

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING**

**OF THE  
MID-SOUTH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

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

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**NOVEMBER 9-11, 2005  
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# Acknowledgements

# 2005

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This acknowledgements page is dedicated to you - the members of MSERA. It is also to recognize and salute those who served as your officers this year and committee leaders. As we've acknowledged many times, it has been a very different year. Look over the names of those who have served the organization in 2005, watch for them at upcoming meetings and say "thank you." It is a testament to their dedication that they met in November with almost perfect attendance to make the transition of leadership as smooth as possible for incoming President Gahan Bailey and to plan for the future of the organization. We missed Baton Rouge as the 2005 site of the meeting, yet Baton Rouge and Louisiana felt your support and concern. Thank you.

The 2005 MSERA Proceedings are abstracts representing the work of hundreds of experienced and novice researchers, educational practitioners, and policy makers. Although the scholarly work was not physically presented to an audience this year, this in no way takes away from the blind peer review process that lead to the acceptance of their work and recognition by MSERA that their work was worthy of inclusion on the program of the annual meeting.

This acknowledgements page will be somewhat shorter than those in previous proceedings; I want the first paragraph to stand as the recognition of the work of the 2005 leaders of MSERA this year.

One individual recognition that I do want noted is that of John Petry. John submitted his resignation as Executive Director of MSERA effective at the end of 2005. John has served MSERA with dedication in many capacities, including as Editor of these Proceedings. He is to be commended and thanked.

To the 2005 officers and committee chairpersons and all those who serve to make MSERA the organization it is, with thanks and appreciation.

**Jane Nell Luster**  
**2005 President**



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# Wednesday

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**\*\* Where there is a paper and a name but no abstract, the abstract is missing. Please send the abstract to Lorraine Allen, [lallen@memphis.edu](mailto:lallen@memphis.edu).**

## Session 1.1

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. **FIELD EXPERIENCE..... Bayou**

**President:** Judith A. Boser, University of Tennessee

### **What Student Teachers are Thinking: A View from Their Journal Reflections**

James D. Kirylo, Southeastern Louisiana University , and Edward L. Shaw, Jr, University of South Alabama

Through their reflective daily journal entries, student teachers have a lot to say relative to their student teaching experience. Their meaningful insights and suggestions can be extremely beneficial for both the supervisory professor and cooperating teacher in order to better serve the teacher candidate during the student teaching experience. Moreover, their journal reflections can be an integral, informative asset for teacher candidates preparing to enter the student teaching experience. To that end, this research presentation explored what student teachers were thinking through their daily student teaching journal entries.

Working in lower and upper elementary-level classes spanning across urban, rural, and suburban areas in the southern region of the United States , the data were collected from 20 student teachers during an entire spring semester of student teaching. Four main sources were utilized to collect the data: student teacher journals, field notes, post-observation tape-recording interviews, and a survey at the end of the student teacher experience.

To identify the critical information from the mass of collected data, the researchers read and reread the data, and intensely discussed, reflected, and debated what was noticed and what seemed to be the emerging themes and patterns. Among other things, it was found that the teacher candidates had much to say about their initial anxieties of the student teaching experience to the important role of preparation and the complexity of behavior management to the sometimes complicated relationships with the cooperating teacher to best pedagogical practices.

In short, primarily through their journal entries, this presentation was driven by the "real" voices and reflections of former student teachers, offering their unique insights, suggestions, and experiences. The invaluable contribution of what they expressed may better assist the cooperating teacher/supervisory professor in facilitating a positive student teaching experiencing, as well as offer empathetic understanding and suggestions to future student teachers.

### **Using Metaphors to Enhance Preservice Teachers' View of Their Role as Teachers**

Arthur McLin, Arkansas State University

The ability of teachers to teach is a challenging role for teachers in this 21st century. Teacher education programs are also challenged to train students to meet the challenges of this new century. A critical piece in teacher development is a self understanding of how preservice teachers view themselves in their role as teacher.

The study evaluated the use of metaphors in a teacher education program for preservice teachers majoring in secondary education. Metaphors were used to help preservice teachers reflect and analyze their role of teacher and how they view themselves confronting the realities of classroom teaching. To help preservice teachers reflect and analyze their role of teacher and how they see themselves confronting the realities of classroom teaching, metaphoric inquiry was used to engage conceptions of themselves as teachers.

The purpose of this study was to identify preservice teachers' (N=62) choice of metaphors used that represented their role of teacher. Students responded to a questionnaire at the completion of their Field II course (semester before internship) to determine if metaphoric inquiry enhanced their sense of self in their role as teacher. The responses from the questionnaire demonstrated that metaphoric inquiry in students' sense of self had a positive affect on how preservice teachers saw themselves in their role of teacher and the profession. Also, teachers' sense of self could enhance the effectiveness of teachers to teach in this century and the challenges that it presents.

### **Field Experiences: Preservice Teachers' Perceptions of Kidwatching\*\***

Carla C. Dearman, Mary Nell McNeese, and Rose B. Jones, University of Southern Mississippi

**Session 1.2**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. ONLINE LEARNING..... Levee**

**Presenter:** Marcia R. O'Neal, University of Alabama - Birmingham

**Application of Self-Regulatory Strategies in Online Learning Environments**

Fethi A. Inan and Anita G. Wells, University of Memphis

In an online learning environment, it is assumed that learners take responsibility for their own learning. In an online course, the students are basically supported by communication tools and course management systems. Therefore, students must perform self-regulatory competency to achieve learning goals. Self regulation is defined as "The degree to which students are able to become a metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participant of their own learning process" (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004, p. 41). Schunk (2004), Driscoll (1999), and Dabbagh and Kitsantas (2004) identified key self-regulatory processes: (1) goal setting: students identify and set their learning goals; (2) self-monitoring: students observe and direct their learning progress; (3) self-evaluation: students compare their outcomes of performance with their individual goals; (4) task-strategies: students identify, select, and apply appropriate methods and techniques to achieve learning goals; (5) help-seeking: students identify, select, and receive help from social and non-social sources; and (6) time planning and management: students effectively schedule and manage their time.

Regarding online learning, most of the researchers focus on content and material development considering how to make material more meaningful. They list a lot of expected skills from online learners but most studies do not include how learners can gain these skills. Therefore, there is a need to investigate how these materials can be utilized by learners. Further, there is a need to examine how online learners can be supported to develop self-regulatory skills to take responsibility of their learning.

This paper discussed: (1) What is the importance of self-regulation in online learning? (2) Which type of instructional strategies can be used to support self-regulation? and (3) What should be the role of the instructor to support self-regulation in online learning?

**Does Self-Determination Theory Have an Effect on Satisfaction of Graduate Students in the Online Learning Environment?**

David A. T. Hall, University of South Alabama

In meeting the need for the flexible access to education, graduate students have turned to the Internet and, in particular, to the many offerings provided by online learning. As such, the educational offerings presented via this delivery system, the online learning environment, have unique challenges and, in particular, learner satisfaction. The challenge presented by the mechanism of learner satisfaction appears to be the key to make the online learning experience a holistic organism for the learner. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) asserts that when the three factors of autonomy, or control, relatedness, and competence are combined, they provide self-determination behavior. SDT is an appropriate measure to understand satisfaction in the online learning environment as individuals participate in self-determined behavior due to an awareness of becoming potentially satisfied.

This study sought to understand satisfaction of graduate students in the online learning environment. The factors of control, relatedness, and competence are worthy human psychological needs regardless of the intended environment. It was intended that this study would provide data concerning learner satisfaction on this emergent educational delivery method provided by online learning. Instructional designers and those involved in educational psychology were provided further data so as to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness the adult learner needs to thrive within the online learning environment. The study's participants were a sample of graduate students solicited using several online discussion servers utilized by graduate students. This study used data collected from an online survey addressing measures to the subject criterion on graduate student satisfaction in the online learning environment based on prior experience. Measures founded in SDT were utilized by examining the relation between the factors of SDT and graduate student course satisfaction as perceived from several criterion predictors. Discussion was made about the data collected and recommendations for further research.

**Online Learning Varies Greatly Among Institutions of Higher Education**

JoAnna Dickey, Eastern Kentucky University

Students want it. Instructors are asked to do it. What is it and how can we do it? As the demand for online learning increases, there is a wide range of perceptions, definitions, and applications. Although there are academic definitions and prescribed methods of delivery, online learning and the way it is defined, delivered, and administered may vary greatly among institutions of higher education. As part of the Teacher Education Models Program grant in the state of Kentucky, the author collected information from nine grant participation institutions.

Five regional universities, two land-grant universities, one private university, and one private college participated in this study. These institutions reported information as requested in a survey sent to them via email. Information collected in this survey included: (1) definitions for "online" courses, (2) types of delivery systems, (3) faculty development assistance, (4) tuition or fees, (5) student assistance, and (6) other types of online learning experiences offered. Results from this survey indicated that there was a wide range of definitions, faculty development services, tuition and fees, student assistance and online learning experiences other than course offerings. There was little variance in the information concerning delivery systems.

**Session 1.3**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... Mississippi Queen**

**Presenter:** Charles L. McLafferty Jr.

**The Planning and Implementation of a Workshop on the Basics of Research**

Lydia Frass, Kyna Shelley, David Freeman, and Elizabeth C. Smith, University of Southern Mississippi

This research project was an analysis and overview of the planning and implementation of a workshop titled "Research Simplified." In the fall of 2004,

several graduate students in an educational leadership and research department formed a graduate educational research association whose goal was to promote research among students. In the development of a service project during spring of 2005, the organization began planning and organizing a workshop to provide an overview of research basics, essentially a "how to get started" seminar, with the goal to motivate and encourage students to research, present, and publish original work. Research can be a daunting task, especially for those just beginning the process. The importance of conducting research may be stressed to graduate students by professors, but students often reported that they did not know how to begin it. Students also learn the importance of presenting work at conferences and submitting it for publication, but it has been observed that very few attempt to do either. The question was raised about why this is so.

Part one included development of a needs assessment questionnaire to analyze students' interest in a workshop, interest levels in research topics, current research activity, confidence levels, interest levels in conducting projects, and perceived involvement levels by faculty in helping students. Next, based on the survey results, the agenda was set to include topics such as developing research ideas, steps to conducting research and publishing, and using research resources more effectively.

The workshop consisted of a panel of professors who discussed different aspects of research and responded to audience questions. The participation was successful, both in attendance and panel-student interaction. Evaluations from attendees rated sessions positively. Suggestions from these evaluations and informal responses indicated a high interest level in additional workshops and will serve as a guide for future projects.

**The Relationship Between Reading Ability and Bibliographic Errors**

Vicki L. Waytowich and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, University of South Florida ,  
and Qun G. Jiao, Baruch College - City University of New York

Reference lists in articles serve a number of important scholarly functions. They provide credibility and support for the author's ideas, supply background information for the article, and serve as a resource for the reader to find additional literature on the topic. Readers of journal articles may wish to follow up a cited reference to further their knowledge of existing research, to track down other related material, or to verify the assertions and claims made by the authors. To retrieve cited works easily, it is essential that references are accurate. Inaccurate references reflect poorly on the authors, devalue the credibility of the article and the journal in which it appeared, and also hinder the search for additional sources of related literature. Further, citation errors in references can make it difficult for readers to obtain, check, or verify information to which the text of a paper refers. Errors such as misspelled titles and author names could conceivably have the consequence of preventing important works from being retrieved, consulted, and recognized. Thus, reference errors can be a source of great frustration for readers.

Recently, a few researchers have attempted to identify the underlying causes of citation errors. Reasons that have been identified include the "complexity" of some citations and carelessness and misuse of language. These findings suggest that levels of reading ability might play an important role in the accuracy of reference lists. Yet, to date, this possible link has not been investigated. Thus, the present study examined the relationship between levels of reading ability (i.e., reading comprehension and reading vocabulary) and the citation error rate and quality of reference lists in doctoral dissertation proposals among 115 doctoral students. A canonical correlation analysis revealed a multivariate relationship between levels of reading ability and both bibliographic error variables. Implications were discussed.

**Bibliographic Errors in Articles Submitted to Scholarly Journals: The Case for "Research in the Schools"**

Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie and Vicki L. Waytowich, University of South Florida ,  
and Qun G. Jiao, Baruch College - City University of New York

In recent years, several researchers have examined the bibliographic accuracy of citations, especially in public health and medical journals. These studies analyzed different types of citation errors in selected journals for a fixed time period to determine the prevalence of the bibliographic errors in these journals. The results have shown a high rate of errors, ranging from 8% to 66.7%, with as many as 6% of the original articles being irretrievable. Yet, to date, no study has examined citation errors among articles submitted for possible publication to a journal. This was the purpose of the present investigation. Specifically investigated were 52 articles submitted to *Research in the Schools*, a nationally and internationally refereed journal. This number of articles represented more than 50% of the articles submitted to this journal over a two-year period. For the purpose of this inquiry, citation error rate was defined as references cited in the body of the article that were missing, incomplete, or inconsistent with the reference list.

Findings revealed a mean number of citation errors of 5.87 (SD = 7.88). Further, a statistically significant and moderate relationship was found between the number of citation errors and whether the article ended up being rejected by the editor(s). Moreover, articles containing more than three citation errors were approximately four times more likely to be rejected than were articles containing fewer citation errors. These findings suggest that citation error rate is an important predictor of whether an article is accepted for publication. The present researchers also documented the most prevalent bibliographic errors with respect to the 5th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, such as issue numbers being presented when the page numbers in each volume are continuous. The implications of these findings were discussed.

**Session 1.4**

**9:00 A.M.– 9:50 A.M. POLICY..... Delta Queen**

**President:** Ronald A. Styron, University of Southern Mississippi

**Analysis of Five School Districts' Discipline Policies' Alignment to Louisiana's School Wide Positive Behavior Support Model**

Doug Postel, Tifarah Dial, Kathy Adcock, Theresa Hamilton, and Celya Taylor , Louisiana  
Education Consortium: Grambling State University , Louisiana Tech University,  
and University of Louisiana – Monroe

Many states have proposed a shift in paradigms to more proactive and positive approaches to student discipline. School systems throughout Louisiana are now faced with the challenge of revising current policies or developing new ones to comply with Louisiana 's mandatory school improvement process that includes a discipline component. Louisiana 's School Wide Positive Behavior Support Model presents a nontraditional perspective of addressing discipline in a school setting.

Five doctoral students examined the existing discipline policies of five rural public school districts in northwest and northeast Louisiana to analyze the alignment of these policies to Louisiana's School Wide Positive Behavior Support Model. According to Guthrow (2002), most school districts believe that their methods (policies) of disciplining students were congruent with national norms.

Researchers contacted school superintendents to obtain permission to examine the discipline policies in their districts. Copies of discipline plans were obtained from the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance in each school district. Researchers created a Likert-scale instrument to evaluate district policies (Maximum Alignment to No Alignment) with five indicators that identified the degree of alignment: (1) behavior expectations identified, (2) tracking of misbehavior, (3) outline of consequences, (4) communication of expectations to all stakeholders, and (5) acknowledgement of pro-social behaviors. Three research questions guided this study: (1) have school districts identified alternative methods to discipline? (2) have school districts identified and implemented Louisiana's new policies regarding school wide discipline? and (3) what was the most common indicator identified in district policies aligned to Louisiana's School Wide Positive Behavior Support Model?

**Assessment and Analysis of Per Pupil Expenditures: A Case Study Testing a Micro-Financial Model in Equity Determination in a Large Southern State**

Richard Holsomback, University of North Texas, Pine Tree Independent School District

The purpose of this study was to examine district-level financial data to assess equity across public school districts and to compare equity benchmarks established in the literature using selected functions from the state's financial database after a major court ruling to remedy constitutional problems within a large southern state. The study was limited to all public school districts in that state, and no charter schools or special schools were included in the sample. The study included a purposive sample of school districts where comparable data were available across two academic years for the 1996-1997 school year immediately following the court ruling to the 2003-2004 school year (n = 1043 in 1996-1997, n = 1037 in 2003-2004).

The analysis that was performed on the data was a univariate equity analysis on the total per pupil expenditures across the purposive sample based upon equity benchmarks set in the school finance literature. Based on these benchmarks, equity existed in total per pupil expenditures as measured by an index established in the literature for the lower half of the distribution, i.e., the poorer districts in per pupil spending and equity existed in total per pupil expenditures as measured by a broader range ratio on the entire sample. However, equity only existed in two of eight of the benchmarks for the time elapsed in the distribution samples, 1997-2004, including benchmarks set in the literature for the top one half of the distribution and broader measures across these samples, as well for expenditures per pupil.

**Strategies for Cost Control in K-12 Education**

Olin Adams, Rachael G. McDaniel, Bonnie K. Mapp, Jeffrey P. Forster, and Jon R. Thomas, Auburn University

This paper explored strategies for cost control in K-12 education. Three approaches suggested were outsourcing of support services, scheduling of classes in longer blocks of time, and distance education. The outsourcing of support services offers education agencies not only cost reduction, but greater expertise in the management of support functions and an opportunity for administrators to devote more time to the core function of instruction. Although implementation of outsourcing generally involves controversy in human resource management, education agencies have contracted extensively such functions as transportation, food service, and custodial service. Block scheduling likewise has provided cost savings. The largest savings has been in learning resources, viz., textbooks and supplemental materials. Moreover, block scheduling enables education agencies to hire part-time and retired faculty, who do not carry the benefit costs of full-time teachers. Yet this scheduling approach yields academic, as well as financial, advantages including more flexibility in classroom instruction and more time for in-depth study. Finally, many education agencies are using technology to enhance learning and to create distance education opportunities. Distance learning programs allow education agencies full utilization of teachers as they conduct instruction on more than one campus. While this use of technology carries a startup cost, the initial investment is recovered in human resource savings at multiple campuses. These cost control strategies should be viewed as a means, not ends, to the goal of quality education. Nonetheless, the education agency savvy in cost control will be in a better position to achieve quality.

**Session 1.5**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. AT-RISK STUDENTS..... Riverboat**

**President:** Shelly Albritton, University of Central Arkansas

**Student Training for Academic Reinforcement in the Sciences: An Interdisciplinary, Innovative Approach for Recruiting Minority High School Students into the Fields of Science and Medicine**

Daphne W. Hubbard, University of South Alabama

In a collaborative effort involving a college of medicine, a regional center for healthy communities, and a college of education, college faculty secured a federal grant to recruit minority high school students into the fields of science and medicine. Student Training for Academic Reinforcement in the Sciences (STARS) recognizes the importance of strengthening the K-12 education base as a vehicle to increasing the number of minority students who can successfully complete postsecondary and graduate-level education.

In this program, 15 rising juniors from two minority high schools participated in the program that included six-week academic enrichment sessions for two consecutive summers, a six-week internship in a health care provision site or a medical research facility during the third summer, Saturday academies for two academic years, and afternoon tutorial sessions for two academic years. The objective of the first two summer enrichment sessions was to provide students with the necessary academic skills to succeed in college. The objective of the Saturday academies and the on-going tutoring program was to ensure that minority students who entered the program in Phases I and II remained motivated and eligible to complete Phase III, which was designed to expose students to practical experience in health care or medical research. This study provided an overview and evaluation for the STARS program's inaugural summer.

Data were collected and analyzed from pre- and posttest scores on sample Alabama High School Graduation Exams in the areas of math, science, reading, and language arts; student questionnaires and interviews; and instructor questionnaires and interviews. The STARS program is an authentic, innovative example of an interdisciplinary approach to recruiting minority high school students into the fields of science and medicine.

**The Impact on Achievement and Interest in Science: La GEAR-UP Camps, Year III**

Randy Parker and Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

In an era of increasing accountability, universities must collaborate with P-12 schools to develop programs that increase student achievement, as well as preparation for postsecondary opportunities. One way to collaborate is in providing on-campus experiences for at-risk students. Such opportunities have been shown to increase student attitudes and achievement (Dori & Revital, 2000); influence future career choices in mathematics, science, engineering, and technology (Joyce & Farenga, 1999); and provide for students a bridge to how science, technology, and engineering are used in society at large (Cavallo & Laubaugh, 2001; Dori & Revital, 2000).

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of La GEAR-UP summer residential science exploration camps on the science achievement and attitudes of at-risk middle school students from 37 low performing school districts. Students participated in leadership workshops, tutoring sessions, science field trips, and explorations in: (1) nature and biology, (2) engineering and chemistry, (3) physical science and physics, and (4) technology. During the three years of the program, 900 rising seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade students have attended camp.

Pre- and posttest data were gathered on science attitudes using the 28-item Science Attitude Survey (SAS) and on achievement using the EPAS (Explore). Data were analyzed with dependent t-tests and ANOVA with alpha set at .05. Results of this analysis showed significant increases in: (1) attitudes toward science, (2) math achievement, and (3) overall achievement for each year and for the total group. Significant increases were consistent when data were analyzed by race and gender. Effect sizes using Cohen's d were in the moderate to large ranges. Results of this study indicated positive attributes of residential exploratory camps in raising student awareness, achievement, and attitudes toward science while also guiding student preparation for secondary and postsecondary education.

### **Improving Performance of At-Risk Youth Via a College Mentoring Program**

Phyllis Williams, Birmingham-Southern College

This was a presentation of a mentoring program between a small liberal arts college and inner-city public schools. The program was initially developed at the request of an elementary school principal. It was designed as a collaborative plan to provide one-to-one instruction for at-risk youth and a multicultural experience for college students.

Participants in the program included upper-level college students who were currently enrolled in an Educational Psychology course and at-risk youth who were identified by their classroom teacher, school counselor, or administrator. The youth were identified because of academic, social, or behavioral issues. The college students used educational and psychological theories from their course to enhance the academic, social, and/or behavioral performance of the at-risk youth.

#### **Session 2.1**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. TECHNOLOGY..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** William Brescia, University of Arkansas

### **The Influence of Gender and Gender Grouping on Attitudes, Perceptions, and Uses of Technology**

Connie D. Bain, University of Alabama

With the continued growth and prevalence of technology, of interest is whether gender differences continue to exist with regard to technology. Gender, the technology available at home, and amount of time spent on the computer are factors that have the potential to influence students' uses and attitudes toward technology. This study examined the influence of gender and gender grouping on attitudes, perceptions, and uses of technology. The mixed methods research design consisted of a combination of qualitative and quantitative instruments: pretest and posttest surveys, computer logs, student interviews, student reflections, and teacher observations. Quantitative data were examined using chi square, independent samples t-test, frequency analysis, and descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were used to build theory and corroborate quantitative data.

The quantitative data analysis found no significant differences or relationships between males and females and gender groupings based on the results of The Computer Survey; however, differences were found in the amount of time spent on the computer and types of activities. Females spent more time on the computer than males. The majority of the females used the computer for instant messaging while the majority of the males used the computer for playing games. Placement in gender classes did not influence attitudes, perceptions, or uses of the computer based on analysis of the pretest and posttest.

The implications from this study were that females are using the computer more and have a greater interest in technology. All students should have the opportunity to use the computer and be encouraged to use the available technology. Single gender classes have the potential to increase self confidence by providing a safe learning environment where students have more freedom to express themselves without fear of embarrassment.

### **Using Technology Effectively to Promote Teaching and Learning in Culturally Diverse Classrooms**

Linda F. Cornelious and Vicki Keel, Mississippi State University

Technology brings about many changes in the ways in which students learn and their teachers prepare for the instructional process. Although computers are now available in most schools, not all teachers see the value of using them to complement their instructional practice in ways that motivate culturally diverse students to maximize their learning potential. The purpose of this research was to identify ways in which teacher education candidates can use technology to design and deliver effective instruction for culturally diverse classrooms. Recommendations were made about how faculty in schools and colleges of education can become better prepared and comfortable in their use of technology. Specific strategies suggested how faculty can use the Internet, World Wide Web, and multimedia-tools to enhance teaching and learning. Because effective teachers are expected to use technology as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, they must also know how to properly integrate technologies into their instructional practice. Student achievement can be affected by the degree to which teachers use technology. Therefore, it is crucial that faculty in schools and colleges of education model the best practices in teaching by effectively using technologies themselves in order to promote teacher candidates' use of technology in their own classrooms to improve students' learning experiences. Searches from Academic Search Elite and EBSCO Host research databases were used to select relevant refereed journal articles.



## A Study Comparing the Levels of Technology Integration of Teacher Preparation Faculty to K-12 Faculty\*\*

Shannon Parks, Alabama Department of Education, Stephanie B. Ash, University of Alabama – Birmingham

### Session 2.2

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. CURRICULUM..... Levee

President: Kathleen Collins, University of Arkansas

### Teacher Preparation for Integrated Learning: The Value of Music Instruction for the Elementary Classroom Teacher

Sara B. Bidner, Southeastern Louisiana University

The curtailment and elimination of music and other arts from elementary and middle school classroom teacher preparation programs have become increasingly common in institutions of higher education. Thus, classroom teachers sometimes have no opportunity to develop skills for incorporating music into the curriculum, although education in the arts is generally valued, and often required, in the elementary school curriculum. Additionally, many schools have no music teachers, and lack of funding often results in the elimination of existing music and other arts programs. It was the premise of this paper that prospective classroom teachers should have the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in music education that will serve to enrich the elementary curriculum, and to make learning more meaningful for students.

Music experiences provide an added dimension for engaging students in the learning process. Teacher candidates, even those who have had successful school music experiences, need guidance in structuring music lessons for students that make learning meaningful within the context of the total curriculum. Nothing is so convincing to teacher candidates as witnessing the involvement of students in lessons they have prepared that enrich student understanding and foster connections in student learning.

Guidance in preparatory experiences for teachers provides the direction that classroom teachers need for recognizing how music can truly enrich the total classroom experience. Strategies designed by teacher candidates and implemented in field experiences provide evidence of successful integrated approaches connecting music learning with thematic content learning. Specific content standards from both music and other disciplines serve as the focus for assessment of student learning.

Research studies in recent years have assessed the attitudes and self-confidence levels of teacher candidates regarding the likelihood that music and the arts will be included in their own classrooms. These studies have indicated the need for hands-on preparation in learning basic knowledge and skills before prospective teachers are willing to include arts experiences in their own classrooms. As teacher candidates develop a greater knowledge of music and improve musical skills, they become more confident in their abilities to incorporate music into strategies for teaching.

### Elementary Recess: A Study of First- and Fifth-Grade Children

Rose B. Jones and Jeanetta G. Riley, University of Southern Mississippi

Although many American schools have reduced scheduled recess periods in recent years, research has suggested the important role recess plays in children's overall development. With less emphasis on the total child and more on standardized testing in schools, the present study examined different types of recess play of first- and fifth-grade children in two county schools and two small city schools during spring semester in one state in the southern region of the United States. From a review of literature, seven play categories were chosen for observation purposes: (1) objects, (2) observation, (3) literacy, (4) dramatic, (5) physical movement, (6) aggressive, and (7) sedentary. Ten research questions were developed for these individual and group play categories. Two researchers observed 81 elementary children (44 first-grade and 37 fifth-grade) for a three-week period using "bug-in-the-ear" with audio signals indicating time for observations and recordings and a checklist designed to record play categories.

Data were compiled, and t tests were run comparing two groups by city/county, gender, grades, and schools. Three significant differences were found: (1) children in county schools had more observation play,  $t(79) = -2.08, p=.04$ ; (2) children in county schools had more literacy play in mixed gender groups,  $t(79) = -2.11, p=.04$ ; and (3) children in city schools had more physical movement in single gender group play,  $t(79) = 3.41, p<.001$ . Few differences were found between county school and city school children; however, children in city schools were found to have more physical movement play, which may indicate that these children engaged in more after school physical activities as research suggests. This finding could be of importance because of new documentation linking more sedentary life style with the rise of obesity in children and adolescents.

### The Negative Impacts of Media on Children's Behavior

Lishu Yin and Li-Ching Hung, Mississippi State University

Media have brought very positive influence on promoting young children's learning because of their colorful images and excitement. At the same time, they have also brought violence and pornography to pollute young children's innocent minds and souls.

On average, young children watch TV for two to four hours per day and watch 4,000 hours of TV before they enter kindergarten (ACT, 2005). The average American child will have viewed around 200,000 acts of violence on television by age 18 (AAA, 2005). In the last two decades, numerous studies have warned parents and educators that violent television programs and movies can arouse children to act violently (Hepburn, 2001). However, actions have not been taken yet to protect young children. A significant increase in violent behavior has taken place across the United States. The statistics from different sources have shown that mass media have caused damage in children's healthy emotional development.

Mass media have played a very important role in society. In this paper, the side effects brought by the mass media were analyzed and resolutions were suggested. This paper addressed the concerns of parents, educators, and school counselors. It also called the attention of media designers and producers to help young children to use media in a more constructive way.

Examples of the concerns include: (1) children learn to behave aggressively toward others from media violence; instead of learning to take care of problems and conflicts, they are taught to use violence; and (2) children think drinking and smoking as a "cool & attractive" fashion rather than an unhealthy and deadly habit (AAP, 2005).

**Session 2.3**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. RESEARCH IN PROGRESS..... Mississippi Queen**

**Presiders:** Sherry Shaw and Pamela M. Broadston, University of Arkansas – Little Rock

**Utilizing Children’s Materials with Adult Learners\*\***

Elizabeth C. Smith, University of Southern Mississippi

**Same-Sex Classrooms in Public Schools\*\***

LaShanda Kennedy, University of West Alabama

**Identification of Social Support Systems of Interpretation Students in Postsecondary Settings\*\***

Charissa Crow, University of Arkansas – Little Rock

**Effect of Advanced Placement Teacher Training on Learning Atmosphere\*\***

Melany Hamrick, University of West Alabama

**Feasibility of Offering American Sign Language as a Second Language Option for High School Students\*\***

C. J. Jacob, University of Arkansas – Little Rock

**Session 2.4**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. LEADERSHIP..... Delta Queen**

**Presider:** Abraham A. Andero, Mississippi State University - Meridian

**Nurturing School Leaders: The School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans**

Kathleen T. Campbell, Southeastern Louisiana University; Jean Krieger, Woodlake Elementary School, St. Tammany Parish (LA) Schools; Jeff Oescher, University of New Orleans; and Betty Porter, School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans

In the current age of high-stakes testing and school accountability, school principals have assumed increasingly more responsibilities. They are expected to create a school master schedule and individual student and teacher schedules, oversee maintenance and repair of the school building, manage the budget, supervise classroom instruction while staying abreast of research-based best practices, facilitate appropriate professional development for teachers, direct the preparation of students for the annual high-stakes testing, be visible in the classrooms and hallways and extracurricular activities, and implement all state and federal mandates while keeping up with their required paperwork. In addition, they are supposed to be leaders with a vision for school improvement and student achievement, the accomplishment of which they inspire students and teachers toward by effecting change.

