interscholastic sports and activities, was formed.

Results indicated the following themes related to teacher-coaches: perceptions, specific content areas, teacher education, employment opportunities, common characteristics, classroom environments, professional development, school culture, harsh realities, and balance. Discussion of the findings included gaps in the literature and opportunities for further study.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. RETHINKING SCHOOL REFORM: CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND CHANGE (Symposium).....Capitol Room

Heather K. Olson Beal, Stephen F. Austin State University, and Angela Lee
and Petra Munro Hendry, Louisiana State University

This research explored three high-achieving public schools in East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP), Louisiana: (1) an autonomous high school, (2) a foreign language immersion magnet school, and (3) a traditional elementary school. Despite decades of desegregation efforts, one-third of all children in

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EBRP attend private schools, which are 86% white, while public schools are 83% African-American and 81% socioeconomically-disadvantaged. The schools in the case studies were majority African-American and socioeconomically-disadvantaged, yet are unique because they have school cultures that function as “achievement gap-closers.” These school cultures are created by parental involvement, strong leadership, curricular autonomy, and teachers with high expectations of all students. Educational literature increasingly acknowledges the influence of school culture on teaching, learning, and student achievement, and is, therefore, critical to understand to achieve systemic change. Toward that end, this research identified aspects of school culture at these campuses in which high student achievement is both expected and attained. The research presented here adds to historical and contemporary narratives that highlight successful urban, public schools, and students.

The first paper was a one-year case study of EBR Lab, an autonomous high school that is part of a community-school partnership initiative to promote school reform. Contrary to a focus on “closing the gap,” which assumes that the norm is the standard, a culture of excellence has been created in this school where students are expected to excel and do excel. Drawing on a theoretical perspective that acknowledges the importance of civic and cultural domains to school reform instead of a limited focus on “testing,” this paper discussed the characteristics of the culture as well as the process of creating that culture.

The second paper was a one-year case study of South Boulevard Elementary, a foreign language immersion magnet school that has achieved both integration and educational excellence. Despite studies to the contrary, this research found that both white and African-American parents chose South Boulevard, a dilapidated, inner-city school that is majority African-American and is socioeconomically-disadvantaged. This research identified aspects of the unique culture created by the immersion curriculum that counter several common narratives that focus on the achievement gap and deficit models of minority culture: (1) a culture of academic rigor, (2) a culture of multiplicity, and (3) a culture of community.

The third paper was a case study of Ryan Elementary, a traditional school that has been recognized as one of the highest performing schools in the state despite its 96.3% poverty rate. Regardless of the difficulties, real or perceived, faced by Ryan students, they have been achieving beyond some of their more wealthy peers. This research found that the school culture, created by the school principal and based on principles of culturally responsive pedagogy, was critical to student achievement at Ryan. This research explored the practices and behaviors of the principal that contributed to the creation of a school culture that promotes academic achievement and excellence. The presenters shared findings and elicited discussion among audience members regarding the complex ways in which school culture is created and negotiated.

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. READINGAcademy Room

The Effects of the Reading First Program on the Acquisition of Early Literacy Skills: A Comparative Study

Monica Wong-Ratcliff, Texas A and M University – Kingsville

The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacy of the Reading First (RF) program on the early literacy acquisition of young children. The primary research question was to investigate whether first-grade students in RF schools would have better reading performances than those students in non-RF schools as measured by Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) subtests. The secondary research question was concerned with whether third- and fourth-grade students in RF schools performed better than those in non-RF schools on statewide-mandated English Language Arts (ELA) assessment measures.

A three-year longitudinal study was conducted to examine the ELA scores between 2006 and 2008. Data were obtained from six elementary schools in two rural school districts in Louisiana. The results showed that the first-grade RF students had better performances in reading than the non-RF students at the beginning of the school year 2007-08. However, the differences in the adjusted means of the DIBELS subtests (Nonsense Word Fluency and Oral Reading Fluency) were not statistically significant at the end of the school year. Also, all of the first graders in both the RF and non-RF schools demonstrated significant gains in their reading skills.

As the school district required the non-RF schools to implement some of the RF components

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in the classrooms, the findings indicated that the RF practices, which were based on scientifically-based reading research (SBRR), helped produce positive reading outcomes in both RF and non-RF classrooms. As for the statewide-mandated ELA assessment, the findings of the longitudinal study indicated that the students in the RF schools performed better than those in the non-RF schools in the Louisiana ELA assessment programs between 2006 and 2008. The study provided evidence that the efforts of the RF program in implementing research-based reading instructional strategies into classrooms were successful.

Reinventing Preservice Education in a Post-Katrina Venue: Rethinking Professional Course Structure by Providing Service and Using Access to Literature Through Classrooms Libraries to Enhance Preparation for Urban Teaching

Margaret-Mary Sulentic Dowell, Louisiana State University

A critical focus of elementary education programming is preparation to teach reading. Using literature and providing access to books is a cornerstone of reading development. Post-Katrina New Orleans has continued to face formidable, frightening, and fascinating challenges, recovering, rebuilding and reforming education, mostly within the public schools. The research is undeniable for students; those who read regularly perform better all around. The current national estimate on the ratio of access to books is approximately 22 books to one child; in the fall of 2007 in New Orleans-East, the number was zero books per child. Television and media reports counted the number of missing and displaced persons, cataloged the loss of property, and even lamented the months of missed school days and the catch-up many students faced. However, one key component missing in that discussion was the lack of access to books.

In August 2007, Abramson Science and Technology Charter School opened in New Orleans-East, serving one of the hardest hit areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Housed in temporary buildings and run on generators until late fall 2007, the school had no working library. Devoid of a neighborhood public library, children lacked opportunities to access literature. The success of many teachers weighs on their preservice experience, and this course-embedded project focused on avenues for preservice teachers to experience meaningful opportunities to engage in authentic course activities, provide service, expand their cultural horizons and frames of reference while strengthening preparation for teaching in urban environments.

This case study highlighted service, teaching, and research efforts to establish classroom libraries at Abramson involving public school faculty, College of Education faculty, and education candidates at Louisiana State University in a reciprocal and mutually beneficial learning experience, ultimately gathering 8,865 books and establishing classroom libraries at all levels in every class.

The Role of Readability When Comparing Local Norms to National Norms

George W. Hebert, Louisiana State University

Curriculum-based measurement in Reading (R-CBM) has long been regarded as a robust measure of reading in both scientific and applied settings. Currently, universal screenings in reading in a Response to Intervention (RtI) model utilize the R-CBM practices. However, uncontrolled systematic error often appears in R-CBM data, perhaps because of passage difficulty. In this study, local reading norms were compared to nationally established reading norms. The readability of the grade-level probes was calculated by various established and accepted formulas. Additionally, adjusted scores were calculated for comparative purposes. Discussion focused on the importance of establishing valid readability estimates to better equate reading passages.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES Paramount Room

Science Achievement Among Fifth-Grade Students in the United States

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Mary N. McNeese and Rose B. Jones, University of Southern Mississippi

This research study investigated the interrelationships among fifth-grade students' science skills, their standardized science achievement scores, and their science teachers' instructional activities. The 5,324 students and their science teachers were a nationally representative sample whose responses were made available through the Early Childhood Longitudinal Program (ECLS) in the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The specific demographic information on the sample was presented.

Results of the analysis of these quantitative data showed that interrelationships among specific science instructional activities and student science skills were positive, meaning that science teachers using certain activities and students with certain science skills were likely to be using multiple activities to develop multiple science skills. For example, teachers' frequent use of hands-on activities was associated with frequent use of the internet for science. Likewise, students' skilled in communicating science ideas were also skilled in the understanding of science concepts. The activities and skills, which were significantly related to standardized science achievement scores, were: frequency of hands-on science activity, frequency talking about science results, frequency using the internet for science, frequency generating/testing hypotheses, emphasis on science facts, understanding science concepts, developing science problem solving, and communicating science ideas.

All of these significant interrelationships were negative, which indicated that greater frequency of these activities (indicated on the questionnaire by lower numbers) was associated with higher science achievement. These three variables were not significantly related to science achievement: taking science tests/ quizzes, frequent use of library science resources, and use of technology as a science tool.

These results have implications for policy and practice; i.e., since both instructional time and science resources are limited, perhaps the most efficient tactic would be to focus on activities and skills that are the most productive. Additionally, participants were encouraged to discuss these variables from their respective experiences.

The Identification of Essential Developmentally Responsive Middle School Principals' Practices and the Construction of the Essential Practices Rating Instrument

Tiffany N. Taylor, Paige Tompkins, and Mary O'Phelan, Mercer University

The research study identified essential practices of developmentally responsive middle school principals as related to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards of 2008 and professional learning as identified by the National Middle School Association: (1) vision of learning, (2) instructional programs, (3) professional learning, (4) management, (5) faculty and community collaboration, (6) ethical behavior, and (7) political, economic, legal, and cultural contexts. A panel of 16 middle-level experts participated in a Delphi study. The panel was comprised of a national panel of principals associated with the National Forum for Accelerating Middle-grades Reform, authors and researchers identified by a review of literature, and other pertinent educational leaders. The panel identified 256 essential principal practices. Responses were analyzed, and common responses were combined.

Data analysis of Delphi II, a 179-question rating scaled survey, revealed that 111 practices were rated as absolutely essential or very important by 90% of the participants. A statistical profile, including the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score, and percentage rating each response as absolutely essential or very important, was developed and used as the Delphi III instrument to determine the degree to which the panel members agreed on each practice. A final review of the Delphi III results indicated that 111 practices were essential middle school principal practices.

Findings provided a non-exhaustive, research-based list of essential practices of middle school principals. The rating instrument can be used by middle-level special interest groups, middle school principals, and local school districts to assess middle school principals. Future research was recommended to find relationships between the level of practice of the ISLLC standards of 2008 by middle school principals and student achievement. Future research is necessary to determine relationships and effects between principals' practices and school performance.

The Effect of Tangrams on the Spatial Ability of College Students

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Kimberly E. Ball and Linda K. Morse, Mississippi State University

Students with a strong spatial ability have consistently migrated toward fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM disciplines). In the past, it has been assumed that boys have higher spatial abilities than girls. Recently, in children with low socioeconomic status, spatial abilities for boys and girls have been found to be equal. This has brought to the forefront the influence of environment. The National Research Council released a report in 2006 touting that students who do not learn to use their spatial abilities to their maximum potential are at a disadvantage. Integrating spatial skills instruction into the classroom is a challenge issued by the National Research Council.

Tangrams appear to be an ideal transition tool. Tangrams are a set of seven shapes invented by the ancient Chinese. They can be utilized in classrooms as a way of satisfying national and state requirements in the area of geometry. A unique aspect of these tangrams is that they can be formed into thousands of different pictures. The tangrams may be transformed into a given picture by translation, rotation, and/or reflection of each individual piece. Subjects in this study consisted of 20 students enrolled in Educational Psychology summer courses at Mississippi State University in 2008. Utilizing spatial ability tests before and after a two-and-a-half week exposure to tangrams, spatial ability was found to increase significantly.

The results of this study should encourage the development of tangram activities within the classrooms of K-12 schools. Perhaps this could lead to increased representation by women in the STEM disciplines. A follow-up study needs to be performed to see if tangram intervention in the K-12 grades could indeed result in greater spatial ability.

**10:00 – 10:50 A.M. WRITING A SUITABLE SABBATICAL PROPOSAL
(Training) Louisiana Room**

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

Do you WANT to take a sabbatical? Do you NEED to take a sabbatical? Have you EARNED a sabbatical? Sabbaticals are not guaranteed just because you have the requisite number of years invested in the university. Certainly, not all sabbaticals applied for are approved. How can you write a sabbatical proposal that will stand out among other proposals submitted? What do you need to include in your proposal so it were approved? How can you prepare a proposal, that once granted, will lead to a successful sabbatical that will enhance your college and university's mission? How will your sabbatical scholarship be disseminated among the various scholarly networks? Preparing a successful sabbatical takes time, effort, and creativity. If your university is going to invest in you and pay you while you are not teaching, it wants to make sure that you have a solid, unique, and worthwhile project planned. Too many sabbatical proposals are written that lack specific details and a unique approach to study that are outside the regular activities of a professor. You need something new, something different. A sabbatical is a time to show your ability to contribute to your field and advance your knowledge and skills and showcase your university.

This training session provided relevant literature and guidelines about writing a successful sabbatical proposal and helped to find out how to make your proposal stand out and have a better chance of being approved. Participants learned how to think creatively and generate project ideas that are unique and fundable. Examples of well written and poorly written proposals were shared. Additionally, an evaluation checklist, including pertinent elements of a suitable sabbatical proposal, were distributed. Participants shared their ideas and learned how to develop them into a great proposal that could be funded.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....University Room

Developing Into a Mentor: Combining Style with Substance

Randy Parker, Louisiana Tech University

A continuing issue for school leaders is the recruitment, induction, and retention of new

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teachers. Despite numerous reform efforts and professional development programs, research has indicated that large numbers of beginning teachers leave the profession within the first three to five years. The effectiveness of a mentor can be a critical element in the process supporting and retaining new teachers. An effective and engaged mentor can be critical in helping a new teacher to master day-to-day issues, develop strong professional relationships, and become an integral part of the professional learning community.

This position paper presented the argument that mentors must be carefully selected to maximize effectiveness and that not enough attention has been paid to matching the veteran teacher's style of mentoring with the needs and aspirations of the new teacher. The tenets of three common styles of mentoring (Responder, Colleague, and Initiator) were presented along with the common outcomes and limitations of each approach.

A discussion followed about the methods appropriate to identify potential mentors and to match the style of the mentor with the needs of the new teacher. Six research-based strategies to maximize mentoring effectiveness in modeling effective teaching, nurturing development of the new teacher, and increasing opportunities for professional growth were presented. Research has indicated that there is no one right way to approach mentoring and that individual situations dictate which mentoring approach to use. Knowledge of mentoring style and effective, research-based mentoring strategies can be used to clarify expectations and maximize opportunities for effective mentoring. By putting this knowledge into practice, effective school leaders can enhance both the effectiveness of new teacher induction programs and the mentoring expertise of experienced faculty.

School Wellness Policy - What Novice Educators Need to Know

Vincent R. McGrath, Mississippi State University, and Linda C. McGrath, Community Health Educator

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

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. EFFICACY..... King Room

Telephone, Internet, or Support from Both: Which is the Best Predictor of Smoking Cessation?

Joseph A. Haas, Dana K. Fuller, Chris Tate, and Jwa K. Kim, Middle Tennessee State University

Telephone and internet-based smoking cessation programs are cost effective interventions that have the opportunity to reach many smokers. The smoking cessation program in this study allowed participants the choice of using either method of support or both methods. This study endeavored to determine which support method (telephone, internet, or both) was the best predictor of quitting smoking.

In July and August of 2007, a group of 5,346 participants enrolled in a smoking cessation program through their employers or health plans. Four sources of information were collected from these individuals: intake characteristics, telephone call records with counselors, website usage, and a follow-up survey given during their seventh month after enrollment. Abstinence from smoking was defined as not having "even a puff" in the last 30 days.

Logistic regression was utilized to determine which support method was the best predictor of cessation, along with demographics and smoker characteristics. The variables included in the model were time until first cigarette after waking ($p = .0009$), average number of cigarettes per day ($p = .0045$), usage of nicotine replacement therapy ($p < .0001$), modality ($p = .0305$), stage of change ($p < .0001$), active internet social networking ($p = .3721$), passive internet social networking ($p = .0057$), interactive tools ($p = .8437$), gender ($p = .3148$), number of phone calls ($p < .0001$), number of online sessions ($p < .0001$), and age ($p = .0982$).

Participants who only used the internet modality were no more likely to quit than those who

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used only the phone modality (OR = 0.66, $p = .1274$), and participants who used both modalities were significantly less likely to quit than those who only used the internet (OR = 0.62, $p = .0086$). A more concentrated usage of one modality may be more beneficial than using some of both.

School- and Teacher-Level Correlates of Teacher Autonomy

Mindy L. Crain-Dorough and Kathleen T. Campbell, Southeastern Louisiana University

The study examined the correlates of teachers' perceptions of autonomy. The set of correlates included school-level variables (achievement level of school and school climate subscales) and teacher-level variables (teacher efficacy, years of teaching experience, years of experience at the current school, National Board certification, and degree level). Previous research has found relationships among teacher autonomy and several constructs (e.g., empowerment, job satisfaction, motivation, professionalism, and burnout; Burnetti, 2001; Kim and Loadman, 1994; Klecker and Loadman, 1996; Ulriksen, 1996). Research is needed to explore constructs related to teacher autonomy in the context of schools as social systems (Pearson, 2006).

Data were collected using a survey that was administered online via the Survey Monkey website. A link to the survey was sent to the respondents in an e-mail. The survey was open to respondents for almost three weeks. A follow-up e-mail was sent a few days before the survey closed. The administered survey was a combination of three pre-existing surveys, the Organizational Climate Index (OCI), the Teacher Autonomy Scale, and the Teacher Efficacy Scale (short form), in addition to demographic questions. The survey was administered to teachers from eight schools located in three school districts in southeast Louisiana. There were 150 teachers who completed the survey. A multiple regression analysis was utilized to examine the relationship of teacher autonomy with the two sets of variables.

A full model, including both sets of variables, was compared to a reduced model containing only the school-level variables to evaluate the differential impacts of the two sets of variables on perceptions of autonomy. The findings suggested implications for improving teachers' sense of empowerment in their classrooms and schools with the end result of improving student learning.

Measuring Teacher's Perceptions of School Culture in Southeast Louisiana

Nan B. Adams, M. Flo Winstead, and Thomas A. DeVaney, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Mitzi Trahan and Dianne F. Olivier, University of Louisiana - Lafayette

This study investigated the differences in teachers' perceptions of multiple dimensions of school culture reflecting norms of professional teaching and leadership behaviors in rural southeastern Louisiana. Data were collected using the Revised School Culture Elements Questionnaire (RSCEQ), which examined actual and preferred features of school culture. A variety of demographic variables was collected to allow the analysis of several factors considered relevant to teacher efficacy, such as years of teaching experience, grade level taught, and level of academic attainment of teachers.

During March 2009, the Revised School Culture Elements Questionnaire (RSCEQ) was distributed to faculty in PreK-12 schools in southeastern Louisiana. 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. The students were required to obtain consent from their school to administer the surveys. Surveys were completed by over 600 teachers in approximately 30 schools. The data were analyzed by school and then aggregated to provide a norm by which to compare each school score. Tentative conclusions were drawn.

The findings of the study suggested implications and recommendations for principal behaviors that demonstrate shared leadership and vision, collegial teacher behaviors to support teaching and learning, and teacher commitment to developing themselves to better serve the needs of their students.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. COGNITION/ACHIEVEMENT Governor Room

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University of Southern Mississippi Teacher Leader Institute

Ronald A. Styron, Margo Guillott, Gaylynn Parker, John Bishop,
and Stacey Reeves, University of Southern Mississippi

The goals of this study were to: (1) investigate how utilizing embedded literacy strategies as measured by the Mississippi Curriculum Test during a 20-day summer institute setting functions regarding the improvement of students achievement (grades six through eight) in Language Arts, (2) investigate how engaging in coaching/supervisory skills with lead teachers and building-level administrators in facilitating language arts skills and comprehension through the use of the Understanding by Design conceptual framework as found online on the Mississippi Curriculum Framer impacts student performance in Language Arts, (3) explore how utilizing Mississippi Curriculum Framer online resources functions in the integration of literacy within different content topics and how subsequent supervision of these standards into daily instruction impacts student achievement, (4) examine how engaging in the praxis outlined by theories of Understanding by Design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005) and Depth of Knowledge (Webb, 2002) strategies (as framed by second order change) function towards student achievement on state literacy tests, and (5) explore Walkabout supervisory/coaching techniques (Guillott, unpublished) based on the conceptual framework of Understanding by Design functions to facilitate the cognitive ability to transfer knowledge across content areas by middle school students.

These goals were accomplished through a comprehensive 20-session summer program, with two follow-up sessions, involving 20 participants from low achieving and high poverty schools from the area of south Mississippi. The researchers administered three separate questionnaires, including one prior to the Institute, one upon conclusion of the Institute, and one after the administration of the MCT. One-way ANOVAs, correlation, and multiple regression analyses were performed.

Meandering Mind Mapping: Congenitally Blind Students' Conceptualizations of Matter

Sinikka Smothers and M. Jenice Goldston, University of Alabama

A multiple case study was used to explore the following question: What conceptual understandings do four congenitally blind adolescents have concerning the nature of matter? More specific research questions focused on the following: (1) What formal physics constructs or theories do congenitally blind adolescents use in their explanations about changes in matter? and (2) How do the congenitally blind adolescents' explanations express conceptual consistency within a certain theoretical framework?

Methods included tactile investigations on the concepts and processes associated with changes in matter that included: dissolution, chemical change, expansion, and condensation. Individual interviews, model making sessions, journal writing, and focus-group interviews comprised the primary data. Responses were analyzed using three frameworks: structural views of matter, types of understanding of matter changes, and conceptual consistency of students' explanatory schemes of matter which identified macro- and microparticulate views and alternate understandings of matter.

Data analysis led to the development of Meandering Mind Maps, analytical tools that illustrate visually shifts in participant's thinking between theoretical views of matter. A Meandering Mind Map consists of a macroparticulate outer layer, microparticulate inner layer, and an interface layer that includes lynchpin concepts molecule, atom, and element. The lynchpin concepts are perceived to mediate and scaffold cognitive shifts between the macroparticulate, physically observable, and the microparticulate, abstract views of matter. Each participant's responses were coded to one of the three categories, plotted in clockwise sequence, and connected with a line on the meandering-design.

The findings of this study suggested that congenitally blind adolescents have theoretically inconsistent and emerging conceptual frameworks of the structure and the behavior of matter. These findings parallel results noted with sighted adolescents. Pedagogical and future research implications, including the design and use of tactile models to scaffold all students into understanding abstract concepts in physics and chemistry, were discussed.

The Role of Counselor-Led College Preparation Activities in Increasing College Opportunity for Aspiring First-Generation College Students

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Jacquelin T. Broussard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this study was to determine if college preparation programs and activities presented by school counselors increased student opportunity to attend a four-year institution. Students who do not have college educated parents often have many characteristics that put them at a disadvantage in gaining access to a four-year college. First-generation college students are more likely to enroll in community colleges and technical colleges and are less likely to enroll in four-year institutions. Increased opportunity for first-generation college students to gain access to college is dependent on the programs that are offered through the educational process. The guidance provided by the school counselor can have a profound impact on increased opportunity.

A questionnaire using a four-point Likert scale was completed by 222 aspiring first-generation college students who were planning to attend a four-year institution. Participants' perceptions regarding counseled college preparation activities and programs were examined. Measures of central tendency, variability, and frequencies were examined for each college preparation activity or program presented by school counselors.

Study results revealed that participants indicated that they were more likely to be exposed to activities about course selection to prepare for college and scholarship and financial aid to pay for college and less likely to be exposed to activities geared to help students choose a four-year college over other post-secondary options. Almost half of the participants also indicated that they were not exposed to career related activities. This was a surprising find because career and lifestyle development is a course required for school counseling certification.