How is the principal going to find time to effect change while performing the myriad managerial tasks? Research indicates that change in schools is best accomplished through shared decision making. Building a collaborative decision-making group requires that the principal assume the responsibility of ensuring that relationships are developed, that a knowledge base is established, and that a shared vision is developed. Again, the question is “How?” The School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans Fellows Program is designed to empower principals to effect needed changes by providing the professional development and the resources related to the essential elements mentioned above.

Evidence has suggested that the SLC has been effective. Data analyzed over a three-year period disclosed the average of standardized test scores of the SLC schools for each of the three years ranged from 22% to 43% higher than non-SLC schools across the state and as much as 124% higher in Orleans Public Schools this past year. This quantitative data, combined with qualitative data in the form of principals’ vignettes, indicated the effectiveness of the SLC.

**Implementing a Three-year Partnership Between an Urban School District and Two Universities to Prepare Future In-House School Leaders: A Recipe for Success**

Jack Klotz and Shelly Albritton, University of Central Arkansas; Jane McHaney, Armstrong Atlantic State University; Karen Connelly, Savannah-Chatham County Board of Public Education SBDM Council Members’ Perceptions of Support for and Leadership of School Councils; and William R. Schlinker,

Mary Hall O'Phelan, Sharon Spall, and William Kelley, Western Kentucky University

This presentation focused on how three different educational entities came together to develop a concept that became a plan for training future school site instructional leaders in one southern school district. The organizations that were involved in this enterprise were the local school district that has a student population of 35,000+, a local state university's College of Education, and a second university from another state that offers a nationally recognized standards-based, performance-oriented, non-traditional principal preparation program. The presenters provided participants with timelines followed, activities, and contributions of each partner institution that led to the implementation of this "out of the box" principal preparatory partnership program, which is its first year of delivery. Attendees heard of the trials and tribulations encountered along the way by these partners as they have moved forward during the implementation of this unique partnership. Additionally participants received information detailing the program's two-year instructional content components. Finally, those in attendance heard from students in the first of three planned student cohorts regarding their impressions of the program's instructional content components, rigor, and practicality.

## Session 2.5

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. PROGRAM EVALUATION..... Riverboat**

**Presenter:** Susan Santoli, University of South Alabama

### **The Impact of the No Child Left Behind Act: State-Mandated Testing Program on Rural Schools in Northeast Mississippi**

Sarah E. Campbell, Mississippi State University

The study examined teachers' perception regarding the No Child Left Behind Act 2001. The study sought to find out: (1) the opinions of teachers regarding NCLB Act based on current knowledge, (2) the effect of NCLB Act state mandated testing on classroom instruction, and (3) the effect of the NCLB Act state-mandated testing on student achievement. With particular interest in local context, this study was undertaken to discover the impact of standard-based state testing in Mississippi. Data from this study will increase public awareness of teachers' attitudes regarding the NCLB Act and its effect on classroom practices.

A query using numerous and varied grouping and a mixture of keywords such as state-mandated testing, teaching and instruction, NCLB and rural schools, testing and NCLB Act and Mississippi was conducted through ERIC (Educational Research Information Center) to begin the search. Conducting this search connected to this body of literature prompted further discovery of related books, newsletters, journal articles, conference papers, project reports, essays, research studies, public opinion surveys, testimonies, and historical materials. From this body of literature, the author selected the works that focused specifically on teachers' perception and state-mandated testing within the last 10 years. This literature consisted of the work that could be identified as qualitative and quantitative research, public opinion surveys, and non-empirical works. In short, only a handful of studies specifically explored teachers' perception of state-mandated testing, and these studies were examined in this literature review. Analysis began with reading the target research to see what researchers had to say about teachers' perception of the NCLB Act and teachers' perception of the NCLB on instruction and students' achievement. These studies were examined in the literature review.

An examination of the literature review suggested that the NCLB Act state-mandated testing program both positively and negatively influence instruction and student achievement. This research suggested that NCLB state-mandated testing program adversely affected instruction and student achievement not just in Mississippi but through the nation.

Furthermore, the research examined in this paper suggested that the relationship between NCLB state-mandated testing program, curricular and instructional practices, and student achievement is neither easy nor straightforward and is in dire need of further clarification within states. If state-mandated testing continues to be viewed as a practical means of educational reform, then it is very important to understand the ways in which NCLB is mediated through the local contexts and the minds, motives, and actions of teachers.

### **Program Evaluation for Early Childhood Mental Health Services in Louisiana**

Beverly A. Mulvihill, Tonia D. Crossley, and Carl Brezausek, University of Alabama, Birmingham Center for Educational Accountability

Timely identification of high-risk children and families permits more effective interventions. Mental health concerns often go undetected until school age. This one- to five-year delay exacerbates untreated social, emotional and behavioral problems. Early intervention may prevent or ameliorate subsequent and related issues. Since 2002, the Early Childhood Supports and Services (ECSS) program has demonstrated the effectiveness of a mental health intervention in six Louisiana regions. This model program promoted collaboration among agencies providing services that impact a child's learning capabilities and school readiness.

This paper reported evaluation results for 157 families. Families receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) are eligible for ECSS. Demographics, family and child risk factors, employment barriers, and parenting stress were assessed at baseline and every six months. Frequencies, t-tests, and Pearson correlations were used to describe the study population, compare mean scores at baseline and six-months, and explore the relationship between parenting stress scores and services received.

After six months, families reported a 9%-24% reduction in employment barriers. Two of five areas (personal/ financial and emotional/physical barriers) were significantly reduced ( $p < .05$ ). Parenting stress showed significant reductions in two of three subscales and the total score ( $p < .05$ ). The services families received and initial stress scores were positively correlated.

Parenting stress has been shown to be related to depression and to adversely affect the parent-child relationship. These results indicated families that perceive fewer employment barriers and less stress in their parent-child relationship after six months in the program. Families experiencing more stress received more services. Services provided for families in the early childhood period to improve family functioning appeared to assist parents in the critical areas of employment and parenting, consequently promoting a healthier and more stable environment for early childhood mental health development.

### **LA 4 and Starting Points Prekindergarten Program Evaluation, 2003-2004**

Carl M. Brezausek, Meredith M. Matthews, Thomas O. Ingram III, and Scott W. Snyder, University of Alabama – Birmingham Center for Educational Accountability, and Billy R. Stokes, University of Louisiana - Lafayette

The LA 4 prekindergarten program began in 2001 with the passage of Senate Bill 776 with the purpose of serving four-year-old children not currently

enrolled in publicly-funded prekindergarten classes. The LA 4 program was modeled after the Starting Points prekindergarten program begun in the 1992-1993 school year.

In 2003-2004, prekindergarten intervention was provided to 4,767 children in the LA 4 Program, and 996 children in the Starting Points program. The targeted children were at-risk, unserved four-year-olds. These children were evaluated with the McGraw-Hill Developing Skills Checklist in the fall and spring of their prekindergarten year.

Analyses of LA 4 test scores revealed significant improvement from pretest to posttest in the participating students' scores. Additionally, the LA 4 students' performance remained close to or higher than the national average on the posttest. Starting Points students displayed similar results. Specific analyses of the test scores also indicated a narrowing of the differences between students from differing family income backgrounds by ethnicity, consistent with the No Child Left Behind legislation.

These results supported the high-quality Louisiana Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children followed by the LA 4 and Starting Points programs, including certified teachers, full-day program, research-based and developmentally appropriate curricula, and a low student-to-teacher ratio.

Further examination of kindergarten screening test scores indicated that students who participated in LA 4 prekindergarten were better prepared than students who did not participate in a prekindergarten program, despite their impoverished backgrounds.

**Session 2.7**

**10:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. INTERVENTIONS FOR BASIC ACADEMIC SKILLS: READING-TO-READ, MATH-TO-MASTERY, READING-TO-READ, AND REACHING-FOR-WRITING (2-HOUR TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room**

Carlen Henington, R. Anthony Doggett, and Brad Dufrene, Mississippi State University

Approximately 12% of school-aged children have been identified and receive services for learning disabilities. Before these children are evaluated, amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education and Improvement Act (IDEA, P.L. 108-446) mandate the use of pre-referral interventions and accountability. Typically, these interventions must be brief and targeted to meet the specific child's immediate need for assistance using early academic problem identification, and academic intervention development and implementation. Based on timelines and constraints of the school environment, the interventions must be brief and unobtrusive within the daily routine of the classroom, easy to monitor with empirical evidence to show efficacy of the intervention, and acceptable to those who "consume" the intervention.

The purpose of this training session was to provide participants with detailed information about the implementation of pre-referral individual and group interventions for delays in basic academic skills: Math-to-Mastery, Reading-to-Read, Reaching-for-Writing. Each intervention uses a variety of intervention strategies including previewing, repeated practice, self-correction, feedback, and graphing to visually depict progress across time. Previous studies have shown significant growth in targeted areas using the general model for the intervention in school systems, but no presentations or publications have been conducted to assist the interventionist and school personnel in modifying the interventions to meet the needs of diverse settings.

This training session provided the participants with detailed descriptions of the interventions that could be implemented by novice and experienced interventionists, teachers, and other school personnel. Demonstrations of each intervention were provided, and participants were encouraged to practice the interventions during the training. Handouts specific to the interventions were also provided to participants. Presentations also included specific case studies presenting empirical data for interventions in each skill area using time series analysis and curriculum-based assessment. Social validity data were presented for each intervention.

**Session 3.1**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, University of South Florida

**Nurturing Their Students: Primary-Level Teachers' Perceptions**

Jeanetta G. Riley, University of Southern Mississippi

Although nt emphasis in public education on academic achievement tends to omit the discussion of i s related to children's social and emotion l development, society expects hers, particularly those teaching younger children, to care about and nurture r students. The theoretical background for this qualitative study within the phenomenological tradition included romantic ideology, constructivism, attachment theory, motivation theory, and concepts related to teaching the whole child. The purpose of the study was to examine four primary-level teachers' understandings of their lived experiences of nurturing students. The teachers taught in two schools located in a rural area of a southern state. The research was undertaken to reveal the teachers' definitions of nurturing, the teachers' understandings of their nurturing behaviors, and the teachers' beliefs of how they learned to nurture students.

Data collection consisted of formal and informal interviews with the teachers, supplemented by observations and documents. Interview data were analyzed using a three-tiered process of phenomenological reflection. From the analysis of data, major themes, minor themes, and subthemes emerged. The two major themes were physical and emotional availability and responsibility for student success. Three minor themes were absence of nurturing, student response, and learning to nurture. Descriptions of the teachers' individual understandings of nurturing and an overall description of their understandings of nurturing were generated.

Conclusions drawn from the data indicated that the teachers understood their nurturing experiences to consist of attitudes, emotions, and actions. By being physically and emotionally available to develop caring relationships with their students, the teachers believed that they could provide emotional and academic support to help their students succeed in their classrooms and in life. Additionally, the teachers believed that nurturing was part of their innate personality but was also learned behavior from observation of those around them, particularly during their childhood.

**Mirror, Mirror: A Phenomenological Study of the Role of Reflection in Teaching**

Amy F. Morgan and Nataliya Ivankova, University of Alabama – Birmingham

In this era of increasing accountability in education, teachers are being asked to move away from the role of intuitive guide to being a more deliberate reflective practitioner. The need exists to understand the experience of reflection and its meaning from the perspective of practicing teachers. Existing studies

describe an effective teacher as one who reflects upon her/his teaching; however, they do not illuminate the perspective of teachers in order to assist other teachers in knowing how to reflect effectively. Guided by the works of Dewey (1909/1933) and Schon (1983, 1987), this phenomenological study explored the reflective experiences of practicing teachers in order to understand, from the perspective of teacher, the meaning of reflection in teaching. The central research question was: What is the meaning of reflection in teaching?

The purposeful sample included five female teachers and one male teacher currently teaching fourth or fifth grade with three to 29 years of teaching experience. The data were collected through focus group interviews and subsequent follow-up individual interviews with each participant. The data analysis followed the procedures outlined by Moustakas (1994). After transcribing interviews verbatim, invariant horizons, or statements significant to the central phenomenon and reinforced by more than one participant were pulled from the transcripts. The statements were organized into seven themes pertaining to reflection: (1) ongoing learning process, (2) way to solve problems, (3) way to deal with change, (4) sharing with others, (5) evolving with experience, (6) being formal and informal, and (7) taking place in a nurturing environment.

These findings can help school administrators hear the voices of practicing teachers so that they can better establish, monitor, and evaluate effective reflective practices. As teachers begin to understand the meaning of reflection for themselves and other teachers, they will become empowered to use time in the classroom more efficiently.

### **Session 3.2**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION..... Levee**

**Presenter:** David A. T. Hall, University of South Alabama

#### **Project ELEVATE: Enhancing Learning Environments Via Active Teaching Enhancement Strategies**

Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University, and Cathy Stockton, Richland Parish (LA) Schools

Project ELEVATE (Effective Learning Experiences via Active Teaching Enhancement Strategies) is a grant project with a primary purpose of enhancing the mathematical skills of students with disabilities, regular education students, and blind students. This project addressed the needs of mathematics teachers in four north Louisiana parishes, as well as teachers of the blind throughout the state.

An Educational Needs Assessment was given to all principals and teachers that wanted to participate in the project. This 27-item instrument contained open-ended questions to allow the participants to more effectively communicate their needs in terms of professional development and materials to enhance their mathematics instruction. Analysis of the data revealed that the majority of the participants expressed: (1) parental involvement was critical for student success, (2) they do not have enough training on the use of technology, (3) a willingness for outside consultation for learning better teaching skills and strategies, and (4) more learning aids and manipulatives were needed to enhance instruction.

To fulfill these needs, the staff of Project ELEVATE has worked with participating schools by providing Family Math Nights to encourage more parental involvement and provided participating schools with math materials kits. The project staff has also established relationships with faith-based groups and provided professional development for their volunteers, conducted Family Math Nights, modeled demonstration lessons in mathematics, and provided needed mathematics manipulative materials. To address the technology needs, professional development through the INTECH Regional Technology Center was sponsored by Project ELEVATE and provided teachers stipends and materials. The Project also provided scholarships and stipends for participating teachers for the DEEP in Math training. Braille mathematics materials were also purchased for the state resource center through the project. This presentation reported the current progress in the project and the future endeavors of Project ELEVATE.

#### **Preliminary Evaluation of the 2005 AMSTI Summer Training Institutes**

Marcia R. O'Neal and Scott W. Snyder, University of Alabama – Birmingham,  
and Steve Ricks, Alabama State Department of Education

This presentation provided an overview of the Alabama Math and Science Teaching Initiative (AMSTI), now in its second year, funded through the Department of Education. Presenters summarized preliminary results of the second year of summer institutes conducted at three sites during June 2005. Over 500 math and science teachers (first-time institute participants) and administrators from school districts in three regions in Alabama participated in the institutes. The AMSTI summer institutes were designed to provide intensive and high quality professional development in inquiry-focused math and science instruction for teachers and administrators in grades K-8. Participating teachers received two weeks of grade-specific training in the subject matter and pedagogy. Teachers who completed the institute had access to AMSTI instructional materials (module-based) to support math and science instruction in their classrooms.

Data collected from first-time participating teachers included pretest/posttest subject matter knowledge (tied to the content of the workshop, not-too-deep subject matter understanding), surveys of current practices and attitudes, and an evaluation of the workshop and its anticipated impact on practices. Administrators completed open-ended survey items eliciting their perceptions of the institute and expected impacts in their schools. The evaluation of the institutes is one aspect of a comprehensive multi-year evaluation of a large-scale grant intended to reform math and science teaching in Alabama.

The presenters described the AMSTI and the summer institutes, summarized results of the preliminary evaluation of the institute, and outlined subsequent evaluation plans. Feedback and discussion regarding evaluation of Math and Science Partnerships were solicited from the audience.

#### **The Effects of Math-to-Mastery with Elementary and High School Students**

Michael Mong, Mississippi State University

Based on Curriculum State University Based Assessment, the Math-to-Mastery intervention package has been empirically proven to be an effective intervention for increasing mathematics fluency. Because of the general lack of research concerning age effects, the purpose of this study was to empirically evaluate the effects of the Math-to-Mastery intervention package with both elementary school students and a high school student.

The participants for the elementary-aged study were eight children selected from a summer academic skills clinic. The participants ranged in age from seven years old to 12 years old with a mean age of 9.2 years of age. The participants for this study were at various points in their academic careers, the youngest entering the first grade with the oldest entering the sixth grade. The majority of the participants were African American children (62.5%), with Caucasian participants comprising the rest of the sample (37.5%). Females comprised the majority of the sample (75%), while males made up the minority (25%). The participant for the high school study was a 16-year-old, Caucasian male. The subject was recruited from a pediatric behavior clinic at Mississippi State University.

All subjects were performing at least one year below grade level in math. Students were selected from a summer academic clinic and a behavioral/pediatric clinic for remediation of reading, writing, and mathematics deficits held at Mississippi State University.

A between-series multiple baseline design across participants was used to evaluate the effects of both of the interventions.

**Session 3.3**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. USE OF PORTFOLIOS IN ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER CANDIDATES: THREE PERSPECTIVES (SYMPOSIUM)..... Mississippi Queen**

**Organizer:** Judith A. Boser, University of Tennessee

Denise Beeler Jones, KY Education Professional Standards Board and University of Kentucky; Dorothy C. Schween and Thilla Sivakumaran, University of Louisiana – Monroe; and William Wishart, University of Tennessee

The use of portfolios, especially electronic ones, continues to increase in assessing teacher candidates at both the institutional and state levels. They provide a readily accessible system showing quality of teacher candidates needed for NCATE accreditation and state licensure.

**Session 3.4**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**President:** Michelle Haj-Broussard, McNeese State University

**Perceptions of Motivation to Learn: A Multi-ethnic Perspective\*\***

Srilata Bhattacharyya, New York Institute of Technology, Wendy Jordanov, Tennessee State University

**A Comparative Study of Preservice Teachers' Motivations in Two Continents**

Qaisar Sultana, Eastern Kentucky University

This study, a replication of one conducted in Kentucky two years ago, aimed at assessing the motivational factors that led the preservice teachers at the American University of Beirut to choose teaching as their profession. The investigator asked all preservice student teachers during their last seminar meeting to write two reasons why they wanted to become teachers. The total of 70 Lebanese student teachers (7 males and 63 females) was comprised of 17 majoring in Secondary Science, 13 in Secondary Math, 10 in Elementary Math and Science, 7 in Elementary Social Studies and Language Arts, 11 in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, 5 in Special Education, 4 in Informatics (Technology), and 3 in Music and Art.

The respondents gave a total of 123 different reasons. These were classified into eight factors, namely, patriotism, future, help, self-appraisal, change, impact, giving, and self-needs. It was difficult to separate the responses associated with change from those referring to the impact of a teacher. For convenience, responses were assigned to factors by the language respondents used. Frequency of responses in each factor was counted. Self-need received the highest frequency (30). It was followed by help (17), self-appraisal (16), patriotism (14), future (8), change (8), giving (5) and impact (5).

The data were collected three months after the assassination of the most popular leader, Rafic Hariri. The national fervor was running very high. The political climate may have influenced the respondents. Kentucky data did not generate the patriotism and giving factors. In the self-appraisal factor, Kentucky's highest frequency response, "I love children," did not appear in the Lebanese data. Kentucky's highest frequency response in self-need factor, long summer vacations, was mentioned only once by their Lebanese counterparts. Kentucky's second highest frequency response, lots of holidays, did not appear in the Lebanese responses. There were several other noticeable differences worth further study for multicultural education.

**A Multilevel Longitudinal Study of Ethnic Differences in Achievement Among Asian American Students**

Eugene Kennedy and Shujie Liu, Louisiana State University

Asian American students have often been labeled the "model minority" as a result of their documented high levels of academic achievement (Chan, 1991). However, there is considerable variation in achievement among the population of Asian American students in the U.S. Although the research on this variation is limited, there are growing indications that cultural differences in ethnic groups and social-economic background are important factors (Huang, 1995).

The present study focused on the role of ethnicity in the academic growth of different ethnic groups of Asian American students as they progressed from grades 8 to 12. The study used data from the first three waves of the NELS:88. The focus of the analysis was on variation in the growth trajectories of these students as reflected in their performance on the vertically scaled standardized achievement tests administered with each wave of the NELS:88 survey. A two-level multilevel model was used to analyze these data. At level one, student performance on the standardized tests was regressed on time and selected time-varying covariates. At level two, ethnicity and socio-economic background were predictors. These analyses used appropriate panel weights and addressed questions concerning the levels and rates of achievement among these groups, the role background factors play, and the impact of attitudes (e.g., locus of control) and behavior (e.g., number of hours of study) changes (time varying covariates) on these processes.

The significance of this project lies in its potential to shed light on an often overlooked issue-- variation in academic achievement among Asian American students. As noted by Kim (1997), the "model minority" label applied to all Asian American students blurs the considerable variation that exists and can lead educators and policy makers to leave these students out of discussions when the focus is on addressing the needs of struggling learners.

**Session 3.5**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION..... Riverboat**

**President:** Lola Aagaard, Morehead State University

## University Faculty Under Stress: A New Look at an Old Theory

Yonghong Xu, University of Memphis

Research on university faculty worklife brought to attention the importance of understanding and reducing work-related faculty stress. Gmelch and his colleagues (Gmelch, Wilke, & Lovrich, 1986) developed a five-dimension definition of stress among university faculty: reward and recognition, time constraints, departmental influence, professional identity, and student interaction. However, after 20 years have passed, have the stress patterns stayed unchanged? Does it still convey a complete picture?

Using the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty: 1999 data, the current study first revalidated this five-dimension stress structure with a factor analysis, and then provided more insight into the complex patterns of faculty stress by including additional variables. Based on a weighted sample of 2,689 fulltime faculty, the analyses showed that measures of faculty reward and recognition, time constraints, departmental influence, professional identity, and student interaction produced only one solid underlying factor, evidence that the five dimensions still define the faculty stress very well.

Furthermore, a hierarchical regression confirmed that untenured faculty perceived a higher stress level than do their tenured colleagues, and faculty stress differed across different academic disciplines. At odds with the previous findings, academic ranks were found not related to stress in terms of time constraints and departmental influences. Also, as age increases, stress levels decrease in all dimensions. Remarkably, ethnicity and sense of job security, two variables omitted by Gmelch and his colleagues, turned out to be significantly related to faculty stress. Asian American and Hispanic faculty members experienced significantly higher stress in reward and recognition; the former group also had higher stress in student interactions.

This study supported the five-dimension stress pattern. By including measures on ethnicity and job security, the findings demanded more attention to minority faculty and their unique worklife stresses, and revealed sense of job security as one of the key factors in reducing the faculty stress level.

### Deception in Faculty Job Application

Mary Hall O'Phelan, Western Kentucky University

The use of deceit during the job application process in higher education has received some attention in recent years. Various ways of detecting deceit were explored by Ekman and O'Sullivan (1991) and in a review of literature by Edelman (1999). Because most of the research on deception has been done using undergraduates as subjects, Edelman suggests that additional studies be done using other populations in order to establish ecological validity. The degree to which faculty applicants present false information, distort their past histories, or omit crucial negative evidence about themselves is not known.

The purpose of this study was to develop a survey instrument to measure faculty attitudes about deception in the college and university workplace. Likert-type items for the instrument were developed for four different scales within the instrument: (1) faculty beliefs about deception, (2) faculty self-reported behavior, (3) faculty beliefs about other people's perceptions, and (4) faculty beliefs about other people's behavior. After IRB approval was obtained, 50 faculty members across several disciplines at a comprehensive university were asked to complete the pilot version of the instrument in order to estimate validity and reliability. Participants were asked to give their reactions and suggestions about content and format of the survey items. Using split-half procedures, reliability was estimated for the instrument as a whole, as well as for each of the four subscales. The pilot study prompted modifications in the wording and format of the instrument, as well as in the content and focus of the four scales. The revised instrument can be used to begin discussions about deception in the workplace in higher education. Subsequent studies focused on survey responses for different groups of faculty, e.g., newly hired vs. tenured, faculty in different disciplines, or faculty at comprehensive vs. research universities.

### Adjuncts Happen: Strong Faculty or Weak System?

Naomi Jeffery Petersen, Indiana University - South Bend

Faculty role expectations were discussed for the purpose of clarifying teacher education program stressors. Involvement in faculty decisions is considered a key component of the quality of students' learning environment according to NCATE accreditation standards intended to address the systemic nature of faculty involvement. To strengthen program infrastructure, one must recognize the complications of maintaining a system that does not clearly define roles and expectations concerning one of its key components: contingent faculty. Increasing use of contingent faculty in schools of education highlights the complexity: faculty roles and responsibilities are increasingly blurred, exceeding the scope of traditional definitions, i.e., isolated teaching.

Reported were the preliminary findings from an ongoing qualitative study, including interviews with core and contingent faculty at two different teaching institutions. Whereas contingent faculty bring valued expertise, they may be less aware of university expectations, thereby magnifying program weaknesses. Communication necessary for true collaboration can be generated only through core faculty service, because it is not teaching or scholarship that is neither valued or compensated. Collaboration among core and contingent faculty could strengthen program quality, but requires: (1) far more service from core faculty than is valued or compensated, (2) a more complex role for contingent faculty to embrace, and (3) student survey data that must include perceptions of the integrated program. Proposed was a focus group discussion for conference participants to contribute to this investigation.

#### Session 4.1

1:00 P.M. – 2:15 PM

**IMPROBABLE RESEARCH WITH IMPOSSIBLE REPLICABILITY AND IRREPRODUCIBLE RESULTS BY IRRESPONSIBLE RESEARCHERS (MSERA KEYNOTE ADDRESS)..... Premier III)**

#### Organizers:

Walter M. Mathews, Evaluation Associates of New York; Ronald D. Adams, Western Kentucky University; Robert L. Kennedy, University of Arkansas Medical Sciences; William L. Deaton, Wears Valley, Tennessee; Harry L. Bowman, Council on Occupational Education; Robert Rasmussen, Louisiana State University System; George W. Gaines, Silas Griffin B&B, Danby, Vermont; and Jean Krieger, Woodlake Elementary School, Mandeville, Louisiana

#### Session 5.1

2:30 P.M. – 3:20 PM

**MIXED METHODS..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** David Morse, Mississippi State University

### **Resolution of Qualitative-Quantitative Dichotomy: Implications for Theory, Praxis, and National Research Policy**

Charles L. McLafferty Jr. and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, University of South Florida

Politicians and taxpayers wonder why researchers have not developed educational research and practice with the same scientific rigor attributed to medicine and engineering. Legislation threatens to proscribe funded research. The debate recurs: Is qualitative or quantitative research best? Beginning in graduate school, educators and researchers are usually taught only one such approach. Philosophical explanations depict an insolvable incompatibility.

This article transcended the traditional qualitative-quantitative dichotomy using a three-dimensional ontology: soma, psyche, and noös. The physical dimension (soma) is best researched through quantitative methods. Naturalistic inquiry optimally encompasses the emotions and intellect (psyche). The noëtic dimension includes choice, purpose, and spirituality: our unique personhood and universal connection with "Life." Concepts such as choice, responsibility, and discovered meaning are largely missing from research and theory in psychology and education, partly because methods are not philosophically suited to the noëtic dimension.

From a dimensional perspective, the quantitative-qualitative concept is no longer dichotomous—rather, the two methodologies are \*dimensionally different.\* Further, the political move toward "science-based research" in the areas of human learning and development bears reconsideration in order to ensure that education, praxis, and research do not leave out the search for meaning--the soul of education.

### **Qualitative and Quantitative Studies: Where Do They Converge?**

Cindy M. Casebeer and Judy Burry-Stock, University of Alabama

In the United States, there continues to be a strong emphasis on student standardized test scores as the benchmark of learning. Therefore, it is commonplace for funding agencies, in particular, to ask that educational programs provide evidence-based (or science-based) results attesting to their efficacy. This is true in teacher education programs as well. However, program evaluators know that providing just the "numbers" does not allow for a rich, true, or complete examination of modern-day programs with multiple stakeholders. However, through the use of mixed-method evaluation designs, it is possible to gain a more complete picture of the program. Through the use of qualitative methods, it is possible to provide a forum whereby the voices of program participants can be heard. Through the use of quantitative methods, it is possible to provide evidence-based results that will meet the demands of the public.

### **Mixed Methods Research in Counseling Research: The Past, Present, and Future**

Nancy L. Leech, University of Colorado – Denver - Health Sciences, and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, University of South Florida

The purpose of this paper was to explain and illustrate the utility of mixed methods research (i.e., combining quantitative and qualitative techniques) to the field of counseling. First, the authors discussed and exemplified the use of mixed methods approaches in counseling practice. Second, the authors described mixed methods designs in the context of applicability to counseling research. Third, they delineated the current state of affairs with respect to mixed methods designs in counseling research through a content analysis of the types of empirical studies published in the three leading counseling journals between 2000 and 2004. These journals are *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *Journal of College Counseling*, and *Counselor Education and Supervision*. The analysis revealed that only a small proportion of these studies can be classified as representing mixed methods research. Finally, the authors illustrated the utility of mixed methods research designs by critiquing select monomethod (i.e., qualitative or quantitative) and mixed methods studies that have been published in counseling journals. They demonstrated how mixed methods research yields richer, thicker data than do monomethod studies, culminating in a greater understanding of underlying phenomena.

#### **Session 5.2**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. ACHIEVEMENT..... Levee**

**Presenter:** Beverly M. Klecker, Morehead State University

### **The Different Roles of Income and Family Structure on Student Achievement and School Performance**

Beverly Derington Moore and Stephen K. Miller, University of Louisville

This study analyzed the effects of seven socio-demographic factors on student scores on the CTBS Mathematics tests at three grade levels: third, sixth and ninth. It also examined the effects of those seven socio-demographic factors aggregated at school level (i.e., school composition factors) on the aggregate school scores, i.e., on school performance at those grades. Major findings involved the relationship between SES and family structure. In this study, SES was defined as family income measured by whether a student qualified for free and reduced meals (F&R). Family structure was defined as having two-parents (mother and father) living in the home. Those same factors were expressed as percentages of students not on free and reduced meals and percentages of students with two-parent families to represent school composition. The effects of the individual factors on individual scores and the effects of school composition factors on school performance (aggregate school scores) were analyzed using forward multiple regression.

A major finding was the contrast between the correlation of SES and family structure at the student level, which was very low, and that at the school level, which was very high. In addition, the regression effects demonstrated a much higher degree of colinearity between those two variables at the school level than at the individual level, which was also higher than the colinearity of the other variables at the school level. The implications of the findings for evaluating school performance and guiding future research were discussed.

### **Mathematics Achievement Patterns Across Two Groups of Learners: A Multilevel Approach**

John K. Rugutt and Caroline C. Chemosit, Illinois State University, and Philip K. Kaloki, Dallas Baptist University



The purpose of this study was guided by the following research questions: (1) Are there differences in mathematics achievement scores among state high schools? (2) Do school factors (socio-economic status - SES, family income, percentage of male students, school mathematics ladder, school size, etc.) explain the differences in mean school mathematics achievement scores? (3) Do student factors (gender, free/reduced lunch, SES, IEP, mathematics ladder, etc.) explain differences in mathematics achievement scores? and (4) Do the school factors influence the magnitude of the student factors on mathematics achievement scores?

The sample of this study was 85,804 high school students, consisting of 73,370 observations collected from 558 schools from white American students and 12,434 observations from African American students from 164 schools. The study used mathematics ACT scores as its outcome variable. The results of the study indicated that there were significant differences among schools. For the African American sample, the test statistic ( $967; 2 = 3064.84$ ,  $df = 163$ ) indicates significant ( $p < 0.000$ ) variation among predominantly African American schools in their mathematics achievement. For the white American sample, the test statistic ( $967; 2 = 13567.20$ ,  $df = 557$ ) indicated significant ( $p < 0.000$ ) variation among predominantly white American schools in their mathematics achievement. At the student level, the variance components was  $963; 2 = 9.65$ , and  $26.00$  for African American, and white American students, respectively. This indicated that white American students were more variable in their mathematics achievement than African American students. Intra-class correlations, computed for the two samples, were  $0.19$  (19%), and  $0.10$  (10%) for the African American, and white American students, respectively.

The intra-class correlations showed relatively substantial proportion of variation among schools, indicating that 19% of variance in mathematics achievement was among predominantly African American schools, and 10% of variance in mathematics achievement was among predominantly white American schools. The within schools variability for African American students is relatively smaller, but substantial variability between predominantly African American schools exists. Complete results of this study and procedures used 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.

### **Regression-Based Formula for Predicting the Academic Success of First-Year College Students**

John F. Edwards and David L. McMillen, Mississippi State University

To reduce student attrition, many colleges and universities have implemented academic mentorship programs designed to increase student performance and persistence. Such programs frequently classify "at-risk" students based on ACT score and/or high school grade point average (HSGPA). Although researchers have identified numerous other variables that are reasonably accurate in predicting the academic performance of first-year college students, ACT and HSGPA continue to be the most widely used predictors of academic performance in college. The purpose of the present study was to provide a fledgling mentorship program, recently instituted at a large public university in the southeastern U.S., with a regression-based formula for identifying at-risk students.

The sample included all freshmen students entering the university in the years 2003 and 2004 ( $n = 3,440$ ). Only variables that were part of the university database were investigated. The dependent measure was a dichotomous categorization of first-year GPA: either, greater than or equal to 2.00, or less than 2.00. A logistic regression analysis indicated that the following predictor variables accounted for a statistically significant portion of the variance in the dependent measure: (1) ACT, (2) HSGPA, (3) gender, (4) race, (5) residency status (living in dormitory versus living off-campus), (6) registration date (early versus late registration), and (7) guardianship (single-parent versus dual-parent).

The methodology employed in this study could serve as a model for deriving regression-based formulas to be used by academic mentorship programs at other universities. Such formulas should be program specific with derivations based on data from local student populations in order to maximize the reliability of prediction. It is further recommended that new population data be analyzed every few years in order to account for the dynamic nature of present day college-student populations.

#### **Session 5.3**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. LEADERSHIP (DISPLAYS)..... Mississippi Queen**

#### **No Child Left Behind, Preparing Highly Qualified Principals**

Ronald A. Styron, David E. Lee, and Mike Ward, University of Southern Mississippi

Mississippi Curriculum Test scores in the south-central region of Mississippi are among the lowest in the state. Improving these scores is essential to improving student achievement, school performance scores, and breaking the cycle of poverty found among families residing in these school districts. Additionally, south-central Mississippi is suffering from both a lack of, and the inability to attract and keep, qualified school administrators, especially school principals. With over 50% of currently serving principals now eligible for retirement, this problem has now reached a magnitude never before seen. As a result of accountability programming, there has never been a more critical time for schools to have competent leadership. The University of Southern Mississippi School Leadership Institute was developed to address these two primary concerns.

The Institute consisted of a comprehensive 20-day summer program, with two days of follow-up during the fall, involving 35 participants, who included practicing and aspiring principals grouped under two primary instructional strands. Two professors from the Department of Education Leadership, along with successful field practitioners, served as instructors.

The goals of the Institute were to: (1) improve leadership skills as related to the facilitation of core academic instruction, comprehension, and student achievement; (2) integrate core academic topics directly related to content standards into daily instruction; (3) facilitate the integration of technology into daily instruction through the use of word processing and spreadsheet software, computer applications, email, web pages, pocket computers, and web-based resources so as to foster the learning concepts of core academics; (4) utilize school-based administrative applications of technology through the use of pocket computers and software such as PowerPoint, T-Observe, and test data analysis software, web-sites, email, and daily organizer; (5) improve the interpretation and management of appropriate test data; and (6) develop and implement action plans based on test data.

Institute content contained a focus on instructional programs, leadership theory and leadership styles, school vision, decision making, time management, fiscal prioritization, management, supervision, selection and evaluation of teachers, action planning, lesson design, professional growth plans, special education inclusion, analysis of test data, interpreting test results, identifying program needs and low-performing students, curriculum alignment, grant writing, accountability, and No Child Left Behind and utilization of technology.

The effectiveness of the Institute was measured by an instrument utilizing open-ended questions and Likert scale, MS curriculum test scores, and a follow-up questionnaire completed during the following spring. Longitudinal data collected and discussed included 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2004-05 Mississippi Curriculum Test scores.

## **Curriculum Alignment Matrix: A Systematic Framework for Aligning Educational Leadership Program Curriculum with Standards, Principles, and Assessment**

Donna E. Pascoe, Martha Hall, Tom Hackett, Bill Hortman, and Patricia Duttera, Columbus State University

The importance of training highly qualified administrators and leaders, along with the importance placed on educational accountability, facilitated changes to our Educational Leadership program. Curriculum alignment was deemed the foundation of this initiative.

The curriculum improvement process was complex and required ongoing program evaluations. An approach that was systematic and comprehensive was a necessary requirement for successful program adaptations and applications. Educational Leadership faculty designed a wall-sized taxonomy matrix framework for analyzing and aligning Educational Leadership Program Curriculum with Standards, Principles, and Assessments.

Alignment began with a review of curriculum standards, principles, instruction, and assessment. Improvements were made by aligning program with external standards from Standards for Advanced Programs in Educational Leadership (SAPEL) and with national testing objectives. The second alignment level was internal, requiring a review of curriculum goals and objectives, instructional strategies, syllabi, class content (validity studies), and curriculum-embedded assessment instruments.

All members of the Leadership faculty team met weekly to study alignment data presented visually on the wall-sized taxonomy matrix framework. Item analysis changes were made within the framework. Topics for consideration and discussion were determined weekly with follow-up as needed.

Program evaluations have been ongoing and reiterative. Assessment measures have been designed as indicators for changes to the program and input from students, faculty, community leaders, standards commissions, and candidates was encouraged. Leadership faculty worked cooperatively to interpret and use assessment data, research, and professional expertise when making decisions regarding curriculum alignment. The wall-sized taxonomy matrix framework facilitated the process of curriculum alignment by providing a visual representation of the information to be assessed. Movement of data and information was visually evident when changes were made by moving information from one cell to another. The wall-sized taxonomy matrix framework provided visual documentation of standards and program content evaluated.

### **Do Ideals Meet the Real World in School Psychology?: Analysis of Internship Time Allocation**

Constance K. Patterson, Michelle A. Jackson, W. Alan Coulter, and Lisa L. Persinger, Louisiana State University – Health Sciences Center, The University of Southern Mississippi School Leadership Institute, and David E. Lee and Ronald A. Styrone, University of Southern Mississippi

Expectations and guidelines for the training and practice of school psychology are constantly evolving and are often affected by both state and federal law (e.g., IDEA 1997; IDEA reauthorized for 2004). These laws are reflected in the roles given to school psychologists in individual states and districts.

This poster presented a graphic display of the roles and activities of school psychology interns in several Louisiana school systems. The data reflected the diversity among activities in districts that partnered with the Louisiana School Psychology Internship Consortium for the 2003-2005 schools years. Data were depicted for districts that engaged in more traditional practices, districts with more progressive practices, pre-doctoral-level intern activities, and pre-specialist-level intern activities. These activities included assessment, counseling/intervention, consultation, research, writing, organization, meetings, training provided and received, and supervision.

### **Validation of a Leadership Self-Efficacy Scale**

Kyna Shelley, Wanda S. Maulding, Marquise L. Loving, Mary Alexander-Lee, Bronagh Gallagher, and Lauren Beckman, University of Southern Mississippi

Though there is an undeniable relationship between self-confidence and effective leadership, it appears that it is a related concept, task-specific confidence or self-efficacy, that explains this relationship. Despite the potential importance of leadership self-efficacy (LSE) with regard to assessment and training, there are, with few notable exceptions, no tools available by which to measure this construct. Based on leadership research, an instrument was developed for the purpose of evaluating LSE, defined specifically as confidence to monitor and influence in order to promote group effectiveness.

This study assessed the relationship between leadership participation and efficacy by, first, investigating the validity of this leadership efficacy instrument, and, second, utilizing the instrument in drawing parallels between experience and efficacy of individuals who are in positions of leadership and those who are not. Five areas of leadership efficacy were explored. They included: (1) monitoring, diagnosing, and action planning, (2) task management, (3) relations management, (4) impression management, and (5) context management. Participants in phase 1 were asked to sort the items according to leadership categories.

The initial sample was composed of 150 students, and per their responses, the questionnaire was revised by retaining items that received at least 70% agreement on category confirmation and rejecting items that did not. Phase 2 participants were selected from a different group of students and were asked to respond to the revised questionnaire to further confirm category classification and revise the questionnaire through factor analysis. Phase 3 participants were graduate students and education professionals (a group of leaders, aspiring leaders, and non-leaders) who were administered the final leadership efficacy instrument in order to assess the relationship of their responses to their respective leadership experience levels.

#### **Session 5.4**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M.    MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**President:** Eugene Kennedy, Louisiana State University

#### **Initial Teacher Candidates' Attitudes Toward Diversity**

Michelle Haj-Broussard and Rose Henny, McNeese State University

Kailin (1999) and Sleeter (1993) both document teachers' perceptions of racial issues in schools. Kailin (1999) notes that even when teachers view acts within their schools that they would call "racist" the teachers said or did nothing, leading Kailin to assert that "Silence was the persistence of racism." Sleeter (1993) studied a cohort of 30 teachers over a period of two years and found that the white teachers associated race with their own European ancestry, denying the history of colonization or the complicity of social institutions in propagating inequality. Haberman and Post (1992) found that preservice teachers, despite intensive coursework in multicultural education and over 100 hours field experience with low-income minority children in schools, reinforced their initial preconceptions rather

than reconstructing their views of children of color.

This study sought to determine McNeese's beginning teacher education majors' views about cultural diversity before they began their diversity education foundations courses at both the undergraduate and the graduate level--SPED 204 and EDUC 647.

Participants were selected to participate in this study based on their enrollment in either SPED 204 or EDUC 647-- foundation courses, which addressed multicultural education and the education of students with exceptionalities. Participants were asked to answer the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (Henry, 1991) at the beginning of the semester during class. The questionnaire was a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed to yield the frequencies and percentages of responses for each class and within a variety of demographic categories such as age, socio-economic status, and ethnicity.

The researchers anticipated that there would be differences between graduate and undergraduate candidates attitudes vis-à-vis diversity. Furthermore, as previous studies have found, the researchers felt that there would be a difference between candidates' views on diversity based on ethnicity and age.

### **Developing Diversity Dispositions in Teacher Candidates via Video Vignettes**

Connie LaBorde and Frances Kelley, Louisiana Tech University, and Cathy Stockton, Richland Parish (LA) Schools

The study examined the use video vignettes developed to address topics (inclusion, abuse, bullying, and racism) to improve teacher candidates' awareness and appreciation of diversity in educational settings. The vignettes (videos) were field-tested by 59 participants in two classroom management courses at a midsized,

southern public university. The participants were teacher candidates enrolled in traditional undergraduate and alternative certification programs.

The researcher met with the teacher candidates one time and administered the survey packet prior to viewing the videos and then, again, immediately after viewing the videos. Participants completed: (1) a demographic questionnaire, (2) the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, (3) the Instrumental Caring Inventory, (4) the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, (5) the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale-Short Form, and (6) a ranking of the four videos they watched (Abuse, Bullying, Inclusion, Racism).

Overall, the teacher candidates' responses to the four video vignettes (Abuse, Bullying, Inclusion, and Racism) indicated that candidates felt that the videos: (1) accurately portrayed real life scenario, (2) helped them empathize with people portrayed in the video, (3) helped them better understand the issues presented in the video, and (4) helped them see the issues presented in a different light. Teacher candidates tended to disagree that their opinions were changed based upon the issues presented in the vignettes. Pretest and posttest data were analyzed and differences were noted between the pre- and posttest with mean scores higher prior to viewing the videos. This suggested that participants' compassion, altruism, empathy, and relativistic appreciation decreased after viewing the videos. The findings of the study suggested that simply showing the diversity videos did not improve dispositions toward diversity. It was determined that different methodologies for use of the videos would be researched.

### **Preservice and Inservice Teachers' Attitudes Toward Multicultural Issues in Tennessee's Public Schools**

Barbara N. Young and Donald Snead, Middle Tennessee State University

The public schools in Tennessee are experiencing an influx of linguistically and culturally diverse students. Many teachers are exhibiting a level of frustration when teaching these students because their personal background and preparation for teaching diverse students are limited. The purpose of this study was to ascertain teachers' multicultural knowledge, cross-cultural perceptions, and attitudes about different cultures as a function of both preservice professional preparation and graduate education curriculum. Accomplishing this goal required the administration of the Multicultural/Diversity Scale-Revised (MCR) at pre/post points.

Data were collected from 90 preservice and 90 inservice teachers. Inquirers used a quantitative descriptive statistical design to analyze these data. Reliability was computed on the instrument, which indicated a .90 index. The data collected in this study indicated a significant difference among preservice students in the category of acceptance for pretest data; however, no significant difference emerged in this category for posttest data. Inquirers surmised that the difference was not present in posttest data because of the instruction administered during the course between pretest and posttest data collection. The researchers suggested that there will be a significant difference between the undergraduate preservice teachers and graduate inservices teachers' perceptions of and attitudes toward cultural issues as they relate to the public school environment. Furthermore, researchers will look at specific data as these data relate to respondents' replies within specific courses.

#### **Session 5.5**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. TECHNOLOGY..... Riverboat**

**Presenter:** Connie D. Bain, University of Alabama

#### **A Study of Preservice Teacher Exposure to Technology in the Field**

Jeff W. Anderson, University of Alabama – Birmingham

This study evaluated the exposure of preservice teachers at a major southeastern university to technology in the classroom during field experience as compared with technology standards for teacher education programs. The study consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data collected from preservice teachers who were involved in their field experience. The study took place over the spring and fall semesters of 2003 and the spring semester of 2004.

Findings included identification of perceived challenges and opportunities for using technology in the classroom, and frequencies and percentages of students reporting the use of technology related to state technology standards. Recommendations included areas for professional development for faculty and opportunities to address technology implementation in area public schools. Results of this study were not generalizable beyond the teacher education program at this university.

#### **School Websites and Teacher Interest: Demographic and Content Differences**

David T. Freeman, University of Southern Mississippi

This study examined the responses of preservice teachers to determine: (1) if a school or school district website would influence the teachers' perceptions of that school or district, (2) if the perception obtained from the website would influence teachers' interest regarding applying for work at the school or district, and (3) if that interest would vary between groups of teachers based on demographic, content areas, and computer efficacy. The sample for the study was undergraduate students completing a teacher education program at a major southeastern teacher training university. The 100+ students completed an online survey that collected demographic, content area, and computer efficacy data. The sample members also provided their reactions to a fictitious school website. A regression analysis was conducted to determine which, if any, of the demographic, content area, or computer efficacy responses could predict reactions to the fictitious school website.

This research was important because school districts need to find cheaper and more effective means to attract the highly qualified teacher required by NCLB. Online recruiting in the private section has produced time and cost savings. Studies from private industry have indicated that websites often provide the first impression for prospective employees and that a poorly functioning and unattractive website reflect negatively upon an organization. School leaders need to know if their web presence has an influence, good or bad, on recruiting efforts.

**Preservice Teacher Training In Technology**

Charles E. Notar, Donna Herring, and Janell Wilson, Jacksonville State University,  
and Judy McEntyrie, State of Georgia Technical Center, Rome, Georgia

The presentation was a report on the results of the second year of a Federal PT3 grant entitled Enhancing Teacher Education through Technology (ET) 2, Dalton, Georgia. The grant involved four school systems and 11 schools, K-6, in West Georgia. The second year, 42 preservice teachers from the University of West Georgia were participants.

The grant trained preservice teachers' technology integration using InTech with a twist. In addition to the InTech training, the students developed their own website for student teaching and after graduation.

Evaluation data were provided from observation of the instruction of students during student teaching by their university supervisors and grant evaluators, LOTI and other self assessment instruments, personal interviews of preservice teachers and their students, and a survey of the preservice teachers and students' parents. Also, all the websites were posted for use by fellow preservice teachers.

**Session 5.7**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING:  
MUSEUMS AND K-16 EDUCATION  
(TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room**

Susan Santoli, Paige V. Baggett, and Edward L. Shaw Jr., University of South Alabama

This training session presented three different partnerships involving public schools, college of education faculty, and museums in Mobile, AL. The first partnership involved the Museum of Mobile and fourth- grade students from an inner-city elementary school. The second partnership involved the Mobile Museum of Art, an art education instructor at the University of South Alabama, and preservice teachers. The third partnership involved the Exploreum of Mobile and a professor of elementary science education at the University of South Alabama and preservice teachers.

The goal of the Museum of Mobile's after-school program (Developing the BIG Picture) is to help selected fourth-grade students strengthen their knowledge of historical events, develop oral and written communication skills, and increase their levels of literacy. The projects and activities complement what the students are learning in social studies and emphasize cross-curricular learning. The Mobile Museum of Art provides university students actual resources and experiences related to art education. Elementary art majors engage in on-site experiences in the education wing of the Museum. In turn, the Museum has the opportunity to make preservice teachers aware of its resources. The evolution of this partnership has led to involving preservice teachers in the teaching of students from the community who visit the museum as part of the summer program and school-year field trips.

The Gulf Coast Exploreum is a regional science center that provides hands-on/minds-on experiences for students of all ages. There are two permanent exhibits and an I-Max theater that shows a variety of movies that typically correspond with the current traveling exhibit. Preservice teachers go to the Exploreum for an orientation and tour and to teach a lesson to a group of elementary students at a later date. These students become the contact persons for their elementary schools when they are hired as teachers upon graduation.

**Session 6.1**

**3:30 P.M.– 4:20 P.M. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** Beth A. Richmond, University of Southern Mississippi

**Processing the "Process": Two Positions on the Worth and Wisdom of Process  
in a Methodological Environment**

Janis P. Hill, Louisiana Tech University, and Jennifer Falls, Louisiana Department of Education

Several eminent educational philosophers and theorists have spoken and written from a process perspective. Most notable among many are John Dewey and Alfred North Whitehead, 20<sup>th</sup>-century contemporaries whose works and words seem particularly familiar in many of the practices and strategies being utilized in today's classrooms. There are some, in fact, who upon a closer revisiting of their educational works, might claim that they were both anachronisms in their time periods. Because many of the practices they advocated are now widely accepted as not only the most appropriate but also the best practice and/or strategy to promote student achievement in the classroom, the premise of this paper was that a careful study of process would offer much wisdom to not only the curriculum theorist but also the classroom teacher.

This paper examined from two perspectives the evolving stages of the process of transformation, looking specifically at two process-driven projects involving classroom teachers engaged in a hands-on analysis of curriculum documents. Using personal journals, anecdotal records, and electronic dialogue, the authors analyzed the tasks, the participants, the environment, and the interaction that occurred throughout all stages of the project. Of particular interest was a comparison-contrast of the following: restrictions as opposed to a lack of boundaries, a director as opposed to a guide, and directed as opposed to emerging. The conclusions of the participants validated the original hypothesis, with unexpected findings emerging from the actual process of exploring the process. Overall, the findings indicated much value in a continued exploration of the benefits of process-driven projects for the classroom teacher.

## **A Reanalysis of the Year One Focus Group Results From a Teacher Education Program Evaluation**

Cindy M. Casebeer and Judy Burry-Stock, University of Alabama

A collection of four focus group interviews with teacher mentors and their first-year teacher mentees at a small, private university in the northeastern United States provided the source of the data for this presentation. Using Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis computer program, the authors were able to provide a means whereby the actual words of program participants could be explored. Participants shared their views of the pitfalls and promises of their technology-rich, inquiry-based teacher education and professional development program. These participants described the teacher education program's web-based innovations and the virtual learning community that allows them to maintain close ties with one another across experience levels and physical locations. They discussed their hopes and their frustrations in their own classrooms and in the teacher education program. These interviews provided a more contextualized view of the program itself, as well as some of the program participants. This enabled the authors to provide a richer, more in-depth report of this teacher education program.

## **A Study of Preservice Teachers' Attitudes Toward Human Rights and Unfair Labor Conditions: A Comparison of the Influence of Two Teaching Methods**

Benicia D'sa, University of Southern Mississippi

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of preservice teachers towards human rights, particularly about human rights related to labor. To assess their attitudes of human rights and unfair labor conditions, two types of presentations, (1) docudrama and discussion and (2) lecture and discussion, were conducted. The researcher evaluated these teaching methods on their efficacy in creating an awareness of human-rights violations and labor conditions. Additionally, the participants were exposed to two types of invitations to engage in human-rights advocacy.

The study involved elementary preservice teachers and secondary preservice teachers typically at the junior undergraduate level. There were 118 participants who attended the treatment and control group and completed the surveys. The study utilized mixed methods, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys addressed general human-rights attitude and advocacy along with attitudes towards labor conditions in the United States and all over the world. Posttest interviews were conducted with six participants to gain additional insights on their attitudes towards human rights and labor conditions. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the scores of participants.

Findings suggested that participants had small gains in knowledge and general attitudes towards human rights after being exposed to the treatments. Interviewees acknowledged poor activism on human-rights issues in the United States and felt that educating their students about these issues when they became teachers might create a change. They emphasized the relationship of knowledge about human-rights abuses to taking action on human-rights issues. This study suggested that if schools and colleges have a role in preparing students for compassionate citizenship in a global economy, then there is a clear need for teacher educators to help develop better informed teachers regarding human rights.

### **Session 6.2**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. COLLEGE STUDENTS..... Levee**

**President:** Olin Adams, Auburn University

### **The Relationship Between Reading Ability and Self-Esteem Among Graduate Students**

Kathleen Collins, University of Arkansas, and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, University of South Florida

Research has suggested that self-perception is a multidimensional construct. For college students, the dimensions of self-concept can be classified as falling into one of two main categories: (1) competencies or abilities (e.g., perceived scholastic competence, perceived job competence), and (2) social relationships (e.g., perceived appearance, perceived social acceptance). Self-perception has been found to play an important role in the college context. In particular, academic-related self concept has been found to predict levels of academic achievement. Moreover, academic-related self concept has been implicated as moderating the relationship among cognitive, demographic, and personality variables and performance in various fields such as foreign language, statistics, and research methods. As such, it is important to determine potential antecedent correlates of academic self-perception.

One potential antecedent of academic self-perception that has received no attention at the college level is reading ability. This is surprising, bearing in mind that levels of reading ability have been found (1) to be extremely variable among both undergraduate and graduate students, and (2) to predict levels of academic performance among both of these groups.

Therefore, the goal of the present study was to investigate the relationship between two components of reading ability (i.e., reading comprehension and reading vocabulary) and three dimensions of academic self-perception (i.e., perceived creativity, perceived intellectual ability, and perceived scholastic competence) among 101 graduate students enrolled in a large university in the eastern United States. Findings revealed a strong multivariate relationship between reading ability and academic self-perception. Implications were discussed.

### **Legal "Cheat Sheets" and Their Relationship to Undergraduate Test Scores**

Lola Aagaard, Ronald Skidmore, and Dean W. Owen, Morehead State University

The purpose of this research was to investigate the attributes of legal "cheat sheets" prepared as study aides and used by students during tests and to determine whether these attributes were related to students' test scores. Students with low academic achievement exhibit a consistent pattern of limited study strategy usage (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002). These students may understand effective organizational skills but typically fail to use them consistently (Wong, 1994).

The participants in this study were 149 undergraduate students enrolled in a course required for entry into the teacher education program at a regional state university in the Mid-South. Students were allowed to make and use legal "cheat sheets" on two of the five tests during the semester. These cheat sheets were collected along with the completed tests by the instructors. The cheat sheets were analyzed for total number of words, use of highlighting or underlining of terms or concepts, use of headings indicating chapters or general topics, breadth of coverage of the material on the test, and whether these attributes related to

students' test scores.

Analysis indicated a positive relationship between test score and word count (A students had the most words on their cheat sheets and F students the least). The use of highlighting or underlining was also related to higher test scores. Some lower scoring students did not make cheat sheets at all.

The relationship between word count and score may reflect the amount of time students spent preparing. Highlighting and underlining may have been indications of increased time spent, but also of an understanding of strategy. Low performing students mirrored the findings of research literature in not taking full advantage of this study strategy and failing to use effective organizational strategies in preparing their cheat sheets.

### **Grade Attainment and Life Orientation**

Ronald Skidmore, Lola Aagaard, and Dean W. Owen, Morehead State University

Research has been equivocal as to an association between optimism and academic performance. Group differences relative to course grade attainment in an academic venue have not been investigated. The purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a reliable group difference in Life Orientation (i.e., dispositional optimism or pessimism) relative to final course grade attainment in a sophomore-level course required for entrance into the Teacher Education Program at a regional state university in the Mid-South.

The Life Orientation Test – Revised (LOT-R) was administered at the beginning of the semester, prior to administration of the first examination, to 107 undergraduate students in a sophomore-level course that is required for entrance to the Teacher Education Program. The LOT-R is a 10-item, Likert-type scale that yields subscales of pessimism and optimism and a total LOT score. All three variables were analyzed for a relationship to final grade in the course. ANOVA revealed significant differences in all three dependent variables across grade levels. Multiple comparisons showed that students attaining an "A" grade for the course were significantly less pessimistic at the beginning of the semester. Further research is necessary to determine whether an optimistic Life Orientation is related to specific study strategies or a result of prior academic success.

### **Session 6.3**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. ACHIEVEMENT (DISPLAYS)..... Mississippi Queen**

#### **Reading Fluency and Comprehension Strategies: A Combination of Successful Interventions**

Stacy L. Bliss and Ashley Williams, University of Tennessee

Students reading below grade-level are a major concern for most educators. Reading interventions are plentiful in the literature; however, the success rate of many of these interventions is unknown. This presentation demonstrated the effectiveness of three different reading interventions. Each of the interventions represented a distinct stage of the reading process (pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading), and resulted in significant gains in reading fluency or comprehension. While all were conducted on an individual basis, each can be adapted for group use.

The first intervention, TELLS, is a previewing strategy that is designed to improve reading comprehension. Results showed an increase in reading comprehension of 20%. Rate of comprehension showed a much larger increase, increasing by over 100%. While rate of comprehension displayed a larger increase, reading comprehension was limited by ceiling effects.

The second intervention, focusing on strategies to be used while reading, used a combination of a checklist and story mapping to increase the reading comprehension of a fifth-grade student using grade-level chapter books. Baseline data indicated that the student read at a low fourth-grade level with a comprehension rate at the low third-grade level. Six weeks after implementation the student increased his reading comprehension to the fourth-grade level, while his reading fluency increased to a high fourth-grade level.

The third intervention, focusing on a post-reading strategy, used a combined intervention consisting of a read-aloud, paired-reading intervention, and assisted-reading intervention to increase the reading fluency of a child reading at or below grade level. Baseline data showed a fluency level between 53 and 60 WCPM. Accuracy rate was at frustration level. Results of the intervention indicated an increase in the child's reading fluency from 59 to 79, which places the student at the mastery level.

#### **Predictors of First-Grade Reading Performance**

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

This study identified variables in the home literacy environment that could be used to predict the reading performance of children at the end of first grade. Reading performance was measured by the Grade Equivalent (GE) score Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) reading test. There were 109 subjects surveyed. Independent variables investigated were: educational levels of mothers and fathers, frequency of reading mothers and fathers engaged with their children, predominant type of reading done by mothers and fathers with their children, socio-economic status, public library membership, and visiting libraries affected reading performance of students.

Multiple regression analyses and one-way ANOVAs showed that the mother's level of education, type of reading done by the father, family income, socio-economic status, and public library membership were significant. This study showed that the father's education level was not significant but the mother's educational level was significant. The frequency of reading the mothers and fathers did with the children was not a significant factor in reading performance. School versus entertainment reading was significant for the father, but not the mother. The socio-economic status of the parents was a significant factor in the child's reading performance: the higher the income level the higher the grade reading level. The last factors, public library membership cards and visiting the public library, were significant.

This study provided insights into home literacy characteristics that can be used to predict a child's reading performance. The results indicated that the home environment sets the tone for lifelong literacy skills. The results can be used to guide the development of future literacy programs that focus on parental involvement. Parent education concerning simple ways they can assist their children's education could ultimately improve their children's literacy skills.

#### **High School Physics Students' Epistemological and Motivational Beliefs About Science**

Meiko Negishi, Anastasia D. Elder, and Taha Mzoughi, Mississippi State University

As part of a larger evaluation, this preliminary study explored high school physics students' beliefs about science, including (1) epistemological beliefs

and (2) motivational beliefs. This study was a part of a larger evaluation project that examined the effectiveness of a three-week summer workshop for high school physics teachers in a southern state, funded through a grant by the Institutions of Higher Learning and the U.S. Department of Education.

Survey questionnaires were administered to a total of 226 students enrolled in high school physics courses at 10 different schools in the beginning of the academic year of 2004-2005. Beliefs about science utilizing a five-point Likert scale was used to measure students' epistemological beliefs such as certainty (6 items, 945; = .66), development (6 items, 945; = .71), authority (5 items, 945; = .76), and reasoning (9 items, 945; = .78). Attitudes toward Science using a five-point Likert scale was used to measure students' motivation in science including efficacy (6 items, 945; = .66), value (6 items, 945; = .86), mastery goals (7 items, 945; = .80), ability (6 items, 945; = .76), and extrinsic (7 items, 945; = .69).