This study has implications for the development of school counseling programs that address the needs of underrepresented groups such as first-generation college students. The results provided insight into the perceptions of aspiring first-generation college students regarding their increased opportunity to attend college.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. EVALUATIONCapitol Room

Psychometric Validation of the Cross-Cultural Religiosity Scale

Philseok Lee and Jaw K. Kim, Middle Tennessee State University

Since Allport and Ross (1967) introduced the Religiosity Orientation Scale, many researchers have examined the measurement of religiosity. Gorsuch and Venable (1983) proposed the Age-Universal Intrinsic/Extrinsic Scale (I/E Scale) to make ROS suitable for various age groups. Kirkpatrick (1989) argued that extrinsic religiosity was subdivided into two categories: Personal Extrinsic (Ep) and Social Extrinsic (Es) factors. In the same year, Gorsuch and McPherson (1989) revised the I/E Scale to make the Age-Universal Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiosity Scale-Revised (I/E-R Scale) consisting of 14 items with a five-point Likert-response format through factor analysis. However, previous studies have one common problem that the scale was only analyzed by classical test theory (CTT), which has been proven to have many practical problems. In 2005, Kim and Kim developed a new religiosity scale, the Cross-Cultural Religiosity Scale (CCRS), consisting of 22 items based on item response theory (IRT). They found that CCRS was generally acceptable according to IRT as well as CTT.

This study examined CCRS from three angles. First, the validity and item test correlation of CCRS were computed in conjunction with I/E-R. Second, the study confirmed three distinctive factors of CCRS (I, Ep, and Es). Third, this study evaluated each item of CCRS with item discrimination index and item information in IRT. Data from 233 students were already collected. Data analysis was completed during the summer of 2009, and the results were compared and interpreted based on the three-factor theory. This study enhanced the understanding of human religiosity dimension through a new development of CCRS.

Legal Literacy for School Administrators and Teachers: Measurement in the Mid-South Area

Vivica Smith Pierre, Eugene Kennedy, and Patrick Saidu, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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Schimmel and Militello (2007) found that over 75% of the 1,317 teachers they surveyed had taken no course in school law and that over 50% of respondents were uninformed or misinformed about teacher and student rights. The findings from the Schimmel and Militello study suggested that most educators: (1) are uninformed or misinformed about student and teacher rights, (2) have taken no course in school law, (3) get much of their school law information from other teachers, (4) would change their behavior if they knew more about school law, and (5) want to learn more about these issues. In addition many teachers are utilizing technology to enhance student learning and are uninformed about educational technology and current legal issues.

The Schimmel and Militello survey, however, did not utilize a representative sample that allows us to make inferences about all teachers and their knowledge of school law, including educational technology and legal issues. Rather, Schimmel and Militello used purposeful sampling. Specifically, researchers contacted principals who were interested in administering the survey with their teachers and in examining the answers with their staff. The 1,317 respondents represented 17 states: Massachusetts ((n=690), Texas (n=174), Colorado (n=145), Michigan (n=75), California (n=52), and other states (n=181). In examining the survey data, Schimmel and Militello (2007) ran simple statistical analyses, correlations, and analyses of variance (ANOVA). This research has built upon the Schimmel and Militello survey and Pierre and Saidu added new areas (e.g., current awareness of cyber bullying, online crime and safety, security breaches, and legal compliance current issues and trends, if any). In addition, Pierre and Saidu focused more particularly on the Mid-South geographic area. Pierre and Saidu utilized mixed methods research methods and the interpretation of results.

**Launching Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program Evaluation
Through Rubric Development in Composition Courses**

Elizabeth Woodworth, Jennifer Good, Susan Barganier,
and Kelly Birchfield, Auburn University at Montgomery

Developing effective writing assessments is difficult, and using those assessments to develop an overall writing program evaluation is even harder. The complexity of skills necessary to produce good writing, combined with its developmental nature, make it difficult to create an assessment system that measures all nuances of growth (Yancey and Huot, 1997). Typically authentic writing samples are preferred over standardized assessments when measuring writing outcomes, yet the need to standardize and report program results remains a challenge (Spandel and Stiggins, 1980).

This exploratory study chronicled early efforts of administrators in developing a writing rubric for use throughout a four-year WAC program. The Director of Composition created a general rubric to rate assignments for the two required composition courses in the WAC program. At the end of the term, eight different raters from across the university were gathered to complete a blind evaluation on a sample of student portfolios (N=17) from both composition classes, with identity and composition course coded. Two different raters read each full portfolio and, using a four-point scale, rated dimensions of a student's overall writing ability on a 34-item survey. Because of internal consistencies of .78 or higher, the items of the survey were collapsed into scales of macro-organization, micro-organization, word-level errors, referencing, and style. Mean ratings for these scales were compared at both composition levels, yielding no significant difference between the two groups. Nonetheless, important information per writing dimension, which will help flesh out full program evaluation details, was explored and discussed.

This initial evaluation has led to the further development of a writing rubric that will serve as the framework for the upper-level, writing-intensive courses. Discovering a valid and reliable method to provide flexibility for growth, while maintaining common overarching dimensions of writing for reporting purposes, can have an impact on future program evaluations.

10:00 – 10:50 A.M. ENGLISH/READINGAcademy Room

**Creating a Collaborative Classroom: An Experience of Learning
English as a Foreign Language Through Dialogue**

Rong Li, University of Tennessee at Knoxville

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The author grounded this qualitative action research in the practice of teaching English as a foreign language in a university in China. In the research, the author examined students' lived experiences of collaborative English learning through dialogue in a comprehensive English class. The research suggested that engaging students in dialogue can be a powerful way of English teaching and learning. The author used Peters' (1998, 2002) DATA-DATA model of action research. They provided a rich description of what their teaching situation was like. They analyzed why their teaching situation existed as they described. The author offered a detailed plan on how and under what conditions the dialogical pedagogy worked out.

Data collection included students' interviews, students' weekly and final reflections on their learning experiences as a group, and the author's field notes. Nine out of 30 participants were randomly chosen for interviews. A thematic analysis technique advanced by Moustakas (1994) was implemented for data analysis. The process involved the researcher's reading of the entire transcript, grouping statements into "meaning units," reflecting on their structural descriptions of tentative themes, and constructing an overall thematic structure of the data. Findings were: (1) the need for both interaction and reflection in language learning, (2) students are motivated to learn when seen as making contributions to the group, (3) dialogue engages students in thinking and making meaning collaboratively, and (4) students practice various language skills as they are involved in dialogue.

Implications of the research suggested that building a collaborative classroom takes time and experience. Essential to collaborative learning in a foreign language classroom is the creation of a respecting and trusting dialogical environment.

Social Graces: Women's Education in the American South

June S. Newman Graham, Louisiana State University

This paper explored the construction of southern womanhood and its relationship to the history of women's education in the American South. The author asked, How were women "schooled" during the late 19th to early and mid-20th century? Also, the author examined how women educated themselves. The story of educational history in the United States has many biases. It focuses on northeastern education to the detriment of the rest of the regions in the United States. Also, the concentration emphasizes formal schooling almost exclusively. Finally, for the most part, it has ignored females other than the token mention of women's names. In this paper the author sought to recover many of these areas collectively.

The author used a case study approach of one group of women in the South, the Natchez Garden Club, an elite social club in Mississippi, to explore the relationship between women's informal education, as well as their formal efforts to involve themselves in the school system in their local area. The researcher's results showed that the women of the Garden Club were involved in various literacy practices that helped them to educate themselves in an informal manner. They published a monthly periodical that covered a wide range of topics. As well, they had a vast mentoring program. Formerly, in the schools, the women of the Garden Club sponsored contests such as essay competitions. One of the ladies even wrote a text book on the history of Mississippi that was used for 30 years in the public schools.

The implication drawn from this study is that women in the South were often innovators in education. Their contributions have long been ignored. As an association focused on the southern region, the author was attempting to recover the history of southern education and considering the pioneering work that women have done for this region.

The Exploration of Preservice Teachers' Metacognitive Support for Science Literacy

Dana G. Thames, Kathleen C. York, and Tania H. Hanna, University of Southern Mississippi

Many students find it difficult to read and understand science materials. Providing metacognitive support is one way for teachers to help students improve reading comprehension in science. This study sought to address a common problem in science instruction: most novice teachers lack confidence and experience in providing metacognitive instructional support that leads students to independent use of strategic behaviors to meet the reading demands of science texts. This qualitative

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study explored the following question: How do novice teachers plan and implement metacognitive communications during instruction with science texts? During the course of the research study, the following subset of questions naturally emerged: (1) What do novice teachers' semi-scripted, metacognitive instructional conversations about science reflect? (2) What do novice teachers' semi-scripted-metacognitive Think-alouds about science reflect? and (3) What problems and challenges do novice teachers face when they attempt, plan, and implement metacognitive support for science literacy?

Three data sources, each drawn from a random and purposeful chain sampling of 50 out of 150 comprehensive case studies, were analyzed. The researchers conducted preliminary analyses of novice teachers' metacognitive verbalizations in semi-scripted lessons, journal reflections, and conference field notes, and they identified significant statements, which were coded, analyzed, examined for redundancy, and collapsed into broad themes and patterns and reexamined analytically.

The findings were verified using multiple data sources, peer review, and reconceptualization. Key emergent themes identified included metacognitive support reflecting: (1) an initial reluctance on the part of the novice teachers to draw on personal funds of knowledge to think aloud about science texts, (2) less mechanistic strategy talk during metacognitive teacher-student communications after repeated practice with planning and implementing interactive instructional conversations with science texts, and (3) improved generative use of developmentally appropriate questioning during interactive instructional conversations. Implications for educators were identified.

**11:00 – 11:50 A.M. ON WRITING IN APA FORMAT: USING THE NEW SIXTH EDITION
(Training)..... Paramount Room**

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's 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 will consolidate "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 training session were: (1) to examine the major revisions in the Sixth Edition that involve changes in professional writing, (2) to contrast the changes in the Sixth Edition from current professional writing

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practices, and (3) to provide participants with an overview of the differences from the Fifth Edition.

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 need to be incorporated into professional writing behaviors.

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

Teacher Quality as a Factor of Student Achievement: How Does the Type of Teacher Certification Correlate with Student Achievement in Mathematics?

Dona I. Robinson, Southern University

This study investigated the extent to which student achievement in mathematics was correlated with the type of mathematics certification held by teachers. Demographic variables, such as socioeconomic status, teacher salary, overall school spending, urbanicity, and educational attainment, were also examined. Student mathematics achievement was defined as the mathematics score on the Louisiana Graduate Exit Exam for the 21st Century (GEE-21). The GEE-21 is a criterion-referenced test for all Louisiana public high school students to show sufficient knowledge and skills to be eligible for a standard high school diploma. The study employed an ex-post facto correlational design that utilized data from the 64 school districts in the state of Louisiana. The sample consisted of the 64 school districts in the state of Louisiana.

The district mean mathematics GEE score was used as the dependent variable, and the predictor variables were each district's percentage of each certification type of the mathematics teachers. A Pearson coefficient correlation was used to examine the linear relationship the district mean of student mathematics scores, teacher certification types, and the district demographic variables. A multiple linear regression model was used to illustrate the relationships of the independent measures of best fit. Beta weights and structure coefficient were examined to determine which predictors contributed most to a district's mathematics performance. Teacher certification types and socioeconomic status of school districts were statistically significantly associated with district mathematics performance (full, $r = .283$, $p < 0.05$; temporary, $r = -.257$, $p < 0.05$ and socioeconomic status, $r = -.645$, $p < 0.01$). A statistically significant regression equation for predicting a district's mathematics performance on the GEE was developed.

Beta weights and structure coefficients of the linear regression model confirmed that socioeconomic status rather than teacher certification type had the greatest influence on student mathematics performance on the Louisiana Graduate Exit Exam.

Primary Grade Teachers' Teacher Identities and Teaching Practices in the United States and Japanese Mathematics Classrooms

Kyoko M. Johns, University of Alabama

Previous studies focused on teacher behavior and classroom mathematics practice, but there was limited information about teacher identities and classroom practice. Hence, the problem of this study was to examine teachers' identities, dispositions toward mathematics and teaching, and their effects on classroom teaching practices with sociocultural perspective

The case studies were embedded in Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective, Lave and Wenger's situated learning theory, and Gee's Discourse analysis theory. Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective and Lave and Wenger's situated learning theory helped to explain how social and cultural aspects interacted with individuals' identities in a community. Lave and Wenger (1991) defined learning as "increasing participation in communities of practice concerns the whole person acting in the world" (p. 49). Gee's theory provided a tool to analyze language as it enacted with social practices and developed one's social identity (1999).

The qualitative case studies included two participants from the same elementary school in Japan and two participants from the same elementary school in the United States. These teachers provided the unit of analysis. Data collection methods included observations of mathematics lessons over

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four weeks, field notes, teacher interviews, and teacher surveys. All data were analyzed to find common themes among the four participants. Data were analyzed first to compare the two teachers from each country and then to compare all teachers from both countries

The data suggested that teacher identity and identity formation in sociocultural perspective were essential components in understanding mathematics teaching practice and the mathematics pedagogical content knowledge expressed in teachers' instruction. Teachers' background experiences and the communities in which they participated influenced how teachers taught mathematics. The creation of a learning community within a school to support teachers in developing positive and strong mathematics teacher identities and in providing mentors for new teachers could help address some of the issues were discussed.

Single-Sex Education and Its Impact on Academic Achievement, Discipline Referral Frequency, and Attendance for First- and Second-Grade Public Education Students

Katherine L. Bradley, Mercer University

According to various educational theorists and researchers, single-sex education is an effective instructional strategy for increasing student performance. However, little is known about the impact of single-sex public education in the United States. This study investigated differences between single-sex students and coeducation students on academic and non-academic outcome variables. It was the intent of this researcher to contribute to the empirical understanding of single-sex education within a public elementary educational environment, specifically, for first- and second-grade students. This quantitative research analyzed the impact of single-sex education on academic achievement (math and reading improvement), discipline referral, and attendance for public school first and second-grade students. Though there are over 30 outcome variables cited in the literature, these outcome variables were chosen for this investigation based on their direct and indirect impact on a school's ability to make AYP. An ANOVA was used to analyze the academic data, and chi square was used to analyze the non-academic data.

Analysis of the academic data with ANOVA indicated that female students in the single-sex environment showed statistically significant improvement in both reading ($p = .01$) and in math ($p = .04$). Attendance data were analyzed for significance differences between single-sex classes and coeducational classes. Statistically significant differences ($p = .004$) for attendance were found between all single-sex students and all coeducational students. Differences in attendance were also statistical significance ($p = .01$) between females in single-sex classes and coeducational classes. Only an empirical reporting of discipline referral data was included because of the low incidence of referrals.

The implications of these findings were that single-sex education may be an effective instructional strategy for facilitating math and reading improvement for female students. Also, based on the findings of this study, single-sex education may have a positive impact on attendance for males and females. Future research on single-sex education is necessary before a definitive conclusion can be reached regarding the academic or non-academic impact on student performance in public education. Researchers must seek to identify best practices for single-sex research and standardize research methodology so that the end result, high quality, research-based evidence, may be obtained.

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

A Qualitative Study of Developing Visionary Leaders: Principals' Voices

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

In this study, the researchers interviewed 12 practicing principals who graduated from Educational Leadership Constituency Council (ELCC)-recognized or ELCC-denied building level programs regarding their views toward developing visionary leaders. The focus was on their perceptions regarding the experiences needed to develop visionary leaders in principal preparation programs. What were the experiences of principals from ELCC-recognized and denied principal preparation programs regarding the development of visionary leaders?

A sample of 12 recently-graduated practicing principals was studied. The sample consisted

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of six participants from the three Texas public universities that received ELCC recognition for their principal preparation programs and six participants from the one Texas public university that was denied ELCC recognition for its principal preparation program. Interview questions concentrated on opportunities provided to develop visionary leaders during the coursework, as well as the internship of the principal preparation programs. Eight metathemes were evident in the interview data: (1) activities, (2) professors, (3) discussions, (4) involvement, (5) cooperating administrator, (6) on-the-job training, (7) guest speakers, and (8) coursework/internship. Each of the metathemes focused on methods of learning and the development of skills that visionary leaders possess. Each of the metathemes found in the interview data focused on active learning on the part of the aspiring principal.

Conclusions from this study may have implications for potential students of principal preparation programs in Texas. Aspiring principals know the challenges that face them upon graduation, and they must take the responsibility of ensuring that the principal preparation program they enter provided the support for them to develop the skills of a visionary leader who is prepared to lead schools through the change process on a regular basis. Recommendations for principal preparation programs as well as implications of the findings were discussed.

Using Survey Data to Inform Writing Across the Curriculum Program Development

Kelly Birchfield, Elizabeth Woodworth, Jennifer Good, and Jeff Barksdale,
Auburn University at Montgomery

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) programs strive to improve student writing skills in discipline-specific areas through embedding writing assignments - and increasing writing frequency - during content instruction. However, many content-area instructors have limited definitions of what constitutes writing assignments. As administrators begin to consider WAC program development and define criteria for upper-level writing-intensive courses, Sandler (2000) recommends involving faculty immediately and warns administrators against top-down mandated programs. In order to involve faculty in program development, however, conceptions and understanding of writing instruction must be explored, because many faculty consider "school writing as primarily research papers, essay exams, and laboratory reports" (Magnotto and Stout, 2000).

One hundred fifty-five instructors (38%) from all five schools across this university responded to a 26-item survey through online and paper survey distribution methods. In addition to collecting demographic information for comparison, the survey included items regarding nine types of writing assigned in upper and lower division courses and open-ended questions regarding students' writing strengths and weaknesses. Frequencies of responses to types of assignments were yielded and compared at the division level. Survey results revealed that writing that critiques information and writing that synthesizes information were most frequently assigned by instructors, regardless of course division. The frequency of assigning writing increased in upper-level classes, suggesting that faculty at this university already have a degree of comfort with embedding writing instruction into coursework.

Patterns from open-ended responses were discussed. This initial understanding of faculty views of writing has implications for program development. First, it dispels the myth that upper-level faculty rely on composition instructors from lower division courses as the primary providers of writing-intensive instruction. In addition, expectations of writing vary depending upon course division. For future exploration, upon redistribution, the survey data were disaggregated at the discipline-level to ascertain the specific content-area expectations of discipline-based faculty.

Using the Net Present Worth Method to Evaluate the Potential of Expanding the Academic Curriculum Offerings of a Liberal Arts College

Daniel A. Doss, University of West Alabama; Vinson Thompson, Memphis City (TN) Schools;
and Curt Fields, William H. Sumrall, and Don W. Jones, Belhaven College

This paper considered the case of a liberal arts institution of higher learning that is hoping to improve its market competitiveness through the addition of either a graduate certificate program in human resources or the addition of a full graduate degree in human resources. An examination of net present value calculations was the quantitative tool through which the two alternatives were examined with

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respect to estimated student enrollment data over a period of five years. The net present worth outcomes indicated that the full degree program is the preferred alternative. Therefore, it was recommended that the institution consider the implementation of the full degree program as a viable method of increasing its revenues and enhancing its competitiveness.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. RESEARCH/STATISTICS King Room

Essential Books in the Field of Instructional Design and Technology

Jenelle M. Ouimette, David A. Hall, and Dan Surry, University of South Alabama

This article described the results of a study to determine the books that instructional design and technology professionals believed were most important to the current field. Participants for this study included 77 professionals from all different areas of the field, including education, business, and government. The purpose of this study was to examine the current foundation of the field of instructional design and technology as well as to build a list of valued books for instructional design and technologists. A survey was conducted asking the participants to rank each book on a four-point scale according to the books importance to the field. The data were then analyzed and the results were presented.

Results showed the importance of a book ranges on differentiating factors such as area of interest in the field, degree level, and age. But overall, there are books that were found to be statistically significant in this field, encompassing most of the ideals the field is based upon. These books were on every instructional designer or technologist list of must reads.

Testing Measurement Equivalence Through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Item Response Theory (IRT)

Jungkyu Park, SungKyunKwan University, Korea, and Jwa K. Kim, Middle Tennessee State University

In order to validate a test or questionnaire, one important part of item analysis is measurement equivalence across different populations or groups in each item level. If this process is unsatisfactory, the phenomenon is called Differential Item Functioning (DIF). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Item Response Theory (IRT) were utilized to investigate the Type I error rate and power of detecting both uniform DIF and non-uniform DIF items under various conditions. A total of 16 polytomous item responses were generated through Wingen (Han, 2004) in the IRT frame. Types of DIF items, sample size, and size of DIF were manipulated. In a CFA perspective, the dependant variables were continuous variables. Factor loadings and item intercept invariance were investigated to identify measurement equivalence by LISREL 8.8. When the dependant variables were ordinal variables (e.g. Likert-scale items), the invariance of threshold (location parameter) was investigated.

In an IRT frame, among several DIF tests, the likelihood ratio test (LR method) was utilized because it was the most closely related to CFA in terms of the baseline model and nested model. In the uniform DIF condition, CFA showed lower Type I error rate than IRT, especially when small sample size was small. However, in the non-uniform condition, IRT had lower Type I error rate than CFA. The invariance test of intercept had higher Type I error rate than the threshold tests. The power of both CFA and IRT were high and reached almost 1.

This study made a significant contribution to the field considering that only a few studies have tested the threshold invariance, although there were several studies concerning DIF-detection in the CFA and IRT frames.

Danger: Using Stepwise Variable Entry May Lead to Misinterpretation of Your Regression Results

Melanie S. Clark, University of North Florida

Stepwise variable entry methods have been used with multiple regression and other related statistical procedures for some time. These methods use a variety of procedures for determining what order to enter variables from the predictor set into the regression equation. It has been as argued that the

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stepwise variable entry procedures frequently yield invalid and misleading information regarding the order of importance of the variables in a regression analysis.

Stepwise procedures seek to determine which predictor variable in the regression analysis serves as the best predictor of a given criterion variable. Determination is then made about the predictor making the second best contribution once the variance explained by the first predictor is removed from the analysis, the third best contributor once the variance explained by the first two predictors is removed, and so on. As an alternative to this “forward” stepwise procedure, the “backward elimination” method puts all the predictors into the model and then removes them one at a time based on the variable that makes the least unique contribution to the analysis at any step of the procedure. Frequently, researchers utilize stepwise routines that combine both of these procedures.

Stepwise methods are problematic for many reasons and have often been criticized by reflective methodologists. Stepwise methods use miscalculations of degrees of freedom, lead to increase Type I error rates, foster misunderstandings about order of variable importance, and yield atheoretical findings relative to variable relationships. Concrete data analytic examples were presented to illustrate several problems with stepwise methods and to present the case about why educational researchers should seriously consider abandoning stepwise procedures and consider other more reliable methods (e.g., regression structure coefficients) for determining variable importance.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. TEACHER EDUCATION.....Governor Room

**Individual Contributory Factors in Teacher Job Satisfaction
and Math Teachers’ Overall Job Satisfaction**

Shujie Liu, University of Southern Mississippi

There have been no consensus conclusions regarding the factor structure of teacher job satisfaction, as well as individual factor’s contribution, to teacher job satisfaction. The research questions for this study were as follows: (1) What factors influence teacher job satisfaction? To what extent does each factor contribute to overall satisfaction? and (2) What is math teachers’ job satisfaction in contrast to other teachers? Is gender related to overall satisfaction?

Data for this study were from the 2000-2001 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. Specifically, 32 items were employed for this study with 31 items (Q10) asking teachers to what extent they were satisfied with the school where they were currently teaching and one item (Q11a) regarding a teacher’s overall job satisfaction. The sample used for this study included 3,639 current teachers, among which 291 were math teachers. In terms of gender, 2,669 female and 972 male teachers participated.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and multiple regression were used to analyze the data. A principal component analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to examine the factor structure of the 31 items, with multiple methods used to determine the number of factors underlying the data (e.g., eigenvalue-greater-than-one, scree plot, and parallel analysis). Seven factors were retained for the final solution. Multiple regression was conducted to identify the individual factor’s contribution to overall teacher job satisfaction, with the seven factors revealed from the EFA as the independent variables.

The preliminary results showed that the first three strongest predictors of the overall teacher job satisfaction were Administration and Professional Development, Student Characteristics and Parent Support, and Classroom Autonomy. Suggestions for policy makers were discussed regarding how to address teachers’ needs and improve their job satisfaction level.