Results showed that the high school physics students had strong epistemological beliefs about science in reasoning ( $M = 4.10$ ) and development ( $M = 4.05$ ). At the same time, they reported least support in the beliefs such as certainty ( $M = 2.25$ ) and authority ( $M = 2.10$ ). Those students were most strongly motivated by value ( $M = 3.78$ ) and mastery goals ( $M = 3.77$ ), but least motivated by extrinsic factors ( $M = 2.63$ ). Further, the high school students in physics courses were fairly motivated by efficacy ( $M = 3.65$ ) and ability ( $M = 3.05$ ). Overall, the findings of this study indicated that the high school physics students had positive attitudes toward learning science.

### **How Do Kindergarteners Express Their Mathematical Understanding?**

Kyoko M. Johns, University of Alabama

The study was conducted to advance understanding of the ways kindergarten students express and represent their understanding of mathematical ideas and knowledge and how a classroom teacher assesses students' mathematical understanding. The goal of this study was to develop an in-depth view about how young children communicate mathematically.

Data were collected from 18 kindergarten students during a four-week period using observation, audiotaping, informal interviews, children's journal writing, individual conferences, and field notes. Of the 18 students (eight females, 10 males) participating in the study, two were African American and 16 were Caucasian. The following research questions guided the inquiry: (1) How do kindergarten students express their mathematical understanding? and (2) How does a kindergarten teacher assess children's mathematical knowledge and ability?

A descriptive analysis was used to determine children's mathematical representations. Each audiotaped lesson and activity was transcribed for further analysis. Informal interview questions addressed students' views, beliefs, attitudes, and thoughts about doing mathematics. Children's journal entries and individual conferences provided information regarding their mathematical understanding and knowledge. Field notes were used to record children's mathematics skills and understanding. The findings of the study revealed how young children communicate and represent mathematically and their positive attitude toward doing mathematics. The kindergartners in this study were successful at communicating mathematically with their peers and with the teacher using their oral and written language. The study has curriculum implications for early childhood teachers on how to incorporate more mathematics activities in daily classroom routines and how to utilize a various assessment methods to help children become mathematically literate.

### **Effects of a Year-Long Discipline Strategy on K-12 Students' Achievement, Social Skills, and Classroom Discipline\*\***

Peter Ross, Mercer University

#### **Session 6.4**

**3:30 P.M.– 4:20 P.M. MENTOR SESSION..... Delta Queen**

#### **Presiders:**

Quisar Sultana, Eastern Kentucky University, and Nola J. Christenberry, Arkansas 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.

#### **Session 6.5**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. LEADERSHIP..... Riverboat**

#### **Presenter:**

Jean D. Krieger, Woodlake Elementary School, St. Tammany Parish (LA) Schools

### **“What Are You Doing On The Balcony?”: The Role of Reflection in Leadership**

Linda J. Searby, University of Alabama – Birmingham

This paper and discussion centered on the reflective practices of aspiring and active school leaders. Heifetz (1994) uses the metaphor of “going from the dance floor to the balcony” when describing reflection. This refers to the act of changing perspectives in the midst of the leadership fray. A school leader must move forward, then pull back and reflect; intervene, then listen; test the waters, then refine the strategy. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) pose a similar metaphor for the reflective practitioner – that of being an actor in the drama, on the one hand, and the critic who sits in the audience watching and analyzing the performance, on the other. Reflection is an intrapersonal behavior, an inward-looking act. However, reflection, a specific type of thinking, should lead to action. Schlechty (1993) has stated that “thinking is the most important act of leadership in a change-oriented environment.” Therefore, the inner life, the thinking life, the reflective life of a school leader is of utmost importance.

This presentation drew upon data from two separate research studies: one that focused on the reflective practices of leaders of stuck and moving schools (principals) and one that investigated the kinds of reflection practiced by aspiring and practicing female school leaders who attended a mentoring conference. The presentation highlighted the reflective practice of an outstanding leader of a “moving” school and showed how his personal reflection translated into effective leadership skills. It highlighted the reflections of women school leaders who were asked to journal their thoughts about entering into mentoring

relationships to enhance their leadership abilities. As the two studies were compared, the author emphasized the benefits of reflection and the impact that quality reflective time can have on one's developing leadership skills. Implications for administrator preparation programs were also discussed.

### **Knowledge for Action: A Guide to Overcoming Problems of Leadership**

Abraham A. Andero, Mississippi State University – Meridian, and Bettie Jimerson, Robert C. H. High School

Societal pressures from many sources and directions, representing a host of growing issues, are challenging administration personnel. A school superintendent must take the initiative in developing curricula that will be accountable to these needs. Several leadership approaches have been used in education. A functional approach was recommended for instructional improvement today. With this in mind, a respected school leader will employ skill in group facilitation, in recognizing and defining group needs, and in encouraging emerging leadership among group members. This type of leadership is flexible and varies with every problem situation. School leaders must be able to recognize a situation openly, search for alternatives, and cope effectively. A school leader needs to help organizational members develop and implement goals. Well-developed goals help an organization to sharpen its decision making and challenge it to do more and do it better. The measure of an organization's success is determined by the extent to which it sets goals and develops plans for their attainment.

A successful school leader should delegate wisely and effectively. She should delegate when tasks can be done, as well or better by staff members, helping them grow professionally in the process. She should make effective use of teamwork, giving members opportunities to participate in problem solving, always recognizing and rewarding them for successful accomplishment. A school leader should foster a humanizing working climate. This climate is characterized by such qualities as openness, appreciation, caring, kindness, positive enthusiasm, sensitivity, self-discipline, and empathy. All people are treated as unique persons who have a potentiality for making a positive contribution to the growth and improvement of others and of the organization. A school leader should motivate her followers by recognizing them and showing faith and trust in them. A successful school leader is a change agent. She should work with others to direct change in children and youth for coping with the world of the future.

### **Where Should Levine's "Educating School Leaders" Be Taking Us?\***

John J. Marshak and Jerry A. Rice, State University of New York –Cortland

#### **Session 6.6**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. WRITING GRANT PROPOSALS (TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room**

John R. Petry, University of Memphis

The session emphasized the following: (1) sources of grant and project funding (local, state, and federal); (2) initiating activities: statement of need, personnel concerns, contract issues, ethical issues, work/task analysis, costing, scheduling, and network analysis; (3) project management budgeting, meeting deadlines, resource changes, reviews and reports, and evaluation procedures; and (4) deliverables (product and reports). Knowledge bases and skill requirements cited were: (1) teamwork, (2) critical thinking, (3) problem solving, (4) professional responsibility, (5) values, (6) time management, and (7) best professional practices. Emerging computer applications were discussed, including university electronic services for grant seekers. Websites were contacted for information. Participants spent time in imagining an educational need, submitting a short proposal to a funding agency to create a project to meet a need and manage the project, noting deficiencies in design, discrepancies in meeting goals, and success in the achievement of objectives.





# Thursday

# 2005

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**\*\* Where there is a paper and a name but no abstract, the abstract is missing. Please send the abstract to Lorraine Allen, [lallen@memphis.edu](mailto:lallen@memphis.edu).**

## Session 7.1

9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. ENGLISH EDUCATION..... Bayou

**President:** Stacy L. Bliss, University of Tennessee , Knoxville

### Issues in Southern Adult ESL Classrooms

Li-Ching Hung and Lishu Yin , Mississippi State University

According to the U.S. Census Bureau Report (2001), more than 35 million immigrants living in the United States stated that their native language was not English. The growth of industries such as fish farming and car manufacturing has brought in a large number of immigrants to the southern states. Many issues related to Adult English as a Second Language programs have started to catch the attention of educators and the community at large.

This paper addressed the following critical issues: (1) The diverse needs of students are not met at the individual level. Some need advanced English skills to improve their lives, while others need English to function on a daily basis. (2) Instructors are not equipped to help students ease the transition from their own culture to the dominant one. According to McCroarty (1993), cultural expectations of students directly influence their participation in the language classroom. Thus, it is essential for teachers to be aware of any cultural differences while developing the curriculum or lesson plan. (3) Instructors are not aware of students' diverse learning motivation caused by learners' different educational backgrounds and proficiency levels. The students' motivation has an impact on the process of the acquisition of a new language. Understanding the motivation of students can help teachers employ different teaching strategies to get all students involved.

Constructive suggestions regarding the issues were also given in this paper. Most important, this paper provided teachers with a better understanding of the students they work with. For example, students from Asian countries are used to the teacher-dominant learning environment, so when they first enter an American classroom, it can be very challenging for them to adjust to the new teaching methods such as role playing and group discussion.

### The Impact of School Reform Design, ESOL Instruction, and SES on ESOL Students' Reading Achievement

Cristina P. Valentino, University of North Florida

The purpose of this doctoral dissertation study was to examine how school reform design, ESOL instruction, and socio-economic status impacted the academic achievement of ESOL students in grade 2. Gains in lexile scores on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) were used to measure one aspect of academic achievement, namely, general reading ability. The primary research question was: To what extent can gains in lexile scores on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) be explained by the independent variable set of school reform design (America's Choice/Direct Instruction), ESOL instruction (ESOL instruction/no ESOL instruction), and socio-economic status (free and reduced lunch/no free lunch)? Participants were 204 ESOL students enrolled in grade 2 in Duval County Public Schools during the 2003-2004 academic year, including 53 in Direct Instruction and 151 in America's Choice school reform designs; 151 receiving free and reduced lunch and 53 paying full fee for lunch; and 139 receiving ESOL instruction and 65 receiving no ESOL instruction.

Findings indicated that students in the Direct Instruction school reform design had greater gains in the SRI than students in the America's Choice design. Socio-economic status and ESOL instruction were not statistically significant predictors of academic achievement. Further, there were no statistically significant interactions among any of the predictor variables: between school reform design and ESOL instruction, between school reform design and socio-economic status, between socio-economic status and ESOL instruction, or among school reform design, socio-economic status, and ESOL instruction.

### The Transformation of Mainstream Teachers into ESL Mentors

Susan K. Spezzini and Julia S. Austin, University of Alabama – Birmingham

Through a school/university partnership, a site-based ESL certification program was provided to mainstream teachers in a large county system that was serving increasingly larger numbers of English language learners (ELLs). Although initially challenged by shifting paradigms, these teachers became empowered through self-accountability in distance learning groups. Armed with vested interests from their own action research, they began disseminating information about their own experiences, became advocates for ELLs and their families, and gradually transformed into ESL mentors. As documented by the research literature on mentoring, their transformation evolved as a constructivist practice through awareness, engagement, monitoring, reflection, personal strengths, and reciprocal

learning. The data collected included a questionnaire and mentoring stories. All 44 completers in the first two cohorts responded to the questionnaire during their 5th ESL certification course (Spring 2004 or 2005) and wrote mentoring stories during their 7th and final course. This questionnaire was developed from research literature on mentoring, site-based professional development, and ESL best practices. Content validity was established by basing items directly on research literature and having items reviewed by a panel of experts. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and qualitative data using content analysis.

When before-program entry was compared to the program's 4th semester, self-reported results indicated the following changes: sharing ESL best practices with colleagues, from 70% rarely/never to 86% daily/weekly; length of interactions, from 84% five minutes or less to 95% 15 minutes or more; giving ESL presentations at faculty meetings, from 84% never to 68% at least once; and giving presentations at ESL parent meetings, from 93% never to 48% at least once. Although no pre-assessment was given, the changes reported by the teachers themselves suggested that the intervention, a site-based ESL certification program via a school-university partnership, was the major catalyst for their transformation into ESL mentors.

## **Session 7.2**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION..... Levee**

**Presenter:** Scott W. Snyder, University of Alabama – Birmingham

### **The Relationship Between Eighth-Grade Students' NAEP Mathematics Scores and Their Fathers' Educational Attainment**

Beverly M. Klecker, Morehead State University

Educational researchers have long been aware of the pitfalls of correlational studies; still the methodology continues to be useful and popular. The No Child Left Behind Act requires the disaggregation of accountability test data by socio-economic status (SES). This SES variable has been found to be moderately to highly positively correlated with the educational attainment of students' fathers. This paper presented secondary analyses of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) National Public School data for the years 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2003 exploring the relationship between students' eighth-grade mathematics scores and their fathers' educational attainment.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has, since 1969, been the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know in various subject areas. Demographic and questionnaire data were collected as the NAEP was administered. Considerable research literature was found on the relationship between paternal educational level and (1) student achievement (e.g., Anglum, 1990; DeBaz, 1994; McCarlin & Meyer, 1988; Mungai, 2002) and (2) student mathematical achievement (e.g., Campbell, 1999; Downer-Assaf, 1995; Fagan & Inglessias, 1999; Illinois Mathematics & Science Academy, 2001). NAEP eighth-grade mathematics average scale scores were examined through secondary data analyses.

Students' responses to the question "How far in school did your father go?" were categorized: "Did not finish H.S.," "Graduated H.S.," "Some education after H.S.," "Graduated college," and "I don't know." The percentage of students responding "I don't know" ranged from 20% (1990) to 26% (2000). The students' average scale scores on the NAEP consistently increased as fathers' educational level increased. The statistical significance of the differences (alpha set a priori to .01) was consistent across years (measured by ANOVAs). The strongest effect sizes (Cohen's *d*) were between "Did not finish H.S." and "Graduated college" (median across years  $d=.72$ ).

### **An Exploration into Issues of Identity and Power in Mathematics Classrooms: Reflecting on Classic Research**

Lynn L. Hodge, University of Alabama

In this paper, the author illustrated how issues of equity in the form of identity and power may play out in mathematics classrooms. This understanding of how the dynamics of equity emerge and move through the mathematics classroom has implications for how educators and researchers approach efforts to promote more equitable teaching practices (Nasir & Cobb, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Overall, the author delineated an orientation on the mathematics classroom that took into account status and power and reveals the non-neutral and value-laden nature of the teaching and learning of mathematics. In order to accomplish this, the author drew on equity research, including many studies that are considered classics in the field, to offer illustrations and relevant issues. The author focused specifically on the idea of identity as a relational construct, issues of discourse that contribute and delimit students' induction into mathematical literacy, and the process of silencing. It was in this discussion of specific issues that the idea of a third space (Gutierrez et al., 1999) that transcends the dichotomy between the official narratives and counter narratives of the classroom becomes particularly relevant to mathematics education.

### **Attitudes Toward Mathematics: Are Sex and Math Anxiety Important?**

Martha Tapia, Berry College, and George E. Marsh II, University of Alabama

It is indisputable that males have higher achievement in mathematics and higher levels of enrollment in mathematics courses, but whether these results are caused by socialization factors or innate differences has been a matter of dispute. Attitudes play an important role in achievement and persistence in mathematics courses. The development of positive attitude toward a subject is one of the most prevalent educational goals. While attitudes are important, there is a paucity of research about the different factors that influence the attitudes toward mathematics. The effects of gender and mathematics anxiety on attitudes toward mathematics were examined with the Attitudes toward Mathematics Inventory (ATMI). A sample of 210 students enrolled in mathematics classes at a private liberal arts college completed the ATMI and provided their gender and level of math anxiety.

Data were analyzed using a multivariate factorial model with four factors as dependent variables (self-confidence, value, motivation, and enjoyment of mathematics) and two independent variables (gender and mathematics anxiety). The interaction of math anxiety and gender was not significant. There was a significant effect of gender on value with small effect size with males scoring higher than females. There was a significant effect of math anxiety with large effect size on self-confidence, enjoyment, and motivation and with medium effect size on value. Students with no math anxiety scored significantly higher than all other students in self-confidence, enjoyment, and motivation and significantly higher than students with some or a great deal of math anxiety in value. Students with little math anxiety scored significantly higher than more anxious students in self-confidence, value, and enjoyment and higher than students with a great deal of math anxiety in motivation. Students with some math anxiety scored significantly higher than students with a great deal of math anxiety in all four factors.

## **Session 7.3**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... Mississippi Queen**

**Presenter:** A. J. Guarino, Auburn University

**More Power to You? Not with Unbalanced Designs!**

David Morse, Mississippi State University

Statistics texts frequently recommend that statistical power (for hypothesis testing) and precision (for estimates of parameters) should be considered a necessary part of planning a study. However, not many address the impact on power arising from unbalanced designs. This study summarized Monte Carlo simulations varying total N, effect size, proportion of cases in each treatment group, and population variances. For each combination of conditions 25,000 replications were run, and resultant empirical power levels at the .01, .05 and .10 alpha levels were recorded. Results indicated that when group sample sizes are sharply unequal, statistical power may vary by up to 40 points or more from the levels noted for equal sample sizes. Very small total N values showed power differences across all effect sizes, whereas with large N values, the differences tended to be smaller except for the medium-to-small effect size values. When separate-sample test statistics were used (e.g., Welch t for two-group case), sometimes power was better for sharply unequal group sizes than for equal group sizes when total N was small and effect sizes were small to medium. In some instances, the separate-sample test statistics had superior power to the pooled-sample test statistics even when population variances were equal. In general, equal or near-equal sample sizes yield better power for null hypothesis testing than unequal sample sizes. When sample sizes are not equal, sometimes the harmonic mean of sample sizes could serve to yield realistic forecasts of power, but conditions were noted in which the harmonic mean n would systematically misrepresent power. Researchers should plan appropriately for studies, especially when independent variables are not manipulated so that the desired level of power can be attained. These findings suggested that reliance on total N or generic "rules of thumb" can yield power levels much different than anticipated.

**Can You Trust Education and Other "Science-Based" Publications?**

Charles M. Achilles, Seton Hall University

**The "Success Case Method": A New Approach for Educational Researchers to Use to Draw Causal Inferences?**

James P. Van Haneghan, University of South Alabama

Scriven (2004) suggests the "Success Case Method" (SCM) was developed by Brinkerhoff (2003) as a research approach that allows for causal inference. The goal of this presentation was to discuss the viability of the SCM as a formal technique for doing applied educational research. The SCM involves evaluating an intervention by gathering data on success cases and failure cases. Success cases are then analyzed in detail to rule out alternative causes. Hence, the technique requires thinking through the mechanisms of an intervention, and assessing plausible alternative causes that could account for success. For instance, in evaluating a school program, one would have to rule out teacher effects, test preparation effects, other interventions, and other factors. Failure cases are analyzed to provide formative feedback to help improve the program as are success cases. Brinkerhoff discusses SCM as a "quick and dirty" evaluation method. Most of his examples involve analyzing corporate programs.

The author described several additions to the success case method designed to make it a more viable applied research method. One addition was an expanded list of alternative causes for educational interventions that can be applied to most interventions. Second, educational scientists need to develop more detailed process models of interventions. This would allow individuals using the SCM method to determine the "footprints" of particular kinds of interventions. Third, since the SCM method usually involves sampling success cases, methods for ascertaining the causes of success for unsampled cases need to be developed. Finally, the integration of SCM with other approaches was discussed. SCM, when combined with quasi-experimental designs, could be a powerful combination when randomized clinical trials are not available. Most tools for developing the SCM methodology are already available. Linking these tools to the SCM could help educational researchers develop a powerful methodology

**Session 7.4**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. READING..... Delta Queen**

**Presenter:** Patrick N. Kariuki, Milligan College

**The Relationship of Oral Language Development and Socio-Economic Status to Mississippi Curriculum Test Reading Comprehension Scores in High and Low Achievement Schools**

Beth A. Richmond, Kristen Pittman, and Tania Hanna, University of Southern Mississippi

With the advent of high stakes testing mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, teachers are held accountable for the results of their students' scores on annual achievement tests. The purpose of this study was to explore the demographic and language differences between students in Mississippi Level 1 and Level 5 Schools and to investigate the relationship of those variables to reading comprehension scores on the Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT).

Methods employed by this study involved determining the oral language development of students on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and obtaining reading comprehension scores from the Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT). PPVTs were administered to third-grade students in both Level 1 and Level 5 achievement schools. School demographics that indicated the socio-economic status of students were investigated.

Results were obtained using SPSS statistical analysis of the PPVT scores and the reading comprehension scores on the MCT. Results indicated a significant positive correlation between PPVT scores and reading comprehension scores for both groups. Analysis of variance indicated that PPVT scores were significantly lower at the Level 1 school as were reading comprehension levels.

It was concluded that students from Level 1 schools have lower socio-economic levels and less developed language skills than those students from Level 5 schools resulting in lower reading comprehension scores. Findings indicated that teachers from Level 1 schools must provide language interventions, as well as intensive systematic reading instruction, to attempt to reach the same levels of success as those teachers from Level 5 schools. The findings also raised the question of the equity of evaluating teachers from Level 1 and Level 5 schools on the same metric, as variables apart from instruction cannot be assumed to be

equal in the different levels of schools.

### **Reading Intervention Preferences for Second-Grade Students**

Kristi W. Campbell and Michael D. Mong, Mississippi State University

Repeated Reading (RR) and Listening Passage Preview (LPP) are two reading interventions that have been found to be effective according to empirical evidence. However, to date, there has been no research evaluating children's preference of either of the interventions. The purpose of the present study was to examine elementary school children's preference of RR and LPP interventions.

A sample of 52 students from an elementary school participated in this study. There were more female participants (n = 31, 60%) than male participants (n = 21, 40%); in addition, approximately 54% (n = 28) were African American, while the remainder reported Caucasian (37%, n = 19), Asian (6%, n = 3), Indian (2%, n = 1), and Pakistani (2%, n = 1). All of the participants were second-grade students. Most of the students were eight years of age (n = 33, 63%), with a mean age of 8.3 years. Thirty-three percent were seven years old; 4% (n = 2) were 9 years old.

Children were taken out of the classroom one at a time for an average of 10 minutes. After arriving at the specified location, children completed either the repeated reading intervention or the listening passage preview intervention. Once the reading interventions were completed, the children were given the child preference reading survey. After the survey was completed, children were taken back to their classrooms.

Statistical analyses were performed to answer two research questions: (1) How acceptable is reading to second-graders? and (2) Which intervention, repeated reading or listening passage preview, is preferred? Tentative conclusions were drawn, and attempts to verify conclusions included reexamination of relevant data sources. The findings of the study suggested implications for classroom practice and teacher educators.

### **Teaching Boys to Read: A Review of the Literature**

Rebecca M. Giles and Andrea M. Kent, University of South Alabama

Learning to read is a child's most significant academic accomplishment. Reading is a vital skill that provides the foundation for future success, both throughout school and life. Reading ability, as well as the desire to read, varies greatly among different groups of children, including boys and girls. Research consistently reports that young male readers lag behind their female peers in reading achievement. There is no consensus, despite several possible theories, regarding the reasons why such a gap exists. The articles in this paper were reviewed in an attempt to clearly identify the issues surrounding the literacy differences observed in boys and girls and to fully examine the approaches being employed to address these issues.

The wealth of current information related to the reading needs of school-aged boys leaves no doubt that parents, teachers, librarians, and even children's authors, are now more aware of gender-specific literacy concerns than they were five years earlier. While several strategies, such as the incorporation of technology, a broader acceptance of reading material, and an increased number of male reading role models, are being used, research regarding the effectiveness of any one strategy is lacking. Further, the exact age range at which a difference between the reading ability and motivation of boys and girls occurs has not yet been established through sufficient research. Although boys' literacy needs is a topic rich in emotional support, there is a great need for substantial research to further investigate the role of gender in learning to read, reading ability, and motivation to read.

#### **Session 7.5**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. PRINCIPALSHIP..... Riverboat**

**President:** Kathleen T. Campbell, Southeastern Louisiana University

#### **Pressure Cooker: Why Do You Want to Get in With Us?**

Jean D. Krieger, Woodlake Elementary School, St. Tammany Parish (LA) Schools

Because of the demands of today's accountability regarding student achievement, it is extremely important that school principals be dedicated to the task of ensuring that the needs of all students are met, regardless of "subgroup" classification, funding from the local school office, or lack of parental support and involvement. With all of the demands placed on school administrators, why are enthusiastic, motivated teachers still choosing to become school principals? This report provided a peek into the reasons aspiring principals are choosing to become school leaders and why veteran principals stay on the job. Aspiring principals in the southeastern region of the country were questioned about their reasons for seeking principalship positions and their expectations upon becoming principals in this age of increased accountability. Veteran principals in the same region were asked what keeps them on the job, motivated, and supported as they work to help their students achieve the highest level of performance possible. Findings provided catalysts for further study.

#### **From Behind the Mask: Principals' Perceptions of Implementing Section 504**

Camilla Sims-Stambaugh, University of North Florida

As a greater number of students and their parents request Section 504 services, K-12 public schools are expected to provide services. Public school principals have indicated that providing special needs education is a challenge that they feel unprepared to manage.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand school principals' perceptions of Section 504 implementation by identifying, describing, and documenting principal routines in overseeing the civil rights law. Participants for the in-depth, semi-structured interviews were 18 principals of elementary and secondary schools in the southeastern United States.

The primary research question was: "How do principals understand their experiences in implementing Section 504?" Further questions focused on principals' knowledge of the mandate, their dispositions that either enhanced or marginalized their responses, and their behaviors or actions in managing the regulations.

The qualitative analysis of the data included the use of related literature concepts such as worker behavior within social service environments and the dramaturgical elements within social settings. Inductive analysis generated themes of demands, constraints, and choices within principals' experiences of Section

504 implementation.

Findings indicated that principals cared about their students while managing all-consuming work loads. Principals lacked sufficient knowledge and expertise regarding compliance regulations. Because of legal aspects, principals felt apprehensive and avoided involvement. They had difficulty in supervising staff implementing Section 504 plans, they typically had no formal child-find process in place, and they frequently allowed staff to use discretion in deciding student eligibility.

Implications for further research surfaced. The principals' perspective on implementing Section 504 services provided only a partial view of the complex issues attendant on effective implementation of services. Perceptions of teachers, school counselors, parents, and students could further enrich the literature in regard to the Section 504 implementation in the K-12 public school setting.

### The Changing Role of Principal: From Colonial Inspection to Modern Supervision

Abraham A. Andero, Mississippi State University-Meridian, and Bettie Jimerson, Robert C.H. High School

Supervision of instruction has changed greatly over the years from the inspection of teachers to democratic leadership. The relationship of the modern supervisor to the teaching staff should be that of an instructional leader. The principal coordinates and facilitates the work of teachers in an effort to improve the learning of pupils and the work of the school. The principal works to bring about coordination of the total program of education within the system. The principal seeks to draw many people and groups into educational planning and action, and assists the staff identifying, diagnosing, and solving problems. The principal facilitates the sharing of ideas, makes available new knowledge resulting from research, mobilizes resources and encourages the wise use of them, and assists in the continuous professional growth of the entire staff. Realizing that her/his own professional growth is as important as that of staff members, the principal leads the staff in a constant search for better and more effective ways of doing their jobs, believing always that no best ways have yet been found.

Principals today work in such a way as to discover and develop leadership abilities in all their co-workers of both lay and professional groups. They try to establish a professional attitude wherein teachers feel secure in changing an attitude or a technique. Principals are patient, friendly, cheerful and understanding. They like people and are enthusiastic about potentiality for improving the quality of education through their leadership.

The role that has been described here for the principal in the educational team is a large one, but a professional one. Principals today will enthusiastically accept this leadership challenge for making teaching and learning better for future students.

#### Session 7.6

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. MAKING PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS: TIPS, TRICKS, AND WORDS TO THE WISE (TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room**

Jane Nell Luster, National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring, and Scott Bauer, George Mason University

MSERA has traditionally been a wellspring of knowledge for novice researchers, graduate students, and new faculty alike. Each year, MSERA proudly sponsors sessions on publishing, job seeking, and a bewildering assortment of research methods. Yet, in recent years at least, an important skill area has been neglected: making presentations at research meetings. This training session was designed to remedy this situation by offering guidance on how to make presentations at meetings like MSERA and AERA. Specifically, two (much too seasoned) veterans of educational research meetings first demonstrated in graphic detail how NOT to present one's brilliant research findings in 14 minutes or less, highlighting many of the all-too-often distracting misuses of handouts, overhead projectors, and video-display technologies.

No expense was spared in simulating the kinds of presentations that leave audiences shaking their heads in dismay and pondering how such seemingly skilled scholars could imagine that they are communicating with members of their species. Second, the authors provided guidelines on preparing, practicing, and presenting research findings, including the Top Ten checklist for designing effective presentations. The authors also discussed the variety of formats available at meetings, including what to expect at national meetings like AERA. Though the authors strove to practice what they preached in conducting this training session (hence it is both entertaining and at least slightly humorous), the material presented was of a very serious nature. However elegant and technically proficient the research, authors are judged at meetings by their ability to communicate effectively and efficiently. Job seekers, novice scholars, and veterans may benefit from this material.

#### Session 8.1

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** Jimmy D. Lindsey, Southern University – Baton Rouge

#### Functional Hearing Inventory: Research Update

Pamela M. Broadston, University of Arkansas - Little Rock; Robert L. Kennedy, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; and Roseanna Davidson, Texas Tech University

Hearing plays a critical role in the total development of human beings, so a hearing loss can have a serious impact on that development. However, there is a lack of functional hearing screening/assessment instruments to evaluate such a loss, that are comprehensive, can be used across ages, are designed to assess children's hearing within their natural environment, and have been investigated for evidence of reliability and validity. Because this type of assessment instrument is necessary for program planning, there is a need for such an instrument for deafblind children. The Functional Hearing Inventory (FHI) was developed to meet this need.

The purpose of this study was to obtain evidence of the validity and reliability of the interpretation of the results of the FHI. In particular, criterion-related validity for the FHI was investigated by correlating it with teachers' and parents' ratings. Interrater reliability of the FHI was studied through the correlation of the FHI ratings by two trained evaluators. Participants for the research must have been reported as children with deafblindness on the Federal Deafblind Census, and must be between the ages of zero and 26. Because of the low incidence of deafblindness in the population, the researcher selected a purposeful sample of 31 subjects.

Descriptive assessment included frequency counts, percentages, and bar charts to illustrate the aggregate responses from the participants. Cohen's kappa was used to determine interrater reliability. For criterion validity, the FHI ratings were recoded as 0 to indicate no response; 1 for the lower three levels

(awareness/reflexive, attention/alerting, and localization; and 2 for the higher three levels (discrimination, recognition, and comprehension). These three levels were considered to be comparable to the teachers and parents indicating a 0 for no response, 1 for a physical response, and 2 for a discriminating response.

### **A Cognitive-Anatomic Study of Dyslexia Subtypes**

Janet N. Zadina, Tulane University - Health Sciences Center

Developmental dyslexia, the most common kind of learning disability, is defined as a reading disorder, although multiple cognitive-motor processes are involved. These processes may vary across individuals. Thus, subgroups may exist with deficits in some cognitive operations and relative sparing of others. Investigators have found that dyslexics have anomalous anatomy of speech-language areas. These results have not been replicated in all studies, perhaps because reading involves several processes and dyslexia may be a heterogeneous disorder comprised of subtypes. Understanding the neural basis of dyslexia subtypes may lead to clearer definitions, clinical characteristics, and earlier detection and treatment.