**Perceptions of Alternative Certification Teachers Toward the Inclusion of Students
with Exceptionalities in the General Education Classroom**

Philip L. Garner, Thillainatarajan Sivakumaran, and Dorothy Schween, University of Louisiana at Monroe

The study compared the attitudes of alternative certification students towards the inclusion of students with exceptionalities to find out: (1) What are the alternative certification teachers attitudes towards inclusion of special needs students? (2) Do alternative certification teachers feel prepared to make accommodations and modifications for students with exceptionalities? and (3) What are the

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perceptions of alternative certification teachers of the training and resources for the instruction of the inclusion of students with exceptionalities received in their program?

The Alternative Certification Program is a Master's in the Arts of Teaching Program at the University of Louisiana at Monroe. This program allows those who have been awarded a bachelor's degree from an accredited university that meet certain criteria to take courses for teacher certification and receive a master's-level degree. Eight students in the program were surveyed using demographic and questions pertaining to the research questions in a pre- and post-study of their attitudes towards inclusion prior to and after participating in a class teaching methods for teaching students with exceptionalities in the general education classroom.

The results of the survey were analyzed quantitatively by comparing the pre- and post-course results. Conclusions from the study were used to evaluate student confidence in the teaching of students in the inclusive classroom and compared with those of undergraduate students in a longitudinal study in order to improve preservice and alternative certification teacher education.

A Comparison of Basic Subject Areas Content Exams for Four Consecutive Semesters

Ava F. Pugh and Jerri Washington, University of Louisiana at Monroe,
and Fred Groves, Missouri State University

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, the arts, and physical education. For this action research only four subject areas (science, social studies, reading/language arts, mathematics) were used with a sample consisting of 80 preservice candidates enrolled in the Professional Block semester, the semester prior to student teaching. Candidates were administered a content exam totaling 100 questions at the conclusion of each semester.

The four areas of question, science, social studies, and reading/language arts contained 80 total questions and were used for comparing the mean scores for four consecutive semesters. Scheffe's comparison indicated a significant difference where the mean for mathematics was greater than the means in the other three areas. A one-way ANOVA analysis indicated no significant differences across four semesters between fall and spring semesters. A two-way ANOVA revealed no significant interaction between means for semesters and subject matter. For semesters alone, a significant difference was found for the Spring 2007 semester. Students did not perform as well in the other three semesters. A possible reason for the difference in scores could be that this particular semester contained candidates in the old elementary program where fewer classes in mathematics and reading were required.

11:00 – 11:50 A.M. READINGCapitol Room

The Reading First Program and Statewide-Mandated Assessment: A Longitudinal and Comparative Study

Monica Wong-Ratcliff, Texas A and M University – Kingsville,
and Sherlyn Powell, University of Louisiana at Monroe

Reading First (RF) is the largest and the foremost federal initiative in improving the reading achievement of struggling students in the United States. The program focuses on implementing proven methods of reading instruction in K-3 classrooms. This study investigated the impact of the Reading First (RF) Program on student performance as measured by statewide-mandated English Language Arts (ELA) assessment programs.

A matching procedure was used wherein three RF schools and three non-RF schools from two rural school districts in north Louisiana were matched. A longitudinal study was conducted to examine the ELA test scores of 882 third-grade students and 909 fourth-grade students in the Grade 3 integrated Louisiana Educational Assessment Program and Grade 4 Louisiana Educational Assessment Program between 2006 and 2008. Dependent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA procedures were conducted in analyzing the data.

The findings indicated that the RF students performed better than the non-RF students for these three years. The study provided evidence that the federal initiative of disseminating research-based

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reading instructional strategies into high-poverty, low-performing schools were successful.

People or Machines? Measured Reading Comprehension from Different Reader Types

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

Educators who teach reading to students with disabilities often struggle to find ways to assist students in improving their reading skills. One method for assisting these students is to provide a “reader” modification. The assumption is that, although students might not be able to independently read the text, they might be able to comprehend the reading selection if read to them. One popular type of “reader” modification is the use of a computerized text reading program. Research on the effectiveness of these programs, however, does not fully support their widespread use (MacArthur, Ferretti, Okolo, and Cavalier, 2001).

The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship existed between reading comprehension and three different reading modification types (human reader, tape-recorded reader, and text reading program on a computer). The sample, selected from two school districts in Kentucky, consisted of 10 (mean age = 12.6 yrs.) students with disabilities who read on a third-grade level. Three reading passages and associated reading comprehension test questions were selected from the Level 3 Pearson’s Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (“GRADE”) test. Passages were randomly assigned to be read by a human, recorded by the same human voice to be played from a tape, or typed in a word processing program to be read by a text reader on a computer located at each school site. After each passage, four reading comprehension questions were orally read to students by the researchers. Nonparametric statistical analysis indicated that there was no significant difference in reading comprehension based on reader type.

Although it was not the focus of this study, there did appear to be differences in reading comprehension as related to student disability type (i.e., learning disability, other health impairment, and mild cognitive disability). Implications of findings and suggestions for further research were discussed.

A Professional Development Model for Urban Literacy

Tracy Harris, Stephanie Davidson, and Nikisha G. Ware, Jackson State University

This paper described a professional development (PD) model for improving literacy in an urban school district experiencing low reading achievement. The model resulted from collaboration among Mississippi’s only urban university, the state educational agency, a private foundation, and a local school district that addresses urban literacy issues. The model was implemented by the Mississippi Learning Institute (MLI), a literacy collaborative that focuses on the needs of P-12 teachers and students, especially on early childhood education and reading as a part of literacy development. MLI aim to improve student achievement through sustained PD.

Research highlights the need for ongoing PD for inservice teachers in order to impact instructional practices and to ultimately improve student achievement. The cornerstone of the MLI Model is high-quality, ongoing PD, and its framework is two-fold: practice and performance, and policy and support. PD sessions are implemented throughout the academic year on Saturdays and during the summer through mini-institutes. Teachers collaborate and engage with literacy coaches and administrators in order to question and refine their instructional practices in ways that build on scientifically-based reading research and best practices in teaching. This focus on high quality PD constitutes the practice and performance arm of the model.

The second arm, policy and support, was implemented through services provided by the state agency, university entities, and a collaborative team of local school administrators and university research faculty. The MLI Model, the only nationally recognized public school-university partnership in Mississippi, has demonstrated promising results by improving student outcomes in an urban, predominantly African-American, local school district where 85% of its students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The presentation provided a detailed description of the model, outcomes experienced by the teachers, and a report of student achievement.

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11:00 – 11:50 A.M. TECHNOLOGYAcademy Room

Students' Perceptions on the Use of Social Networking in Learning

Steve C. Yuen, University of Southern Mississippi

The study examined students' perceptions on the use of social networking in learning. Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following: (1) How did students feel regarding the use of a social networking site in learning? (2) What were the effects of using a social networking site in a course on the sense of community among learners? and (3) Were there differences in the use of a social networking site and the sense of community among different learners (age and gender)?

The participants were 30 students enrolled in educational technology classes from two universities. Two social networking sites were designed for private use with a similar layout and identical features and components and were implemented in two courses. Each site allowed students to create their own profiles; upload photos, audio, podcasts, and videos; create and join discussion groups; and publish blogs and presentations. A questionnaire was developed to evaluate the use of social networking in teaching and learning and assess its effectiveness on the sense of community among learners.

The findings of the case study indicated that students had positive experiences using a social networking site in learning. They found that the class social networking site was user-friendly and gave them a sense of belonging. Participants in both courses felt that social networking is a great tool for class communications and can be used for professional development. They indicated that the class social networking site can encourage learner-center activities, provide collaborative learning opportunities, and promote knowledge sharing. Furthermore, the study revealed that using a social networking site in a class could build a sense of community among learners.

Preservice and Inservice Training, Gender, and Years of Teaching Experience

Rebecca R. Lutonsky and Margaret L. Rice, University of Alabama

The researcher in this study investigated how preservice college credit computer training, inservice training, gender, and years of teaching experience influenced teachers' computer skills as measured by the Basic Technology Competencies for Educators Inventory (BTCEI) and interviews. The study investigated what basic computer skills participants had, what skills participants thought teachers should have, and how inservice and preservice training and years of teaching experience helped teachers to learn computer skills. The study inquired about what teachers wanted to learn more about regarding basic computer skills and investigated how teachers currently use the technology that they have.

Participants were 402 teachers from 12 school systems in the central and western regions of a southeastern state. Nine of these respondents then participated in qualitative interviews. Three participants were randomly selected from each category of low, medium, or high scores on the BTCEI to participate in the interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using a three-way analysis of variance, and qualitative data techniques were used to code participants' interview responses into themes.

Results indicated that teachers who had preservice and inservice training had skills that teachers who did not have this training did not have. Results indicated that teachers wanted to learn more technologies through inservice training and that inservice training and technology access were most helpful in aiding participants in learning basic computer skills. In conclusion, professional development in the form of inservice training needs to be offered to teachers so that they can have at least 20 hours of training or more. Seven to nine preservice college credit hours are needed for teachers to indicate high computer competency skills.

The Effects of Cross-Age Mentoring in an Online Collaborative Environment

Gail L. Johnson, Louisiana State University

This mixed method research was designed to examine the effects of cross-age mentoring in an inter-institutional, online learning community. The research questions focused on the impact of mentoring on high school students' confidence in their information seeking skills, perceptions of their

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information seeking standards, and the application of these standards to an information seeking task. Also of interest was the dialogic interaction between the students at the two sites, the impact of the facilitator on the process, and the university students' perceptions about their experience.

The participants included 26 students (mentees) enrolled in an American history class at a rural high school and 18 preservice teachers (mentors) enrolled in an introductory educational technology course. Mentoring groups comprised of four to five high school students and three to four preservice teachers interacted twice weekly for five weeks via a synchronous online courseware system. The Information Commitment Survey and Confidence Survey were administered pre- and posttest to evaluate students' performance on information seeking tasks. The qualitative data consisted of mentoring themes, challenges, and benefits of online mentoring.

The results of multiple paired t-tests revealed that there was no change in the high school students' confidence in their information seeking abilities. A simple linear regression analysis of the six evaluative standards revealed that students placed greater emphasis on evaluating the accuracy of information. A positive correlation was found between evaluating the accuracy of information and the use of an advanced search strategy. Performance on the information seeking task was positively influenced by conceptual scaffolding provided by the facilitator (question prompts) and preservice teachers (feedback). Conceptual feedback was found to be most effective in an online environment.

The findings from this research contributed to the literature on cross-age mentoring between higher education and K-12 students and provided insights about high students' abilities to locate, evaluate, and synthesize information.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. INSTRUCTION..... Paramount Room

**Individual Differences In Distance Education Learning Environments:
Should Instructional Designers Take Individual Differences into
Account in Distance Education Learning Environments?**

Jenelle M. Ouimette, University of South Alabama

Individual differences and the role they play in learning have long been up for debate in the education community. For the most part, educators seem to have accepted that individual differences do play a role in traditional classroom learning at least on some level. In the age of designing virtual classrooms and completely online societies, once again the question is raised: Should individual differences be taken into account in distance education learning environments? This question is particularly important for instructional designers to consider because of the large role they play in the designing, developing, and implementing of distance education learning environments. It is important for instructional designers to determine the role that individual differences play in distance learning environments because the answer could affect not only the design of the online instruction but also the implementation and appropriate use of the instruction.

This issue has two basic sides: to take individual differences into account or not to take individual differences into account. Some instructional designers do not believe individual differences make a significant difference in how people learn in a distance learning environment. They feel, and some evidence supports them, that, if instruction is designed well, anyone was able to understand it and learn from it. Other instructional designers believe that part of designing well-made instruction includes taking individual differences into account, no matter the learning environment. Evidence and research continues to add fuel to the fire, not providing any hard evidence that clearly points to one side over the other. Instead, the evidential outcomes are mixed and the debate rages on. Now one is faced with this remaining question. This paper looked at both sides of this controversial issue and took a position: to consider or not consider individual differences in distance learning environments.

**Dissimilar Learning Styles, Academic Stress, and Student Coping Behaviors:
What Higher Education Faculty Ought to Know**

Chevanese L. Samms, Louisiana State University

Given the diversity of stressful situations that students come across in the academic setting,

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this paper examined coping behavior as a response to stressful encounters generated by dissimilar learning styles between faculty and students (Sternberg, 1994; Kirton, 2003; Friedel, 2006). The literature supports that this dissimilar learning style may lead to student stress (McCrae, 1984; Folkman and Lazarus, 1985; Carver and Scheier, 1994), and motivation is required of the student to maintain coping behavior to learn from the instructor (Struthers, Perry and Menec, 2000; Kirton, 2003).

Interest in the relationship between dissimilar learning styles, academic stress, and student coping behaviors warrants the attention, especially, of the faculty citizens of the academic community. These current themes may have strong implications for enhancing their teaching and learning experiences, including instructional design, instructional techniques, and assessment. Instructors who demonstrated an understanding of Kirton's A-I theory and measure of learning style may be more willing to accommodate the dissimilarities in learning styles between themselves and their students, which may reduce student stress. Students may then become more motivated to learn and remain in classes, resulting in a reduction in dropped courses, academic withdrawals, incomplete courses, and improved academic performance (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 1997; Struthers, Perry and Menec, 2000; Kiguwa and Silva 2007).

Furthermore, this position paper, apart from making professors and students and other interests aware of their adaptive or innovative problem solving preferences, could offer insight to faculty, so much so that they may better assist students with strategies that would help them cope more effectively with the courses they teach. Students could benefit from an understanding of their own learning style, as well as that of their classmates and instructors, which may help them to navigate the course content with less anxiety and adverse consequences (Pritchard, 2003; Sittler, 2009).

The Importance of Learning Science by Formal Settings

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

Formal learning can be defined as planned learning involving activities within a structured learning setting. In this type of learning, the learner has to enroll in a program of study, attend classes, and follow a curriculum for the programs enrolled in. Such a program offers the learner limited flexibility. It also has spelled out expectations and time limit. At the completion of formal learning, the learner is evaluated through criteria specified by curricula. Informal learning on the other hand does not require the learner to be enrolled in a program. It involves learning acquired through daily life activities, often in an experiential manner. This may likely be as a result of opportunities providing situations for learning purely by chance. Informal science environments and experiences can trigger and maintain long-term interests in learning science, resulting in the learner attaining sophisticated levels.

The process of producing a scientist or engineer involves learning science from the basic principles to advanced levels. Most people may find it difficult to understand some of the theories and principles built as some sections of science develop from one stage to another. It then becomes very necessary to have an instructor and a structured setting. The author strongly supports the former (formal learning setting) type of learning because the learner has no choice but to learn what is offered and meet specific set objectives. The objective of this position paper was to convince the reader why the author believes that a formal setting for science learning is very important in the present world.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Louisiana Room

One Size Does Not Fit All

Sumita Bhattacharyya, Nicholls State University

There is a call for the improvement of instruction to address students' diversified needs. During the last three decades the configuration of our school population has become more and more pluralistic. Not all students are alike. Consequently, we are moving away from the concept One Size Fits All.

Based on this knowledge, differentiated instruction is getting more attention in the classroom wherein students have multiple options for taking in information and making sense of ideas. Different instructions for different students do not mean that teachers make it easy for students. When teachers

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know students' strengths and weaknesses, it becomes easier to customize their instruction. When the instruction best fits students' needs they find learning most compelling. The instructional concepts were broad based and not focused on minute details or unlimited facts. Teachers must focus on the concepts, principles, and skills that students should learn. The content of instruction should address the same concepts with all students but be adjusted by the degree of complexity for the diversity of learners in the classroom.

This session offered an opportunity to experience a clip of a courtroom trial created entirely by undergraduate method course students in a teacher education department. This show was specifically designed to accommodate different students' learning styles in a classroom.

Implementation Strategy of B.Ed. Teaching Practice in Real School Classrooms: Issues and Challenges

Mhammad Y. Sharjeel, Iqra University

Teaching practice is the core component of all preservice teacher education programs. Through teaching practice, a novice teacher is assumed to have inculcated a supposedly viable pedagogic experience to transfer the core competency of the subject knowledge to students in a real classroom situation.

This study encompassed the challenges and issues that the novice teachers experience at the post-training level of their B.Ed. program of studies. The investigations also enlightened the gaps that the trained teachers have shared with the researchers. The study highlighted the extent to which the on-training components of teaching practice was reflected in the attitude of the trained teachers while implementing the set of learned skills in real classrooms. Study participants comprised randomly selected n = 120 student-teachers who had obtained their bachelors' degree in education in 2008.

SPSS v16 independent sample t-test was used to measure the difference in the mean perception scores of the two groups of teachers. The tested hypotheses indicated that the mean scores of the two groups of sampled teachers were not significantly different. Student-teachers' interviews revealed that teaching practice in the B.Ed. program was ineffective from the implementation perspectives. Teaching methods and techniques employed during the coursework were only lecture-based and did not help novice teachers implement innovative classroom teaching techniques. Experiences of the two trained groups of teachers showed no significant difference on the basis of B.Ed. teaching practice objectives and its implementation in professional teaching contexts.

Infusing Environmental Themes into Existing Inservice Teacher Education Program in Science

Shahid Hussain Mughal, Government Elementary College of Education (Men),
and Najmunnisa Khan, OMYS Academy Gulzare Hijri

Environmental education has become an important and growing area of educational research. An environmental perspective allows students to understand the importance of science for the society and the environment, to develop a sense of inquiry, and to think creatively about the solutions to environmental problems. Teachers have a vital role in ensuring that environmental education is implemented effectively. One of the purposes of this research study was to explore the opportunities for environmental infusion in the existing science teacher education program and to understand the perceptions of a science teacher educator, of how she experienced the possibilities and challenges of environmental infusion in her teaching of science topics.

The research was designed in a qualitative paradigm. Within this paradigm, action research was employed. The primary sources of data were interviews and classroom observations, together with secondary sources such as document analysis and unstructured conversations. Major findings from the study revealed that the science curriculum of inservice teachers' training program contained a fair amount of environmental content in it. This included information about the relationship between living and non-living things (Simple Food Chains); factors determining weather, rate of evaporation; exploring ways in which living things adapt themselves to their natural environment (migration, hibernation, camouflage); erosion; and forms of energy as a sources of electricity. These concepts are loaded with the basic information rather than the skills needed by the learners to enable them to have a positive approach

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towards the environment, for the purpose of resolving, or helping to resolve, environmental issues.

The study further indicated that infusing environmental content in science was very challenging because environmental issues are complex. Building a sufficient knowledge base of science teacher educators is very essential while discussing and handling environmental issues. In the light of the findings, the study recommended the infusion of environmental concepts in all subjects of teacher education. The study also recommended the training of teacher educators in environmental education on a massive scale. Science-based environmental education is required at every level of education to take informed, effective, and on-the-spot decisions. The study recommended the incorporation of skills in science textbooks that would help learners to take initiatives about the solution of environmental problems.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTUniversity Room

Perceived Social Support Among University Graduate Students

Heather L. Moore, East Tennessee State University

The desire to understand a person's need for affiliation dates back to at least the early 20th century. According to the third level of Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation, humans have an innate and fundamental need for supportive relationships (Maslow, 1943). Furthermore, a person's primary motivation will continue to be the search for love and belonging until an innate and personal level of emotional satisfaction is acquired. Understanding a graduate college student's perceived level of social support is thought to be a key component for predicting success at the college level. In this study, the author examined perceived social support among college graduate students based on four key dimensions: (1) family, (2) friends, (3) work, and (4) school.

The author analyzed the perceived level of resilience by graduate students and compared students' levels of resilience with their perceived social support scores. Using multiple regression analysis, the author also assessed the ability to predict resiliency using the four dimensions of social support as predictor variables. Previous research indicated a need for a study to expand the understanding of graduate students' perceived level of social support from various support networks (i.e., family, friends, work, and school). Because graduate students are facing increasing challenges, universities may find that making a conscious effort to understand social support networks could positively impact their graduate-level retention and success rates.

For this study, the author surveyed over 2,000 graduate students (master's, Ed.S., Ed.D, and Ph.D.) at a regional four-year university. The survey consisted of three sections: (1) social support, (2) resilience, and (3) demographics and was administered electronically over a three-week period. It was hypothesized that students with higher levels of perceived social support would also have high levels of resilience.

Higher Education In a Stringent Economy

Donna O. LaCaze and John Fulwiler Mihir, Southeastern Louisiana University

Education and economy are two key components that are independent (considering scope and functionality) but are interdependent (considering the community as a whole on a continuum of life) on each other for a sustained and healthy society. They complement each other and significantly impact growth and influence potential outcomes of the society. As they are interdependent, their association raises concerns about specific issues that may or may not have significant impact, however, may influence the operational definitions thus impacting outcomes. Recent financial fluctuations have impacted educational institutions.

The current situation should open doors to: research and the discussion of economic means to educate students, preparatory programs to address and prepare learners to sustain in a globally changing economy, and maintaining quality with compromised resources. The extent to which economy should influence academic preparation, educational outcomes, and institutional orientations to sufficiently prepare learners for a globally changing economy should be understood. Participants in this study were student teachers, chosen randomly from Southeastern Louisiana University. A survey tested for identified

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factors, reliability, and validity was sent to the students to reflect their perspectives of education, and educational initiatives in reference to the current economy.

While the literature review elaborates on what higher educational institutions across United States have done during the economically depressed years, the study outcomes shed light on how learners in the geographic region of Southeast Louisiana perceived current economy and their academic preparedness. The study may leverage viable solutions to teachers, administrators, and legislative personnel – to direct new educational initiatives in stringent economic situations specific to Southeast Louisiana.

A Probit Model with National Data: Post-Secondary Outcomes for Emerging Adults

Lauren A. Menard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

It takes longer for emerging adults to complete school these days (Arnett, 2004). Ruben and Komanie (2007) link the lack of a college degree to unemployment and poverty. Furstenberg, Kennedy, McCloyd, and Rumbaut (2003) note that a decent standard of living now often requires a college degree. An array of conditions is frequently associated with differences in educational attainment (Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison, 2006; Roemer, 2002; Rothe and Berger, 2007; Rumbaut, 2008).

This study answered the following research problem: What predictors are associated with obtaining a bachelor or masters' degree for emerging adults between the ages of 25 and 30? Variables from the 1972-2008 General Social Survey data file were analyzed using the probit regression function of the Survey Documentation and Analysis program. The dependent variable, highest degree earned, was recoded as a dichotomous variable, with one category including those who obtained a bachelor or doctorate degree and a second category for all other responses. The model included several predictor independent variables.

Results for the probit model found a Pseudo R-sq = .489, $p < .001$ ($n = 1,056$). General educational development was the strongest predictor, and vocational preparation was a reliable predictor. Constructivist ideologies link "learning with experience and context" to increased motivation and meaning (Huffman and Hipp, 2003, p.xvi). Age wed was the second strongest predictor, even more significant than parent's educational level. Postponing marriage until school is completed and financial security is achieved is an example of how societal complexities and conflicting adulthood pathways contribute to delays in achieving classic milestones of adulthood, such as finishing school (Lloyd, 2005; Furstenberg, Rumbaut and Setterson, 2004; Shanahan, 2000). Year of survey, comprehension skills, industry of employment, health, father's education, mother's education, and number of children were other reliable predictors. Findings have implications for the support of post-secondary educational and vocational preparation initiatives.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. HOW TO CONDUCT EFFECTIVE AND INTERACTIVE LEGAL TRAINING FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS: ADMINISTRATORS AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF (Training) King Room

Jennifer M. Miles and John W. Murry, University of Arkansas

Most senior student affairs officers recognize the need for staff training regarding legal issues. Legal issues may affect any number of situations and cut across functional areas. Because of the ever-changing legal landscape and the amount of contact among student affairs staff members and students, faculty, parents, governing agencies, accrediting bodies, potential employers, and the greater public, staff members must be familiar with legal issues. These issues directly impact how they perform their jobs as well as how they interact with various constituencies. In this one-hour training session, the facilitators shared key legal issues that all student affairs administrators face.

The session centered on several key areas which impact all student affairs administrators and staff regardless of their area of expertise. Participants received an understanding of why legal training is necessary and how effective training can be conducted. They were introduced to several sample training modules with practical case scenarios and other learning activities.

The objectives of this session were to introduce participants to the importance of legal training and demonstrate three key areas where legal training is essential for student affairs professionals

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in today's higher education environment. Included in the training session were the following: (1) the need for regular legal training, Training Module 1: Student privacy rights, (2) FERPA b c, FOI Laws, (3) Training Module 2: Campus safety and security a, Clery Act b, Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act c: Negligence, and (4) Training Module 3: Avoiding Discrimination a, Sexual discrimination, Students with disabilities. This session included group discussion and interactive activities using case studies, quizzes, and practical examples. The participants were actively involved in the learning process.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. TECHNOLOGY (Displays).....Governor Room

The NSF Tri-Regional Information Technology (Tri-IT) Research Project

LaDonna K. Morris, Florida Community College at Jacksonville

The Tri-Regional Information Technology (Tri-IT) research project is a \$1.5 million grant funded by the National Science Foundation. It is a partnership involving two community colleges and one HBCU. One hundred eighty ninth-grade girls in six high schools in North Florida were engaged in after-school technology experiences with 12 teachers for three years (10/1/2008 – 9/30/2011) and compared to a control group of 180 girls who were not in the program with regard to their behaviors, motivations, dispositions, and perspectives about technology. The target population included girls in high schools with high minority representation and low socioeconomic status.

This display session focused on a description of the project and lessons learned during the implementation stage. The significance of the project was that few girls and even fewer girls of color were interested in information technology, which is a potentially lucrative career that is in high demand. Girls also tend to lack confidence in their abilities.

The purpose of this study was to increase girls' interest, skills, and confidence in technology. Students in the treatment group received 280 hours of instruction, including three 40-hour summer camps (global information systems/global positioning systems, video mobile devices, and IT web applications) and 40 hours of instruction each fall and spring semester. Qualitative data were collected via interviews, focus groups, and class observations. Quantitative data were collected via pre- and posttests for each curriculum module as well as these instruments: Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire, Computer Attitudes Questionnaire, and the TechLiteracy Assessment.

A Template for Teaching the Chi Square Technique

Robert L. Kennedy, University of Arkansas for Medicine

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 are 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 directed toward 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

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and interpretation of the findings, and a conclusion relative to the hypothesis. Because of the data files, the materials were available on computer media.

Students' Perception of Light Wave Phenomena Through Inquiry Learning in an Informal Environment

Ken R. Ford, Southern University

This pilot study involved: (1) identifying students' perception of light phenomena and (2) determining if students learned scientific concepts of light presented to them through their interaction with an exhibit called the Light Island in an informal setting. This study involved a sample of 20 subjects in a college program at a university located in the southern region of the United States.

The participants in this study consisted of a sample of high school students obtained through the process of convenience sampling. Using the Light Island exhibit, the participants were involved in the activities of reflecting a source of white light off of the surface of concave and convex mirrors, refracting white light through converging and diverging lens, and passing white light through a prism, thereby making observations of what happens in the process. After making these observations, the participants were given a pretest, and over a time period of a week they were given a posttest by the researcher. Scores from these tests were collected and input into SPSS using a mixed method analysis.

Results from the analyses confirmed that the high school students involved in the study were successful in gaining knowledge through their perception of light phenomena and grasping the science concepts by interacting with the Light Island exhibit using scientific inquiry in an informal science environment.

Dissertation from a Distance: Using Online Instruction for Guiding the Dissertation Process

Kyna Shelley and Peggy Jasperson, University of Southern Mississippi

The large percentage of doctoral students who complete coursework, yet never finish the dissertation, is reported by many to be approximately 50%. Researchers have concluded that factors such as previous graduate level research experiences – the coursework, the practical application, and the advisor/advisee relationship – directly impact student reactions to the dissertation writing process and the likelihood of completion. Guides to writing the dissertation abound, each with a unique approach to making this sometimes overwhelming task more manageable for students. Likewise, some university programs offer courses to assist with the dissertation process.

Over the past decade, extensive research on the effectiveness of online courses versus traditional face-to-face methods has been conducted and shows mixed results in the overall success of students. Related to providing graduate students with online access to specific components involved in the dissertation process, several resources are available, including, for example, webinars to teach writing skills, online templates for guidance, and online "web-based" scavenger hunt-type programs.

The research focused on online learning, however, has not examined the effectiveness of using an online course for teaching the dissertation process. This project examined the attitude changes and reported learning that occurred when using an online instructional tool, BlackBoard, as the primary teaching device for a three-hour dissertation process course. Pre- and post-course surveys were conducted. Additionally, student writing was evaluated by comparing successive draft documents submitted by students. Finally, student satisfaction with this method of course delivery was assessed.

EXACT: A Computer Program for Performing a Variety of Exact and Resampling Tests

David T. Morse, Mississippi State University

Traditional, parametric statistical tests require strong assumptions in order for the calculated p-values to indicate accurately the likelihood of the results under the (assumed) null hypothesis sampling distribution. Even nonparametric tests, such as the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test, require strong assumptions (e.g., homogeneous variances) though textbooks often fail to mention this. Exact tests have

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been around for over 70 years and do not require such strong assumptions. However, they have been relatively slow to come into widespread use because: (1) they are computationally more intensive than standard tests, (2) common statistical packages typically do not include exact test choices, except as an extra-cost option, and (3) when exact tests are available, it is often for a limited repertoire of tests.

EXACT is a Windows-based program, developed by the author and available without charge, that can perform a wide range of comparisons including means, variances, ranges, mean absolute deviations, medians, and two variations of distributional overlap, the proportion dominance and A-statistics. Correlations may be tested as well. As a teaching tool, EXACT can be helpful for presenting the concepts of exact and resampling tests in statistics or research methods classes. For a given data set, the program reports the number of data combinations or permutations (for correlation) to be processed; if the number is excessive, the user may specify a chosen number of resampling trials to run instead. Directional and nondirectional results and probabilities under the null hypothesis are provided, based on the observed distribution of outcomes instead of a theoretical and potentially inappropriate sampling distribution. With EXACT, researchers no longer need pray for robustness against violations of assumptions or rely on large-sample or asymptotic approximations of statistical significance. Examples of program use were provided, and copies of the program were available.

2:00 – 2:50 P.M. READING Academy Room

Fuzzy Cognitive Maps Theory: Epistemological Implications

Gerald J. Calais, McNeese State University

Cognitive maps (CMs) are directed graphs that simulate interrelationships or causalities among concepts, formally model political and social systems' decision-making processes. However, when the concepts and paths reflect a lack of a positive or negative total effect, indeterminacy dominates because CMs cannot accommodate knowledge-based building since causality itself tends to be fuzzy. Fortunately, fuzzy cognitive maps (FCMs) were introduced to augment a CM's power by overcoming this intrinsic weakness.

Information gleaned from articles and empirical studies was selected from theoreticians and researchers, including, but not limited to, the following: Gopal Achari, Guillermode Aspuru, Robert Axelrod, David Brubaker, Sumita Fons, Voula Georgopoulos, Peter Groumos, Bart Kosko, Chrysostomos Stylios, and Timothy Ross. FCMs, typically dependent upon experts' input, associate fuzzy values with each of its concepts and employ fuzzy degrees as the metric for designating the interrelationships between concepts. Moreover, they are significantly more flexible, valuable, and efficient than CMs because they can model cyclically dynamic systems, thrive on feedback, and connect various FCMs to propagate knowledge bases. Basically, it is a FCM's memory capabilities that enable it to demonstrate how a change in one concept's value affects the entire FCM by keeping track of the concept's old and new values following each of the FCM's new cycling, runtime, or simulation. A typical simulation of a FCM entails experts' input, initialization and simulation of the system's behavior, the free interaction of the concepts, and reaching, or failing to reach, equilibrium.

Although applied extensively in the physical and social sciences, FCMs could be integrated in intra/interdisciplinary content area classroom reading assignments: art, literature, mathematics, music, social sciences, and science. Having students articulate their rationale for selecting specific concepts, determining their causal relationships, and assigning weights to the concepts simultaneously enhances their understanding and retention of the material and their problem-solving skills.

**Using Interactive Video Conferencing for Professional Development
in Reading: A Review of the Literature**

Andrea M. Kent, University of South Alabama

The emphasis on reading instruction has become an enormously high priority as evidenced by the revision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2000. As a result, literacy coaches have become prevalent in elementary schools, and reading intervention teachers are often present in middle and high schools. Rapid expansion of new positions often leaves the professional development of

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the people acquiring these positions lacking. Interactive video conferencing (IVC) may be one tool to provide excellent professional development in which literacy coaches can interact with an experienced coach through purposeful observation and guided reflections, along with the opportunity to discuss the observation with the literacy coach, under the guidance of a facilitator.

Articles were selected based on: (1) respected journals in the field representing varying types of research including empirical and non-empirical studies and action research, (2) content pertaining to current use of IVC in general, and (3) current implementation and effectiveness of IVC with inservice teachers for the purpose of professional development.

Though the literature review, it has been found that video conferencing is currently being used in many professional development settings. For example, the technology is being used for various interactions between universities and preservice teachers, distant learning opportunities, webinars, and guest lecturer-type conferences. However, little use of IVC to provide true interaction of participants with the “expert” is being used as a means for professional development of inservice teachers.

Literacy coaches and specialized reading teachers have an enormous responsibility. Raising test scores and decreasing the number of struggling readers are among the top priorities for most schools across the nation. As literacy coaches and reading teachers lead their schools in facing this challenge, it is important that institutions of higher education, state departments of education, and school districts equip the coaches so that they are prepared to successfully meet the demands of this position. Using IVC may be one way to effectively provide the needed professional development.

African-American Adolescent Readers’ Strategy Awareness and Comprehension Performance with Narrative and Science Texts

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

Even though strategic reading is widely accepted as one way to improve middle-school students’ comprehension of different texts and reading achievement scores, many adolescent readers do not learn how to be in metacognitive control. Further, African-American readers are underrepresented in the reading research focused on metacognitive strategic reading, especially at the middle and secondary levels. This mixed method study explored the relationship between metacomprehension strategy awareness and reading comprehension performance with narrative and science texts.

One hundred thirty-two African-American middle school students were asked to identify helpful strategic behaviors from six clustered subcategories (predicting and verifying, previewing, purpose setting, self-questioning, drawing from background knowledge, and summarizing and applying fix-up strategies). Participants also read and answered comprehension questions about narrative and science passages.

Quantitative findings revealed statistically significant ($p < .05$) differences in two of the six subcategories, indicating that students preview and set purpose more often with science than narrative texts. Findings also indicated that overall narrative and science metacomprehension awareness and comprehension performance scores were statistically significantly ($p < .01$) related. Qualitative findings, based on analyses of video-taped interviews and think aloud, revealed that better readers engaged in metacognitive verbalizations infused with goal, self, and narrative talk, whereas struggling readers engaged in dissonant verbalizations infused with disclaimers, overgeneralized, decontextualized, and literalized responses.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. AT RISK/MINORITY/GENDER Paramount Room

Examining the Legal Framework and the Practical Implications of Affirmative Action in American Higher Education

Celeste A. Wheat, University of Southern Mississippi

Since its inception in the 1960s and 1970s, affirmative action has played a crucial role in contributing to greater diversity within the walls of academe. Over time, affirmative action “has signified a variety of strategies designed to enhance employment, educational, or business opportunities for groups, such as racial or ethnic minorities and women, who have suffered discrimination” (T. H. Anderson, p. 3,

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2004). Unequivocally, affirmative action policies have created inroads for women and minorities in higher education, both in college admissions and employment contexts.

In examining the role of affirmative action in achieving greater diversity and equity in American higher education, the goal of this study was twofold. First, the researcher conducted an in-depth examination of the concept, history, and legal framework of affirmative action policy through the lens of affirmative action jurisprudence in American higher education. Specifically, this research involved a review of the literature concerning the major Supreme Court cases that have set the legal framework for affirmative action policy in college admissions including: (1) Board of Regents of University of California v. Bakke (1978), (2) Gratz v. Bollinger (2003), and (3) Grutter v. Bollinger (2003). Second, the researcher examined the practical implications for informing affirmative action policy in college admissions and employment contexts.

The results of this research indicated: (1) while race conscious policies are allowed, they are not required, (2) admissions policies and practices must be able to pass the highest level of legal testing and strict scrutiny, and (3) definitions of diversity were more broadly defined to include economic status, as well as race/ethnicity or gender. Additionally, this research revealed a number of strategies for achieving diversity through race and gender neutral policies. Finally, this study pointed to the future direction of affirmative action, which is increasingly shifting from the legal arena to the political arena.

Powerful Language in Online Threaded Discussions

Crystal A. Thomas, University of South Alabama

This paper critically examined communicator perceptions of powerful language in university course online discussion threads. While online learning is often liked by students (e.g., in terms of virtual access to course content), online discussion threads present a unique set of challenges for anyone desirous of appearing competent to her or his peers or instructor. Whereas a student can make immediate adjustments to content or delivery when transmitting a message in a face-to-face setting, research has indicated that receivers characteristically make the same global judgments of communicator competence despite a decreased number of nonverbal cues present in a discussion thread posting. Consequently, language plays an increasingly important role in online discussions in that classmates interpret one's competence, gender, and power based on word use and sentence construction.

Drawing on interdisciplinary peer-reviewed instructional research, this literature review extended Barrett and Lally's (1999) work by clarifying how students interpret competence and gender based on language use in an online learning environment. The themes identified in this review should help students take steps to appear more competent and alleviate gender biases in discussion posts. Ultimately, by avoiding hedgers, qualifiers, hesitation forms, and disclaimers, students and instructors can work together to enhance learning in this fairly new learning environment.

Basic Tenets of Critical Race Theory and Their Significance for English Classrooms of the 21st Century United States

Tammy C. Cook, University of Montevallo

The literature review explored Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) to identify the theory and its application to education, as well as its relevance specifically for high school English classrooms. Resources chosen represented a range of documentation from some of the earlier pioneers of CRT to more recent work from educational researchers. Findings suggested that one of the tenets characterizing CRT is that "it names and discusses the daily realities of racism and exposes how racism continues to privilege whites and to disadvantage people of color" (Edwards and Schmidt, 2006, p. 405).

Using CRT as a lens through which educational practices and politics can be investigated has the potential to help educators in the classroom create safe places for adolescents to make their voices heard about social injustices and silent discrimination. A connection of CRT to classroom instruction is explained through Ladson-Billings' (1995b) ideas of effective pedagogy which helps students "to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p. 469).

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Cultural diversity is an everyday reality for schools across the United States, perhaps more in the 21st century than any other time in the history of the nation. Statistics have indicated that minority students comprise one-third of the student population, and estimations propose that by 2020 one-half of the student population will be composed of minority students. In order to successfully teach the growing number of minority students, the growing number of mostly white English teachers whose social and cultural backgrounds are quite different from their students will need to find different strategies from those they use to teach their white students. One issue prevalent in these classrooms is the identification and application of best practices for teachers to follow.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT Louisiana Room

**Student Perception of Performance in Short-Term Intervention
Related to Conditional Probability Instruction**

Gholamreza Tashbin, Kelly C. Woodford, Treena Gillespie Finney,
and Alan F. Chow, University of South Alabama

This study reported the perception of students who participated in an experimental study related to conditional probability instruction where participants received different short-term intervention methods. The study examined how easily mathematics and statistics students were able to transfer frequency solutions to conditional probability problems in novel situations. Students studied either a problem solved using the traditional Bayesian probability format or using a natural frequency format. In addition, the example problem and the target problem presented for solution had matched or mismatched context. Following the study, participants were asked a series of questions related to the usefulness of the example and their own perception of how well they had performed. Responses to these questions related to perception were evaluated in relation to the actual performance of each participant.

The results of this evaluation showed consistency with the actual performance, with students who felt more confident in their own performance actually scoring better than those who felt that they had performed poorly. Some cautions are necessary though in concluding that student perception is an indicator of student performance.

The perceptions of the participants expressed in the responses to the Post-Study Questions indicated a level of superficial learning that did not extend to a level or learning adequate to transfer the learning to other problems. Participants may perceive that they are learning at a higher level than they really are, and their inability to transfer that learning to the multiple choice target problems may support this concept.

**The Role of Private Sector in the Development of School
Education in Pakistan: Lessons from the History**

Nasim Qaisrani, Iqra University, Karachi

Successive governments in Pakistan reacted differently to the role of the private sector in the educational development of this country. From 1947 until 1971, private sector was very much active in the promotion of education in this country. But it was also criticized on several grounds; some of these allegations include: (1) low status of teachers, (2) low academic standards, (3) unequal distribution of educational facilities among various sections of the society (i.e., between male and female, urban and rural, and (4) more emphasis on liberal arts subjects as compared to scientific and technical programs. Keeping in view these factors, the Educational Policy of 1972 recommended the nationalization of private schools, and a complete ban was imposed on the establishment of new schools in the private sector. After a period of seven years, the Education Policy of 1979 again recommended the establishment of educational institutions in the private sector. At present, many institutions from primary to university level are working in this country.

The study was concerned with an historical descriptive analysis of various procedural trends and developments that emerged in Pakistan for private education. The purpose was to understand the past in order to avoid the repetition of mistakes in the future. This study also attempted to review and

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examine the National Education, plans, policies and programs, existing provisions, and strategies that have been adopted to develop private sector in the system of school-level education in Pakistan.

Doodling: Distraction or Benefit

Byra L. Ramsey, David Bell, and June Lawson, Arkansas Tech University

Generally, instructors view class doodling as disrespectfulness and/or a distraction. This study explored the possible benefits of doodling for students who were attending lectures and/or viewing taped information. Collected data from doodlers and non-doodlers were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA with an alpha of 0.05. The findings showed a marked difference between scores of students who were engaged in doodling when compared to those who were not doodling. A pre/post test was given to participants, as well as a short questionnaire. The participants came from a convenience sampling of students who were randomly selected from four separate face-to-face courses in the College of Education at Arkansas Tech University.

This research found similar results as those found by Andrea (2009), from the School of Psychology at the University of Plymouth, England. Andrea discovered that doodling can actually help improve students' concentration and raise assessment scores by stimulating the brain into making connections with pertinent information. As the issue of doodling is explored through scientific research, hopefully, educators will view classroom doodling through a new lens. Thus, they will alleviate a current paradigm that tends to be in opposition of student doodling while listening to lectures and/or taped information.

Mentoring that Increases the Retention of African-Americans at Predominantly White Universities

Lakitta D. Johnson, Jackson State University

African-American students continue to endure a myriad of problems at predominantly white universities. They complete their degrees at lower rates than white students at predominantly white universities, which decreases the amount of personal and professional choices for them. To address the plight of African-American students in higher education, many universities have implemented retention programs. Despite these efforts, their success rates at predominantly white universities continue to be low.

This purpose of this study was to examine the academic, social, and cultural problems experienced by African-American students at predominantly white universities by exploring a retention program that has documented success. The author highlighted the benefits of the mentoring programs on increasing the retention of African-American students. Specifically, the author discussed the effects of the level of dedication and commitment the faculty and staff who participated in the retention program exhibits as well as the students' perception of this commitment. With qualitative research methodology, the author utilized an analytic and descriptive case study to explore a retention program at a southern, predominantly white university.

Data were collected for this study through the use of interviews with students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, university documents were collected. The author coded the data employing constant comparative analysis and analytic memos. Results from this study revealed that the mentoring program was one of most effective components of the university's retention program. Students, faculty, and staff highlighted the dedication and commitment of the faculty and staff and mentors to the personal, professional, and academic growth of the students. Implications from this study included the importance of having a retention program operated by people who were genuinely invested in the success of its students and it reiterated the effectiveness of mentoring programs and the continued need for retention programs to assist students in reaching their academic, personal, and professional goals.

3:00 –3:50 P.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS (RIP)University Room

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

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Perceptions of Employability: The Influence of Captioned Video Review

David J. Horgan, James A. Siders, Vivian H. Wright, and Kagendo Mutua, University of Alabama

The purpose of this study was to examine how an individual's perception of employability of people with speech impairments and cognitive impairments was altered over time through the use of captioning. These perceptions were compared using video review of one worker's description of his job, without video capturing, and later, the same description, when video captioning technology was employed. The review of literature included Census Bureau data, legislation, perceptions of knowledge and tasks, and captioning.

The participants completed a nine-item survey consisting of four Likert-type items and three questions (forced-choice) to obtain demographic data relating to gender, age, and the school/college that the student is currently enrolled, and two questions (fill-in response) to obtain identifying data: (1) course number with section, and (2) mother's maiden name to compare pre- and post-survey responses. Using a pre/posttest methodology, participants completed a survey after viewing a video of a cognitively impaired individual.

The data were analyzed using a two-paired sample t test and a univariate analysis of the covariance (ANCOVA). A significance level of .05 was used for each analysis. Additionally, item-to-total correlations and Chronbach's alpha were used to test for reliability and validity. No significant data were found in the present study. Recommendations for future research included surveying employers' attitudes and perceptions before and after they have participated in sensitivity workshops regarding the employability of individuals with cognitive and speech impairments.

Birth Weight and Achievement: The Power of Parental Expectations

Dolores E. Cormier-Zenon, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this paper was to examine the relationship between low birth weight and achievement. Achievement levels of children born with birth weights as low as one pound to as high as 13 pounds were evaluated based on: birth weight, student success, and parental expectations. The results indicated a minimally significant relationship between the achievement levels and birth weight. The relationship between birth weight and achievement did become significant, however, when one controlled for parental expectations. It appeared that the higher the parental expectations, the stronger the relationship between birth weight and achievement.

The primary explanation is that when birth weight is low there are neurological consequences that militate against the beneficial effects of parental expectations. When birth weight is high, there are not neurological impediments to achievement, and expectations have an impact. It was found that there is a 10% difference between weight and achievement when parental expectations are high.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. ENGLISH/READING King Room

Using Poetry Learning Centers to Lower Inhibitions of English Language Learners

Susan N. Piper and Thomas Heitman, University of South Alabama

This qualitative case study was designed to examine whether the affective filters of English language learners (ELLs) were lowered when in a junior high school setting a particular teacher of ELLs introduced her poetry activities, centered on aesthetic response and scaffolding transactions, to a group of English language learners. Ten ELLs from grades 8 and 9 who have different L1 backgrounds and who vary in fluency from non-English speaking to near-native English fluency participated in the study. The activities were developed based on an argument that transactions with particular poetry activities structured through centers will result in the lowering of students' inhibitions, thus accommodating access to the target language in the learner's environment and consequent target language acquisition in the academic domains.

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

Is Guided Reflection Necessary for Inservice Teachers?

Shoudong Feng, Mary H. Mosley, and John Trice, University of Central Arkansas

Dewey believed that reflective thinking is critical for meaning-making and personal growth (Dewey, 1933) and was conducted in a systematic, rigorous, and interactive manner. Like professionals in other fields, teachers and other professional educators should reflect on their practice, identify strengths and problems, explain and interpret to understand the problems, assume responsibility, and make decisions on future actions that may lead to change in practice (Boody, 2008; Luttenberg and Bergen, 2009). Guided reflection has been found to be particularly effective for preservice teachers (Nolan, 2008; Welch and James, 2007) and is used in many teacher education programs. However, little research has been done on its effectiveness on inservice teachers.

This research intended to determine if the amount of experience inservice teachers possess would help them make better reflections and draw conclusions about the usefulness of guided reflection for inservice teachers. A group of preservice (50) and inservice teachers (50) was invited to participate in the study. They were asked to teach a reading lesson in a real classroom and compose a written reflection first without, then with guidance. A rubric was used to grade their reflections, and conclusions were drawn about the quality of their reflective work.