The underlying question in this study was: Do behavioral subtypes of dyslexia exist and do neuroanatomical features dissociate these subtypes? This study investigated: (1) cognitive/ behavioral, (2) anatomical, and (3) behavioral-anatomic relationships. Dyslexics (n=16) and controls (n=16), matched for age, education, sex, and handedness, were compared on neuropsychological measures of intelligence and language. Brain regions (prefrontal and occipital lobes, hemisphere volume) were measured on volumetric MRI scans. Five subgroups were identified: two control groups (weak phonological and strict) and three dyslexic groups (phonological deficit dyslexia, non-phonological deficit, and global deficit dyslexics). These subgroups differed on all cognitive/behavioral measures ( $p < .001$ ) with a correlation ( $p < .001$ ) between measures of IQ and phonology.

Significant group differences were found in lobar volumes ( $p = .018$ ) with prefrontal ( $p = .003$ ) and superior prefrontal regions ( $p = .004$ ) larger in dyslexics. Subgroups differed significantly ( $p = .043$ ) on asymmetry patterns, with the phonological deficit groups having atypical lobar asymmetries. A significant relationship existed between left occipital volume and performance on the word identification test ( $p = .045$ ). These results may help explain conflicting findings in earlier studies that did not subdivide groups and support the notion that dyslexia is a heterogeneous disorder with anomalous frontal and occipital anatomy.

### **Students with Dyslexia: The Underserved and Left Behind Population**

Beth A. Richmond, Ellen Ramp, and Carla Dearman, University of Southern Mississippi

The position of the researchers is that students with dyslexia are underserved in the Mississippi Public School System. Although dyslexia is specifically included in the Specific Learning Disability (SLD) definition of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students with dyslexia are provided services under a separate, unique program separate from the IDEA in Mississippi. As Mississippi is one of only four states addressing dyslexia under a separate program, this approach seems to be commendable and allows for more students to be served; however, it was the position of this paper that by removing students with dyslexia from the protections and funding of the IDEA, students may be served insufficiently or ineffectively with services varying greatly from district to district. This position paper elucidated the current definition of dyslexia, the IDEA definition, and the history of dyslexia programs in Mississippi. A review of the literature supported the need for intensive intervention for students with dyslexia. The current dyslexia programs, the methods of identification, teacher preparation programs, and the various intervention models were reviewed. Implications for improving programs were developed, and a plan of action was proposed.

#### **Session 8.2**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. TECHNOLOGY..... Levee**

**President:** Linda F. Cornelious, Mississippi State University

#### **Leading the Technology Thrust: Integration or Illusion?**

Lawrence Leonard and Pauline Leonard, Louisiana Tech University

There is expanding recognition that formal leadership plays a pivotal, albeit largely indirect, role in student achievement (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Walstrom, 2004; Peterson & Cosner, 2005). There is also substantial and increasing evidence that such school contextual factors as culture, mission and goals, instructional practices, and accountability mechanisms can have a dramatic impact upon school success (Fullan, 2005). One of the more recently evolving contextual factors that continues to be particularly problematic is that of authentic technology integration in the teaching and learning process. School districts nationwide continue to spend billions of dollars annually on various forms of technology equipment and services. Despite the widespread expectation that teachers routinely integrate technology into the curriculum to facilitate student achievement, there is substantial evidence that it is not occurring in the manner or degree desirable.

This combined quantitative and qualitative study examined the extent that computer-related technology is used in 12 school districts in northern Louisiana from the perspectives of 214 site-based administrators in 149 schools. The findings suggested that technology integration remains a serious concern in that many teachers seem unwilling or unable to incorporate computer-related technology into the teaching and learning process. Even with appropriate teacher technology-use preparation and dispositions, the principals and assistant principals were concerned about inadequate technology resourcing. Respondents reported that there were recurring problems with computer and software currency, equipment maintenance, and teacher training. Problems were considered to be more serious in smaller, rural schools and school districts, primarily as a consequence of inadequate district support and persisting problems with sufficient Internet connectivity. Furthermore - and perhaps the most disturbing revelation from this research - the data revealed that many school administrators consider themselves to be ill-prepared to assume the role of technology leader. The implications of these and other findings for school improvement were discussed.

#### **The Role of Educational Technology Professionals in Arkansas Schools**

William Brescia, University of Arkansas

This study surveyed school administrators and sought to identify congruencies and mismatches based on demographic characteristics. The job description of the ETEC professional in education has encompassed tasks as varied as leading the educational technology efforts for an entire building to changing the ink cartridge for a teacher who cannot figure out why the printer will not work. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has for over a decade sought to implement specific guidelines for the use of technology in the classroom and provide guidance to school systems on the most efficacious use of

technology.

Educational Technology professionals in Arkansas Schools serve in an uncertain and in some cases perplexing situation. The state of Arkansas does not have a uniform way of classifying educational technology professionals in schools. Educational Technology professionals fill a multi-faceted scope of tasks and means different things in different school systems. There continues to be an ongoing concern about the wide variety of confusing job descriptions for these positions. The lead Educational Technology professionals are referred to as sometimes the Director, sometimes the Coordinator, and sometimes a classroom teacher.

This research sought to identify existing perceptions by school building administrators about the role of Educational Technology professionals in their schools. The goal of this inquiry was to identify the perceived role of an education technologist in the schools and provide the researchers and practitioners with information that might lead to a more unified and rational approach to this important position. The objective of this research project was to identify perceptions of building administrators about the roles and responsibilities of the educational technology professionals in their buildings.

### **Perspective Analysis of the Current Abilities of Alabama School Leaders to Provide Technology Leadership in Schools and School Districts**

Feng Sun, University of Alabama – Birmingham

With the award of Bill and Melinda Gates State Challenge Grant for Leadership Development, the Alabama State Department of Education was interested in getting a clear perspective regarding the current abilities of school leaders to provide technology leadership in schools and school districts. All of the attendees of district superintendents and school principals to the Alabama Renaissance Technology Academy for School Leaders training workshop took the Renaissance survey for school leaders online. Approximately 836 public and private principals and superintendents in Alabama have gone through this training from year of 2002 to 2004. The survey was posted on the Profiler PT3 web server (<http://profiler.pt3.org>). All of these school leaders used the assigned login name and password to access this survey. The survey was composed based on the five factors regarding school leaders' perspectives of providing technology leadership role in their school districts and schools and Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA): (1) a vision for technology, (2) staff development, (3) encouraging instructional integration of technology, (4) infrastructure for technology, and (5) using technology. Twenty-seven questions were asked in the survey to cover the above five factors; another five questions were included for demographic information. The response to each question has four choices of beginning, intermediate, advanced, and mentoring denoting the levels of implementation related to the leadership role of technology in their schools and districts. The three years of data showed a great growth in the technology leadership skills, especially the quality job-embedded staff development, as measured by Alabama's Technology Survey for School Leaders.

#### **Session 8.3**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. CURRENT ISSUES (DISPLAYS)..... Mississippi Queen**

#### **Alternative Public School Students: A Comparison of Attitudes and Behaviors Across Time and with Peers**

Angela L. White, Jason L. Houston, Leanne Whiteside Mansell, and Mark Edwards,  
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and Carol Lee, Child Development, Inc.

Alternative school settings are used by many school districts throughout our nation. The students are usually sent there as an alternative to dismissal from school and to prevent the student from dropping out of high school. The rise of public awareness of school's academic achievement heightens the stress on schools to sustain students through graduation. Alternative schools are often used to give students a chance to fulfill requirements to either graduate or as remediation with the goal of reintegration back into the school settings. While it is clear that students attending alternative school differ from their peers that do not, it is not clear the extent to which these differences are behavioral, attitudinal, or personality traits.

This study examined rural students who were assigned to an alternative school (N = 48) and students in their public school of origin (N = 61). The study investigated the extent to which these groups of students differ in their attitudes related to conflict and self esteem, their level of aggression and their self-reported risky behaviors. The scales used in this study were Modified Aggression Scale, Attitude toward Conflict, Rosenberg Self Esteem, and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Comparisons were made between student's attitudes three times during the year in which intervention activities were conducted and with peers at the end of the school year. Across-time comparisons investigated the impact of intervention and across-group comparisons investigated the similarity of attitudes held by the two groups of students. Modified implementation of the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) program was the key component of the intervention activities.

Preliminary findings suggested important differences between students assigned to alternative school and comparable peers. Evidence of the positive impact of the ART program was mixed. The results were useful in understanding the impact of interventions focused on students attending alternative schools.

#### **Transportation Policies and Practices in University Athletic Departments in the U.S.**

David LaVetter, Arkansas State University

Transportation of college athletes may be one of the most overlooked risk management issues facing intercollegiate athletics administrators. These accidents have caused death, injury, liability claims, property loss, and grief to the traveling teams, their families, and the institution. In February 2004, a 15-passenger van carrying a basketball team was hit by a semi-truck in Texas resulting in two deaths and others being seriously injured. Fifteen-passenger vans have been shown to be more risky than charter buses. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration cautioned that 15-passenger vans were three times more likely to roll over when carrying 10 or more passengers than when carrying nine or fewer passengers, or lightly loaded. Over 400,000 student-athletes compete in sports in the U.S each year. What do administrators consider when developing policies? What are the typical modes of transportation by sport? What policies have been changed to improve passenger safety during team travel?

An online questionnaire was sent to 765 college/university athletic directors. The survey was designed to answer questions relating to: (1) transportation modes used, (2) policy development and implementation, (3) driver qualifications, (4) 15-passenger van usage, and (5) size of department as measured by budget, number of sports offered, and total number of athlete participants.

Descriptive statistics analyzed the data, as well as chi square analysis comparing policy variables and department budget. Additionally, 32 different states were represented, thus allowing data analysis by geographic location. There were 238 completed surveys returned for a response rate of 31%. The results may be used to create more awareness of college athletic departments' transportation policies that may assist in the development of safer transportation policies for team travel. Knowing transportation policies that are currently practiced may help decrease accidents, litigation, and injury or death. Safe transportation

recommendations were displayed and discussed.

### **Ripped from the Headlines: Issues and Trends in Educational Technology**

Vivian H. Wright, University of Alabama

Pick up almost any newspaper or magazine today and chances are one will find at least one article relating to some new technological wave, advance, trend, or irritation! In this poster presentation, educational technology research on various technology issues and trends was presented. Essentially "ripped from the headlines" this presentation provided an overview of how the issue/trend may affect today's classrooms (P-16); discussed the impact on society—legal, social, cultural, and ethical; and how the issue/trend could be used as a teaching and learning tool. Links to online resources were included for each issue/trend so that the conference attendee could investigate each further. Issues and trends presented included video streaming, weblogs, plagiarism, webcasting, and Tablet PC potential in the classroom, among others.

In education today, it is hard to maintain an awareness of new trends in technology, much less how those trends could possibly benefit our classrooms and student learning. This session presented an overview and briefly described innovative techniques on how these trends might be used in a classroom. Each issue/trend was presented in an organized format for this display session, with the presentation specifically focusing on how the issue/trend can affect our classrooms of today and tomorrow. While technology grows exponentially, it is important for researchers and educators to understand current and emerging trends and research and assess their importance and potential.

### **Evaluating the Outcomes of Strategic Planning in Higher Education: Faculty Perceptions of University Goals and Objectives**

John D. Hall, Daniel H. Cline, and D. Lynn Howerton, Arkansas State University

With increasing frequency, institutions of higher education are called on to engage in coordinated efforts to develop future plans. These efforts typically entail a systematic collaborative process known as strategic planning. A complete assessment model includes a written strategic plan that sets forth key institutional goals and objectives and an evaluation of the progress in meeting those goals and objectives. Evaluation results may in turn be used to assist the institution in redirecting efforts to address unmet needs or concerns.

This paper presented the faculty's perceptions of a university's progress in meeting its goals and objectives. A faculty survey designed to evaluate 12 university goals and 55 objectives resulting from a 1995-1996 strategic planning process was mailed to university faculty in the fall of 2003. The 55-item survey addressed each strategic goal and objective. Items pertained to the academic and intellectual environment, student issues, faculty matters, undergraduate and graduate program concerns, research, evaluation of academic programs and services, public service, university communication and cooperation, state leadership role specific to education, and university image. The survey used a six-point scale for each item.

The results revealed that none of the university's strategic goals were met. No goals received a rating higher than "minimal" progress, and only four of the 55 objectives were rated as "moderate." No items were rated higher than "moderate." Overall, the findings suggested that the university made no or only minimal progress on the objectives implemented during the planning. The viability of strategic planning as a model for higher education was discussed as were the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

#### **Session 8.4**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. MENTOR SESSION..... Delta Queen**

**Presiders:** Quisar Sultana, Eastern Kentucky University, and Nola J. Christenberry, Arkansas 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 student and professional members of the Mid-South Educational Research Association.

#### **Session 8.5**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 AM TEACHER EDUCATION..... Riverboat**

**Presenter:** William Spencer, Auburn University

### **Philosophical Statements and Instructional Practices of Middle Grade Science Teachers: Do Teachers Practice What They Say They Believe About Student Learning?**

Carolyn C. Williams and Carolyn Pinchback, University of Central Arkansas

The study examined the philosophical statements of middle grade science teachers as compared to samples of their classroom instructional practices to determine whether: (1) their philosophical beliefs of how middle grade students learn science are significantly different from samples of their instructional practices, (2) samples of their instructional practices are aligned with the five prepositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and (3) the factors and conditions may influence teacher quality and student achievement.

A total of 115 middle grade science teachers participated in the study for a period of 18 months. The teachers were selected from two school districts, one small urban fringe school district and one relatively large urban school district. Seven of the teachers were African American and 108 Caucasian. A total of 20 teachers were males. Pre- and post-assessments on science content knowledge, skills, and dispositions were administered to all teachers. The researcher met with the teachers for 45 hours of professional staff development. The sessions followed the format: (1) teachers engaged in hands-on instructional model lessons and reading resource and reference materials standards and practices and the five prepositions of the NBPTS, and (2) lessons were led by National Board Certified middle grade science teachers and university professors of physics, biology, and general science. Four sessions focused on hands-on computer-enhanced science lessons on how to access science lessons on the Internet.



The researcher asked the teachers to write a 250-word philosophical statement on how middle grade students learn science and to submit the results of a science practice lesson that they had conducted with the students. Teachers were asked to collect, analyze, and submit written responses from three of their students: one from a student who responded to the assignment extremely well, one whose responses were judged to be at an average level of understanding, and one whose responses were judged to be far less than average. The teachers were asked to discuss: (1) What was the goal of the lesson? (2) What was each student's most essential misunderstanding or difficulty? (3) How does each student response fit into what your prior knowledge about this student's understandings and performance? (4) What did each student learn from the assignment judging from the responses? and (5) What does each student need to do next to move her or his understanding forward? Each teacher's philosophical statement and practice lessons were analyzed holistically and analytically. Matrices displaying data obtained from all sources were developed and used to identify patterns emerging from the data. Tentative conclusions were drawn and attempts to verify conclusions included reexamination of relevant data sources. The findings suggested implications for classroom practice and teacher educators.

### **Effectiveness of Science Teaching Video Case Studies as Demonstrated in Classroom Practices**

Clifford A. Hofwolt, Vanderbilt University

Does the use of video case studies in an elementary science methods class make a difference in the classroom practices of prospective elementary teachers as demonstrated in their student teaching experiences? To date, little research has been reported on the use of video case studies in relationship to actual teaching practices as demonstrated by classroom teachers.

This study was conducted for two years. During the first year, students in an elementary science methods course were not shown any video case studies that showed inquiry or discover learning and the use of the science learning cycle. They were subjected only to readings and class discussion about these topics. This was the control group. During the second year, students viewed and analyzed video case studies demonstrating these techniques in addition to class discussion and reading. This was the treatment group.

During student teaching, when students from either the control or treatment group taught science lessons, they were observed utilizing an observational system that detects the use of hands-on approaches to teaching science that incorporates discovery or inquiry learning and the use of the science learning cycle. Each student was observed teaching five lessons. When all students from both treatment and controls groups had completed their student teaching, the data collected from the observational instrument were analyzed.

The results indicated that when students viewed and analyzed science video case studies showing inquiry learning and the use of the science learning cycle, they were more inclined to incorporate these teaching strategies into their actual classroom practices during student teaching than were students who had not viewed and analyzed the science video cases. The implication of this study was that video case studies can illustrate to prospective teachers successful styles of teaching and learning that students may not see during observation sessions. These can serve as models of teaching worth emulating.

### **Misconceptions of Preservice Elementary Teachers Regarding Computational and Conceptual Understanding of Percentage Discounts**

Rebecca Robichaux, Independent Consultant, and A. J. Guarino, Auburn University

Research indicates that many preservice teachers have difficulty solving word problems involving multiplication and division of real numbers because they lack conceptual understanding. This study investigated preservice teachers' ability to identify and correct common conceptual and computational errors in simulated written student solutions to percentage discount problems.

Two hundred fifteen preservice teachers enrolled in an elementary mathematics methods course participated. These participants were randomly assigned to one of four simulated solutions and were instructed to identify and correct all errors in the solution. Four computation errors and two conceptual errors were deliberately placed in the solutions. The computation errors included: (1) basic facts, (2) regrouping, (3) decimal equivalents of percentages, and (4) decimal placement in the final answer. Conceptual errors involved: (1) adding percentages, and (2) failing to subtract to determine final answer.

In analyzing the responses, the investigators determined the percent of Type I errors (identifying correct responses as incorrect) and the overall percent of Type II errors (failing to identify incorrect responses) for both conceptual and computation errors. They also determined the percentage of each Type II conceptual error and each Type II computation error. Results indicated that: (1) 9% of the participants committed Type I errors, regardless of the solution assigned, (2) 83% of those given solutions with conceptual errors failed to detect at least one of the errors, and (3) the group given the computationally only incorrect solution was more likely to commit Type II computation errors (3.30) than the group given the computationally and conceptually incorrect solution (2.63).

This study suggested that preservice teachers have difficulty identifying errors made in solutions to percent discount problems. Further analyses yielded the following misconceptions held by these participants: (1) addition of percentages, (2) basic facts, (3) place value, and (4) regrouping. Implications of these findings were discussed.

#### **Session 8.6**

**10:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. DESIGNING A MIXED METHODS DISSERTATION STUDY IN EDUCATION  
(TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

Nataliya V. Ivankova, Matt Fifolt, Tonya Perry, and Jennifer Fritschi, University of Alabama – Birmingham

This training session provided an overview of the mixed methods approach to research, types of mixed methods designs, and steps in designing a mixed methods dissertation study in education. The objectives of the session were to: (1) summarize recent methodological discussions about mixed methods research, (2) distill important steps to be considered when designing a mixed methods dissertation study, (3) illustrate those steps with a 2004 PDK Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award mixed methods dissertation research project in education and with several mixed methods dissertation research proposals recently developed by doctoral students in education, (4) address the challenges and problem solving strategies utilized by the participants in applying those steps, and (5) provide implications for training education doctoral students with regard to mixed methods dissertation research projects.

The session culminated by: (1) actively involving the audience in the discussion and sharing the experiences with designing a mixed methods research project, and (2) jointly creating a mixed methods research proposal outline that incorporated the discussed procedural issues, the outlined steps in designing a mixed methods dissertation research project, and the successful application strategies, including a visual model of the proposed study procedures.

#### **Session 9.1**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. SCIENCE EDUCATION..... Bayou****Presenter:** Carolyn C. Williams, University of Central Arkansas**Use of Pre- and Post-Visit Activities with Informal Learning Settings: Year Two**

Julie A. Holmes and Randy Parker, Louisiana Tech University

Visits to science museums have been shown to improve student achievement, and the effects of museum-based learning may be increased if content knowledge activities are included as part of the museum experience. This two-year study examined the use of classroom activities before, during, and after a visit to a science museum.

The participants were 175 PK through eighth-grade teachers from north Louisiana and southern Arkansas who participated in the annual IDEA Place Space Days program at Louisiana Tech University. Teachers were given a survey to complete to indicate: (1) the activities they had completed with their students prior to the museum visit to build prior content knowledge, (2) if their students had structured activities to complete during the visit, and (3) what activities they had planned to complete after the visit. In the second year of the study, teachers were also asked to specify what activities and materials they had used with their students in conjunction with the museum visit.

Preliminary data analysis indicated that most teachers at all grade levels reviewed rules prior to the visit, and they completed at least one classroom activity in preparation for the museum visit. None of the teachers had assigned a structured activity for their students to complete during the visit. Teachers in the first year of the study indicated more use of post-visit activities across the curriculum than those teachers in the second year of the study.

The results suggested that in order to capitalize on the learning potential of the museum experience, teachers need to be encouraged to use resources designed to emphasize content that their students are exposed to as part of the museum visit. The museum has begun to address this issue by posting activities on its website that correlate with the exhibits and developing lesson plan packets.

**Fact or Fiction?: Science Explorations that Enhance Critical Thinking Skills**

Mary Kay Bacallao, Mercer University

In recent years, the field of scientific discovery has expanded exponentially. Some developments have challenged many of the theories that have been taught in science classrooms over the years. Through this paper, science educators were able to consider the implications of these discoveries about the way the curriculum is presented.

Through the presentation of contradicting factual scientific evidence, readers were given an opportunity to think deeply about the science that they teach. Why is the earth slowing down? What has caused the earth's magnetism to weaken? How was the Grand Canyon formed? Why are several of the planets spinning backwards? Why are living things interdependent? What do you think happened to the dinosaurs? This paper addressed how teachers can utilize these amazing contradictions within science to teach their students how to think critically. These and other questions that cannot be answered solely by reading the definitions of boldface words in textbooks were presented. In sorting out fact from fiction, the readers and eventually the students learned the healthy art of questioning and skepticism. They learned the process by which they may form their own hypotheses. These and other mysteries of science were examined through the presentation of evidence and Socratic style questioning. Some scientific questions may not have answers. Using scientific evidence, students can be led to ask their own questions and find their own answers.

**Third-Grade Students' Perceptions, Attitudes, and Interests in Science and Social Studies**

Gahan Bailey and Edward L. Shaw, Jr., University of South Alabama, and Amber Howell, Spencer Elementary School

A third-grade public school teacher and two university faculty members worked together in the disciplines of science and social studies with 16 African American students enrolled at an urban elementary school in the southeast. The primary objectives of this study were to determine third-grade students' perceptions of science and social studies, students' attitudes of science and social studies, and what activities may increase or decrease the students' interest in these disciplines. Additionally, students rank ordered their favorite to least favorite courses from the four disciplines of language arts, math, science, and social studies. Data were collected by surveying the students at the beginning of the study and again at the end of the six-week period. The pre-survey was given to determine a baseline of the students' attitudes toward science and social studies. The responses were then compared to the post-survey. To determine the students' perceptions of these disciplines, pictures were placed on the survey to determine what students think of when they think of science and social studies. The responses to these pictures showed that they have a limited view of both disciplines. The findings showed that all 16 of these third-grade students enjoy science and 15 enjoy social studies. However, science and social studies were ranked as the least favorite disciplines in the pre-survey. In an attempt to determine if activities that are taught affect attitudes, lessons that were taught in this classroom were documented on a table created by the teacher.

**Session 9.2****11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH..... Levee****Presenter:** John A. Sargent, East Texas Baptist University**Professional Development and Community Building Through Program Development At A Nontraditional Teacher Education Program**

Penny Elkins, Dana Lilly, Al Stramiello, Linda Adams, and Karen Michael, Mercer University

**Narrative Non-Fiction Story Method: A Search for Caring Culture and Leadership**

The intent of this study was to identify the characteristics of school culture and the leadership practices that exemplify an ethic of care. The chosen methodology was narrative non-fiction, for it is stories that offer an enhanced understanding of the context and culture in which one has membership.

Purposive sampling was used to select the school and principal for study. The school met all criteria detailed in the design: rated "Exemplary" by the state education agency for the two previous years, student population reflecting 35% or greater of minority heritage, and 50% or greater participating in free or reduced meal programs. The principal had been in the position for more years than the required five, and teacher-participants had been there three or more years.

The researcher scheduled separate sessions with the principal and five of the teachers to record their individual descriptions of the school and their experiences over time as members there. Although some questioning by the researcher was needed to maintain focus on the themes of care and power, the intent was to allow the stories to be told in their most natural voice. The stories were transcribed in narrative text just as told to the researcher. The analysis allowed for interpretation and integration of the individual stories into an emplotted narrative that profiled the reality of the school's leadership and caring culture.

The narrative that emerged from this study revealed the common threads of care, coherence of policy, program, and practice, and the overwhelming evidence of a prevailing ethic of care in the leadership there. The study provided evidence that narrative inquiry can be a powerful tool for educational leaders to more closely examine and inform practice.

### **Session 9.3**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FOR DISTRIBUTED LEARNING: THE ONLINE LEARNING LAB APPROACH (SYMPOSIUM)..... Mississippi Queen**

**Organizer:** John V. Dempsey, University of South Alabama

Andy K. Stanfield, Piti Kanjanapongpaisal, Hans Gray, and Eunice A. Luyegu,  
University of South Alabama

The University of South Alabama Online Learning Laboratory (OLL) is dedicated to assisting faculty to develop and improve their online instructional environments and pedagogical approaches. Additionally, part of the mission of the OLL activities has always been to provide practical instructional design experience for students working in the Lab. For the last six years, the OLL has been coordinated by an Instructional Design and Development faculty member, but most of its day-to-day activities have been conducted by an ever-changing cadre of graduate students. This model differs from many universities that have full-time career employees conducting faculty development and instructional design services for online learning.

The papers presented in this symposium examined different aspects of how and why the OLL works. The papers recorded unique aspects of the OLL and how this faculty development model could be transferred to other universities. All five participants (the faculty coordinator and four doctoral student/staff members) presented papers.

Briefly, these topics included: (1) the context, background, and credo of the Online Learning Lab; (2) the role and challenges of a part-time senior instructional designer who is also a graduate student; (3) specific job tasks and strategies that are employed by the Lab; (4) the mechanics of working with faculty; and (5) issues of self-assessment, accountability, and evaluation. The first author facilitated audience discussion with the symposium participants focused on the topics of their papers.

### **Session 9.4**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. LEADERSHIP..... Delta Queen**

**President:** Camilla Sims-Stambaugh, University of North Florida

#### **What Successful Administrators Read**

Randy L. Anderson, Ronald A. Styron, Thelma J. Roberson, and  
John Rachal, University of Southern Mississippi

#### **The Role of Water in an Educator's Fitness to Lead**

Jack Blendinger, Linda McGrath, Vince McGrath, Mississippi State University, and  
Lauren R. Wells, University of West Alabama

#### **An Analysis of Servant-Leadership Characteristics of Public School Superintendents in Mississippi and Alabama**

David A. Wright, Donna A. Lander, and Darlene A. Thurston, Jackson State University

The study examined the "Ten Critical Characteristics of Servant-Leadership," according to Spears and Lawrence (2002), among public school superintendents in Mississippi and Alabama. The 10 servant-leadership characteristics were derived from the writings of Robert Greenleaf. All 278 superintendents were sent a survey instrument that operationalized the servant-leadership characteristics. A data analysis was conducted based on superintendents' survey responses and on school district demographics and personal information. School district demographics included school district enrollment, economic status based on percentages of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program, and whether the position of superintendent was appointed or elected. Personal information included the number of years of superintendent experience, age, and highest degree earned. Null hypotheses based

on the school district demographics and personal information were tested using composite scores for the characteristics of servant-leadership and sub-scale scores for each of the 10 Characteristics of Servant-Leadership.

Out of a possible 278 superintendents in Mississippi and Alabama, 180 responded to the survey that contained 100 statements that were adapted from a survey by Livovich (1999) designed to incorporate servant-leadership characteristics and the "Superintendent's Responsibilities" developed by a joint American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and National School Boards Association (NSBA) in 1994. Servant-leadership characteristics most evident superintendents in Mississippi and Alabama were awareness, empathy, foresight, listening, and healing.

Using one-way ANOVA, the composite scores of superintendents with doctorate degrees were statistically significant compared to those superintendents with the educational specialist and master's degrees. On sub-scale scores for individual servant-leadership characteristics, awareness, conceptualization, foresight, healing, and persuasion were significant for the variable of degree. When the sub-scale scores were analyzed using the variable of gender, the characteristics of commitment to growth, foresight, and stewardship were found to be significant.

## **Session 9.5**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. EVALUATION..... Riverboat**

**Presenter:** Carl M. Brezausek, University of Alabama - Birmingham

### **Pilot Development of a Measure of Research Integrity: Conceptual and Scaling Issues**

Scott W. Snyder, University of Alabama – Birmingham

Integrity in scientific research is important to the public and scientists. Effective education in research integrity will require understanding the domains and dimensions of research integrity and the timing of acquisition of perceptions about research integrity among trainees and faculty.

Preliminary research has been conducted to test the validity of a measure of research integrity. The measure includes six scenarios and reflects a two-dimensional model of research integrity. The first dimension represents core performance areas (data gathering, mentoring, publication practices, peer review, etc), and the second dimension represents three domains of integrity (honesty and accuracy, collegiality and adherence to mutual responsibilities among investigators, and protection of the rights of subjects). Data were collected on 150 trainees and faculty in health-related fields of research at UAB and Duke. Rasch analysis and factor analysis were used to gain insight about the performance of the scale.

Results indicated some inconsistencies between item performance and the model. Based on these results, recommendations have been made for revising the scale. While the initial version of the scale included scenarios that primarily focused on clinical research, the typology and results of analyses have relevance to all fields of research. The presentation described the typology and the scale, summarized results of analyses, and discussed the implications of the study for scale revision and for applications with educational researchers.

### **The Association Between the ACT Test and Tennessee's Value-Added Assessment**

Paul B. Webb, East Tennessee State University

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between and among various demographic and test score data with ACT scores in 281 Tennessee high schools. In addition, this study examined TVAAS' assessment of ACT scores and its distribution of grades to Tennessee's high schools based upon its value-added analysis.

The researcher performed correlations and multivariable linear regressions using socio-economic status, ethnicity, dropout rate, graduation rate, attendance, average daily membership, per-pupil expenditure, teacher salary, Gateway exams, English I scores, and math foundations scores as independent variables and ACT scores as the dependent variable. The strengths of the correlations were examined, and the best combination of independent variables was used to predict future ACT scores. Schools were divided into quartiles, based upon average daily membership and attendance rates, in order to analyze the differences in R2 values among the quartiles when running regressions to predict ACT scores. Quartiles, based upon the percentage of students qualifying for free/reduced meals, ethnicity, and average daily membership, were used to study the difference in TVAAS' grade distribution based upon its assessment of ACT scores.