The results on guided and unguided reflections showed: (1) if inservice teachers made better reflections than preservice teachers without guidance, (2) if inservice teachers made better reflections than preservice teachers with guidance, and (3) if the two groups made similar gains with guidance. The findings of the research informed teacher educators whether experience affected the quality of reflection and if guided reflection benefited inservice teachers in the same way it has benefited preservice teachers. Graduate programs that train inservice teachers may also use the findings to decide if guided reflection is necessary for their candidates.

Using Metaphors to Understand Students' Attitudes Toward Writing

Sally A. Zengaro, University of Alabama

In teaching academic writing skills, educators seek to develop skills that students can transfer from the classroom to practical writing situations. Yet teachers are continually impressed with the difficulty of this seemingly simple task. They know their goals for writing instruction, yet they are not always completely sure that students are learning to self-regulate their writing. In looking for solutions to this problem, many people have called for more explicit grammar instruction, longer class sessions, or a change in curriculum to include more examples of different types of academic writing. However, educators have frequently neglected looking directly at the students and what they understand of writing instruction. Both Paris (1988) and Lakoff (1994) emphasized the use of metaphors to explain abstract phenomena that are personal and difficult to describe.

This research attempted to solicit what students thought about writing and their abilities to write through metaphors. The participants were 30 undergraduate students in the southern United States enrolled in a required first-year writing class. The course used literature as the basis for six essays that were written over a 16-week semester. Data for the research were collected over six weeks through student journals and a questionnaire about writing beliefs. Students were asked to use metaphors to describe the way they see themselves as writers and learners in a writing class. Using constant comparison and simple descriptive statistics, the data were analyzed for themes.

The results suggested that students initially felt very apprehensive about writing, describing it as a painful process similar to surgery without anesthesia. However, by the end, they learned to be

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successful, noting feelings of triumph. Over the semester, students' self-efficacy increased as did their ability to write academic prose.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. IRRATIONAL REASONING FOR IMPROBABLE RESEARCH WITH IMPOSSIBLE REPLICABILITY AND IRREPRODUCIBLE RESULTS BY IRRESPONSIBLE RESEARCHERS--INEPTLY REPRESENTED AND INEXPLICABLY RENDERED (Symposium)..... Governor Room

Walter M. Mathews, Evaluation Association of New York

Science, as it is known today, has grown out of the murk of sorcery, religious ritual, and cooking. But while witches, priests, and chefs were developing taller and taller hats, scientists worked out a method for determining the worth of their experimental results: Reliability, Validity, and Replicability. Seven years ago at MSERA/Chattanooga, we asserted that to be an outmoded standard. Instead of tediously demanding, "Is it reproducible?" the presenters boldly asked, "Is it funny?" While other "prestigious" research conferences continue to exercise the tyranny of validity, reliability, and reproducibility, we are proud that this annual session disdained them like original sin.

3:00 – 3:50 P.M. MENTOR SESSIONCapitol Room

Presenter: Linda W. Morse, Mississippi State University

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

3:00 – 5:50 P.M. INQUIRY-BASED TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS (Training) Academy Room

Luria S. Stubblefield, Joseph Meyinsse, Kenneth Ford, and Bobbie Remble,
Southern University and A&M College

This free, two-hour workshop focused on using inquiry-based teaching and learning methods in science and mathematics using exhibits and "snacks" developed by the San Francisco Exploratorium. The objectives of the workshop were to: (1) use research-based strategies that focused on using inquiry in the middle and high school, and college classrooms, (2) introduce workshop participants to exhibits and "snacks," and (3) demonstrate the bridging of formal with informal science and mathematics education. The Southern University (SUBR) College of Education and Departments of Physics, Mathematics, and Science/Mathematics Education Doctoral Program are in partnership with the Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) at Livingston, LA, the San Francisco Exploratorium, and the Louisiana Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. The purpose of this partnership is to significantly enhance preservice teacher training and inservice teacher professional development focusing on inquiry-based, science and mathematics teaching and learning using exhibits and "snacks." SUBR has five interactive exhibits and many "snacks" in its College of Education. These exhibits and "snacks" were a key component of this workshop.

4:00 – 4: 50 P.M. MATHEMATICS Paramount Room

Language Challenges on the State Standardized Mathematics Tests

Lecretia A. Buckley, Jackson State University

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In this era of accountability, standardized tests have taken the forefront among the concerns of stakeholders in education, especially in the field of mathematics education. In Mississippi, the Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2), and the Algebra I Test, part of the Subject Area Testing Program, were recently revised to align with a newly-adopted theoretical framework employed to classify state learning objectives and mathematical tasks. With this adoption, more attention is given to conceptual understanding, which may require more reading comprehension than tasks designed to focus on procedural fluency. Mathematics discourse has been identified as problematic for students with limited experience with the way knowledge is constructed in mathematics, and students' understanding of language impacts their ability to make sense of the mathematics. This is a concern for English Language Learners (ELLs) and warrants research to ensure high quality mathematics education for all students.

The author reported on research in which the author analyzed test items released by the Mississippi Department of Education in order to determine the language challenges for ELLs. The author examined items at the third-grade, sixth-grade, and Algebra I levels in order to determine if challenges were more prevalent at a specified grade level of testing. The analysis employed an interdisciplinary approach combining mathematics education and linguistics. Each task, two representing each of the five content strands at each of the three identified levels, was analyzed with respect to cognitive demand and language challenges using the systemic functional linguistics framework.

Findings provided multiple insights. The author identified language challenges on standardized mathematics tests that highlighted the need for ELL and mathematics teachers to collaborate to ensure high quality mathematics teaching for all students, an equity issue that becomes more pressing as our nation's and state's population become more diverse.

Rubrics as a Performance Assessment for Critical Thinking Problems and Their Development and Validation

Gholamreza Tashbin, Alan F. Chow, and Kelly C. Woodford, University of South Alabama

Evaluating and assessing student performance can be challenging. Consistent scoring for all students adds to the burden on educators to assure fairness to each student. Developing and utilizing grading rubrics is not new. Educators have used rubrics for most types of student assessment, focusing on both the development and the validation of the rubrics to show its suitability. Rubrics should be developed with a specific purpose in mind, and the rubric assessed on its ability to do what it is designed for. When assessing student performance in problem-solving assignments such as mathematics or statistics problems, as well as in more critical thinking-based process problems, rubrics can provide consistency and reliability in assessing performance across all students within a class and students across classes.

This research focused on developing and validating rubrics for use in scoring student performance in problem solving. Rubrics were developed for scoring student performance in solving statistics problems and for scoring student performance in assessing analytical problem-solving in the form of essay questions. Each rubric was developed to assess various performance criteria in student answers. Within each criterion, performance levels were identified to assess to what level of mastery the student exhibited completion. The specific problem-solving rubrics were presented, along with the results of the validation studies. Additionally, further applications of the findings were discussed.

4:00 – 4: 50 P.M. COGNITION/ACHIEVEMENT Louisiana Room

Validating Measures of Community Resources Developed from Coleman's Social Capital Theory

Stephen K. Miller, Western Kentucky University

Coleman (1988) theorized social capital generally as relationships, contacts, and networks, both prevalence and intensity, that parents create and tap in passing human capital to their children. To date, little work exists on measures of Coleman's theory. This paper reported instrument validation for one portion of Coleman's framework: Community Resources. Literature on social capital reflects two views: Coleman focuses on structure and functions that constitute relationships, noting that middle class families have better skills and more efficient networks than lower income parents; Bourdieu and Passeron

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(1977) posit that individuals' norms and values are governed primarily by access to institutional resources, which are controlled by elites. Dika and Singh (2002) summarize the distinction: effectiveness (skills and networks for Coleman) versus power (limited access to resources and accompanying norms for Bourdieu and Passeron). Measures described--Peer Values, Oppositional Norms, Community Stability, Times Transferred, and Church Networks--were developed for a larger study of factors influencing students' college placement scores at five historically black colleges/universities (HCBUs).

After extensive data gleaning, descriptive statistics and psychometric analyses (including factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha, inter-scale correlations, and criterion validity) were reported for the sample of 651. Four of five variables were scales. Factor analysis produced five components, explaining 60.2% of the variance with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .77 to .86. Inter-scale correlations among the final six variables ranged from .00 to .18, indicating essentially distinct constructs. When these variables were regressed on 13 demographic factors, all had very small effect sizes (essentially independent of social stratification, consistent with Coleman's theory). Only Oppositional Norms influenced students' scores.

Results provided considerable support for construct validity. Despite select sample (lower-scoring non-college students excluded from the population) with concomitant restricted range and reduced power, the findings were consistent with Coleman's treatise. Implications were discussed vis-à-vis social capital, equity, and black achievement.

Describing Digital Ethnicity - Development of a Scale

Nan B. Adams and Thomas A. DeVaney, Southeastern Louisiana University,
and Wilma S. Longstreet, University of New Orleans

The Digital Ethnicity Scale is based on the model for Ethnicity developed by Wilma S. Longstreet in 1978. According to Longstreet, ethnicity is that portion of cultural development that occurs before the individual is in complete command of her/his abstract intellectual powers and that is formed primarily through the individual's early contact with her/his immediate environment. Roles are learned early in cultural development and may be impervious to change, and a whole way of living is assimilated in the early stages of cultural development. Increasingly, this early learning environment includes myriad digital communication technologies. The five dimensions identified by this model are: (1) verbal communication, (2) nonverbal communication, (3) orientation modes, (4) social value patterns, and (5) intellectual modes. These initial dimensions have been slightly modified to address the changes brought about by the proliferation of digital communication technologies.

A pilot version of the Digital Ethnicity Scale containing 36 items was developed and administered electronically during Spring 2009. Longstreet's dimensions served as the basis for item development; however, verbal and nonverbal communication were combined to create a single communication dimension. The pilot survey was completed by 232 graduate students enrolled in online programs at a regional university in the Southeast. Factor analyses results identified items that were not related to the dimensions or may have been inappropriately assumed to belong to a different dimension.

Based on the results of the factor analyses and a conceptual review of the items, a revised version of the survey containing 20 items, with five items per dimension, was developed and completed by over 1,400 individuals during Summer 2009. Preliminary findings suggested that this version more closely measures the four dimensions derived from Longstreet's model for ethnicity.

4:00 – 4: 50 P.M. FIELD EXPERIENCESUniversity Room

TLC: Teachers Living, Learning, and Leading Through an Online Community

Holly H. Hulbert and Kelley Samblis, University of Southern Mississippi

Through discussions and needs assessment surveys conducted in local school districts along the Gulf Coast of Mississippi, Hulbert and Samblis of the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) discovered that many teacher assistants aspired to obtain an elementary education degree, yet desired to and must remain employed in their own community. Because they worked during the day, they were unable to take required college courses and were unable to complete required practicum experiences that

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are co-requisites with elementary education coursework offered at USM. These teacher assistants have rich daily experiences in elementary classrooms; therefore, USM faculty felt that an online format would be an appropriate arrangement for them to earn an elementary education degree. The program allows these aspiring individuals to obtain their elementary education degrees while living, leading, and learning in their own community.

To gain a perspective of how the online teacher assistants compared to face-to-face education students, data were collected to determine the skills, abilities, and knowledge of the participants in the program. This paper provided detailed information about the progress of the newly-developed online elementary education degree courses offered at the University of Southern Mississippi for teacher assistants. Utilizing teacher assistants' daily classroom experiences as a basis of practicum experiences, the curricula are presented through the online coursework. This paper discussed the challenges faced with utilizing virtual coaching, as well as the discoveries, needs, and successes for this ongoing online elementary education coursework.

The Nature, Origin, and Frequency of Interactions and Distractions in a Single-Sex Classroom

Katherine L. Bradley, Southeast Bulloch High School

The focus of this descriptive research was to provide insights into the frequency, nature, and origins of interactions and distractions within a public all-boys' and all-girls' class. Also investigated, in an effort to determine the perceived level of enjoyment, was the atmosphere of the learning environment. This 10-hour collective case study focused on two single-gender classrooms (24 males and 18 females) at an elementary school in the southeastern part of the United States. The grade structure of the classes was such that both classes contained first- and second-grade students.

This descriptive investigation, which included an examination of atmosphere and frequency, origin and nature of interactions and distractions within the single-sex environment, also contained a comparative element, as this research isolated developing themes for comparison between the two classes. One researcher conducted all observations, writing, coding, analysis, and interpretation of all field notes. The instrumentation used in this research included a standard instructional rubric to provide a baseline for comparison between the classes.

The instructional components of the observation rubric included: teacher/student focused instruction, activity, subject, objectives or essential questions, student organization, assessment, and timeframe for sub-session. Also used in this research was an interaction rubric developed by the researcher to record interactions within class. The rubric included cells for recording the frequency of interaction, origin, and nature of those occurrences when applicable. Cell topics included instructional and non-instructional differentiations for student initiated interaction and teacher initiated interaction. Non-instructional interactions referred to conversational interactions, not including conversations related to the logistics of classroom operation. Other interaction data gathered on the rubric focused on atmosphere within the class.

Emerging themes and descriptive statistics revealed that the nature, frequency, and origins of interactions and distractions within the single-sex classroom were both intricate components and products of the environment.

Teacher Cognition and Teacher Planning in Preservice Teachers: A Multiple Case Study

Franco Zengaro, Armstrong Atlantic State University

This multiple case study investigated how two preservice physical education teachers attending a university in the South understood the process of planning for instruction as they articulated through their own personal struggle and success. A second purpose of this study was to explore the connection between planning and teaching. Constructivist theories and theories of personal and practical knowledge provided the theoretical frameworks for this research. The following research questions guided this study: (1) What do preservice teachers learn about planning for instruction during their teaching practicum? and (2) Can prior knowledge and experiences function as potential catalyst in our understanding of why preservice teachers plan and teach as they do?

Data collection included interviews, field observations, and documentary notes. Data were

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analyzed utilizing constant comparative methodology. From coded materials categories emerged which created a network of ideas forming a thematic narrative throughout the cases. The following themes emerged from this case: motivation, stress, time, and getting to know the students.

The findings of this research are important because they have articulated several aspects in the ways preservice teachers see their roles as educators. While one believed that students did not want to learn regardless of what the lesson was, the other realized that the best way to deal with conflicts and frustration was to make a personal connection with the students. The purpose of this research was not to evaluate who was the more successful teacher. Rather, the findings addressed the need to reevaluate the importance of debriefing as a tool used in preparing preservice teachers. One student came away feeling that she could be successful only with certain ages of students, while the other student attributed his success to his ability to form a personal relationship with students.

4:00 – 4: 50 P.M. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (Displays)..... King Room

An Experiment in Professional Development Sites: Special Education

William A. Rieck, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Two years ago, the Louisiana Department of Education selected three universities to develop professional development sites emphasizing special education. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette was selected and partnered with a low SES elementary school and a low SES secondary school. The overall goals included: (1) increased collaboration among stake-holders, including parents, (2) increased performance of special needs students, and (3) a reduction of the amount of time students with special needs students spend in exclusive settings.

Each school had a leadership team consisting of an administrator, a special education teacher, a general education teacher, two parents, a representative from Families Helping Families of Louisiana, a university faculty member, and a coordinator employed by the project. The monthly meetings were used to determine appropriate staff development activities, consider challenges, and where technical assistance from the university was needed. Each school also served as a location for special education teaching candidates to complete their student teaching. At least four staff development activities were planned for each school.

The activities were not always identical and were based on needs assessments conducted at the schools using a Likert-type indicator. At the end of staff development activities an assessment was made relative to basic understanding. Administrators, teachers, and, where appropriate, parents and para-educators were compensated for the successful completion of activities and attendance at meetings. Records were maintained about the success of staff development activities from a cognitive perspective, nature and types of interventions, and student time in various instructional settings. At the end of the first year the elementary school was removed from the program. To compensate for the loss, a different elementary school was selected, though it had a more eclectic population and was much larger than the original school.

The Steady Increase in the Arkansas Benchmark Examination Scores: The Effects of Enhanced Instruction and Learning or Variations in Item Difficulty and Performance Levels

John D. Hall, Craig H. Jones, and D. Lynn Howerton, Arkansas State University

The No Child Left Behind Act and the accountability movement in public education have resulted in many states developing group administered, criterion-referenced achievement tests that are, in turn, administered to students in select grades. The resulting test scores are often used to make high stakes decisions that may affect both students and schools. In Arkansas, the Arkansas Benchmark Examination is the test that is used each spring as part of the accountability system to annually evaluate student achievement in an attempt to improve the education for all students.

In June 2008 the Arkansas Department of Education released annual data showing an overall steady increase from 2005-2008 in the percentage of students in grades 3-8 scoring proficient or advanced on the Arkansas Benchmark Examination in math and literacy. While this increase in overall student achievement may be attributed to enhanced instruction and learning, it may also be attributed to

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other variables such as teaching to the test and differences in the level of item difficulty and performance levels or cut scores across yearly editions of the test.

The purpose of this investigation was to determine if the level of item difficulty and the performance levels or cut-scores reported in the Technical Reports for the 2005-2008 Arkansas Benchmark Examination varied across the yearly editions of the test and whether these variables may have contributed to the reported increase in student achievement. Recommendations based on these findings were provided.

Rethinking the Curriculum: Faculty Development and Online Courses in Summer School

Brad M. Petitfils, Loyola University

Many universities have recently turned to offering summer courses online that allow both undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to receive university credit while they travel home or abroad; however, many teaching faculty have serious reservations concerning the academic rigor and educational experience these courses provide to students. Loyola University New Orleans has developed a faculty seminar that addressed these issues, which are most commonly cited by skeptics regarding the development and implementation of distance education courses. The translation of curricula from an on-campus model to an online model is not an easy task, especially for faculty members who have never before taught online.

Loyola's Online Summer Seminar requires professors to complete course proposals and participate in a semester-long course design workshop to ensure that the classroom experience is replicated as closely as possible. The course design model requires faculty members to develop instructional units that contain four main parts: learning objectives, lecture/presentation, student collaboration, and assignments/assessments. During the seminar, faculty learn best practices from instructional designers, educational technologists, reference librarians, media specialists, and their peers who have previously taught online courses. Upon completion of the seminar, faculty participants are paid a course-development stipend.

University Seminar: The First-Year Experience at Louisiana Tech University

Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

According to the American College Testing Program (ACT, 2008), there has been a sharp decrease in the percentage of first-year students at four-year public colleges and universities that return for a second year from 2006 to 2008. Of 14 Louisiana four-year public institutions, an average of 64.2% of first-time students enrolled in 2006 have continued with their college education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).

What are successful public institutions doing to retain student enrollment? Many universities have implemented first-year freshman programs or seminars, as well as provided exceptional advising programs and support services to incoming freshman (O'Shaughnessy, 2009). The First-Year Experience at Louisiana Tech University focuses on giving the first-year student the resources and support needed to successfully transition to college. The First-Year Experience is led by the Office of Enrollment Management and the Bulldog Achievement Resource Center (BARC). The BARC's mission is to help students feel connected to the university by providing them with academic and co-curricular resources and by providing opportunities for university and community involvement.

In this display presentation, an overview of Louisiana Tech's First-Year Experience Program was given. Tenets of the program, such as the University Seminar course, the Common Reading Program, and the First-Year Convocation and Medallion ceremony were shown. Ultimately, these various components help to equip incoming freshman to succeed in completing a degree program while enhancing the overall student experience.

Combining Selected School and Teacher Variables to Predict the Likelihood of Achieving Adequate Yearly Progress in Title I Middle Schools

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Dawn Owens, Mercer University

Student achievement was the primary focus of the accountability reforms of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The requirements of NCLB ushered in the concept of schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in order for every child to be performing at grade level by the end of the school term in 2013-2014. This study investigated the combined power of selected school and teacher characteristics to predict the likelihood of achieving AYP and reading absolute bar on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test in Georgia's Title I middle schools.

For this quantitative study, the school characteristics included student population size, school territory (urban, suburban, or rural), and percentages of minority and economically disadvantaged students. The teacher characteristics included teacher degree level, years of experience, teacher retention, and teacher absenteeism. The sample comprised all Title I middle schools in Georgia with a school-wide program, housing Grades 6-8, and for which archival data were available. Binary logistic regressions were performed on data from 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 to determine the power of the predictors on AYP and reading absolute bar. Absolute bar is the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO), the percentage of students that must meet or exceed the reading/English language arts and math proficiency levels for AYP.

The findings indicated a statistically significant predictive relationship between minimum teacher degree level and AYP and between the percentage of economically disadvantaged students and AYP. With each unit of increase in the percentage of teachers with a minimum degree level or each unit of increase in the percentage of economically disadvantaged students, there is a decreased likelihood of the school making AYP. No statistically significant predictors were identified for reading absolute bar. The implications provided a means of predicting the likelihood of achieving AYP, thus allowing for informed decision making prior to assessment.

Food Preferences, Activity Level, and BMI: Impact on Elementary Students' Standardized Test Scores

Peggy Jasperson and Kyna Shelley, University of Southern Mississippi

Various known factors, including socioeconomics, race, and gender, affect student learning. Although studies have discussed students' health, specifically obesity, and their performance in school, most simply imply that a connection between the two makes sense. Although national programs are being developed to improve the overall well-being of children, data have not yet established a direct relationship between childhood obesity and academic achievement. In fact, few studies have actually examined the relationship between a child's body mass index (BMI) and that child's overall achievement.

The current project examined the relationship among factors such as eating habits, food preferences, activity level, obesity, and standardized test scores. Sixty-five fourth- and fifth-grade students were weighed and measured, and their BMI scores were calculated. Students answered a researcher-designed questionnaire regarding their dietary intake, their activity level, and their body image. The most recent Language Arts and Math achievement scores were collected. Univariate and multivariate methods of analysis were used.

The combination of gender and race showed a relationship with BMI and with test scores. Caucasian males had a lower average BMI than African-American males, and Caucasian girls had a higher average BMI than African-American girls. Caucasian boys performed significantly lower in Language Arts than did African-American boys. Girls of both races consistently scored lower than boys of both races in Math.

Findings demonstrated an association between gender/race and BMI that is not typically observed in the literature. Findings of this study may enable physical education teachers to better understand their target population and to create more meaningful lessons that will increase the activity level of students. This, in turn, has the potential to impact academic achievement.

4:00 – 4: 50 P.M. ACTION RESEARCH: FACT OR FICTION? (Symposium).....Capitol Room

Organizer: Jeffrey Oescher, Southeastern Louisiana University

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The Impact of Literature Circles Impact on Fourth-Graders' Reading Comprehension Skills

Megan Bankston, Southeastern Louisiana University

The Impact of Teaching Question-Answer Relationships on Students' Comprehension

Deborah Brown, Southeastern Louisiana University

Using Academic English to Improve the Mathematical Achievement of English Language Learners

Elena Dieck, Southeastern Louisiana University

The Impact of Fluent Reader on Students' Reading Performance

Martha Herty, Southeastern Louisiana University

The Impact of a Literacy Intervention on the Text Reading of a Hearing Impaired First Grader

Lorrie Wax, Southeastern Louisiana University

In the last several years, great interest has been generated around action research and its use by teachers. Textbooks have been published, classes have been offered, and teacher preparation programs have embraced such projects as the capstone artifact in teacher candidates' portfolios.

The purpose of this symposium was to discuss the results of five well-planned action research studies in light of the researchers' intentions and the limitations of their studies. Their work is examined in the context of a simple question, What is fact, and what is fiction? All of the studies were used as the capstone project for the researchers' completion of a graduate degree in education. All of the research questions of interest to the researchers were causal in nature. That is, they all wanted to know the effectiveness of some intervention or strategy being used with their students.

All researchers used pre-experimental or single subject designs. Methodological issues such as sampling, instrumentation, and treatment fidelity, were handled appropriately. In fact, there were few if any flaws in their research with the exception of the use of an inappropriate design.

All of the researchers were teachers or specialists working with the children participating in their study. All were interested in the interventions they studied based on the specific needs of their students. For example, one researcher needed to find an effective way to teach text reading to a hearing impaired child. Her selection of the particular intervention was the result of becoming interested in specific strategies during her graduate work. A second had been exposed to literature circles in her graduate work and felt they had merit, given the current level of achievement, or lack thereof, of the children in her classroom. In essence, all five researchers wanted to examine the effectiveness of specific interventions in the context of their own classroom.

All of the researchers considered their work as action research. However, the desire of each of them for conclusive evidence on the efficacy of the intervention used was tempered by the constraints of examining the intervention in a very restricted context. Each researcher has resolved this dilemma to her/his satisfaction as reflected on thoughts and concerns in this regard.

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

A Comparison of Predictive Accuracy in Logistic Regression and Discriminant Analysis

Maira L. Martelo, University of North Florida

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

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

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

Trudy Abadie, University of North Florida

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

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

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

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

Thursday, November 5, 2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Developing Dispositions During Teacher Education

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

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

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

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

Stephen K. Miller, Western Kentucky University

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

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

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

Data Collection for Accreditation Purposes

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

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

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

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

9:00 – 9:50 A.M. TECHNOLOGY King Room

The Application of Social Networking Technologies in Teacher Education Programs

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

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

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

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

Impact of Video Tutorials in an Online Educational Statistics Course

Thomas A. DeVaney, Southeastern Louisiana University

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

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

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

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

Bo Shadden, East Tennessee State University

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

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

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

9:00 – 9:50 A.M.

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

Ellen M. Ramp, The University of Southern Mississippi

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

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

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

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

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

The Man from Recife: Why Paulo Freire Remains Relevant

James D. Kirylo, Southeastern Louisiana University

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

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

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

Nik A. Clegorne, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

Evan Mense and Sharon C. Hoffman, Southeastern Louisiana University

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

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

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

Roland W. Mitchell, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

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9:00 – 9:50 A.M. MULTICULTURAL Academy Room

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

Jay Feng, Mercer University

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

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

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

Transforming Teacher Candidates' Perceptions Regarding Teaching Students of Diversity

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

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

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

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

Preservice Teacher Development Through Community Partnerships

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

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

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

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

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

African-American Males' Perceptions on Teaching as a Career

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

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

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

Preschool Programs in North Alabama: Examining Quality Care and Education

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

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

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

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

Candi L. Hill and Alice Carter, Louisiana Tech University

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

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

Racial and Age Differences in Mathematics Attitudes

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

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

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

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

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

Dale Campbell and Patricia K. Lowry, Jacksonville State University

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

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

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

Factors Influencing Minority Student Persistence and Success

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

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

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

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

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

Organizing Instruction to Meet Instructional Goals Revisited

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

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

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

Joy N. Bell, Kennesaw State University

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

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

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

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

Melissa J. Haab, Alabama Southern Community College

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thad Mitchell and Roland W. Mitchell, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

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

Marian N. Jackson, University of New Orleans

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heather Moore, East Tennessee State University

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mitzi Trahan and Dianne Olivier, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

Vincent R. McGrath, Mississippi State University

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

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

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

Lingqi Meng, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Whitney Shelton and Patrick N. Kariuki, Milligan College

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

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

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

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

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

Lauren A. Menard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

Pamela H. Scott, East Tennessee State University

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

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

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

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

Marclyn D. Porter, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

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

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

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

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

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

Gwyllyn Williams, Southern University and A and M College

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

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

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

Thursday, November 5, 2009

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

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

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

Factors Contributing to the Success of College Algebra Students

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thursday, November 5, 2009

Sherry Shaw, University of North Florida

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

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

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

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

Vinson F. Thompson, Memphis (TN) City Schools

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

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

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

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

11:00 – 11:50 A.M.

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

(Symposium)..... King Room

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Organizer: Larry G. Daniel, University of North Florida

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

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

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

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

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

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

Discriminant Analysis: A Special Case of Canonical Correlation

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

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

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

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

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

Principals' Voices Regarding Visionary Leadership

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

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

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

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

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

Robert O. Slater, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

Perceptions of PDS Stakeholders: Do They Make A Difference?

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

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

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

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

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

Presenter, Linda W. Morse, Mississippi State University

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Job Satisfaction Among High School Principals In Mississippi

Geoffry A. Haines, Delta State University

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

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

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

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

Nicole S. Boudreaux, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

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

Martha Jallim Hall, Southern University and A&M College

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

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

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

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

Lesia Holder, Midway College

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Relationships and Learning In the Classroom: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Alicia Westbrook and Richard Mohn, University of Southern Mississippi,

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

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

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

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

Edith G. Mayers, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

How to Use Video in Evaluating Teacher Candidate Progress

Elizabeth E. Hillman, University of Southern Mississippi

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

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

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

Leadership in Higher Education: What Faculty Want

Eric J. Heinrich, Louisiana Tech University

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

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

Shane T. Warren, Mississippi State University

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

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

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

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

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

Beverly M. Klecker and David Barnett, Morehead State University

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

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

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

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

Doctoral Students and the Conditions of Their Education

Tiffany N. Labon-Sims, University of Southern Mississippi

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

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

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

Examining the Predictive Validity of the Achievement Goals for Research Scale

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

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

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

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

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

Eun J. Talka, Mercer University

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

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

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

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

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

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

Robert O. Slater, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evaluating the Use of Gaming Frameworks as an Instructional Tool

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Saswati Majumdar, University of Louisiana at Monroe

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Analyses of Ohio Middle School Teacher Preparation Programs Using Factor Analysis

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Alternative Administrative Certification: Factors Influencing Program Choice

Dana L. Bickmore, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

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

Assessing Professional Learning Communities Through Formal and Informal Measures

Dianne F. Olivier, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

Teachers' Responses to Current Educational Issues Affecting Their Professional Lives

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

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

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

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

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

Making a Difference Through Teacher Leadership

Deborah L. Hayes, Lincoln Memorial University

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

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

No Child Left Behind: Perspectives and Knowledge of Parental Involvement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Lesia Lennex, Morehead State University

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

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

Are Faculty Concerned with Online Delivery at Traditional Institutions?

La Toya M. Hart, Jackson State University

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

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

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

How to Use Photo Story in Class Activities and Portfolios

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

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

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

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

Measuring Metacognitive Self-Regulation in a Biology Intensive Freshman Orientation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Formal and Informal Science Education: A Collaborative Effort

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jonathon L. Modica and Ketevan Mamiseishvili, University of Arkansas

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

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

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

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

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

Pamela H. Scott, East Tennessee State University

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Audrey Bowser, Arkansas State University

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

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

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

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

The Purpose of Preschool: Sociocultural Influences on Policy Development

Bridget E. Thomas, George Mason University

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

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

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

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

Anne C. Lindsay, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

When Metaphors Reveal Images of Teaching in Preservice Physical Education Teachers

Franco Zengaro, Armstrong Atlantic State University

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

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

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

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

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

Hongwei Yang, University of Kentucky

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

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

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

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

Elementary Education Majors' Experiences in a Middle School Field Placement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chinese and African-American College Students' Hope

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

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

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

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

Hierarchical Regression of Demographic Factors, Instructional Strategies

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

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

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

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

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

Correlation Between Students' Attitudes Toward Math and Achievement Scores

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

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

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

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

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

3:00 – 3:50 P.M.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTUniversity Room

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

Vinson F. Thompson, Belhaven University

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

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

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

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

School Culture and Accountability Outcomes: Evaluating Standard

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

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

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

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

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College Students, Religiosity, and Abortion Attitudes

Tina Vazin, Alabama State University

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

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

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

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

A Longitudinal Investigation of Middle School Teachers

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

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

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

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

A Study of Educational Retreats Providing Professional Development

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

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

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

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

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

Ellen S. Faith, Christian Brothers University

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

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

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

The Indicators of Family Engagement Survey

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shirley Bowles and Ursula Whitehead, University of Southern Mississippi

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Peter A. Sheppard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Effects of Aviation Education on Minority

Catherine S. Woodyard, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

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

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

Language Learners in the Constructivist English Language Arts Classroom

Susan N. Piper and University of South Alabama

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

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

A Longitudinal Study of Grade Retention Kindergarten Through Third Grade

Dilek Suslu and Eugene Kennedy, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

Steven L. Mccullar and Roland Mitchell, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Curt Fields, Memphis (TN) City Schools

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

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training and their success in graduating from high school.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kirsten T. Edwards, Louisiana State University

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

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

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

Leadership Styles and Student Achievement

Santina S. St. John, Concord University

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

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

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

Generational Differences in Workplace Attitudes

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

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

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

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

Louisiana Value-Added Qualitative Study: New Teacher Focus Groups

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

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

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

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

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

James H. Lampley, East Tennessee State University

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

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

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

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

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

Belinda M. Cambre, University of New Orleans

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kelli D. Spencer, Mercer University

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

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

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

Writing Publishable Mixed Research Articles: Guidelines for Emerging Scholars

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

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

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

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reformulating the mixed research question(s).

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

Using ICOMP in Factor Model Selection

Hongwei Yang, University of Kentucky

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

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

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

Structural Invariance of Two Survey Formats of the Religiosity Scale

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

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

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

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9:00 – 9.50 A.M. OUTSTANDING PAPERS Paramount Room

Presider: Linda Kondrick, Arkansas Tech University

10:00 – 10.50 A.M. EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN Paramount Room

Does a Classification of Developmental Delay Lead to Special Education in Subsequent Evaluations? Predictors of Special Education Outcomes at Age 9

Tammy C. Lavergne, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services [OSERS] (2003) estimates that more than 250,000 students (7%) receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) at age five, the Kindergarten year for most students. By age nine, when most U.S. students are completing third grade, more than 500,000 students (12%) are receiving special education. Despite the high incidence of students ages five through nine receiving special education services, relatively little is known about their participation in these programs. Do students who receive special education services during the primary years have a better chance of declassification, or do they continue to need special education despite intervention during this period?

This paper presented a theoretical framework for intervening with special needs students in the early primary grades which was based upon the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky), the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner), and the transactional theory (Sameroff). A comprehensive review of the literature was included and addressed early childhood special education (ECSE) programs, efficacy of ECSE, economics of ECSE, the effects of labeling, the future of ECSE based on national data sets, Louisiana eligibility criteria, and the effects of the proposed predictor variables on student achievement in ECSE.

Logistic regression was used to identify the influence of 14 independent variables considered to have an impact on student performance: (1) student variables – race, GPA, gender, percentile ranking on standardized math and reading assessments, time in general education, and duration of services, (2) parent variables – education level of mother, education level of father, income status, and family composition, and (3) teacher variables – teacher certification (general/special educator) and years of experience (general/special educator). Data were collected using the Special Education Reporting (SER) system, the AS400 database, and parent questionnaires to determine if evaluation outcomes could be reliably predicted.

Teacher Perceptions of Challenges to Preparing Professionals to Educate Children with Autism

Ruth S. Busby, Timothy Hobbs, Rhonda Bowron, and Jan Oliver, Troy University

With autism affecting 1.5 million American children and growing exponentially, early diagnosis and appropriate intervention is the key to significantly improving treatment. The purpose of this study was to collect and assess information regarding teacher perceptions of informational needs and professional challenges associated with educating children with autism. The participants in this study included both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in education courses at a rural university. The participants were selected because they were representative of practicing professionals in the community who have or will have experience teaching children with autism. Thirty-one students participated in this voluntary study.

The methodology for this study involved a nominal group technique conducted by university professors. This form of brainstorming produced a large number of ideas in a short period of time by posing this one question to participants: What are the challenges to preparing professionals to educate children with autism spectrum disorders? The design ensured that all members had an equal voice in the development and refinement of the list. Consensus-building techniques were used to identify issues that participants believed to be relevant to the education of children with autism.

The four stages in this process included: (1) silent problem generation, (2) public display of problems, (3) problem discussion, and (4) problem ranking and prioritization. A second phase involved group discussion of possible solutions to the top ranked problems. The process took less than an hour. The top three issues were identified by participants as: (1) collaboration between inservice and preservice

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teachers and caregivers, (2) a visit with families who have experiences with autistic children, including video footage of real life experiences in the home setting, and (3) an autism clinic for the training of preservice teachers. The findings in this study suggested implications for the better preparation of educators of autistic children.

Alabama Health Profession Students' Perceptions of Health Care Information and Service Needs of Individuals with Disabilities

Marcia R. O'Neal, Retta R. Evans, Kay Hogan-Smith, Betty Nelson, Stephen L. Firsing, III, and Brian F. Geiger, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and Jeri Jackson and Gary Edwards, United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Birmingham

Data from Healthy People 2010 Midcourse Review are useful to compare the health status of populations related to quality of life and disparities. Little is known about barriers to accessing health information and clinical services in Alabama. Project funders, the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities, and the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, provided support to gather information concerning health information and health care services available to individuals with disabilities, to build a database of health information and service needs, and to develop training modules.

A team representing diverse disciplines and settings formed two working groups to guide the project. Members included university researchers, service providers, students, and consumers. Surveys were developed for four audiences: individuals with disabilities, families/caregivers, health profession students, and service providers.

The focus of this paper was on results from students. Surveys, available in alternate formats, included 25 items. Researchers activated social and professional networks to distribute surveys. Health profession students (N = 568) revealed areas of strength and need related to health disparities among patients with disabilities. Respondents included students in medicine, dentistry, optometry, nursing, therapies (PT, OT, SLP), nursing, and counseling. Approximately 70% reported receiving training to prepare them to treat individuals with disabilities, 55% felt comfortable treating these individuals, and 65% felt that they did so fairly. About 60% assisted their patients or caregivers to follow treatment recommendations and prevent illness. However, 15% to 20% of students were uncertain about how to answer these items.

Students identified obstacles/challenges and training needs related to treating individuals with disabilities. They expressed a desire for information on communication, mobility accommodations, various disabilities, and advocacy/accessibility. Results from each student group presented to the relevant health profession school will inform curricular change. Needs identified from surveys with all four groups have been prioritized to produce video and written training modules.

10:00 – 10.50 A.M. SOCIAL SCIENCE..... Louisiana Room

Wit, Mirth, and the Learning Environment: Maximizing Student Performance and Teacher Effectiveness by Incorporating Structured Humor in the Classroom

Michael G. Lovorn, University of Alabama

Studies show that humor is an effective strategy for fostering student engagement, development, and confidence-building (Rule, 2009; Harlin, 2008; Mawhinney, 2008; Morrison, 2008; Ogden, 2008; Walker, 2008). Structured use of wit and mirth can enrich and broaden learning by establishing a predictable environment wherein students are enabled to interact and grow socially and academically. Teachers who model and employ appropriate humor strategies embolden their students to perceive learning, content, and behavior in relevant, engaging, and dynamic manners, and promote students' positive attitudes toward school, coursework, and each other.

This session was designed to review literature related to humor as an effective classroom strategy and observe the ongoing humor research of the lead presenter in the areas of teaching and teacher development. Participants understood the great and numerous benefits of employing structured, content-based humor as a teaching strategy, and they were exposed to several humor-in-the-classroom strategies being investigated in the study. Participants also learned about the challenges and potential

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pitfalls of inappropriate humor in the classroom setting and what research reveals about how teachers may reduce or eliminate negative or bad humor. Additionally, session participants learned: (1) how to find humor within a given curriculum, (2) humor is not limited to oral transmission: teachers may also use the board, music, dramatic expression, props, handouts, tests, and other materials to introduce humor and wit, and infuse it into the classroom on a regular basis, (3) self-deprecating humor on the part of the teacher makes her/him more approachable to students and sets a tone for inviting and invigorating content-based conversation, and (4) despite the many benefits of using humor in the classroom, there are several challenges that teachers must consider and prepare for before employing the strategy.

Family Background, “Risk Aversion,” and 12th-Grade Math Achievement

Edward B. Reeves, Morehead State University

The association between family socioeconomic status (SES) and academic achievement is a persistent finding in large-sample national research. Explanations for this association often point to upper SES families having greater resources to invest in their children’s educational success. Breen and Goldthorpe have supplemented these explanations by proposing a motivational factor that influences educational decisionmaking. According to their theory, students and their parents value upward social mobility less than they fear downward. It follows from this dictum that the higher a family’s socioeconomic status, the more “risk averse” the student and parents were in their educational decisions. They will make choices that increase the likelihood that the student will remain in the same SES bracket as the parents. Consequently, upper SES students are more motivated to attend four-year college and graduate school. These same students are also more motivated to take advanced math courses in high school regardless of their ability in math. Lesser SES students are not as motivated to take such courses even when their math ability is equal to that of upper SES students.

The present study used the 2002-04 Educational Longitudinal Study national probability sample of high school seniors (N = 12,973) to test Breen and Goldthorpe’s decision-theoretical explanation of educational differentials. After controlling for 10th-grade math ability, family resources, math course-taking, and student demographics, multiple regression models were used to test the risk aversion hypothesis in relation to 12th-grade math achievement.

Risk aversion was found to have strong statistical significance and an effect size of 0.36. While the effects of family background accumulate over many years of schooling, in this study the effects were constrained to the last two years of high school. For risk aversion to have an effect of such magnitude over a limited time span is especially worth noting.

Perceptions of Campers Towards the Effectiveness of LifeSkills Training

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

This study examined the perceptions of second-year summer campers towards the effectiveness of LifeSkills Training (LST), a government supported substance and violence prevention program taught during summer camp. Student perceptions were based on four categories: student knowledge of LST, the application and perceived usefulness of LST during the school term, and the willingness to recommend LST to others. A qualified LST instructor engaged 30 summer campers, consisting of middle and high school students, in a two-hour session per week of life skills training for the duration of eight weeks. After the training, students attended the regular school session, and 10 campers returned for a second year of summer camp.

The returning campers (seven females and three males), ranging from the ages of 12-16, were interviewed using a questionnaire. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using predetermined suggested answers for the questions falling in one of the four categories. An analysis of the data revealed that the campers did retain some knowledge of life skills taught the prior summer. Violence prevention and healthy emotion skills were applied more than any of the other skills at home and in the school setting.

The results indicated that students viewed LST in a positive manner. Over 90% of returning campers felt that it was very important to learn LifeSkills and that the training was useful. There has been little research on the students’ opinions or perceptions of the usefulness of the programs. This finding

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suggested a possible correlation between student interest in and perceptions of a behavior modification program and the possible impact of the program on the development of important life skills.

10:00 – 10.50 A.M. ADMINISTRATION/HIGHER EDUCATION.....University Room

A Correlational Study of Self-Regulation, Internet Use, and Academic Achievement in a Computer Literacy Course

SungHee YangKim, Southern University and A & M College

This research was a correlational study of the relationships among self-regulation, students' internet use, and academic achievement in an undergraduate computer literacy course. Students who are not able to self-regulate their internet use may not be able to maximize their academic achievement. There has been little research on the relationship between internet browsing and academic achievement based on self-regulation.

This study used a sample of 39 students who were enrolled in two sections of a computer literacy course. Each section was taught by the same instructor. Students self-reported the demographic questionnaire, a survey of internet and computer use, and responded to the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) selected section for self-regulation. The amount of internet use also was measured using computer software.

Factor analysis supported the construct validity of the MSLQ scores. The MSLQ internal consistency reliability Cronbach alpha was .735. Over 69% of internet access during class was for non-academic internet browsing. But, self-regulated learners were less likely to access the internet during class. The correlation of total internet access with academic achievement was negative. Students' strengths or weaknesses in using learning strategies were emphasized in computer literacy courses to maximize the potential benefits of the computer and internet. A longitudinal study of classroom use of computers and internet access to learn how students utilize the computer and internet and to develop effective teaching strategies for successful and efficient learning was suggested for further study.

Considerations of Distance Education Integration: A Qualitative Pilot Study

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

Distance education has become a controversial commodity within educational settings throughout the United States particularly within sectors of postsecondary education. While studies generally look at institutional levels to determine whether or not distance education offerings increase or decrease the exploration of college level administrators and department chairs in such scenarios was explored. The purpose of this study was to further extend the research on the role of key administrators in expanding distance education offerings. Previous research conducted on an archival public data file made available from the Post-secondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS) through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education website identified four factor components that have an impact on distance education offerings: faculty concerns, institutional barriers, lack of funding/costs and resources, and external support. Participants were intentionally selected based on their leadership role within the institution.

Participants received a consent form prior to arranging the interview that detailed the project purpose, risks, and benefits associated with this study and contact information for the researcher. Four 30-minute interviews were conducted with guided questions developed specifically for this study. All interview audio and notes were transcribed for data analysis. After transcription, a hand analysis was conducted to identify common themes and descriptions using lean coding.

Five emerging themes arose: (1) faculty considerations and incentives, (2) student considerations, (3) resources and external support, (4) lack of funding and costs, and (5) administrative characteristics and considerations. Implications of the study suggested that key leaders understand that change is a lengthy process, the cost associated with distance education offerings, and the importance of tenure and promotion policies and procedures in the creation/expansion of distance education offerings.

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Decision Makers: Upper Level, White Female Administrators in Higher Education

Carlton R. McHargh, University of Alabama

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, one of the roles of higher education is to provide “national leadership on the issue of diversity” (<http://www.aacu.org/issues/diversity/>). While some studies have demonstrated that increased diversity in higher educational contexts has been linked to benefits, other studies have shown that achieving diversity in campuses across the United States, particularly at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) is not an easy task to accomplish. Much of the existing literature has focused on diversity amongst the students at PWI’s campuses. In contrast, this paper argued that, in order for PWIs, to truly embrace the ethos that underlies diversity initiatives, policies and practices have to assure that individuals from underrepresented backgrounds are meaningfully included at all levels ranging from students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

This paper drew from qualitative interviews of five purposefully selected white, female, upper-level administrators at a southern PWI. Respondents addressed topics that included experience, education, interview process, and perceived prospects for advancement. Some research suggests that there are several inherent difficulties in achieving diversity in PWIs, including the lack of sound policies guiding their hiring, and overt and subtle discriminatory practices. Other research generally shows that there are fewer qualified candidates of color for top level leadership positions. Critical Race Theory and Whiteness Studies guided the study to understand the extent to which the theoretical arguments made were supported in practice.

This study utilized narrative case study and in-depth interview questions. The data were coded utilizing NVivo 8 and offered insight into the issues pertaining to the hiring of underrepresented administrators. Preliminary results showed that white women administrators trusted institutional hiring practices. Additionally, this study offered strategies for fostering an inclusive institution and postulates direction for future study.

10:00 – 10.50 A.M. MATHEMATICS..... King Room

Educating Students in Poverty in the Discipline of Mathematics

Leslie F. Jones, Nicholls State University

Student achievement and/or the performance of American schools gained national attention with the 2001 authorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. This legislation focused on many diverse, complex educational issues, and, in many ways, it is similar to the report A Nation at Risk, released by the task force the National Commission on Excellence. Former president Ronald Reagan created the National Commission on Excellence Task Force to critique the nation’s schools. There are obvious similarities between the A Nation at Risk and NCLB. First, there are complex issues addressed in both initiatives. Secondly, the focus of both initiatives is obviously, student performance in K-12 schools and teacher preparation programs in higher education. Standardized tests are significant for both A Nation at Risk and NCLB; there was an influx of the usage of standardized tests after A Nation at Risk, and the NCLB legislation mandates that students be tested yearly in grades three through eight. As a result of A Nation at Risk, rigorous structure was added to teacher preparation programs—the NCLB legislation addressed a need to have “highly qualified” teachers focusing on preparation, recruitment, and retention. The discussion was linked to the standardized testing movements because there is evidence to suggest that students in poverty who take standardized tests score lower than affluent students. In 1966, the Coleman Report revealed that the greatest determiner of student achievement was socioeconomic status.