The findings indicated that English I and II scores are most strongly associated with ACT composite scores including the four ACT subtests: math, English, reading, and science. English scores were found to be more strongly associated with ACT math scores than Algebra I scores, and more strongly associated with ACT science scores than biology scores. It was discovered that TVAAS' ACT grades were highly skewed when schools were divided into quartiles based upon the percentage of students qualifying for free/reduced meals, ethnicity, and average daily membership. Only one school, in a poor school quartile of 70 schools, scored above the state average gain in ACT reading.

### **A Web-Based Teaching Aid for Presenting the Concepts of Norm Referenced**

Charles E. Notar and Sherri Restauri, Jacksonville State University

This paper presented a useful instructional tool in the form of a user-friendly, web-based navigational chart for preservice, as well as inservice, teachers. Based on an extensive review of established, as well as contemporary publications on norm- and criterion-referenced assessment, the authors generated an instrument that highlighted the main topics covered by previous researchers interested in NRT and CRT. A chart illuminated the most important issues relating to the composition and evaluation of appropriate forms of student assessment within the learning environment. This chart was designed based on a major facet of testing: comparing and contrasting norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing models (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2003). In addition to providing a useful, easily distributed application tool, this paper presented information that is useful for understanding the commonalities and differences between norm referenced and criterion referenced testing. The electronic aid presented may further be adopted by both teachers and students in classes focusing on research, assessment, and tests and measurement.

## **Session 10.1**

**1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M. POLICY..... Bayou**

**President:** Charles E. Notar, Jacksonville State University

**Impact of a High-Stakes Test on Mississippi Social Studies Teachers' Instructional Practices**

Kenneth E. Vogler, University of South Carolina

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of high-stakes tests on teachers' instructional practices. Data were obtained from a survey instrument given to a stratified random sample of Mississippi social studies teachers who teach the same content that is tested on their state's high school graduation examination. An analysis found teachers using more traditional, teacher-centered instructional practices such as textbooks, multiple-choice questions, open-response questions, visual aids, lecturing, and textbook-based assignments rather than student-centered instructional practices. Also, teachers' use of these instructional practices was most influenced by factors relating to sanctions attached to the examination rather than items such as personal desire or belief about using "best" practices.

**Questioning Authority: The USM Happening**

Lauren R. Wells, University of West Alabama, and Jack Blendinger, Mississippi State University

Responding to the need for a unified voice for faculty on university campuses in regard to fundamental professional values and standards, academic freedom, shared governance, and contribution to the common good, a group of committed faculty members came together in 1915 to found the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). This study examined AAUP's role in a recent controversy regarding the abuse of authority at one of Mississippi's leading public universities, the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). In March 2004, USM's president suspended two tenured professors and locked them out of their offices because of their outspoken criticism of his leadership. The two professors were leaders in the university's AAUP chapter.

The researchers investigated the USM controversy as a case study using data collected from documents and records available in the public domain. Each document and record was analyzed holistically for the purpose of identifying patterns and themes. Particular attention was given to available email messages because electronic communication played a featured role in the controversy. The professors' emails and other forms of communication appeared to have been monitored by the president without their knowledge. Findings from the study indicated that the president's abuse of authority ignited student-led protests and faculty no-confidence votes.

**The Influence of Institutional Control in Adoption of Managerial Accounting Practices by Colleges and Universities**

Olin Adams, Toni L. Edwards, and A.J. Guarino, Auburn University

Institutions of higher education have followed the lead of business in adopting managerial (internal) accounting practices that promote planning and control of operations. The investigators sought to determine the status of managerial accounting practices in higher education institutions. To that end the investigators surveyed a national sample of chief financial officers (CFOs) in four-year colleges and universities at two points in time, 1998-99 and 2003-04. The sample was stratified by institutional control (public or private).

The research suggests that as of 2003-04 public institutions of higher education have increased their adoption of managerial accounting practices, both in comparison to their position in 1998-99 and when compared to public institutions in 2003-04. This increased commitment of public institutions is observed especially in budgeting, costing, performance measurement, and outsourcing. Item analysis indicated that public institutions report significantly higher adoption of capital budgeting practices, activity-based costing, financial performance measurement at the level of individual classes, and the use of benchmark costs. By contrast, the status of managerial accounting practices in private institutions appears to have leveled or fallen.

Although the interpretation of these findings might have varied by observer, public institutions likely have assumed a greater commitment to internal accounting practices as part of an adjustment to the new economic realities they face. Reduced state appropriations have forced public institutions to raise tuition substantially, while rising costs, notably in health care benefits, have led public colleges and universities to a consciousness of frugality.

**Session 10.2**  
**1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M.    READING..... Levee**

**President:** Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

**Evaluation of Years 1 and 2 of Putting Reading First**

Marcia R. O'Neal, Kathleen Martin, Kay Emfinger, and Scott W. Snyder,  
University of Alabama – Birmingham

This paper described and provided evaluation results for the Putting Reading First project implemented during the 2003-2004 school year in Bessemer, Alabama. Among project goals was that of improving outcomes for children through professional development, curriculum, and high quality literacy environments so that children in the community will enter kindergarten with skills and abilities that ensure they will become successful readers and learners.

In its first year, the project served over 200 three- and four-year-old children and 16 classrooms at eight independent, school-affiliated, or Head Start centers, each of which was designated as either a treatment or comparison site. During the second year of the project, it served over 300 children in 19 classrooms at seven centers. Project activities included screening, coaching sessions, parent education workshops, professional development in literacy education, transition planning, parent lending libraries, and curriculum materials. Evaluation included a number of student assessments (PPVT-III, PreLAS2000, Early Childhood System Concepts of Print and Writing, book checkout records, Social Skills Rating Scale, a locally used Language and Emerging Literacy Assessment, and a family literacy inventory). Children who exited the program and attended one of the local kindergartens were followed through analysis of DIBELS results. Teacher assessments included the ELLCO and the Assessment Profile, as well as three locally developed surveys of knowledge and perceptions.

First-year results indicated greater gains for treatment groups than for comparison groups on both the PPVT and on Print Concepts subscale of the Concepts of Print and Writing. Significantly greater gains were also seen for teachers in treatment classrooms on both the process and structure components of the ELLCO and on the structure components of the Assessment Profile.

## **The Effect of Supplemental Reading Programs for At-Risk Students**

Lauren Mayfield, Bienville Parish (LA) Schools, and Julie A. Holmes, Louisiana Tech University

The purpose of this action research study was to determine the effectiveness of the Edmark Reading Program, a supplemental, mastery learning reading program on the performance of at-risk K-5 students. Six elementary schools in a rural north Louisiana parish identified 127 K-5 students at-risk for reading failure. Students were pretested on the 150 Level I words of the Edmark Reading Program. Paraprofessionals tutored each child for 15 minutes per day in the program. Students were posttested on the 150 Level I words. Those who mastered Level I proceeded to Level II. Data were analyzed using a dependent t-test.

Preliminary data analysis revealed a significant difference in the pretest to posttest scores and in the students' letter grades in reading from entry to completion of the Level I lessons. Of the 45 students who completed Level II, a significant difference was found from pretest to posttest score, but no significant difference in letter grades in reading. A Pearson-r correlation was also used to determine if there were any significant correlations between the Edmark posttest score and letter grade at the end of the program and between grade level in school and the Edmark posttest score. This analysis revealed a significant correlation in grade level and posttest scores for those who completed Level I, while those who completed Level II showed a significant correlation between the posttest grade and the letter grade in reading at the end of the program. Qualitative data in the form of teacher surveys and student reading grades were also collected, and an analysis revealed that most teachers saw a great deal of improvement in their students' reading skills, mentioning improved fluency and letter grades.

Further data analysis may reveal other significant findings. Further research using true experimental design is needed to verify the usefulness of supplemental reading programs.

## **The Effects of Self-Assessment on Kindergarten Students Learning of High Frequency Words**

Patrick N. Kariuki and Brooke Wiseman, Milligan College

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of self-assessment on kindergarten students learning of high frequency words. Under the state curriculum standards, specifically the Tennessee curriculum, kindergarten students are introduced to high frequency words also known as sight words. The standard 100 high frequency words taught in kindergarten make up 50% of the words found in the English-language text (McGee & Richgels, 2000). Therefore, the emphasis for acquiring the skills to teach/learn high frequency words is enormous, not only for the kindergarten teacher but also for the learner.

This study was conducted at a selected elementary school in Kingsport, TN. The sample consisted of 30 randomly selected kindergarten students. The students were then randomly assigned to a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group used the self-assessment method to learn high frequency words, whereas the control group used the traditional method of assessment to learn high frequency words.

The data for this study were collected by using a posttest only equivalent group design. Data were analyzed using independent t-tests at .05 level of significance. The results indicated a significant difference between the students who used self-assessment and those who used traditional assessment. The students who used self-assessment scored higher than those who used traditional assessment. No significant difference was found between the genders.

### **Session 10.3**

**1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M. OBSERVATION OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR  
(SYMPOSIUM)..... Mississippi Queen**

**Organizer:** David N. Ellis, University of South Alabama

Abigail Baxter, University of South Alabama, and R. Kenton Denny, Louisiana State University

The current emphasis on accountability in education has raised the bar on what the classroom teacher must accomplish in the classroom. In addition to instruction, the teacher must demonstrate that all students have learned what has been taught. There is also an emphasis on the documentation of the effectiveness of instructional methods. Much of the current legislation has placed a large emphasis on the summative assessment of students' learning, that is, assessment at the end of the unit, term, or year to document learning. However, in order to ensure positive results from summative measures, the classroom teacher needs to use much more formative assessment throughout the school day. Formative assessment is the process of collecting assessment information to guide instructional decisions. In formative assessment the teacher investigates the success of each lesson and uses the obtained results to guide future instruction. In formative assessment attention is paid to how the students behave and react to instruction in addition to how many questions they got right or wrong. Most classroom teachers, however, have very few such action research skills. This session focused on strategies that classroom teachers can use to assess their students' behaviors in the context of the classroom in order to make learning more effective. One of the first decisions the teacher needs to make is to decide what behaviors are of interest and how they should be measured.

These two decisions are very important. The behaviors to be assessed must be observable and measurable. This is accomplished through an operational definition of the behavior. This session described the process teachers should use to operationally define the behavior of interest. Teachers also need to decide on the aspect of the behavior that is important to them. Teachers can choose to measure the frequency of a behavior, or how many times it happens. They can limit the frequency to a specific period of time and figure out a rate for the behavior. The teacher may also want to look at the duration of the behavior or how long each episode lasts. Finally, the latency, or length of time from the beginning of the lesson until the behavior occurs, may be of interest.

The presentation described the decision process teachers should use in determining whether to measure the frequency, duration, and/or latency of a behavior. This session helped teachers design action research projects within the context of their classrooms. These action research projects, including formative assessment techniques that concentrate on students' classroom behaviors as well as academic productivity, can be used to make instruction more effective for all members of the classroom. Teachers will then be able to develop instruction that meets the needs of students and, in turn, will enhance learning.

### **Session 10.4**

**1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M. TEACHER EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**Presenter:** Andrea M. Kent, University of South Alabama

## Novice Teachers' Assessment of Their Teacher Education Programs

William Spencer and Martha Pettway, Auburn University

Preparation programs for teaching continue to receive extensive attention as a part of increasing the success level of students in public schools. For example, the No Child Left Behind initiative includes the requirement that all teachers be "highly qualified." In addition, accreditation systems at the state and national levels typically require preparation programs to obtain feedback from graduates and to use that feedback to improve their programs.

This study was designed to assess the perceptions of recent graduates of their preparation programs and to develop some recommendations for program modification. Using three public school systems in eastern Alabama as a base, 608 novice teachers (three years experience or less) were sampled for this study. Subjects were asked to respond to a questionnaire soliciting their perceptions of their preparation for teaching. Using previous satisfaction literature and current NCATE standards, 39 items were generated and grouped into five broad categories: knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction.

Results indicated that most respondents were well satisfied with their preparation as far as knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; and quality of instruction. They were somewhat less satisfied with the degree to which their programs had prepared them to deal with diversity, both inside and outside the classroom, and also with their preparation to utilize technology for instruction. Additional analyses were then conducted comparing the perceptions of subjects who had attended historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) to those who had attended predominantly white institutions (PWI). Also, the study compared teachers who went through traditional B-level certification with those who went through an Alternative A certification. A third dimension of investigation involved comparing those who were teaching grades 1-6 with those who were teaching grades 7-12.

## Non-Traditional Teacher Licensure Programs' Influence on Traditional Educational Programs

Glenda G. Ezell and Roland Smith, University of Arkansas - Fort Smith

This paper suggested that one state's non-traditional teacher licensure program could lead to the demise of traditional educational programs and will eventually call into question that state's resolve to insist on NCATE approval when large numbers of candidates emerge from programs with significantly less rigor and much less assessment. This position paper was based on a study of a non-traditional educational program sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Education contrasted with traditional educational programs.

After referring to a recent state-wide research study that found a slight preference for traditionally prepared educators, this paper discussed effects of non-traditional education on traditional education programs in a public and a private university. Based on a case study at a public university, the paper reviewed the evolution of changing guidelines, the relationship between preparation of non-traditional candidates versus traditional candidates, steps taken at the site level to strengthen non-traditional programs, school district leaders' responses to nontraditional candidates, and the dichotomy of a state firmly committed to increasingly stringent NCATE regulations while sponsoring and promoting a program that would not meet minimum NCATE standards. This paper then considered the effects of a state's non-traditional program model on traditional education programs offered at public and private universities. Based on specific examples, references were made to informal counseling of candidates by university, public school, and state agency personnel as well as enrollment trends resulting from these two program options.

The presenters offered suggestions for the future calling for increased standards, increased course requirements, and accountability for non-traditional educational programs and increased flexibility for traditional education programs. They argued that these refinements could increase capabilities for non-traditional candidates while maintaining the viability of programs sponsored by colleges of education.

## The STEADY Program: Perceived Effectiveness and Impact on Retention of New Teachers

James Hortman, Columbus State University

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of a program of special mentoring services and strategies on first- and second-year public school teachers. Teachers were surveyed about: (1) their level of participation in the various services offered by the Sustained Teacher Education Advisement for the Defining Years (STEADY) program, (2) their perceived effectiveness of the services to help them develop as professional educators, (3) their intentions to stay in education, and (4) their perceived role of the STEADY program in their decisions about education as a career.

All first- and second-year teachers employed in schools participating with the area university in the Partner School Network were invited to complete the survey. Thirty-six first-year teachers and 49 second-year teachers representing elementary, middle, and high school levels were surveyed. Data were gathered, analyzed descriptively, and disaggregated by gender, age, level of teaching, and highest earned degree. Results yielded evidence that certain services such as email communication with mentors, personal onsite visits, and the availability of "first year survival kits" were more widely utilized than others and perceived as more effective. High percentages of first- and second-year teachers, 94.3% and 78.7% respectively, reported that they currently intended to stay in the classroom. The second-year teachers reported more participation in offered services and perceived positive impact of the STEADY program on their decision to stay in the classroom. Several suggestions were offered for enhancing the program.

### Session 10.5

**1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M.    ACHIEVEMENT..... Riverboat**

**President:** Deborah Y. McAfee, University of Arkansas – Little Rock

### A Study of the Effects of the Accelerated Reader Program on Eighth-Grade Students' Reading Achievement Growth

Sharone Lacy, Debra Prince, and Sue Minchew, Mississippi State University

The study compared the reading achievement growth of eighth-grade students following one and two years of participation in the Accelerated Reader (AAR) program with the reading achievement growth of eighth-grade students who did not participate in it.

The issue of adolescence literacy, or the lack thereof, is a concern that continues to gain increasing attention. Educators are trying to find effective

strategies to improve reading skills, and the use of computer-assisted instruction is widely spreading. One computer-assisted instruction that is widely used in schools is Accelerated Reader. Therefore, it is imperative to find out whether or not it is effective in improving secondary students' reading skills. Currently, there is very little research of Accelerated Reader being a secondary school improvement model.

A pretest-posttest group design was utilized for this causal comparative study. The Mississippi Curriculum Test was used as the pretest and the posttest for reading achievement growth. A one-way analysis of variance was the statistical treatment performed on the data to determine if a significant difference existed between the reading comprehension growth of eighth-grade students with and without one and two years of participation in the Accelerated Reader program. Three groups of eighth-graders (242 students) were chosen from one school.

Results revealed that the AAR program participants scored significantly higher than those who did not participate in the AAR program.

The findings showed that the addition of the AAR to the existing reading program did result in a significant increase in the reading achievement growth of participating students when compared to the reading achievement growth of students who did not participate in it.

### **The Impact of the STAR 3 Positive Behavioral Support Program in an Inner-City Middle School**

John D. Sachs, University of South Alabama

The purpose of this paper was to present the results of a study that compared the office discipline referrals in two inner-city middle schools from a large metropolitan school district. The STAR3 program was designed to improve the overall discipline by implementing a school-wide program based on the positive behavioral supports initiative that has been emphasized by Sugai, Sprague, Horner, and Walker, 2000. The main thrust of the program was to reduce the number of office discipline referrals by teaching the teachers how to focus on and reinforce appropriate behaviors exhibited by their students. The main objective of this program was to have a positive impact on the overall school climate and hopefully have a positive impact on student achievement. This presentation discussed the results of the study and identified the issues that surrounded the implementation of school-wide behavioral interventions in a metropolitan inner-city middle school.

### **The Effects of School Schedules on Mississippi Subject Area Scores**

Ronald E. Morgan, Donna Lander, and Darlene A. Thurston, Jackson State University

This study examined the effect of schedules on the 2003-2004 Mississippi Subject Area Examinations. There were 240 Mississippi public high schools included in this study. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in this study. The mean scores were analyzed based on the following schedules: (1) A/B BLOCK, (2) Traditional schedule, and 4x4 block. Sub-groups of African American, white, and economically disadvantaged students were included in the study. Extending instructional time appeared to affect student achievement on all Mississippi Subject Area Examinations with the exception of English 2.

#### **Session 10.6**

**1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M. MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS: LOW-ASSUMPTION STATISTICAL TESTS YOU SHOULD KNOW (TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

David Morse, Mississippi State University

Many of the traditional statistical tests require strong assumptions about the underlying population distribution(s) and interval or better strength scale in order to behave reliably when testing hypotheses. However, behavioral science data sets do not always conform well to these conditions. Further, the actual tests themselves often do not serve to inform as to the magnitude of the effect, requiring additional computation of effect sizes to be reported. It would be useful to have procedures available that do not make such strong assumptions and do not require such strength of scale for the measures in order to allow meaningful comparisons to be made. This training session covered procedures with these advantages. For ordered data sets, methods such as the ridit and the dominance statistic make very little demands of the data and yield results that are interpretable as effect sizes. Multivariate versions of traditional nonparametric tests such as the sign, the Wilcoxon and Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney, were also presented. Several examples were given for each test, and simple computer programs for running each test were furnished. Armed with these assumption-free tests, researchers should be able to tackle a wider variety of data sets and worry less about violations of assumptions.

#### **Session 11.1**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. COLLEGE STUDENTS..... Bayou**

**President:** Lauren R. Wells, University of West Alabama

### **Characteristics of Doctoral Students Who Commit Citation Errors**

Vicki L. Waytowich and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, University of South Florida, and Qun G. Jiao, Baruch College - City University of New York

The y investigated the citation error rate and quality of reference lists in doct dissertation proposals rather than in the finished theses and dissertations. It also studied the relationship between perfectionism and (1) frequency of citation errors and (2) the adherence of the reference list to the fidelity of the chosen citation style among doctoral students. Also of interest was to determine whether any demographic variables predicted citation errors and quality of the reference list. The major analytical procedure used in this study involved canonical correlation and regression analysis. Findings indicated that graduate students with relatively high levels of self-oriented perfectionism and other-oriented perfectionism tended to commit the most citation errors and constructed reference lists that departed the furthest from the citation style stipulations.

An analysis of the citation errors revealed that the participants' dissertation proposals, on average, contained more than 12 missing and incomplete citations. This indicated that for every three citations included, one of them represented some type of error. Regression analyses revealed that: (1) students with the lowest expectation levels tended to commit the highest rate of citation errors, and (2) students who have taken the most courses in their graduate programs tended to receive the lowest scores pertaining to the quality of reference lists. The implications of these findings were discussed.



## **Investigation of Whether Cultural Differences Exist in Scores Obtained on the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire**

Sandra M. Harris and Rebecca Jacobson, Troy University – Montgomery

### **The Relationship Between Bibliographic Errors and Library Anxiety Among Graduate Students**

Qun G. Jiao, Baruch College - City University of New York, and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie  
and Vicki L. Waytowich, University of South Florida

Errors in bibliographic citations are not recent problems. Indeed, citation errors can be traced back to more than 100 years ago. Despite the publication of various style manuals to guide the preparation of bibliographic citations, such as the Chicago Manual of Style, the American Psychological Association Publication Manual, and the Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, "citation errors continued to appear, as did an increasing number of complaints about them" (Sweetland, 1989, p. 293). In recent years, several researchers have examined the bibliographic accuracy of citations. In particular, one reason for citation errors to occur is that the authors take a shortcut and actually have not seen the original article they are citing, perhaps due, in part, to their inability or reluctance to utilize the library system to obtain the article. This inability or reluctance, in turn, has been found to stem from their levels of library anxiety.

Therefore, the present study investigated whether levels of library anxiety predict simultaneously the citation error rate and quality of reference lists in doctoral dissertation proposals among 90 doctoral students. This study was unique for at least two reasons. First, it was one of the first studies to examine bibliographic citation inaccuracies in unpublished articles. Second, it appears to be the first study of citation errors in research proposals. Third, the current investigation was one of the first to investigate the psychological characteristics of authors who commit such errors. A canonical correlation analysis revealed a multivariate relationship between levels of library anxiety and both the citation error rate and quality of reference lists. This finding suggests that level of library anxiety plays an important role in students' ability to construct accurate reference lists. The implications of these findings were discussed.

#### **Session 11.2**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. SCIENCE EDUCATION..... Levee**

**President:** Clifford A. Hofwolt, Vanderbilt University

#### **An Analysis of Teacher Education Students' Conceptual Knowledge of the Ozone Layer and Its Depletion**

Ava F. Pugh, Rebecca Watts, Holly Casey, and Jerilee Washington,  
University of Louisiana – Monroe

The study examined the knowledge of undergraduate and graduate teacher education students regarding the ozone layer and the implications of ozone depletion. Students were tested on concepts regarding the ozone layer prior to any discussion of the concepts and then tested on the concepts following a discussion of the pretested items. Statistical analyses compared the items answered correctly on the pretest and posttest to determine if student knowledge improved after discussion of concepts. Test scores also were compared among students who were posttested one week after the discussion of concepts and students who were posttested five weeks after the discussion to determine if concept knowledge differed among students as a result of the amount of time between discussion and posttesting.

Ninety-eight students responded to the 35-item questionnaire on the ozone layer and its depletion. After discussing the concepts, the average percentage of posttest items answered correctly (73.03%) exceeded the average percentage of items answered correctly on the pretest (47.93%). Although undergraduate students (n = 56) correctly answered a lower average percentage of pretest items than graduate students (n = 42), undergraduates correctly answered a higher average percentage of the posttest items than did graduates. Percentage comparisons among individual items indicated that students are more familiar with certain concepts regarding the ozone layer. Graduate students who were posttested five weeks after discussion (n = 21) answered an average of 68.98% of the posttest items correctly, whereas graduate students who posttested one week after discussion (n = 21) answered an average of 74.01% of the posttest items correctly. These findings suggested that students are familiar with factual concepts regarding the ozone layer. However, students are less familiar with the implications of ozone depletion. The time lapse between the discussion of concepts and posttesting may influence the retention of discussed topics.

#### **Levels of Understanding of Physical Science Concepts of College Students Enrolled in General Education Physical Science Courses**

Tillman Kennon, Arkansas State University

#### **Evolution vs. Creationism: An Evolution in Student Attitudes**

Linda C. Kondrick and Eric C. Lovely, Arkansas Tech University

Teaching college students about the nature of science should not be a controversial exercise. College students are expected to understand the difference between science and pseudoscience. They are expected to accept astronomy as science and astrology as mysticism; likewise, to accept evolution as a scientific theory and creationism as a religious belief. In practice they are unlikely to walk out of a physical science course if the instructor discusses the evidence supporting the existence of black holes. In fact, they are fascinated with the discussion of these yet unproven singularities in space and time. However, the conflict between creationism and the nature of science is apt to create friction in the classroom when the subject of evolution is raised. In fact, students have been known to stage walkouts from classrooms in protest of the topic being discussed. The authors have grappled with the meaning of such behaviors.

They surveyed 287 students in a small, public, liberal arts college in the Mid-South. Pre-course survey questions were designed to determine: (1) what

portion of the students held a creationist view, (2) how well informed the students were about the theory of evolution, and (3) whether there was a correlation between the level of understanding of the theory of evolution and the expression of a creationist position. An identical post-course survey was used to determine if there was any significant shift in position before and after a semester of instruction in a college biology or zoology course in which evolution was taught.

The results revealed that students who are initially in a transitional stage of cognitive development undergo the greatest move away from a creationist viewpoint, toward a true understanding of the theory of evolution. Classification of theories of origins according to Scott and accommodation theory informed the analysis of survey results.

### **Session 11.3**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. RESEARCH METHODS AND STATISTICS (DISPLAYS)..... Mississippi Queen**

#### **A Template for Teaching the Pearson “r” Correlation Technique**

Robert L. Kennedy, University of Arkansas Medical Sciences;  
 Pamela M. Broadston, University of Arkansas - Little Rock

#### **Analysis and Application of Educational Research: An Online Course that Creates a New Culture for Learning**

Donald Snead and Barbara N. Young, Middle Tennessee State University

Content requirements, criteria and standards, and personal needs and issues of learners drive course design. Multiple modes of interaction, such as small group discussion, large group discussion, teacher to individual student communication, and individual student to individual student communication, must be incorporated into course design. Both traditional onsite course models and newer, more innovative, online course delivery systems must incorporate these components into course design.

Analysis and Application of Educational Research was designed with the above in mind as an innovative online course. The online graduate course was designed and structured for effective delivery, using the WebCT online development program and its components, with attention given to meaningful interaction, quality feedback, relevant and enriching activities, inquiry-based readings and activities, and research opportunities not typically available or engaged in when utilizing the traditional onsite course delivery format. The online course design provided for a more dynamic, complex, and enriched learning environment for the inquiry-seeking graduate student. Learners were immersed in course content within this alternative learning environment through multiple styles of delivery, Internet resources and Internet-based telereasearch, and numerous inquiry-based tasks.

As a result, a totally new, dynamic culture for learning emerged utilizing interactive WebCT components such as Online Personal and Group Discussion Boards; Group Chat Rooms; Student Tools including email links, Student Personal Profile Homepages, online grade access, and Essay Drop Box with instructor feedback capability; External Links; Course Documents including handouts, articles, and resources; and other links and tools. Poster display session noted content description including Syllabus, Content Modules, Semester Calendar, Readings, Requirements, and description of links to various pages and tools, and essays and assignment directions. WebCT Course Map/Menu settings, navigation, and tools available and utilized within WebCT for this course were addressed.

#### **Challenges and Facilitators of Faculty Involvement in Research**

Kyna Shelley and Freda M. Kirkland, University of Southern Mississippi

Despite the undisputed emphasis on high-quality teaching, the common measure of success of a college faculty member, the performance on which promotion and tenure decisions are primarily made is research productivity. Not only does the number of publications impact faculty performance evaluations, but with the rising costs of higher education, faculty are also expected to seek out and procure research grant monies. Although faculty almost unanimously report that they are genuinely interested in research and acknowledge the importance of grant funding, large numbers also report that they do not engage more fully in these activities because of lack of time, training, or support.

The goal of this project, used initially as a class research project, was to assess the challenges that university faculty face and the facilitators that help these faculty participate in research activities. Unlike most prior studies, this project focused on members of a professional education unit within a research-extensive university. Input from a faculty focus group guided the development of a 93-item questionnaire. Items included demographic and professional questions, as well as those addressing the relative influence of factors on research participation and productivity. Whereas the survey included numerous challenges and facilitators identified by various prior studies, this project included additional factors and evaluated experiences with research separately from those with grant writing.

Results indicated that, similar to related research about barriers to research activity, these respondents viewed lack of time as being the biggest barrier to greater research productivity. Whereas the institutional environment was perceived as supportive of both research and grant writing and equitable in providing research incentives and recognition, participants nonetheless reported that research could be facilitated by increased training, particularly the presence of a research and grant-writing mentor, and incentives such as course releases that increase time available for research and grants.

#### **Culturally Congruent Methodology in Nursing Dissertations**

Betty Clavijo Bennett, Southern University - Baton Rouge

Recognition of the potential for misrepresenting cultural minorities by using measures developed and normed with other populations should prompt the development or adaptation of appropriate research methodology. Thoughtful consideration of cultural nuances will mitigate potential researcher bias and ensure enhancement of the interlinking aspects of research validity. This paper presented a discussion of the five types of validity evidence based on: test content,

response processes, internal structures, relations to other variables, and consequences of testing [American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Psychological Association (APA), and National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) 1999; Goodwin, 2002]. These types of evidence of validity were examined with consideration of the threats to validity imposed by cultural biases utilizing a format established by Hambleton, Merenda, and Spielberger (2005) for assessing construct, method, and item biases.

Nursing dissertations from a large southern university were examined and deficiencies noted with respect to culturally congruent methodology. Leininger's Culture Care Diversity and Universality Theory (1991) informs about the concept of culture as groups characterized not only by ethnicity or race, but by age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, or socio-economic status. In order for researchers to have cultural proficiency in conducting research they need to be cognizant of diverse expressions of constructs and appropriate methodology. Unfortunately, as noted by Jacobson (1997), a common error in nursing research is the assumption that a widely used and published measure is conceptually and psychometrically sound. If research methodology is not culturally competent in diverse healthcare systems, how effective will it be?

### **An Example of Problem-Based Learning in a Research Methods Class**

Anastasia D. Elder, Mississippi State University

Problem-based learning (PBL) environments encourage students' critical thinking and active engagement with classroom material (e.g., Evenson & Hmelo, 2000). PBL is a student-centered approach to instruction in which students learn material by way of addressing or solving an authentic problem. A PBL case was developed and evaluated for use in a senior seminar class on Research Methods for undergraduates majoring in Educational Psychology (n=15). It was designed to challenge students to: (1) develop a researchable question, (2) distinguish between different types of research questions, and (3) review concepts of independent and dependent variables. The case included a survey instrument on academic cheating and a mission to "do some research and report back to the University administrators."

Students worked in groups creating three different research questions (i.e., descriptive, comparative, and correlational), delineating independent and dependent variables, and critiquing the survey instrument. Groups shared their responses with the larger class. In addition to addressing the objectives of the case, discussion in the larger class incorporated issues of sampling, development of survey items, and ethics in data collection and management.