In the study, the authors attempted to link several variables to student achievement in a multiple regression equation. This study was replicated in 1979 by Brookover and colleagues. Similar findings were recorded. Since those studies, many variables have been linked to student achievement; however, the question still lingers about the greatest predictor of achievement for students, particularly in poverty. Colleagues have discussed teaching methodologies in reading, science, social studies, and English language arts for teaching students in poverty. The mathematics and reading disciplines pose additional challenges because there is evidence to suggest that all students have difficulty with both mathematics and reading early.

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The National Assessment of Education Program reported that students performed inadequately on computation and have problems understanding word problems. American students also performed poorly in mathematics in comparison to other countries. According to Knuth and Jones (1991), improving instruction in mathematics is a national concern!

Secondary Mathematics: Four-Credits Vs. Continuous Enrollment for College Readiness

Jeremy Zekowski, University of Alabama

For nearly two years, an in-depth analysis of the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) pertaining to secondary mathematics and the successful completion of bachelor's degree has been ongoing. During this period, many states have been modifying policy to require college-going high school graduates to complete four math credits to be college ready. The current research project aimed at examining the nature of credits versus continuous enrollment in secondary mathematics. The hypothesis was that many average bachelor-degree-seeking students opt for less challenging senior years in high school without mathematics, thus lowering the continuity for developing critical thinking skills necessary for higher education success.

The NELS consisted of about 25,000 1988 8th graders followed through 2000. About 50% of the participants had complete secondary and post-secondary transcripts, surveys, interviews, test scores, and more. NELS was a two-stage stratified probability sampling design to come as close as possible to a random selection of students nationally. Because of the complex sampling design of NELS, each participant in the study was assigned weights. The weights were reflected as the participant's likelihood of being randomly selected. The weighted sample size for the analysis was about 2.0 million students.

The variables analyzed in the study using regression models were (1) highest mathematics course completed in high school, (2) overall Carnegie credits earned, (3) continuous enrollment in secondary mathematics, (4) graduation mathematics credit requirements, and (5) early entry to algebra-1. Socioeconomic status (in grade 12) and 8th-grade math achievement were controlling covariates. Results found that continuous enrollment in secondary mathematics was more important at predicting bachelor degree completion than a three- or four-credit policy. The findings are a sign that block scheduling and higher education policy are in need of further research on this subject.

Accommodating Diversity in the College Algebra Classroom Using Differentiated Instruction: Effects on Student Achievement and Attitudes towards Mathematics

Valerie L. Epps, Southern University of Baton Rouge

Students enrolled in the college algebra classroom are diverse in many aspects: life and educational experiences, mathematical abilities, and learning styles. In search of strategies to best accommodate the diversity in the college algebra classroom, the researcher proposed that this task could be accomplished through the use of differentiated instruction. Research indicates that with the use of differentiated instructional strategies, the instructor can meet the needs of all students and help them meet and exceed the projected student learning objectives. There was limited research on the use of differentiated instruction in the college level mathematics course. However, studies conducted on the secondary school level indicated positive results in regards to student achievement in all content areas.

This pilot study examined the effects of differentiated instruction on student achievement and attitudes towards mathematics. The data analyzed for this study came from 80 students enrolled in college algebra by way of pre- and posttest and mathematics attitude and learning style surveys. These assessment instruments were administered initially to assess student initial readiness levels and attitudes towards mathematics and at the conclusion of the study. Students were either engaged in differentiated activities or in the lecture method of delivery depending on the class to cover course objectives. Data were analyzed and compared using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

The results of the study indicated significant difference between the groups. The study concluded that achievement levels of students increased when allowed to use strategies geared towards their learning styles and those students experiencing success attitudes improved in regard to mathematics. There were a number of concerns identified. Recommendations for addressing such obstacles and further research were discussed.

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10:00 – 10.50 A.M. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTGovernor Room

An Empirical Evaluation of the Progress and Achievement of English Language Learners in a Suburban School District

Marlynn K. Martin

The legislation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has brought to educators' attention the need, requirement, and demand that all children are guaranteed an equitable education. In support of this mandate, Assistant Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Education, Kathleen Leos, (2006) stated, "There are approximately 5 ½ million non-English speaking students in the United States public schools, speaking 440 different languages, and 80% of those English language learners speak Spanish." Continuing, Leos stated, "English language learners are the fastest growing K-12 population in the United States with 16 states reporting a 200% increase in English language learner enrollment from 1991-2001." The Mississippi English language learner population has steadily grown between 50-100% during this same time period (NCELA, 2006). Since 1994 the steady growth of numbers of English language learners is an indicator of why NCLB mandates specific requirements for English language learners in school districts across the nation (Part A. Sec. 3102, NCLB, 2002).

NCLB includes basic principles that require stronger accountability in all realms of education; increased flexibility and local control, expand options for parents, and utilization of teaching methods that have proven to work in other school programs. Other stipulations of NCLB included providing assistance to schools in need of improvement, provide better information to teachers and administrators, ensuring that teacher quality is a high priority, and giving more resources to the schools to accomplish these goals (USDE, 2004). Furthermore, this law has prioritized that all school age children must make the grade state-defined education standards by the end of the 2013-2014 school year. Stemming from this legislation, educators and school districts have become more aware of their obligations to identify and provide English language instruction for immigrant students in order for them to understand and perform successfully in an all-English-speaking academic setting.

Because of the impact of immigration in Mississippi and the legislation of NCLB, this study was designed to determine the progress of English language acquisition of English language learners on the Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (SELP) and the relationship, if any, to the progress of English language learners on the Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT). The results of this study showed that ELLs showed English language acquisition on the Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (SELP) and academic progress on the Mississippi Criterion Test (MCT), and that there was a significant, positive relationship between the two assessments administered during the three-year period of this study in the suburban school district in Mississippi.

Online Instruction: Collaborative Learning and Video Lectures

Gail D. Hughes, University of Arkansas - Little Rock

To determine which aspects of online courses were most important 94 students enrolled in online graduate research and statistics classes completed surveys rating impacts of course instructional methods and providing VARK learning scores. To explore student learning styles as a mediator for students' preferred instructional technique, the researcher conducted one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests among learning style groups (visual/aural, read/write, and kinesthetic) on the importance ratings of instructional options (instructor notes, instructor communication, textbook, video lectures, assignments, and group activities) utilizing a Bonferonni adjusted alpha. The ANOVAs for instructor notes [(F(2, 78) = 5.620, p = .005, = 0.102], textbook [(F(2, 78) = 5.784, p = .005, = 0.106], and assignments [(F(2, 78) = 7.354, p = .001, = 0.136] were significant, and Tukey follow-ups revealed higher scores for reading/writing students than visual/aural students.

When asked, "What aspects of this course contributed most to your learning?" most frequently cited aspects were lecture videos, group work, assignments, instructor notes, and textbook. Students stated that video lectures "helped me feel like I was in an actual course with an actual instructor teaching it." Other students cited the value of collaborative learning: "Group tasks helped me apply the concepts taught and gave me the interaction that I need to get the most from class." Overall, individual

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learning preferences were only somewhat explained by students' learning styles.

Aligning with previous studies, the results from this study converged to indicate that most aspects of the online course were beneficial and that students appreciated the flexibility to select the instructional technique that best met their individual needs. Instructors teaching online courses should consider multiple learning options for students. While the textbook and lecture notes were the instructional techniques of choice for some students, other students benefited from collaboration with peers and from "attending" lectures via video.

College Student Use of Textbooks

Lola Aagaard, Belinda Riley, and Ronald L. Skidmore, Morehead State University

It has been reported (Aagaard and Skidmore, 2004; Sikorski et al., 2002) that only a minority of college students actually read the course textbook in preparation for examinations. Although professors widely lament students' propensity to ignore the carefully chosen textbooks, research specifically investigating why this phenomenon occurs is minimal. Bookstores have reported that fewer students are buying textbooks, perhaps because of rising costs (Mehegan, 2004).

A volunteer sample of undergraduate students at a regional university in the mid-south participated in a semi-structured focus group interview regarding their use of college textbooks. Questions were asked concerning textbook cost, course requirements related to the text, student knowledge of textbook features, performance in the course related to textbook use, and the pros and cons of e-textbooks. Researchers took notes on a laptop and also audio-taped the interview. Student responses were analyzed using the constant-comparative method.

Results indicated that students were buying textbooks, although they felt that any further rise in cost might prohibit them from purchasing texts for all courses. Generally, students reported that they were not reading the textbooks, as such. They used them more as a reference in case they needed further explanation of a concept they did not fully understand from the professor's lecture, notes of the lecture, or the additional material (powerpoint slides, diagrams, etc.) made available online by the professor. Students liked having physical texts, but some were open to the idea of e-textbooks. They noted that being asked questions over information that was covered only in the textbook would get them to at least skim the assigned chapters. Frustration was expressed with teachers who assigned a text but never required anything that would force use of the textbook by students. Recommendations were made for the best use of textbooks, based on interview results.

10:00 – 10.50 A.M. COGNITION/ACHIEVEMENTCapitol Room

Differential Item Functioning by Gender in State Predictive Tests

Eric M. Havens, Jwa K. Kim, and Dana K. Fuller, Middle Tennessee State University

This study investigated differential item functioning (DIF) by gender in tests that predicted the performance of students on state administered exams. Item analysis was also conducted on the tests through CTT and IRT in order to determine the strength and weakness of each item. This study expanded on Gallagher and Delisi's (1994) work, which included only high ability students by extending the sample to low and medium ability students. The tests examined were developed by Discovery Education Assessment.

The participants were eighth graders in the state of Tennessee. The tests for third through eighth grade have been through the most revision. The sample was further reduced to eighth grade to obtain a slightly older sample. The sample size for the reading test was 7,897, and the sample size for the math test was 8,044. Some of the tests were administered by paper and pencil, whereas some were presented through a computer. All of the items were identical in each format, and the students received the same amount of time to complete the tests. Eighteen out of the 28 reading items displayed DIF. Out of the 18 biased items, 12 of the items were biased for women, and six were biased for men. Seventeen out of the 28 math items displayed DIF. Nine of the items were biased for females, whereas eight items were biased for males.

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The results supported the initial concern that DIF was present for the math and reading tests. Items with DIF were discussed, and some possible explanations of the biased items were given. The findings in the present study may serve as evidence that DIF analysis should become a regular part of the test development process.

School Accountability Status, Student Core GPA, and ACT as Predictors for First-Year College Retention

Jason Droddy, Louisiana State University; Wade Smith and Rebecca Robichaux, Mississippi State University; and A. J. Guarino, Arkansas State University

The purpose of this study was to investigate the predictive validity of school accountability status, core GPA, and ACT scores on students' first-year college persistence rate. This dataset contained more than 17,000 records of students who graduated from a Louisiana high school and enrolled in a four-year university. Persistence was defined as any high school graduate who entered a public four-year university in the fall and enrolled at any public postsecondary institution the following academic year. School accountability was dichotomized into high and low performing high schools.

A direct logistical regression was performed on persistence status as the outcome and the three-predictor variables: (1) school accountability status, (2) Core GPA, and (3) ACT Scores. Initial results indicated that after controlling for Core GPA and ACT Scores, school accountability was statistically significant, yet failed to explain any practical effect. Both ACT scores and Core GPA, however, achieved statistical significance. Students were 2.6 times more likely to persist if they earned a 2.5 Core GPA while students who achieved a 20 or higher on the ACT were 1.3 more likely to persist.

The results of this study failed to support that a school's accountability status has any predictive value for their students' first-year college persistence. The variables of Core GPA and ACT, however, demonstrated predictive value and supports earlier research (Cohn et al., 2004; Daugherty and Lane, 1999; DeBerard et al., 2004; Lotkowski et al., 2004; Murtaugh et al., 1999; Noble and Sawyer, 2002). Core GPA provided approximately twice the predictive value of ACT. These findings questioned what high schools can accomplish. Traub (2002) analyzed this question from a human capital perspective and concluded that schools are incapable of providing the changes in human and social capital expected of them. Data from this study supports this conclusion.

What NCES Has Done In Comparing NAEP's Results with State-Level Testing

John J. Marshak, Virginia Commonwealth University

As required by NCLB, each state is responsible for providing the federal government with the results of its state assessment scores, along with measures of a number of other variables, in order to assess its Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Each state created its own assessment instruments and established its own proficiency levels. At the same time, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) was charged with creating an assessment of the nation's students' educational progress. This is known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Counting the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Schools, American possessions, etc., there are well over 50 sets of scores with associated proficiencies to compare with the NAEP results for each of the subjects assessed.

In an attempt to address this problem in one subject area, NCES produced a report published in April 2008 entitled Comparison Between NAEP and State Mathematics Results: 2003 (NCES 2008-475). Its stated purpose was to address: (1) How do states' achievement standards compare with each other and with NAEP? (2) Are NAEP and state assessment results correlated across schools? (3) Do NAEP and state assessments agree on achievement trends over time? and (4) Do NAEP and state assessments agree on achievement gaps between subgroups? This paper went beyond the executive summary by delving into the 84 pages of text and over 300 pages of appendices to examine its conclusions.

10:00 – 10.50 A.M.

RESPECT IN THE CLASSROOM: STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES (Symposium) Academy Room

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Shannon Audley-Piotrowski, Gilbert Parra, Bob Cohen, Amanda Kuryluk, Alyssa Blair,
Neha Kumar and Yeh Hsueh, University of Memphis, and Amber DeBono,
State University of New York at Albany

Respect is a vital part of daily life in the classroom, but the notion and act of respect are often difficult to define. To promote and maintain respect in the classroom, students and teachers must have a shared understanding of what respect entails and how respect is given, although there can be diverse views on these issues. These views vary from relationship to relationship such as that between teacher and student, between friends, between different peer groups, and within the peer group. In this regard, however, little empirical research has examined teachers' and students' perceptions of respect and disrespect, and how these relationship-based respect or disrespect play out in the classroom.

This symposium presented four empirical investigations of children's and teachers' perceptions of respect and disrespect in the classroom using different methods. Each paper focused on a particular perspective about respect by the teacher, by the student, or by the peer group. The findings from these studies suggested the complex role that respect and disrespect play in the classroom. The first paper reported a qualitative study grounded in phenomenology that examined middle school teachers' self-perceptions of showing and receiving respect/disrespect within a multi-ethnic classroom. The emerging themes suggested that the teachers feel respected when students are serious learners, but disrespected when they do not take learning seriously. However, disrespect becomes palpable when the teachers felt that their authoritative roles were challenged and jeopardized. Teachers' perceptions of respect in the classroom depend on students' activities.

The second paper introduced a longitudinal study examining elementary school (grade 3-6) children's understanding of respect for teachers, and the reasons behind respecting teachers over time. Results suggested that in addition to a developmental trend in children's understanding of respect, there is an increasing tendency among children to look at teachers for mutual respect.

The third paper used structural equation modeling to examine how respect, aggression, and popularity among children are related one another over time within the peer group. Results suggested that it is peer group liking, rather than popularity, that leads to peer group respect.

Finally, the fourth paper addressed the impact of social exclusion on feelings of being disliked versus disrespected. Although being excluded by the peer group often caused students to feel both disliked and disrespected, findings suggested that disrespectful social exclusion elicited greater aggression than respectful exclusion. Following the presentation of these studies, the audience was invited to discuss how respect could be nurtured in a classroom and what implications these findings may have for practitioners and researchers alike.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT..... Paramount Room

Perceived Effects of Online Professional Development on Teacher Belief and Instructional Practices

Cher C. Crockett, Southern University and A and M College

The presentation showcased literature reviewed in an attempt to research the perceived effects of online professional development (OPD) on teacher beliefs and instructional practices. The literature chosen allowed the researcher to investigate: (1) the attitude mathematics teachers take toward OPD, (2) the teachers' perceived benefits of participating in OPD opportunities, (3) the extent of which mathematics teachers utilize technology in their classrooms as a result of OPD, and (4) the extent to which mathematics teachers utilize the best practices learned via OPD in their classrooms. The researcher analyzed data from mathematics teachers who incorporated and did not incorporate technology into their academic instruction. Data pertinent to the incorporation of OPD-enriched content into the instructional practices were also analyzed. Data collected via surveys, classroom observations, and focus groups were assessed and reported.

The literature included in this study fell into one of four categories: (1) pertinent information about OPD, (2) teacher attitude toward OPD, (3) perceived benefits of OPD participation, and (4) use of technology in the classroom. Findings of the literature reviewed indicated: (1) teachers' attitudes changed after participation in OPD, (2) OPD training positively impacted most teachers' confidence regarding

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technology, and (3) there was an increased use of technology in the mathematics classroom. The findings for the study suggested implications for further OPD training and continued implementation and utilization of OPD best practices in mathematics classrooms.

A Wide-eyed View on Narrowing the Achievement Gap

Karen A. Franklin and Jessica Lester, University of Tennessee at Knoxville

In this paper, the authors took a dialogical approach to presenting two divergent voices on the educational rhetoric surrounding the call to narrow the achievement gap. The authors critically analyzed the dominant discourse surrounding this call, exploring such constructs as “educational excellence” and “leveling the playing field.” With the two authors approaching the analysis from unique lenses, two differing views on the related literature were presented. The first author took an historical and philosophical approach to examine the socially constructed view of “educational excellence.” Through this lens, the concept of educational equality is dismantled, with the support of historical and current literature. The second author deconstructed the notion of “narrowing the achievement gap” through a critical multicultural educational lens. Through this critical lens, the concept of meritocracy is problematized, drawing upon related literature.

After each author independently unpacked their own perspective on the explicit and implicit meanings within the discourse surrounding the achievement gap, they engaged in a meaningful dialogue. Through this dialogue, a final, jointly constructed voice was added to the conversation. This final layer of analysis showed where the two theoretical perspectives diverge, as well as, converge.

Second Life’s Multi-User Virtual Environment: Distance Learners MUVE to Avatars

Susan V. Dupre and Mitzi Trahan, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The purpose of this paper was to present an overview of research related to Second Life™, an internet-based, multi-user virtual environment (MUVE), and its role in education and professional development. While the three-dimensional environment of Second Life exhibits a game-like ambiance, there is serious business going on "inworld" as educators experiment with this technology in increasing numbers. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has created its own ISTE Island and encourages the use of this virtual world to support professional development, networking, and leadership among its members. Second Life is also being used as a vehicle for university course delivery, conference sessions, informal meetings, collaborative projects, and creative products. As a result, Second Life (SL) has become the subject of recent research attention from those who seek to understand the current and potential educational value of this online phenomenon.

This review of literature examined articles primarily from educational and professional development journals, as well as research conducted in and delivered through Second Life educational portals. Findings revealed that Second Life educational opportunities and activities tended to mirror pedagogical best-practices in Real Life (RL), including the development of professional learning communities. However, barriers to access remain, including a steep learning curve associated with orienting users to the MUVE. The growing experimentation with Second Life for educational purposes demands rigorous examination of all aspects of this environment, which appears to enhance and expand traditional distance learning.

A Mentoring and Induction Program for New Teachers and Assistant Principals

William A. Kiser, Charlotte King Eady, Isreal Eady, and Mary Montgomery-Owens,
Jacksonville State University

Educators today face the daunting task of ensuring that every student makes academic progress. For new teachers and new administrators, the task is even more overwhelming when combined with new on-the-job pressures and demands. However, many states are making progress in supporting new classroom teachers and new assistant principals, but there is little consistency among new teacher

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support programs from state to state. To enhance teacher quality and effectiveness, The Commission on No Child Left Behind (CNCLB) found a large body of evidence suggesting that new teacher support makes an impressive difference in new teacher performance (CNCLB, 2007). Strong (as cited in CNCLB) found that schools with effective mentoring programs for new teachers have increases in student achievement and teacher-retention rates. Nevertheless, new teacher induction and mentoring programs are underdeveloped and under-funded across the country (Berry, Hopkins-Thompson, and Hoke, 2002). "Learning is the fundamental process and the primary purpose of mentoring. One of the principal reasons that mentoring relationships fail is that the learning process is not tended to and the focus on learning goals is not maintained" (Zachary, 2000, p.1). A number of studies in the literature indicated that well-designed new teacher and administrator programs enable these educators to flourish and grow. Not only do effective support programs benefit new teachers, but the students, staff, and entire school benefits as well. Fetler (as cited in Doeger, 2003) found that schools with structured induction programs experienced increases in student achievement and attendance in addition to increased staff morale.

The review of literature has revealed a number of key findings that support the need for a research-based, multi-year mentoring process for new teachers and new administrators. This process must be designed to carefully select and train mentors, as well as the new teachers and assistant principals, with a purpose to develop effective educators and increase student achievement. The literature findings also have shown that an on-going support system should include job-embedded professional development opportunities for new teachers and administrators to meet with mentors, observe expert teachers, and experience peer-coaching situations with their mentors. Moreover, the literature revealed examples of ineffective mentoring programs that can be detrimental to both new educators and mentors. Although there is no one way to implement mentoring programs, the research indicates several proven practices to promote success of new educators transitioning into the profession. The most common of these "is a solid induction program with a focus on mentoring" (Doeger, 2003).

Jacksonville State University has revised the Educational Leadership Program to better prepare school leaders to more closely determine the needs of new teachers in order to develop comprehensive and structured new teacher mentoring programs. Embedded into the two internship courses is a mentoring program for leadership candidates and a training program for mentors.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. TECHNOLOGY Louisiana Room

Bringing Web 2.0 Tools into Academic Coursework—A Look at Actual Student Usage, Interest, and Commentary

Sherri Restauri Carson, Franklin L. King, and J.Gordon Nelson, Jacksonville State University

Recent attention to Web 2.0 tools has surged in the media, and proliferation of these tools within the confines of academia abound. Yet, assumptions of value and usage of these tools of students may not accurately represent their preferences. Higher education's eager adoption of these tools too closely follows trends rather than substantiated data. Hence, data collection on student usage of these tools in personal and academic arenas warrants further investigation to determine factors of student interest, adoption, and purpose at institutions of higher learning.

The authors administered an online survey to a large (n=364), diverse sample of students at a mid-sized, southeastern university. Data were collected on numerous variables of Web 2.0 use in students' personal lives, as well as academic lives, to allow for comparisons between these different venues to be analyzed. Students' interest in these tools, usage patterns, and demographic variables were collected and analyzed for possible correlations. Continuing analysis across multiple disciplines has been underway to strengthen the generalizability of these findings.

Data collected from this project were utilized to recommend proper technology tool use in higher education environments, in traditional courses supplementing with technology tools, and in online courses and programs. As well, the heightened understanding of student interest and usage of Web 2.0 tools may be beneficial in variables relating to recruitment and retention of students in higher education by providing additional insight into the tools students feel are essential to their learning and personal lives while they are engaged in their college experiences.

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Role Play and Social Network Services to Understand Preservice Teachers' Conceptualization of School

Hannah R. Gerber, Sam Houston State University

This study examined the dynamics of a social networking service as a method for involving preservice teachers in discussing case studies. The freeware, Ning.com, was used in a secondary methods class at a university in a border town in the midwest. Eighteen students took part in the study. Each student was assigned a role-from parent or superintendent to bus driver or student. Students created a profile based upon their assigned role. Students read case studies and interacted through the Ning in order to discuss how they would deal with the scenario. Forms of data included project questionnaires, discussion board transcripts, and screen captures of students' social networking profiles.

Data were analyzed using pattern matching and were coded into themes of interaction, self-selection of Web 2.0 tools, and appeal. This study found that social network services encourage students to understand multiple roles within schools. Additionally, students' interaction with one another replicated ideas of socialization. The digital medium of the social network service allowed students the ability to communicate and socialize in a non-threatening manner because all students had pseudonyms; cliques that were formed in class did not exist within the social network. Interestingly, the pages of students who played the roles of the janitor, bus driver, cheerleader, and teachers were visited more; more comments were left on their walls than those of the students who participated as principals, superintendents, and deans. Therefore, the climate of school is established before students enter the classroom.

Student understanding of the case study was also enhanced through the use of multimodal elements. Students responded to the case study with text, but several also added YouTube videos, links to websites, and documents that supported their answers to the case study. The students who utilized a variety of multimodal sources offered more practical solutions of ways to approach the case study.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. MATHEMATICS.....University Room

Attitudes of Teachers Regarding Math Lab for High-Risk Algebra I Students

Oscar D. Carter, Ouachita Parish (LA) High School and Louisiana Tech University,
and Alice P. Carter, Louisiana Tech University

With increased emphasis on high stakes testing in recent years, schools have been searching for ways to improve mathematics performance in high-risk students. A number of studies has been conducted to evaluate various techniques for improving scores. The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the attitudes of teachers who were involved in an intervention.

Students in the 9th grade were identified as high-risk based on performance on the 8th grade LEAP test, grades in 8th grade mathematics, and teacher recommendations. They were assigned to a regular Algebra I class and a Math Lab. The Math Lab was taught by a mathematics teacher and was to be a tutoring session. No effort was made to ensure that students in a particular Math Lab had the same Algebra I class.

Mathematics teachers were asked to complete an anonymous survey regarding their attitudes toward the concept of a Math Lab and its structure and to make suggestions for improvement. Six of those teachers taught Math Lab. Six of the 10 mathematics teachers completed the anonymous surveys. In addition, comments were collected from general discussions in faculty meetings. There was a general agreement regarding the criteria (test scores, grades, teacher recommendations) used to assign students to Math Lab; however, there was some disagreement regarding whether Math Lab was required of the identified high-risk students. All of the teachers agreed that the tutoring session does not work and recommended that the class be more structured. As the course progressed, most teachers introduced more structure. In addition, it was recommended that rules regarding moving students in and out of Math Lab be developed. Additional details on the program and recommendations for change were presented. Pros and cons of such a program were explored.

Mathematics and the Anxious Undergraduate

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Martha Tapia, Berry College

This study examined differences in attitudes toward mathematics of college students because of gender and level of mathematics anxiety. It was prompted by an interest in the importance of attitudes and its connection with anxiety and gender gap in mathematics. A sample of 73 students currently enrolled in introductory calculus classes at a private liberal arts college was asked to complete the Attitudes Toward Mathematics Inventory (ATMI). Twenty-six participants were male and 47 were female. The sample was predominantly Caucasian and 39 participants were incoming freshmen. Participants were to provide their gender, number of semesters in college and level of mathematics anxiety from four previously identified levels of mathematics anxiety (none, little, some, and great deal).

Data were analyzed using a multivariate factorial model with four factors of attitudes toward mathematics as dependent variables (self-confidence, value, enjoyment and motivation) and two independent variables, gender and mathematics anxiety. Assumptions were checked, and multivariate analysis of variance was performed.

The interaction of math anxiety and gender and the main effect of gender were found to be nonsignificant with small effect size. The main effect of mathematics anxiety was found to be statistically significant with large effect size on all four factors of the ATMI. Students with no math anxiety scored significantly higher than all other students in self-confidence, significantly higher than students with a great deal of math anxiety in value and significantly higher than students with some or a great deal of math anxiety in enjoyment and motivation. Students with little math anxiety scored significantly higher than more anxious students in self-confidence and motivation and significantly higher than students with a great deal of math anxiety in value and enjoyment. Students with some math anxiety scored significantly higher than students with a great deal of math anxiety in self-confidence.

Assessing Elementary Teachers' Beliefs and Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching

Rebecca R. Robichaux, Mississippi State University, and Paulette Rodrigue, Nicholls State University

Students in Mississippi are not so successful in mathematics as students in the general population. Research has indicated that one key factor in improving student achievement is quality professional development for teachers. Another key factor is the use of a nationally aligned, challenging state curriculum. To address the need for a more challenging, nationally competitive curriculum, the Mississippi State Department of Education released a new mathematics framework in 2007. Within this framework, new objectives are stated for each grade level in terms of Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) construct. The DOK construct suggests that 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, teachers need to possess a thorough conceptual and procedural understanding of mathematics.

Thus, the purposes of this study were to: (1) assess elementary teachers' content and pedagogical content knowledge of the new framework, (2) determine what professional development is needed, and (3) determine the nature of teachers' beliefs concerning mathematics education. Seventy elementary teachers representing four schools completed an evaluation which assessed knowledge of the new framework and beliefs about mathematics education.

Results of this assessment indicated that these teachers possessed stronger content knowledge than pedagogical content knowledge. The strength of their content knowledge was the Number and Operations strand with an average score of 82%. Content knowledge scores of the Algebra, Geometry, Measurement, and Data Analysis and Probability strands ranged from 60% to 74%. Pedagogical content knowledge scores of the Algebra, Geometry, and Data Analysis and Probability strands ranged from 59 to 66%, while scores for the Number and Operations and Measurement strands were below minimum expectation at 42 and 49%, respectively. Implications of their traditional mathematics education beliefs were discussed.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. **READING** **King Room**

Friday, November 6, 2009

Teachers' Beliefs and Knowledge About Metacognitive Reading Strategies

Yuko Iwai, University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse

Reading ability strongly influences student success in all areas of academic learning (Koda and Zehler, 2008). Research showed that metacognition is associated with students' reading proficiencies. Metacognition refers to one's awareness of cognitive processing (Flavell, 1976). More advanced readers tend to use a variety of metacognitive reading strategies than less advanced readers (Baker, 2008; Baker and Brown, 1984; Israel, 2007; McCormick, 2003). In addition, previous research has indicated that teachers' explicit instruction using metacognitive reading strategies facilitated students' reading comprehension. With these backgrounds, it is important for teachers to know and value different metacognitive reading strategies so that they can deliver them in the classroom setting. However, there is little research about teachers' metacognitive awareness and beliefs about metacognitive reading strategies.

The purpose of this study was to critically examine previous literature regarding teachers' beliefs and knowledge about metacognitive reading strategies. The central research question in this study was, What are teachers' beliefs and knowledge about metacognitive reading strategies? The researcher conducted a literature review by identifying key terms, locating resources, critically evaluating the literature, and organizing it.

After thorough examination, major findings were discovered. First, teachers who knew and valued metacognitive reading strategies implemented these approaches in their teaching. Second, there were few tools that measured teachers' metacognitive awareness and reading strategies. For implications, more research on teachers' beliefs and knowledge about reading strategies is needed. It is also important for scholars and educators to focus on metacognitive reading strategies in teacher training for both pre- and inservice teachers.

**Metacognitive Awareness and Strategy Use in Academic English Reading
Among Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) Students**

Yuko Iwai, University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse

This mixed method research study explored the role of metacognitive awareness in reading among adult English as a second language (ESL) students of various academic levels enrolled in a university in the southeastern part of the United States while engaged in academic reading. In addition, this study examined metacognitive reading strategies employed by those students. The following research questions were posed: (1) What role does metacognitive awareness have in academic English reading for adult ESL students enrolled in a university in the southeastern part of the United States? and (2) How does the use of reading strategies impact academic success for adult ESL students enrolled in a university in the southeastern part of the United States? In the quantitative portion of the study, 98 students responded to the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) instrument and a background information questionnaire.

In the qualitative portion of the study, six students (two English Language Institute [ELI], two undergraduate, and two graduate) participated in semi-structured interviews, including examinations of their academic reading materials. The quantitative results showed that the ELI students reported the most frequent use of metacognitive reading strategies compared to the undergraduate and graduate students. Also, no positive correlations were found between the students' academic performance and their reading strategy use or between the students' self-rated English reading proficiency and their reading strategy use. Furthermore, key reading strategies used by the students were found in the qualitative research design. They included adjusting reading speed and selecting strategies for different purposes, using prior knowledge, inferring text, marking text, focusing on typographical features, and summarizing.

Based on the findings, implications for students, teachers, and researchers to improve reading strategies were discussed. Recommendations for further research were also given.

**What Instructional and School-wide Practices are in Place to Support or Motivate Literacy Growth
in Schools that Serve Predominantly Low Income, African-American Communities?**

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Danjuma R.Saulawa, Alabama State University

This study was an attempt to find out from teachers what their schools had set in place to support and motivate literacy growth for students. The participating teachers come from 17 schools that serve predominantly African-American, low income communities. A 25-item questionnaire was circulated, and 195 teachers whose work experience ranged from 1 to 21 years responded. The questionnaire was organized into three categories: Instructional Practices, School wide Practices, and Support from the Administration.

Preliminary results indicated that a variety of structured classroom and school-wide practices, such as comprehension strategies, small group instruction, etc., were in place. Moreover, teachers generally seemed to have good feelings about the administrative support they had. However, practices that allowed for student-student interactions and aroused interest, such as Reader's Theatre, literacy circles, supplementary reading, and community functions, etc. were not used as much.

The findings of this study have implications for teachers, administrators, and the communities for ways to extend literacy experiences beyond the school walls. Some neglected areas could have positive impact on the literacy growth and development in students if put in place.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. RESEARCH/STATISTICSGovernor Room

**The Effects of Variations from Normality on Multiple Regression Results:
A Conceptual Tutorial with Data Examples**

Jeffrey R. Mills, University of North Florida

Most introductory statistics textbooks include a discussion of “moments about the mean” (i.e., variance, skewness, and kurtosis). Statistical moments, simply defined, are a set of statistical properties of a sample that describe the degree to which the distribution varies from normal. While most researchers understand in the abstract that variations from normality affect correlational results, it is rare that statistical moment values are consulted when interpreting results (with the possible exception of variance or, more likely its square root, standard deviation). Although correlational methods tend to produce robust results, especially with larger samples, even when normality assumptions are violated, violations of assumptions can frequently produce biased results.

To illustrate the extent of this problem, the present study investigated variations in normality assumptions on multiple regression results. Data from a published research study were divided into purposive subsets to produce data subsamples with varying degrees of departure from assumptions of normality. A common multiple regression equation (three predictors of the same dependent variable) was computed for each subset. Statistical moments were calculated for variables across each data subset, along with the multiple R and the regression coefficients for the regression analysis conducted for the subset. As anticipated, shrinkage in the value of multiple R was found with smaller subsets and when one or more variables were restricted in range; conversely, larger multiple R values were found with larger sample sizes. The effects of skewness and kurtosis were somewhat mixed depending on the patterns of these deviations from normality across the several variables included in the analysis. Based on the results, guidelines were proffered for inspecting data prior to conducting a regression analysis and for interpreting regression results when normality assumptions are violated.

Three Useful Methods for Detecting Problems with Collinearity in Multiple Regression

LeDale Southerland, University of North Florida

Collinearity results when two or more predictor variables included in a regression equation are highly intercorrelated. Individual regression coefficients for any given predictor variable can change appreciably in magnitude when an additional collinear predictor is either included in or removed from an analysis. Collinearity can result in poor interpretations of variable results.

In this paper, three methods were illustrated for interpreting variable contributions in the presence of collinearity: tolerance values, variable inflation factors (VIFs), and regression structure coefficients. An educational research data set featuring collinear predictor variables was used to compute

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several regression equations for which these useful statistics were derived and interpreted. First, the tolerance value for a variable is 1 minus the R-squared for the regression of a given predictor variable on all the other predictor variables, ignoring the dependent variable. When tolerance is close to 0, there is high collinearity of that variable with other predictor variables, and the b and beta coefficients were unstable. Second, VIF values are simply the reciprocal of tolerance. Therefore, when VIFs are high, there is high collinearity and instability of the b and beta coefficients. Both tolerance and VIF values point out where redundancies occur in prediction but do little more than assist the researcher in determining a variable that might better be omitted from the analysis.

In contrast, regression structure coefficients actually give estimates of variable contribution independent of variable collinearity. Structure coefficients express the degree of relationship of a given predictor variable with the predicted values of the dependent variable, or, stated differently, express the degree to which a given predictor is reproduced in the computation of predicted dependent variable scores. Comparisons of structure coefficients with regression beta weights across the several analyses were presented to illustrate the importance of interpreting structure coefficients.

Did You Vote Today? Student Government Elections and Democracy Education

Jennifer M. Miles and Michael T. Miller, University of Arkansas

Student self-governance is a way for students to have a voice in the decision-making process at institutions of higher education. Formal student governance can occur in the form of student government associations, associated student governments, and commonly, student senates. Student governance bodies are charged with representing the student body as a whole. Although there are substantial challenges to teaching students to be representative of others' interests, there are also challenges associated with garnering student interest in participation.

The purpose for conducting this study was to profile the extent to which college students participate in student government elections. Specifically, the study sought to identify the number of students contesting elections and the rate of voter turnout in different appropriation models. Drawing on data from the 2009 election cycle, 100 colleges and universities were selected for inclusion in the study, including 33 land grant universities with large student (and graduate student) populations and a research mission, 33 comprehensive master's institutions that are traditionally defined as regional public institutions, and 34 private institutions that offer primarily undergraduate programs and are classified as liberal arts institutions. Although frequency data were primarily identified, the percentages of contests and turnout did provide an important portrait of student interest in participating in self-governance activities. Findings revealed important differences between participation levels of students at different institutions, but also indicated broad issues surrounding low levels of participation. Implications of these findings impact how administrators address, rely upon, and relate to students both in and out of classroom.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. STUDENTS AT RISK/MOTIVATIONCapitol Room

Hire Today, Gone Tomorrow: The Determinants of Attrition Among Public School Teachers in Arkansas

Glenn Sheets and David Bell, Arkansas Tech University

The purpose of the study was to determine what factors lead teachers to leave the school/district in which they work or leave the teaching profession entirely. Staff selection is one of the most difficult tasks facing a school administrator, but so is keeping a highly qualified faculty. Teacher attrition has been and continues to be a fast-growing problem across the nation. It is getting more and more difficult to retain good teachers, and the cost of teacher replacement is very expensive.

In Arkansas in 2004-2005 there were a total of 30,191 teachers; 1,434 left the profession, and 2,369 transferred to other schools. The total cost of teacher turnover was \$38,086,582. Nationwide the cost of teacher turnover was \$4,867,879,421. This is an enormous loss to taxpayers, schools, educators, students and communities. There is a substantial body of literature that studies the factors affecting teachers' decisions to exit the teaching profession and the reasons range from teacher pay to poor working conditions.

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Data for the study were obtained during the later part of the 2008-2009 school year using a survey developed by the researchers. The survey was designed to examine the reasons for teacher turnover. The survey listed the various reasons teachers leave their present position or leave teaching altogether (ex., salary, heavy workload). The instrument was mailed to 50 area school administrators at all levels. The instrument asked for the participant to check the reason(s) why teachers had left their school or district on 19 factors based on research findings. Thirty-seven useable instruments were returned (a 74% return rate). The findings of the study reported the top reasons for teacher attrition as well as solutions to retain quality teachers.

A Five-Year Assessment of the Pre-Collegiate Algebra Summer Program for Underrepresented Minority

Jeffrey N. Thomas, Southern University

This study investigated the effects of the Summer Pre-College Algebra Course over a five-year period, namely, 2004 through 2008, on high school juniors and seniors. The course, an intensive, eight-week, three-credit hour college precalculus course, included an integrated package of lectures, problem solving sessions, pre- and post-standardized tests, other examinations and quizzes, mentors, peer-tutoring, seminars, and computer-assisted learning. ACT preparation sessions were conducted to supplement instructional objectives of the course.

The purpose of this study was to conduct research on the impact of an intensive college algebra and trigonometry course for underrepresented minority students. This initiative, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), addressed the disproportionate number of minorities in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. The program served as a foundational gateway for students in their transition to college-level courses in STEM.

A mixed methodology was employed to examine the data, and to determine relationships between the five cohorts. The sample consisted of 102 students (31 males and 71 females) who were surveyed and interviewed. A pretest and posttest, developed by the Department of Mathematics, were administered to each participant. Archival data consisted of students' final grade, ACT composite score, ACT mathematics subtest score, high school grade-point-average, race/ethnicity, and gender.

The results of independent t tests revealed the mean posttest score and the mean pretest score were statistically different ($t = -19.713$, $p = .000$). Furthermore, the dependent variable posttest score and the independent variables gender and final grade were statistically significant ($F = 26.355$, $p = .000$). The findings of this study helped to dispel the myths concerning underrepresented minority students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

11:00 – 11.50 A.M. DISPLAY: TEACHING ISSUES.....Academy Room

Fundamental Issues of Literacy

Lori V. Hunt, Port Arthur (TX) ISD, and Louis Reed, McNeese State University

Throughout the history of America, the process of learning has been a major concern for many educators. Without a curriculum, school personnel would have to resort to exhortation and good intentions for improving learning in schools. Although the need for reform has been recognized (Cross, 1971, 1976; Hashway, 1988,1990), no fundamental reform model has been developed. The basis for a reform model needs to be related to the program of literacy. Literacy refers to the formulation of all significant learning. The development of a reform model must address the fundamental issues that impact literacy. The significance of this research is devoted to exploring the philosophy of developmental education which sheds light into this great and expanding field. The vision, according to Robert M. Hashway, Ph.D. (1988,1990), will modify the way education currently operated by intensifying and supporting existing services, infusing a developmental learning management system, and modernizing the face of the classroom.

Methodology utilized data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and LISREL (Linear Structural Relations) was the statistical tool utilized to achieve parsimony. Endogenous variables of the modified model, including interaction in school, writing outside of school,

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parents' education, pupil/teacher ratio, mediated instruction, academic preparation, general teacher interaction, language arts orientation, writing outside of school, teacher interaction, and language arts were descriptors representing variables for the research. A qualitative search for a definition of literate behavior was explained.

When Starting Salary Won't Cover Student Debt

Jennifer Styron, Wendy Jean Sonstrom, and Kyna Shelley, University of Southern Mississippi

Graduate assistants are essential to the operations of higher education as well as to the livelihood of many research-intensive institutions. Yet, many studies reveal that graduate student retention is less than 50%. Associated with graduate student retention is, among other factors, the cost of graduate education, its likelihood of increasing in light of the current national economic state, as well as a depressed job market for these graduates. This study explored the reported likely benefits relative to the costs of education at the graduate level in a southern research-intensive university. (No medical, law, or other professional schools were included.)

Specifically, the researchers surveyed students with current graduate assistantships to solicit information in the following areas: demographics, area of study, degree type, prior degrees earned, student loan debt prior to starting her/his current program, student loans for the current academic year, supplemental incomes, estimated student debt upon graduation, personal debt, anticipated geographic region for post-graduation employment, and anticipated salary post-graduation. Findings showed that for nearly half the students, student loan debt was surprisingly low or non-existent although other students were leaving graduate school with more than \$140,000 in student loan debt.

When comparing anticipated salaries against actual mean salaries within specific disciplines, respondents generally underestimated likely starting salary for post-graduation employment. Given the current national economic state, finding that large numbers of students will owe between .1/2 – 2 times their annual salary in student loans, this ratio might prove more problematic as job options and the pay scale of post-graduation employment decreases. By understanding the needs of graduate assistants as well as the financial scenario that many of them experience, this research theme may be able to provide essential information that will help institutions better understand the needs of the graduate assistant.

When Teachers are Students: Statistics, Procrastination, and Perfectionism

Wendy Jean Sonstrom and Kyna Shelley, University of Southern Mississippi

Research frequently suggests that, across disciplines, students often fear or misunderstand the role of statistics in their programs of study. In educational research courses specifically, there are often larger numbers of students who are already employed within the field maintaining their full-time jobs while taking graduate classes. This unique population of teachers who are also graduate students could be better understood by exploring differences between teachers and non-teachers in their attitudes towards statistics and the related constructs of perfectionism and procrastination. This study used the MPS (Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale), the PASS (Procrastination Assessment Scale-Students), and the SATS (Students Attitudes Towards Statistics).

Data were collected from 90 graduate students during the Spring 2009 semester at a public university in the Southeast. Data collection was distinct from other studies in documenting when the questionnaire was administered (avoiding exam periods), who collected the data (a fellow student and not the instructor), and the range of graduate classes surveyed (600, 700, and 800-level required and elective educational research and statistics courses). Of the three instruments used with the two groups (teachers and non-teachers) there were no differences between the groups' MPS subscale scores (MANOVA, Wilk's Lambda = .973, $F(3, 73) = .637$, $p = .577$, partial eta-squared = .027) or the PASS total score ($t(88) = -1.576$, $p = .119$). There were significant differences between the groups on four of the SATS' six subscales (MANOVA, Pillai's Trace = .987, $F(6, 83) = 1.907$, $p = .026$, partial eta-squared = .155) with the non-teachers scoring higher on the SATS subscales affect, value, difficulty, and interest.

These findings suggested that, for this subset of students (teachers), there may be a lower level of appreciation for the relevance of such course content, which has implications for higher education, specifically the graduate education of teachers.

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Teachers' Perceptions of Respect in the Classroom and Student-Teacher Relations: A Case Study

Neha Kumar, St. Mary's Episcopal School, and Shannon Audley-Piotrowski,
and Yeh Hsueh, University of Memphis

Respect is a pillar in character education, often described as “treating others as you want to be treated” (U. S. Department of Education, 1994). However, this golden rule seems more a propos to respect among peers, not among teachers and students. While there is limited empirical data concerning students' perception of respect in the classroom, no known research to date has examined teachers' perceptions of respect in the classroom.

The purposes of this study were: (1) to determine teachers' perceptions and definitions of students' respectful and disrespectful behaviors and (2) to examine teachers' perception of respect experiences (classified as unilateral-ordinate and subordinate- or mutual-egalitarian) in relation to their: (1) observed classroom management and (2) perceived typical teacher-student communication exchanges. This qualitative case study examined two teachers' perceptions and experiences of respect within their classrooms. Both participants were female, had taught for two years in multiethnic middle and high schools, and were pursuing graduate degrees in education. They were chosen for their different approaches to teacher-student communication and classroom management success rates to determine if there were levels of agreement from two perspectives concerning respect and disrespect.

Data were collected through classroom observations, four semi-structured interviews, a respect journal where the participants spent a week recording their respect and disrespect experiences, and a concept map activity wherein the participants elaborated on specific respectful and disrespectful behaviors in the classroom. Participants shared specific experiences of being respected and disrespected by students in the classroom, their views of the role of the teacher in the classroom, and their particular expectations about teacher-student communication. All data were analyzed holistically following Mostakas (1996) guidelines, first creating clusters of meaning, aligning them horizontally, and finally uncovering themes. The results of this study suggested possible implications for teacher-student interactions and classroom practices.

The Effectiveness of Health Promotion Presentation Demonstrated Through Pre/Post Testing

Linda C. McGrath, Community Health Educator, and Vincent R. McGrath, Mississippi State University

An original skit and the WIC video, “Breastfeeding: Another Way of Saying I Love You,” were part of the 60-minute presentation, “Does Breastfeeding Make a Difference?” The WIC video was developed by the MS Department of Health and the University of Southern Mississippi for the 1997 pilot study conducted in Mississippi with low numbers of mothers initiating breastfeeding. The original skit, developed by the researchers, uses role playing as the teaching technique. The researchers utilize several teaching strategies to encourage learning – viewing the video, lecturing, role playing, pretests, and posttests. Permission was granted to use a printed version of an online breastfeeding quiz (11 multiple choice items) as the pre/post tests. This study was approved by the Mississippi State University IRB.

The participants were 34 MSU students enrolled in HS 4803/HS 6803 The Art of Parenting for the 2008 fall semester taught by one of the researchers. A paired sample t-test was calculated to compare the mean pretest score, 8.15 (SD=1.73), to the mean posttest score, 9.79 (SD=1.20). A significant increase from pretest to posttest was found ($t[33] = -5.76, p < .001$).

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