Evaluations collected at the end of the case revealed that 86% found it very interesting, and 62% found it very informative. Students' qualitative reactions indicated that the PBL activity enlightened them on a variety of research topics and highlighted some issues for the researcher/instructor regarding use of PBL in the classroom, namely, the social challenges involved in group work.

#### **Session 11.4**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**Presider:** Martha Tapia, Berry College

### **Using Calculators in Calculus Education**

Mary Kay Bacallao and William Otis Lacefield, Mercer University

As new learning technologies have been introduced in mathematics classrooms, teachers, school leaders, and educational researchers have often wondered what the impact of these new devices would be. Studies on the impact of computers on student learning in calculus present mixed views on the relative merits of computer-assisted learning in calculus. This paper focused on the varied and at times contradicting impact of calculus computer software programs on student learning.

Technological advances have given calculus teachers an opportunity to complement mathematical reasoning with the computational and graphical power of computers. Used effectively, these computer applications can allow students to visualize and conceptualize concepts, many times even before mastering hand calculations. However, before taking a headlong leap into using computers in calculus teaching, it is necessary to consider all computer-assisted implications. In any given course or class period, there is only so much time available. Inevitably, instruction involving computers will take time away from traditional methods. Will the learning that results from new teaching methods minimize the learning that would have taken place with tried-and-true methods that have been used for hundreds of years? If so, what steps need to be taken to counteract any possible negative effects on student learning? These are the questions that this research paper attempted to answer through the analysis of the varied and often contradictory research that has been conducted in recent years on using computers to enhance calculus teaching.

### **An Examination of the Use of Item Response Theory and Classical Test Theory to Estimate Ability**

Malenna Sumrall and Scott Snyder, University of Alabama – Birmingham

Ability estimates in item response theory (IRT) are conceptually more appealing than simple raw scores because IRT estimates take into account, at a minimum, the difficulty of each item. It is quite possible that two identical raw scores might produce different IRT ability estimates when the response patterns differ. However, previous research has found strong correlations between calculations performed using IRT and calculations performed on the same data set using classical test theory. While IRT has many uses, the question arises: Is it always the best method?

This study compared IRT ability estimates (thetas) and raw scores using data from test items that were administered as pretest and posttest to teachers participating in a summer mathematics workshop. The items in the tests were from a bank of items designed specifically for such a use. These items have been piloted using large samples and have been analyzed extensively. Using the established IRT item difficulty parameters, a one-parameter IRT model was applied to estimate the ability level of each of the workshop participants on their pretest and on their posttest. Those ability levels were then correlated with the corresponding raw scores. The correlations were extremely high, indicating that either measure of ability could be used with confidence. When findings concerning ability must be communicated to an audience with limited measurement knowledge, raw scores seem to be a better choice.

### **Teaching Algebra with Science**

Mary Kay Bacallao and William Otis Lacefield, Mercer University

In recent years, prompted by national standards that advocate the integration of science and mathematics, secondary mathematics and science teachers have sought to enhance their students' knowledge through capitalizing on the interconnectedness of these subjects. This paper discussed some integration ideas for connections between algebra and science. A brief historical and pedagogical discussion was followed by starter ideas that teachers can use to integrate algebra with science instruction that will mutually enhance the teaching and learning of both subjects. The Benchmarks for Science Literacy, The National Research Council, and the National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics all agree: making connections between mathematics and science have positive effects on student learning for both subjects.

As early as 1905, research had been conducted on both the pedagogical and content knowledge teachers need to successfully integrate mathematics and science teaching. Most of the research conducted from 1901-1989 focused on integration of math and science in the elementary and middle grades. The number of studies published on the integration of math and science from 1990-2001 has increased dramatically. These more recent studies have emphasized the integration of secondary mathematics and science to a greater degree. However, the percentage of articles that describe curriculum and instruction has decreased from 11% in the years 1901-1989 to 5% in the years 1990-2001 (Berlin & Lee, 2005). Although articles on curriculum and instruction for the integration of mathematics and science represent a small percentage of the literature, this paper focused specifically on curriculum and instruction for the integration of algebra and science. Specific ideas for the successful integration of the two subjects were discussed.

#### **Session 11.5**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. MINORITY RECRUITMENT/STUDENT RETENTION..... Riverboat**

**President:** Fanni L. Coward, University of Alabama - Huntsville

#### **An Examination of Student Support Services at a Research Extensive University**

Eric L. Penalber, Michael Burnett, and Spencer J. Maxcy, Louisiana State University

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of level of participation in services provided by the Student Support Services (SSS) program on the grade point average (GPA) and retention of entering freshmen who also entered the SSS program at a research extensive university in the South. Participants in the study were 152 SSS students who entered this university in the fall semesters of 1996 and 1997. A researcher-designed, computerized recording form was used to collect data. The variables measured were selected based on the literature and the information that was obtainable from the admission and student records data bases. All information utilized for this study was collected unobtrusively from the data bases. Findings indicated that peer mentoring, tutoring, counseling, and study skills training were provided to participants in the study group, and that hours earned and hours carried each semester significantly impacted student grade point averages. The mentoring and study skills services provided by SSS, as well as cumulative hours earned and high school academic grade point averages, influenced student retention. Results of this study also indicated that students who earned more credit hours each semester were more likely to continue until they graduated.

As a result of the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that administrators and counselors of the SSS program carefully examine the high school academic GPAs of students enrolled in the program to assist in identifying students who are at greater risk of unsatisfactory academic performance. The researcher recommended that SSS staff work closely with participants to develop a degree plan that includes an outline of the courses for which each student will enroll each semester. Program administrators should also investigate the possibility of expanding the study skills program beyond the first year for the potential beneficial effect on student retention.

#### **Undergraduate Faculty Members' Perception of Their Role in Increasing Student Success and Retention**

David S. Hood, Brentwood (TN) Middle School

This study examined the relationship between faculty perception of their role in increasing student retention and actual interaction with students at Tennessee State University. The primary purpose of this study was to determine if undergraduate faculty perception of their role in increasing student success and retention is related to their actual level of interaction with students outside of the regular classroom setting. In addition, faculty interaction with students was examined based on gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, institutional origin, rank, faculty appointment, and status. The sample for this study consisted of 151 undergraduate faculty from Tennessee State University.

A self-developed perception survey was used to gather the data to complete the study. A peer review panel of six experts in the field reviewed the instrument to establish content validity. There were three research questions, nine research hypotheses, and nine null hypotheses used to determine if there was a correlation between undergraduate faculty members perceived roles and actual level of involvement, and to determine if significant differences existed based on gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, institutional origin, rank, faculty appointment, and status.

Findings of this study were: (1) there was a significant correlation between undergraduate faculty perception of their role in increasing students' success and retention and actual interaction with students outside of the regular classroom; (2) there was not a statistically significant difference in the actual level of interaction with students based on the gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, rank, faculty appointment, and status; (3) a statistically significant difference was found for participants' actual level of interaction with students outside of the classroom based on the institutional origin of the participants; and (4) expectation, faculty roles, knowledge of current retention rate at TSU, age, rank, and status could account for 37% of the variance in faculty interaction.

#### **Paradox of Conquering Student Retention Issues: A Study of Historically Black Colleges and Universities**

Edward D. Brown and Janine Brouillette, Alabama State University

The likelihood that an African American student will remain at an institution to graduate can be described as a series of behavioral, cognitive, and emotional interactions between the student and institution. A large proportion of African American students faces a variety of potentially defeating challenges when it comes to completing college. These challenges exist for many African American students before and during college. A major concern of socially conscious educators is the provision of support to these students and the facilitation of their college attendance and graduation.

This paper was based on a research project conducted during an internship at an historically black university. The project involved qualitative and quantitative statistics on a number of variables in an attempt to identify common threads that might help provide solutions to the great number of students not returning. The survival of historically black colleges and universities depends increasingly on showing that they provide educational benefits not otherwise available. This paper addressed those issues, as well as factors and strategies that may predict persistence of African American college students.

**Session 11.6**

**2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M. LINKING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR READING AND SPELLING FOR STUDENTS WITH MILD LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS (TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

Alexandra A. Conniff and Kate Simmons, Auburn University

Teaching techniques for direct instruction reading and spelling were presented. Participants learned strategies for teaching reading decoding, reading comprehension, and spelling for all students, including students with mild learning and behavior problems. Research-based techniques for accessing the curriculum for students with disabilities were presented. Strategies for linking effective classroom management through instruction were emphasized.

**Session 12.1**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. LEADERSHIP..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** Randy L. Anderson, University of Southern Mississippi

**Teacher Preferences of Educational Leadership Students**

Ronald A. Styron and Wanda Maulding, University of Southern Mississippi

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's standards for accreditation of Departments of Educational Leadership contain a defined knowledge base that is expected of all DEL graduates. A key question regarding the teaching of this knowledge base is if a DEL professor can be effective if her/his acquired knowledge base is derived solely from theory with no related experience pertaining to the implementation of those theories.

Eighty students enrolled in a graduate educational administration program were surveyed to help determine the qualities that they felt most desirable in their professor(s). The program had a total enrollment of 250 students and was found within the southern region of the United States. It had both instructors with K-12 administrative experience and teachers who were recent graduates with no administrative experience.

Participants were asked to complete demographic information and respond to seven questions, including one open-ended question. Responses were anonymous, and no attempt was made to match surveys with participants. The authors used a selective coding technique to create topical categories for each response set. These categories were then reviewed and revised anonymously by an independent team of graduate student researchers who then grouped survey responses into appropriate categories. Survey data were quantified by recording the relative frequency with which each response category appeared.

The information appeared to indicate that students participating in this study prefer professors with backgrounds in K-12 administration, but would also like them strongly grounded in theory. Another conclusion was that of the disconnect in student's minds between the aspect of theory and practice. Although scientist-to-practitioner is a model taught in classrooms, it does not appear to be one in practice by those in the field.

**Internet Lends Support for Educational Leadership Interns in Rural Schools**

Amany I. Saleh, Arkansas State University

Graduate internship in education is one of the most difficult and stressful experiences students go through during their training to earn a certificate and/or a degree in educational administration or curriculum leadership (Martin, Wright, & Danzig, 2003). One of the commonly cited concerns by the interns is the isolation and resistance from their peers they face in their internship sites. Providing constant support and communication has become one of the top priorities for many colleges of education internship directors. However, in many states, students are conducting their internship in their own schools in rural areas hundreds of miles away from the university campuses. With the increasing financial constraints on universities, the traditional model of supervising interns on school campuses, especially at the graduate level, is fast disappearing. The utility of the Internet provides college supervisors a way to keep constant communication with these interns, reducing the need to conduct school visits. Utilizing the Internet also affords internship supervisors with greater opportunities to lend their support to students in an immediate and persistent fashion. The author of this paper described the experience in such an endeavor as the Internet was used to conduct a unique model of supervision and to provide the needed support for interns and also shared students' comments about the experience as data to support the findings.

**Fitness to Lead: The Importance of Stone Age Nutrition**

Jack Blendinger, Linda McGrath and Vince McGrath, Mississippi State University;  
and Lauren R. Wells, University of West Alabama

**Session 12.2**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH..... Levee**

**Presenter:** Anastasia D. Elder, Mississippi State University

**Voices from the Classroom: The Impact of TAKS Preparation in a Third-Grade Classroom**

John A. Sargent and Michelle West, East Texas Baptist University

The purpose of this study was to investigate the way preparation for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam affected classroom instructional methods. TAKS is administered annually and serves as the state's high stakes exam. The research question guiding this action research study was:

How does preparing for the TAKS test affect classroom instructional methods in a third-grade classroom?

The participants in the study were 22 third-grade students located in a semi-rural elementary school in northeast Texas. The study took place over a 14-week period. Data collection procedures included observations/fieldnotes, reflective journals, and student and teacher interviews. Categories were generated through the constant comparison method with continual refining and analysis. Three themes emerged from the data analysis: (1) the amount of time spent focusing specifically on the TAKS test detracted from overall classroom learning, (2) a lack of effective planning for preparation of TAKS instruction lead to student disengagement and boredom, and (3) pressure to get students ready for the TAKS test thwarted the teacher from giving each student the attention deserved.

Implications from this study were in several areas. The vast amount of time spent by teachers in preparing students for high stakes tests detracts from the time available to meet the needs of students. Students with learning problems require extra time that is not available. Also, time devoted to reviewing worksheets and other specialized test preparation activities results in student burnout and apathy. Teachers should prepare for high stakes tests by using varied learning activities. Moreover, time spent in student TAKS preparation results in neglect of subjects not being tested for that year. Teachers must teach all subjects in the curriculum and not specialize in subjects being tested on the TAKS.

### **In Their Own Voices: A Case Study of Individual and Collective Experiences in Cooperative Education**

Matt M. Fifolt, Peggy Delmas, Jennifer Fritschi, Tonya Perry, and  
Nataliya V. Ivankova, University of Alabama – Birmingham

For many students, Cooperative Education (co-op) serves as a transitional bridge between school and work. Because of a paucity of research from students' perspectives, a need existed to study the complex nature of the co-op experience from their unique vantage point. This qualitative case study explored the co-op experience for eight students at Southeastern University focusing on their daily experiences in the co-op program, benefits and challenges of being a co-op student, and how participation in the program helped students learn about their intended professions.

The research used a qualitative case study approach to provide in-depth exploration of the participants' experiences of co-op and to secure multiple perspectives on the central phenomenon. The students involved had all participated in the university's co-op program for at least one semester and were all working at different sites. Students were enrolled in the fields of Engineering, Computer Science, and Business. Data were collected from multiple sources, including formal interviews, reflective journaling, and document analysis over a five-week period. Researchers developed codes from interviews and documents. Codes were aggregated into the following seven themes: roles/responsibilities, benefits, drawbacks, schedule, interactions, environment, and experience. Themes were grouped into three meta-themes: environment, transition, and culture. One of the prevailing sentiments from the research was that students experienced a great deal of conflict in balancing the dual roles of both "student" and "employee" without being able to fully commit to either one. Findings suggested implications for co-op employers, parents, students and colleges.

By listening to the voices of the students, the researchers learned how the concepts of work culture, environment, and transitions affected students' co-op experience. As a primer for qualitative research on co-op, researchers proposed this investigation as a springboard for further discussion in the areas of interpersonal relationships and alternative forms of learning.

### **Study of the Influences of a High School Career**

Roger H. Nadeau, Jefferson Parish (LA) Schools

This phenomenological study documented the influences of a high school career exploration program, Experience-Based Career Education (E.B.C.E.), on the professional lives of nine adults of former program participants. E.B.C.E. was an experience-based, student-centered program that helped students develop long-term career goals and then reassessed those goals based on community-based, externship experiences. The students in this 2004 study completed the two-year program in 1989 and 1990.

The findings indicated that the utilization of John Dewey's experience-based, student-centered philosophy, the basis for E.B.C.E., effectively enhanced the learning process. Study participants developed life guides/philosophies, such as the importance of responsibility, commitment, dedication, and hard work. Adult mentors played an important role in participants' personal and professional lives. Program participants also experienced flow, a condition linking high challenges to feelings of enjoyment, self-worth, and ongoing development, based on their successfully meeting challenges.

The author adopted a phenomenological approach in an attempt to understand the E.B.C.E. program's phenomena and utilized data and theoretical triangulation, member checking and various interview techniques to ensure the credibility of this study. To ensure transferability, the author collected detailed descriptions of data and thoroughly analyzed and interpreted data to enable readers to judge the applicability of findings to other settings. To ensure confirmability in this study, the author conducted a confirmability audit to determine if the findings and interpretations were supported by data and also utilized data and theoretical triangulation; identified foundations upon which findings are based; and described measures taken to diminish researcher bias. To ensure dependability, the author utilized data, theoretical triangulation, and multiple methodologies. The study's data were gathered exclusively through an Internet focus group session and follow-up email questions. Member checking was utilized to allow participants to react to other participants' comments before follow-up questions were designed for the Internet focus group session.

#### **Session 12.3**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION (DISPLAYS)..... Mississippi Queen**

### **Using Repeated Reading to Increase Fluency in Disabled Middle School Readers**

David D. Paige, University of Memphis

This study examined the effects of repeated reading using above-grade-level narrative passages on (1) reading rate as measured in words per minute (wpm) and (2) reading miscues. A single group, pretest-posttest design was used to measure the treatment effects.

The study group consisted of 11 sixth-grade African American students with learning disabilities who received language arts instruction in a self-contained special education setting. A pretest-posttest measurement was conducted using the Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory for the Classroom to measure reading level and reading rate. The average reading level for the study group was 3.3.

The study treatment lasted for six weeks and consisted of each participant reading a 100-word narrative passage once per day for five consecutive days. A different passage was used for each of the six weeks, and the passages were on a 5.0 reading level. During the reading of the passage, the participant had one minute to read as much as possible, after which the number of words read and the number of reading miscues were recorded.

Pretest-posttest measurement of wpm increased from 87.6 to 116.3. A paired sample t-test of the same measure for reading rate was found to be

statistically significant at  $p < .017$ . Study effect size was .86.

The study results suggested that for the classroom teacher, daily, extended use of a repeated reading intervention with above-grade-level passages may have two positive effects on students with reading disabilities. First, reading rate may increase, meaning that a greater volume of text can be read, enabling a student to read more productively. Secondly, a decrease in reading miscues may also occur, resulting in greater decoding accuracy and aiding comprehension. These two factors may improve overall reading efficiency.

### **Special Education Identification Rates and the Use of Certified School Psychologists in Kentucky**

Robert P. Lyons and Mardis Dunham, Murray State University

This study examined the special education identification rates of 176 school districts in the state of Kentucky to describe: (1) the influence of school and community SES factors on special education identification rates, (2) the extent that minority children are over-identified, and (3) the impact of the use of certified school psychologists on the identification process as evidenced by the resulting identification rates.

Special education identification rates of the state's 176 school districts ranged from approximately 9% to 31%, with African American children representing 0% to 65% of identified children. Within each of the categorical disability, identification rates ranged widely as well. Preliminary analyses indicated several significant trends, including school and/or community estimates of poverty (free lunch participation, percentage of adults with high school diploma) relating significantly with both the overall identification rate, and the percentage of minority children identified. Additional data has been requested from the Kentucky Department of Education about minority representation within each of the 13 categorical disabilities so that identification trends can be examined with more specificity.

In June of 2005, a survey was sent to all Kentucky Director's of Special Education regarding the district's use of certified school psychologists in the identification process. Of particular interest to researchers was the impact of certified school psychologists when utilized to obtain and interpret diagnostic data in the IEP meeting. It was hypothesized that identification rates were more reflective of federal guidelines when school psychologists are used in this way.

### **Web Resources for Professionals Concerned with Research Related to and Education of Students with Learning Disabilities**

Jimmy D. Lindsey, Chhanda Ghose, and Regina Patterson, Southern University - Baton Rouge

There are approximately three million students with learning disabilities (LD) receiving general and special education, and they represent 5% of the school-aged population and 50% of all students with disabilities. In increasing numbers, professionals concerned with these exceptional learners are using the Internet for research, instruction, and other intentions. The purpose of this display session was to present Web resources that professionals could access to understand and meet the needs of students with LD and engage in research to add to the developing knowledge base regarding this disabled population. These resources included different search engines (e.g., Google), directories (e.g., Yahoo), and megasearch engines (e.g., Dogpile). The resources also included selected websites professionals should access for research and statistical information or tools, including histories (e.g., Materials for the History of Statistics - <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/maths/histstat/welcome.htm>), glossaries (e.g., Howell's -<http://www.uvm.edu/~dhowell/StatPages/Fundamentals/Glossary.html>), tutorials (e.g., University of California - Irvine Library - <http://tutorial.lib.uci.edu/>), statistical tools (e.g., Sample Size Calculator - <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>), digital statistical books (e.g., Electronic Textbook StatSoft - <http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stathome.html>), chat rooms (e.g., Northeastern Education Research Association Chat Rooms - <http://www.nera-education.org/chatroom.html>), and organizations (e.g., MSERA - <http://www.msea.org>).

These resources included special education and LD-specific websites professionals can access to obtain general and LD information, including governmental agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Education [USDOE] Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html>), professional and parental organizations (e.g., Council for LD - <http://www.cldinternational.org/>; LD Association of America - <http://www.ldanatl.org/>), legislation (e.g., USDOE - <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>), university sites (e.g., University of Virginia - <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/sped/projects/ose/information/interventions.html>), and assessment and instructional sites (e.g., Reading Assessment) database for grades K-2 -<http://www.sedl.org/reading/rad/database.html>; Read-Think-Write - <http://www.readthinkwrite.org/>).

Attendees were asked to share their Web search and research-statistical tools and favorite special education and other sites related to learning disabilities.

### **Multiple Intelligences of Students with Learning Disabilities and Factors Related to Those Dispositions**

Vera J. Alexander and Jimmy D. Lindsey, Southern University - Baton Rouge

This study determined if students with learning disabilities (LD) exhibited: (1) different multiple intelligence (MI) dispositions (measured by the MI Developmental Assessment Scales [MIDAS]); (2) associations among their gender, ethnicity, and MI dispositions; and (3) differences in reading, mathematical, and spelling achievement by MI disposition and the interaction of MI disposition, gender, and ethnicity. It also determined if there were matches between perceived and identified MI dispositions by the students themselves and their special education teachers.

The accessible population was 166 fourth- and fifth-grade students with LD attending 17 elementary schools in an urban school system in a southeastern state. A stratified, proportional random sampling procedure was used to select 80 participants from the population (strata gender and ethnicity). Between-subjects designs were used; factors included MI disposition, perceived and identified MI dispositions, gender, and ethnicity. Dependent variables included the frequency of overall MI dispositions and by gender and ethnicity; Wide Range Achievement Test 3 (WRAT3) reading, mathematical, and spelling standard scores; and the number of matched and mismatched MI dispositions by the participants and their special education teachers.

Data were analyzed using descriptive, chi square, tests for the significance of difference between two proportions, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics (alpha level  $p < .05$ ). Findings indicated that the students with LD had: (1) different MI dispositions, but there were no associations between their gender and ethnicity and MI dispositions, and (2) different mathematical and spelling achievement by MI disposition (reading achievement was similar), and (3) MI disposition and ethnicity interacted to effect mathematical and spelling achievement, but not reading achievement. There were no significant matches between perceived and identified MI dispositions by the students with LD and their special education teachers. Findings were discussed, and the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research were presented.

### **Mode of Assessment and the Reading Performance of African American Students with LD**

Faye J. Jones, Orleans Parish (LA) School Board, and Jimmy D. Lindsey,  
Southern University – Baton Rouge

This study investigated the effects of mode of assessment (paper-and-pencil vs. computer), gender, and computer experiences on the reading scores of fourth- and fifth-grade African American students with learning disabilities (LD). The accessible population consisted of 412 African American students with LD (278 males and 134 females) attending 39 elementary schools and receiving general and special education services in an urban school district in a southeastern state. Eighty students from the population served as the sample and were selected using a stratified, random sampling procedure (stratum gender - 40 males and 40 females selected). To conduct this study, a one-way (1x2) and two two-way (2x2) between-subjects designs were used. The treatment variable was mode of assessment (paper-and-pencil vs. computer), and subject variables included gender (male vs. female) and computer experiences (limited vs. extensive access/use). The dependent variables were the participants' reading rate, obtained using one story from an extended basal reader passage, and word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension scores (literal, inferential, and critical), obtained by administering the Silvaroli and Wheelock Classroom Reading Inventory.

Descriptive statistics and one- and two-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were used to analyze the data. The covariates were the participants' Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement word identification or reading comprehension standard scores, and null hypotheses were tested (alpha level  $p < .05$ ). Results indicated that mode of assessment affected the participants' reading rate and word identification scores; African American students with LD assessed using the traditional method (paper-and-pencil) had higher reading rate and word identification scores. Mode of assessment did not affect the participants' vocabulary and comprehension scores and did not interact with gender or computer experiences to effect the participants' reading rate, word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension scores. Findings were discussed, limitations of the study were presented, and recommendations for future study made.

**Session 12.4**  
**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. MINORITY RECRUITMENT/ STUDENT RETENTION..... Delta Queen**

**Presenter:** Edward D. Brown, Alabama State University

**Mentoring Minority Students in Higher Education: A Review of Literature**

Robin T. Taylor, Glennelle Halpin, and Gerald Halpin, Auburn University

African American students are vastly underrepresented within S.M.E.T. (Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology) fields, and many higher education facilities use different techniques in attempts to level the playing field for them. Mentoring programs are one of the approaches that has been undertaken to assist students of minority races, specifically African American students, within higher education. The literature review focused on: (1) a brief introduction to the needs of African American students within S.M.E.T. fields, (2) mentoring within higher education versus business, (3) benefits and drawbacks of mentoring to minority students, and (4) types of mentoring programs.

Articles and studies were selected by relevance to higher education, and focused on minority groups, especially African American students, and an article or study's ability to define mentoring and different mentoring techniques. Also, articles were chosen with a focus on undergraduate mentoring versus mentoring at the graduate level.

Findings indicated that many higher education universities are interested in practices, programs, and activities that will help retain and recruit diverse students. Minority programs are often seen as a key for retaining minority students, and this review of literature hopes to show both positive and negative feedbacks from different types of minority programs.

Implications from this literature review were shared. A clearer understanding of what role mentoring has in higher education and what seems to work or not work should evolve. Implications from this literature review about how others could best assist minority cultures were discussed.

**Persistence of Transfer Students at a Southern University**

Tiffany F. Culver, Mississippi State University

The purpose of this study was to estimate a model to determine the factors that influence the retention of transfer students at Mississippi State University. Specific research questions to be addressed included: Are the transfer student requirements at MSU factors that are strongly related to the retention of transfer students? How can the information that is collected before the actual admittance of a student be used to predict retention? An existing dataset was obtained from the Office of Institutional Research. Specific variables included were institution, high school GPA, ethnicity, ACT scores, transfer GPA, transfer hours. For the purposes of this study, retention was defined as students attending MSU fall of 2000, 2001, and 2002 who were enrolled at MSU during the fall of 2003; 4,619 transfer students were included in the study and 3,850 of whom classified themselves as white, 627 African American, 40 Asian, 45 International, and 17 Indian. Of the total, 3,674 of these students were from community colleges and 907 from four-year institutions.

Data analysis consisted of a logistic regression. Only variables that were required by the Office of Admissions at MSU were used in the logistic regression analysis. Results suggested that the model is better at predicting students who will be retained than students who will drop out. Variables strongly related to retention include transfer hours, transfer GPA, ACT score, and gender. This information is useful in assisting university officials in policy decisions relating to admissions and the retention of transfer students. This information could also be used to enhance programs targeted at improving the persistence of the transfer student.

**Session 12.5**  
**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. ACHIEVEMENT..... Riverboat**

**Presenter:** John D. Sachs, University of South Alabama

**The Effects of Poverty, Disability, Limited English Proficiency, and Migrant Status on Kentucky School Accountability Indices**

Sara Lindsey, Morehead State University, Jennifer Latham Harris, University of Louisiana – Monroe



## **Wealth, Family, and Behavior: Do Money, Two Parents, and Good Behavior Equal Good Grades in School?**

Rebecca Jacobson, Troy University, and Tomeka Gibson, Troy University – Montgomery

In a perfect world, children of all races, socio-economic background, and family types would have, and would take advantage of, the opportunity to receive a higher education. Empirical research has shown that various socio-economic factors are associated with children's educational attainment: wealth, family structure, and social behavior. Many studies have found that socio-economic factors effect children's education, determining a child's success in, and beyond, the school setting. Such factors include wealth (savings, home ownership, stocks, and bonds), family structure, behavior, and quality of schooling. Different forms of wealth (economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital) provide both parents and children access to educational resources. Academic success often leads to increased social opportunities. Also a substantial number of studies have shown that social skills and self-efficacy in turn influence children's achievement.

Family structure also influences the educational accomplishments of children. As the number of single parent homes increases, studies suggest that the disruption in the home environment affects children academically. Many factors play a significant role in how children succeed in the classroom and can be used to predict how well they will perform as an adult in the working world. In today's society, education has become the key to success and a major factor contributing to the wage gap. Job opportunities once available to less well-educated individuals are scarce as more employers raise employment standards. In this currently changing job market, a high school diploma is not enough. Continuous education is required in order for an individual to excel in the working world. This study examined the role of socio-economic factors on children's success in the classroom setting. It is proposed that wealth, family structure, and social behavior are interrelated in relationship to achievement. The goal of this study was to evaluate how individuals perceive the socio-economic issues that influence academic achievement.

## **A Comparative Study of Parental Demographics For Students in Open-Enrollment Charter Schools and Public Schools in Arkansas**

Deborah Y. McAfee and Gail H. Weems, University of Arkansas - Little Rock

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a statistically significant difference based on parental demographics and parental factors of students enrolled in Arkansas public schools and Arkansas open-enrollment charter schools.

Four Arkansas open-enrollment charter schools, chartered prior to the 2004-2005 school year, and four public schools, nearby, were surveyed. The information was disaggregated into parent demographics of age, gender, number of children attending school in the home, income, educational level, marital status, and distance between the home and school. Forty parental factors were categorized into four headings: career, policy and procedures, academics and learning styles, and parent and community involvement.

A two-way comparative table analysis was conducted using crosstab on parental demographics. A t-test was conducted on the four parental factors. The key findings of the study indicated that charter parents supported their child's enrollment on the key parental factors.

### **Session 12.6**

**3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M. WRITING AND GETTING PUBLISHED  
(TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

John R. Petry, University of Memphis

Opportunities and problems associated with writing and publishing articles and manuscripts were discussed. Topics included sources of ideas for research and writing, guides for effective writing, elements of style, publication sources, preparing and submitting a manuscript, ethics in authorship, understanding the publishing process, and using writing/publishing for professional development. Objectives of the session were to increase the awareness of opportunities to publish, raise standards for writing quality manuscripts, and establish minimum guidelines for professional growth.

The ion addressed pertinent information designed to aid in the achievement of these goals. Activities included a diagnosis of the basic writing skills of attendees, analysis of articles ready for submission to publications, and administration of a predictive measure for publication success. Several sources for publishing (both print and electronic) were presented and discussed that gave the manuscript submitters a higher chance of achieving success or acceptance. Participants' manuscripts were evaluated for their content, style, impact on the reader, and value to the scholarly community.

Important emphases included knowing the audience to whom the publication is intended, knowing the expectations of the editor and journal and making sure the article addresses its main point effectively, having a definite message and reason for writing, writing effectively and distinctly, writing about subjects that the author knew, following the style of the publisher's writing, knowing the editor's preferences, and using the journal's format, understanding the publishing process: how journal articles have been requested, reviewed, rewritten, and accepted; recognizing that the writing, reviewing, and editing processes are time consuming; and following up on every submission, contacting the editor to determine status, and learning how to edit personal submissions. Participants had a broad understanding of writing and publishing as a result of attending this session and were motivated to begin or continue the process.

### **Session 13.1**

**4:30 P.M. – 5:20 P.M. ONLINE LEARNING..... Bayou**

**Presider:** Jeff W. Anderson, University of Alabama - Birmingham

## **A Phenomenological Study of Online Learning in a Community College Setting**

Carla S. Stout, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, and Charles R. Collins  
and R. Burke Johnson, University of South Alabama

The Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC), a consortium of 14 of Mississippi's community colleges, provides its students the opportunity to take distance learning courses from community colleges in Mississippi while getting support services from a local college. This study examined online learning

experiences of students taking classes in the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC) to find out what motivator, support mechanism, and/or driver is needed to take an online learning class and how the MSVCC online experiences compared to traditional classroom experiences. Based on previous studies, the researchers believe that successful online instruction occurs when learners use the Web to go through the sequence of instruction, to complete the learning activities, and to achieve learning outcomes and objectives. Data were collected through online discussion forums and online surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Repetitive key themes and ideas were established by using N6 (formerly NUD\*IST). Themes and ideas were used to establish a foundation that is purposeful and meaningful. Participants were all students from the 14 Mississippi community colleges participating in the MSVCC. The findings of the study suggested implications for online educators and students alike.

### **Teaching Multicultural Education Online Using Student Centered Pedagogy**

Joyce C. Nichols, Karen Rasmussen, and Fernaudra Ferguson, University of West Florida

Draves, of the Learning Resources Network, a distance learning group, maintains that within 20 years online classes will replace most lecture-based courses (Carnevale, 1999). Growth is also predicted by International Data Corporation (IDC). Draves stated that "Distance learning, where student and teacher are connected by technology rather than participating in a classroom, is becoming a viable option to traditional teaching methods, and is poised for major growth [33% annually] over the next several years" (IDC, 1999).

In this paper, the researchers described how a graduate-level course in multicultural education was transformed to an online course. In 2003, the university funded training for selected faculty interested in offering courses online. The authors were given the opportunity to teach graduate-level multicultural education courses in an online format. The authors used Knowlton's (2000) theoretical framework that focused on a student-centered approach to describe how to deliver the courses. Knowlton (2000) contends that online courses must be aligned with the student-centered approach to be educationally effective. Knowlton uses Connelly and Clandinin's (1988) model of the classroom to contrast student-centered and professor-centered paradigms of teaching and learning. There are two categories, including teacher-centered classrooms (usually positivist in nature and most often includes lecture) and student-centered classrooms often associated with constructivism that promotes the active involvement of students). The authors provided student reactions to taking a multicultural course online.

### **Distance-Learning as an Ecosystem**

Ruifang Adams, Idaho State University

To examine a distance-learning virtual classroom, the dominant research paradigm has separated mind from matter, or separated learners from environment. Recently, Zhao and Frank (2003) promoted the examination of technology integration from an ecological perspective. The ecology metaphor is used here to emphasize that in order to understand a complex distance-learning environment it requires a framework that is active, interdependent, and adaptive as a single ecosystem. "The emerging ecological paradigm proposes a unified view of mind, matter and life" (Frielick, 2004, p. 40).

The ecosystem proposed in this position paper suggested that individual learning occurs within a set of nested contexts that fit together somewhat like the levels in a virtual classroom ecosystem. The ecosystem approach describes learning in a distance-learning environment consisting of nested levels within the systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem. The innermost level, the microsystem, is the reciprocal relationship between the individual and the immediate environment. For distance-learning, it is the immediate physical and digital setting in which learners' activities are taking place. The mesosystem refers to the reciprocal relationship between learners and their immediate two or more microsystem learning environments. Within the mesosystem, diverse settings are related in a distance-learning environment through the Internet. The exosystem refers to dynamic interrelationships within the context of distance-learning, the connection between the formal university and informal settings (the student's home or office computer). The last outermost context, macrosystem, considers factors in general environment in a university as governed by global, political, cultural environment. Together they shape new university structures to transform the institutional culture, and in turn, to improve student learning. As a recommendation, the ecological approach could be used to inform policy makers, educational administrators, and instructors of the steps needed to develop distance-learning within the university ecosystem.

#### **Session 13.2**

**4:30 P.M. – 5:20 P.M. PRINCIPALSHIP..... Levee**

**Presenter:** David A. Wright, Jackson State University

### **Closing the Achievement Gap: A Model for Successful Principal Leadership in Impoverished Schools**

Portia I. Hull, University of Southern Mississippi

With the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, educational leaders, including school principals, are searching desperately to identify leadership behaviors and practices that will positively impact student achievement and promote Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for all students, including minorities and economically disadvantaged students.

Ten principals in the state of Mississippi were interviewed to determine differences in their leadership behaviors. All participants were employed in either a level 1 or a level 5 school. Two principals worked in central Mississippi, and the other participants worked in north Mississippi.

Grounded Theory, a qualitative research design, was used for data collection and analysis in this research project. Fourteen principals were given the opportunity to participate in this study. Participants were asked 11 questions during each interview. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The methods of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were used in the data analysis process. A coding review panel was utilized to establish reliability and validity.

The questions developed for this interview are based on a review of the literature concerning effective school practices, the work of the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and Robert Marzano.

The themes that emerged from this study indicate that principals in level 1 schools seek parental involvement, seek buy-in from the staff, focus on institutional management, and focus on instructional development. Principals in level 5 schools create a family environment, develop the faculty, focus on instructional development, and adopt a no-excuses policy.

While the themes generated in this study do not provide the perfect plan for success, they do provide useful, practical, and proven strategies for school leaders that may lead to success when working with minority and poverty students.

### **Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction and Task Performance of High School Principals**

Jerry G. Mathews, Mississippi State University, and Mark W. Neill, Idaho State University

This study was designed to survey high school principals about their perception of the impact of specific task performance factors that influenced job satisfaction, job performance, and retention in the principalship as measured by: (1) the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form, (2) a demographic survey, and (3) a set of open-ended questions. The target population consisted of 128 public high school principals in a western state.

The study used a mixed method research design to assess the task performance factors affecting job satisfaction of high school principals. This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess research process activities and analytic outcomes. Multiple linear regression analyses were performed to determine which demographic variables accounted for a statistically significant variation in the dependent variables. Open-ended, free response questions were used to collect detailed data from secondary school principals to go beyond the simple collection of descriptive data and support the complex process of analyzing behavioral and institutional characteristics.

Some of the results of the study indicated that general job satisfaction and task performance were influenced by gender, level of experience, number of vice/assistant principals. Specific factors for improving future principal job satisfaction and factors influencing task performance were indicated.

### **Teacher Leadership: The Impact on School Improvement**

Sonja Y. Harrington, Hyacinth E. Findlay, and Gwendolyn V. King, Alabama State University

Many state departments of education are concerned with teachers who receive post-baccalaureate degrees mainly for professional development and pay increases, with no intention to pursue administrative positions. States lose money with pay increases and supporting educational leadership programs that produce insufficient numbers of qualified administrative leaders, including assistant principals. As administrative positions go unfilled, impossible demands are made of current principals to be highly effective in the areas of instruction and management. To assist principals, teachers need to share the responsibilities of instructional leadership.

A common theme in the many calls for school improvement is the importance of teacher leadership (Sherrill, 1999; Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1998). Teacher leadership is not about individual "teacher power." Rather, teacher leaders work with colleagues for the purpose of improving teaching and learning (Patterson & Patterson, 2004). Zimpher and Howey (as cited in Sherrill, 1999) point out that "even the best teachers" not prepared for leadership assignments experience frustration and a lack of self-efficacy. Therefore, the roles of teachers as leaders need to be defined and clarified, and teacher leaders need to have a more purposeful preparation (Sherrill, 1999). Teacher leadership preparation programs may resolve these issues. Teacher leaders will be prepared to assist principals and share in the responsibilities for school improvement.

In this qualitative study, several research questions were addressed: (1) How is teacher leadership defined? (2) What are the benefits of having teacher leaders in schools? (3) What impact do teacher leaders have on terms of student achievement and behavior? and (4) What types of training in educational leadership programs do teachers need to be developed into effective teacher leaders?

Data were analyzed by constant comparative analysis, utilizing qualitative software, N6. Several recurring themes were prevalent regarding the need for teacher leaders in all schools. Recommendations for further study were discussed.

### **Session 13.3**

**4:30 P.M. – 5:20 P.M. TEACHER EDUCATION (DISPLAYS)..... Mississippi Queen**

#### **Opening Windows of Opportunity: Orientation for Future Teachers\*\***

Kelly W. Ryan, John B. Hammett, and Roland Thornburg, Jacksonville State University

#### **Improving Student Learning Outcomes Through the Implementation of Teacher Work Sample Folios**

Cheryl J. Cummins and Leslie Griffin, Delta State University

Teacher work sample (TWS) methodology has been implemented in the elementary education program at Delta State University to prepare teacher candidates to determine student learning and use reflective practice. The Renaissance Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality provides a model in which teacher candidates are required to develop documentation related to seven teaching processes believed to be critical to improving learning for all students.

During spring 2005, a teacher work sample folio was designed and implemented in CEL 497 Measurement and Evaluation to improve candidates' understanding of: (1) contextual factors in relationship to designing instruction, (2) the development of learning goals as aligned with state content standards, (3) assessment plans in terms of measuring student growth relative to learning goals and to inform instruction, (4) instructional strategies for the purpose of enabling all students to achieve the learning goals, (5) the use of formative data to make instructional decisions, (6) the analysis and reporting of student learning results, and (7) the reflection and evaluation of teaching and learning. The instructor for the course met with the students twice a week for instruction for eight weeks. Each meeting followed a similar format: (1) each of the seven processes was discussed with the whole group, (2) examples of acceptable documentation were generated, (3) individuals had the opportunity to share ideas, questions, etc. with a partner or the instructor, and (4) candidates developed individual teacher work sample folios. At the end of the eight weeks, each work sample was analyzed according to scoring rubrics. The scores related to each dimension of the TWS were then analyzed, and tentative results were used to guide implementation of this process during the student teaching semester.

#### **Comparing Preservice Teachers' Opinions of Public Schools to Gallup Poll Results**

Paige V. Baggett, Rebecca M. Giles, Carolyn Casteel,  
and Jayne Kennedy, University of South Alabama

The Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools traces and interprets the public's view regarding its schools in order to advance the discussion of educational issues (Rose & Gallup, 2004). This study compared the public's view of schools to those of preservice teachers to identify areas where increased dialogue is needed between the educational community and the public, as well as issues where the two groups might unite to help foster

change. Participants were 9 male and 132 female preservice teachers enrolled at a southern university. The majority (126) were elementary education majors. Thirty had children attending public schools. Data were collected using 22 multiple-choice items from the Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll. Researchers eliminated items containing a political component and added seven demographic items. Descriptive data, in the form of frequency and percentages, for participants' anonymous responses, were calculated using SPSS.

Findings suggested that preservice teachers' overall view of public schools is similar to that of the general public. While both groups agreed that funding is the biggest problem facing public schools, preservice teachers rated discipline as a larger issue than the public. Seventy-four percent of public respondents gave the schools in their community a grade of A or B, while 59% of preservice teachers gave their schools a C. In contrast to the public, preservice teachers strongly oppose using a single test to determine if a student receives a high school diploma and feel that there is significantly too much emphasis on achievement testing in schools today. Not surprisingly, preservice teachers, who are in a position to have detailed information and personal experience with the NCLB Act, view this legislation more favorably than the public, and the public sees parents as a more important factor in determining student performance than preservice teachers.

### **Impact of Field Experience on Preservice Teachers' Perceived Ability for Teaching Comprehensive Reading: Realistic or Wishful Thinking?**

Andrea M. Kent and Jennifer Simpson, University of South Alabama

For preservice teacher education candidates, and those teaching preservice teacher method courses, arguably one of the greatest challenges is to provide experiences that help candidates integrate theory and practice. Though simulations of K-12 classrooms are beneficial, the primary manner in which this bridging occurs is through field experience. However, often times and for varied reasons, the candidate does not see what is being taught at the university that is identified as best practice in research and implemented in the public school classroom.

The study examined how one university's extensive field experience during methods courses impacted preservice teacher candidates' perception of their knowledge and ability to teach a comprehensive approach to teaching reading in an elementary classroom. This was examined in relation to the amount the candidates reported seeing their mentor teacher implementing this reading approach.

One hundred thirty-six preservice teacher education candidates completed approximately 250 hours, three days per week, in an elementary classroom under the tutelage of a mentor teacher. The candidates simultaneously spent two days per week attending methods courses, including the reading methods course. The researcher spent the semester teaching a comprehensive approach to reading instruction. This approach included assessments to guide instruction, read alouds, shared reading, guided reading, working with words, and independent reading. All assignments were made in relation to these components and were to be carried out during the field experience.

At the conclusion of the semester, a Likert-type questionnaire was administered with the candidates. Data were analyzed and compared centering on the candidates' perceived knowledge of the comprehensive reading components, their perceived ability to teach the components, and the amount they reported their mentor teacher teaching these components. Tentative conclusions were drawn about the results of the data. A brief explanation of an expansion of the project for a longitudinal study was included.

### **A Collaborative Approach to Developing Highly Qualified Science & Mathematics Teachers\*\***

Peter Sheppard, Louisiana State University

### **From Oblivion to Engagement: A Model for Teaching Thoughtfulness and Responsiveness**

Naomi Jeffery Petersen, Indiana University - South Bend

This display presented a model for teachers to consider their profoundly influential role of influencing students' perspectives and habits, and how to confront the counter-productive tendency toward oblivion and how to foster thoughtfulness. Oblivion is a happy place, for ignorance is bliss. It confounds every instructor laboring to change students into wiser, more skilled graduates. Oblivion may be seen in students who focus exclusively on the concrete tasks required in the syllabus. This is not just a matter of low level thinking about extrinsic rewards: it is deeply rooted in competition and fear of failure. It is manifested by overreaction and risk avoidance. It is alleviated by civic engagement experience, by conscious awareness of oblivion and engagement, and by developing skills of contemplation and preparation. The impulse to avoid change is a barrier in itself, and teachers must introduce an alternative path.

This model was grounded in systems theory in that a helpful integrated graphic design illustrates the recycling effect of returning to oblivion after impulsive over-reaction or mindless habit or of returning to thoughtfulness after steps of contemplation and preparation. The emphasis here is that the paths become familiar habits that can be developed through intentional practice. Without the intervention of different strategies to respond to stress or to solve problems, students are likely to maintain their preference for oblivion and therefore contribute to the problems of poor communication, low productivity, and other results of disengagement. This model is also rooted in psycho-social constructivism. The interdependence of the community of learners is respected here as a powerful mediator between states of oblivion and states of engagement. The practical strategies emphasize metacognition and feedback to articulate and solidify principles of engagement and to highlight the need for teachers to confront their own tendencies toward oblivion and reaction.

#### **Session 13.4**

**4:30 P.M. – 5:20 P.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**Presenter:** Mary Kay Bacallao, Mercer University

#### **The Effect of Teacher Communication with Parents on Students' Mathematics Achievement**

This study examined the effect of teacher communication with parents on students' mathematics achievement. In the fall of 2003, the investigator selected a total of 52 students from four Algebra I classes taught by a teacher and randomly placed two classes in the control group and the other two classes in the experimental group. The parents of the students in the treatment group received monitoring sheets twice a week that contained students' daily homework grades, tests, conduct levels, and engagement levels. The parents in the control group did not receive monitoring sheets.

The study investigated three questions: (1) What are the effects of teacher communication with parents on student achievement in mathematics courses? (2) Are female and male students affected differently when their teachers have communication with their parents or guardians? (3) How does teacher communication with parents affect lower-performing students when they are compared with other lower-performing students in the control group?

With respect to mathematics achievement, the investigator found that students in the experimental group outperformed the students in the control group. With respect to gender, the results showed that teacher communication with parents did not affect student achievement differently. With respect to lower performing students, the researcher found that lower-performing students in the experimental group significantly outperformed those students in the control group.

### **Comparison of LEAP Scores of Fourth-Grade Students Taught by Mathematics Specialists and Self-Contained Teachers**

Carol L. Price and Thelma J. Roberson, University of Southern Mississippi

This paper presented the findings of a recent study of the use of elementary mathematics specialists to improve mathematics instruction and student achievement as measured by the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) fourth-grade mathematics test. The two null hypotheses tested in the study were: (1) There is no statistically significant difference in LEAP mathematics raw scores for 4th grade students taught by elementary mathematics specialists and those taught by self-contained teachers, and (2) There is no statistically significant difference between elementary mathematics specialists and 4th grade self-contained teachers on the following variables: (1) number of hours spent planning for mathematics instruction, (2) mathematics preparation, (3) perceived ability to teach mathematics, (4) personal feelings toward mathematics, and (5) teacher development. The testing of hypothesis 1 found no statistically significance; however, a pattern of higher scores for students taught by a mathematics specialist was noted that may indicate a need for further studies. The paper presented a discussion of this finding and explored the implications for using mathematic specialists in elementary schools.

When testing hypothesis 2, statistical significance was found in all areas, with one exception. It was noted that only one of the two measures used to quantify mathematics preparation revealed a statistically significance between the two groups. That measure was the number of elementary mathematics methods courses taken in college. The paper presented a discussion about why this may have occurred and addressed a possible limitation found in the instrument used to collect data for this study. Additionally, the paper included a brief review of the literature and a detailed description of the research methodology used in this study.

### **Relationship Between Fifth-Grade Teacher Qualification and Student Achievement in Mathematics in Five Mississippi Delta School Districts.**

Garfield Burke and Vickie Curry, Mississippi Valley State University

Considerable evidence exists that indicates that students taught by qualified teachers were more likely to demonstrate higher academic performance than students taught by teachers less qualified. This study examined the relationship between fifth-grade teacher qualification and student achievement in mathematics in five MS Delta school districts. The data collected included a list of names of fifth-grade teachers and scale scores for their students on the 2003 Mississippi Curriculum Test from Mississippi State Department of Education and a survey questionnaire that was administered to participants.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the relationship between: (1) the teacher's years of experience and students' performance in mathematics, (2) the teacher's highest level of educational attainment and students' performance, (3) the teacher's possession of MS teacher license and student's performance, and (4) the teacher's type of license (traditional, alternative, etc.) and students' performance. The four factors of the independent variable were: (1) the teacher's years of experience – included five levels: 0 - 3, 4 - 9, 10 - 25, 26 - 30, and 31 or above, (2) the teacher's highest level of educational attainment – seven levels: less than a bachelor's, bachelor's, bachelor's plus, master's, master's plus, specialist, and doctorate, (3) teacher's possession of MS teacher license – two levels: yes and no, and (4) the teacher's type of license – four levels: traditional, alternative, reciprocity, and emergency. The dependent variable was the students' mathematics scale scores on the Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT). The ANOVA was significant for: (1) the teacher's years of experience and students' performance  $F(4, 189) = 15.309, p = .000$ , (2) the teacher's highest level of educational attainment and students' performance  $F(2, 191) = 20.76, p = .000$ , and (3) the teacher's type of license (traditional, alternative, etc.) and students' performance  $F(1, 192) = 28.29, p = .00$ .

#### **Session 13.5**

**4:30 P.M. – 5:20 P.M. COLLEGE STUDENTS..... Riverboat**

**President:** Edward B. Reeves, Morehead State University

#### **The Value of Service-Learning for College Students**

Wendy Jordanov, Tennessee State University, and Srilata Bhattacharyya,  
New York Institute of Technology

According to the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, almost 30% of the 6.7 million students in public and private four-year institutions of higher education report participating in a course where service is part of the curriculum, and almost two million of these students participate in service-learning (Shumer & Cook, 1999). Service-learning is defined as "a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility" (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, p. 112). This literature review explored what colleges and universities across the nation value about service-learning. Articles and studies about the value of service-learning for college students written since 1995 were reviewed. Findings suggested that service-learning has had a positive impact on the lives and actions of many college students. Implications of the reviewed studies suggested that service-learning is a valuable tool to motivate students to learn and to apply what they learn in order to help others.

## Measuring the Academic Orientation of Students Attending a Nontraditional University

Sandra M. Harris, Troy University

Academic orientation is a primary factor that influences student persistence and success. Having a succinct way of measuring academic orientation could provide useful information for predicting academic performance, and thus designing appropriate intervention programs. The purpose of this study was to assess the external validity of the Survey of Academic Orientation (SAO) as suggested by previous research. The researcher sought to determine: (1) if psychometric properties of the instrument held for students attending a nontraditional university, and (2) whether scores from the SAO could be used to predict course performance.

The SAO is a 36-item, self-report inventory that contains an adaptiveness index (AI) that measures overall academic outlook, and includes six scales that measure the academic orientations of structure dependence, creative expression, reading for pleasure, academic efficacy, academic apathy, and mistrust of instructors. Respondents were 280 students enrolled in various psychology courses at a nontraditional university. Reliability analyses generated an alpha coefficient of .78 for the AI and alphas, which ranged from .59 to .81 for the six scale scores. The mean score for the AI was 111.58, and means for the scale scores ranged from 14.57 to 23.84. Two scale scores (reading for pleasure and academic self-efficacy) were significantly, positively correlated with course performance. Two scale scores (apathy and structure dependence) were significantly, negatively correlated with course performance.

Results on the psychometric properties of the instrument were consistent with previous findings as were the correlations among scale scores and the correlations between scale scores and course performance. The construct and predictive validity of the SAO were supported. Results suggested that: (1) the academic orientation of nontraditional students is similar to that of their traditional counterparts, and (2) that the SAO could be used as a method of identifying students at potential risk of academic failure.

## Non-Traditional Community College Students' Perceptions of Educational Progress as a Result of Their Experiences Outside of College

Regina A. Lowery, University of Memphis

Community colleges are quite different from other institutions in the educational hierarchy. From the mission of the institutions to the students they attract, community colleges are designed to be able to meet the needs of numerous populations of people. Pascarella (1997) makes note that students are more likely to attend community colleges on a part-time basis while also navigating additional responsibilities such as work and family. "New majority" students comprise two groups: (1) students over 25 who live off campus, work over 20 hours per week, have families, and attend college on a part time basis, and (2) traditional age students of color (Arnold et al., 1993). In terms of this "new majority," community college campuses have been legends before their time, servicing this novel population.

This study examined specific aspects of experiences outside of college life that may affect how non-traditional students perceived their educational progress (gains) utilizing the Community College Student Experience Questionnaire (CCSEQ). External factors included: the effect of job on schoolwork, the effect of family on schoolwork, time spent on campus not in class, time spent studying, and perceived effort in coursework. A random sample of 750 students was taken from the full dataset of the 1999-2001 CCSEQ. From this sample, students indicating they were 23 years of age or older were extracted. Students with answers on all pertinent questions were included in the final sample (n = 261) which consisted of 134 African American (51.3%) and 127 Caucasian students (48.7%).

Least squares multiple regression was used to determine whether the set of variables were the primary influences on non-traditionally aged community college students' perception of overall gains, and if so, what were the interaction effects by race. Implications for community college administration, professionals, and students were discussed in the context of the results.

### Session 13.6

4:30 P.M. – 5:20 P.M. **SCHOOL-BASED INTERVENTIONS: ADDRESSING CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS IN CHILDREN (TRAINING SESSION)\*\*..... Meeting Room 253**

Linda McGrath, Vincent McGrath, and Jack Blendinger, Mississippi State University



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**\*\* Where there is a paper and a name but no abstract, the abstract is missing. Please send the abstract to Lorraine Allen, [lallen@memphis.edu](mailto:lallen@memphis.edu).**

**Session 14.1**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. **POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION..... Bayou****President:** Sandra M. Harris, Troy University**The Long-Range Effects of Parental and High School Resources on Postsecondary Educational Outcomes**

Edward B. Reeves, Morehead State University

Do parental resources and high school resources have long-range consequences for postsecondary educational (PSE) success? If so, which set of resources carries the greater weight? Can these different sets of resources be substituted for one another, or are they complementary (i.e., the effect of each is intensified by the other)? Answers to such questions are important for education policy. For example, if empirical evidence points to these sets of resources serving as substitutes for one another, then the improvement of high schools may be expected to enhance the equal opportunity of all students in postsecondary institutions. But, if the evidence reveals that parental and high school resources, when combined, produce greater PSE attainment, then the improvement of high school quality could disproportionately favor the educational fortunes of students whose family backgrounds are advantaged.

These issues were addressed using a sample of 3,455 seniors in 279 high schools taken from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS:88/2000). The author used a variety of parental and high school resource variables to capture the advantages and disadvantages of high school seniors in 1992 (along with a number of control variables). The dependent variable was an ordinal scale of postsecondary degree outcomes in 2000. Using multilevel ordinal regression, the author found that both parental resources and school resources contribute to PSE attainment, although parental resources have somewhat greater weight. Of perhaps greater importance, the analysis showed that the interaction of these two sets of resources has a positive, statistically significant, and substantively important effect on PSE outcomes. Students whose family backgrounds are advantaged benefit disproportionately from attending high quality schools, and vice versa.

The models demonstrating these results were extremely robust, with the proportionate reduction of error approaching 0.90 in some instances. The results of this study provided insight into the intergenerational reproduction of educational status in the United States (Bowles, Gintis, & Groves, 2005; Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2005). The policy implications of the findings are clear and cautionary. A policy that centered solely on improving the quality of high schools could have the unintended consequence of creating greater inequality of PSE outcomes.

**A National Report Card Model for Technical Education Institutions - A Final Report**

Bill Coulton, Council on Occupational Education

The difficulties involved in measuring and comparing educational performance among postsecondary public institutions are well documented. An often heard lament is that there are no common benchmarks that will allow meaningful institution-to-institution and state-to-state comparisons. Five state agencies overseeing public postsecondary technical schools and colleges in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, along with the Council on Occupational Education (COE), sought to develop common benchmarks and a common report card. A grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), a unit of the U.S. Department of Education, partially funded the project for three years. It concluded August 30, 2004.

Outcomes of the project had a major impact upon operations of COE, four state agencies, and 756 public and private postsecondary campuses, and affected indirectly more than 211,000 students each year. Questions about consistency and reliability of data remained throughout the course of the project. A fear on the part of many participants that the data would be misused by oversight officials, state legislators, and others also prevailed. The summative evaluation results were positive. A post-project survey of institutions recognized in the 2004 Report Card sought to obtain responses about the uses and misuses of the data reported. The results found no misuses by any person or agency. In fact, the institutions used the Report Card appropriately as a morale booster for staff and faculty, as a prospective student recruiting tool, as an example of quality performance in attracting prospective employers of graduates, and as a positive public relations story with boards of education, labor organizations, and community groups. The negative and positive lessons learned from this project can certainly be applied to future accountability projects. Sample report cards were provided.

**Barriers to Advanced Placement in Career/Technical Education at a Community College Consortium**

Arthur J. Miller, Donna A. Lander, and Darlene A. Thurston, Jackson State University

This study determined barriers to advanced placement through articulation in career/technical education at a community college consortium. Barriers were classified into two categories: (1) direct – organizational factors, and (2) indirect – attitudinal factors. Of the 360 students composing the initial sample, 126 participated in the study. Reduction in the sample size occurred because two students did not respond to the questionnaire, and two students withdrew from the college. Of the 122 students (23 males, 99 females) completing the questionnaire, 106 were African American and 16 were Caucasian. The sample group consisted of: (1) 101 students who graduated in academic programs, (2) nine students who graduated from two-year secondary vocational programs prior to the enactment of Perkins III and the Tech Prep Initiative, and (3) 12 students who graduated from two-year secondary vocational programs following the enactment of Perkins III and the Tech Prep Initiative. Five students were selected for one-on-one interviews: (1) two completed a two-year secondary vocational program, and (2) three completed a series of single vocational courses within a secondary academic program.

The researcher used data collected on the questionnaire to determine whether direct or indirect barriers had an influence on the students' choice in selecting a vocational program. The researcher used the data collected through the interview process to compare the course content of secondary and postsecondary career/technical programs and the implementation of the Tech Prep Initiative at the secondary and postsecondary level. SPSS software was used to analyze the questionnaire data, and within case and across case techniques were used to analyze interview data. The findings of the study suggested three implications: (1) a need for review and revision of the guidelines established for implementing the Tech Prep Initiative, (2) the process of advanced placement through articulation, and (3) greater collaboration between secondary and postsecondary institutions.

### **The Impact of Academic Attainment Policy on Mississippi Postsecondary Career and Technical Programs**

Gail S. Baldwin, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, and Donna A. Lander  
and Darlene A. Thurston, Jackson State University

This study examined the impact of academic attainment policy on Mississippi postsecondary career and technical programs. The study progressed through three phases. Data were analyzed using pilot data for 2003-2004 to determine the impact of the policy for academic attainment on the status of career and technical programs. Data were analyzed for similarities and differences of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) states' measurement and standards for core-indicator—academic attainment. The third phase included a survey of deans or directors to determine their perception of measures and standards that might best benefit Mississippi career and technical programs in order to meet the performance level for academic attainment. No definite results were found; however, because of variation and inconsistencies, a study should be conducted on academic attainment policy for postsecondary career and technical programs in Mississippi.

#### **Session 14.2**

**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. TECHNOLOGY..... Levee**

**President:** Glenn Sheets, Arkansas Tech University

#### **Integrating Instructional Technology in Teaching Phonics**

Lishu Yin and Li-Ching Hung, Mississippi State University

The authors examined phonics instruction for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in grades K-12. The mastery of phonics skills can enhance the success of ESL students in learning to read. Integrating instructional technology is an effective approach for the ESL students to master the skills. While English is a new language for the ESL students who come from various linguistic backgrounds, the receptive skills needed to read English words and the productive skills needed to spell words are taken for granted by many of educators (Jones, 1996). Educators frequently do not realize how difficult it is for ESL students to connect a spoken word to a written symbol. Phonics instruction can definitely bridge the gap. Implementing phonics instruction in the reading curriculum for ESL students is necessary and crucial because research has clearly established phonemic awareness and phonics skills as significant in early reading development and in literacy achievement (Strickland, etc. 2000).

It is very challenging for the teacher to teach phonic skills to the students who do not speak any English. Traditional phonics exercises frustrate both teachers and students because students do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge to manipulate the language. Using interactive media such as video, audio, and computer software has provided a new avenue to teach phonic skills. Technology can create a relaxing, non-threatening learning environment to motivate ESL students to explore the new language. This paper described the integration of different media to bring the phonics skills alive for the ESL students and to meet their different learning styles. Examples of successful use included one fourth-grade student who used Hooked on Phonics and gained nine levels in one school year.

#### **Teaching and Learning with Computer Technologies: A Case Study of Teacher Perceptions**

Kathryn C. Poland, University of Louisiana – Monroe

To better understand how computers are affecting the teaching and learning process in a Title I elementary school, a qualitative case study was conducted to examine teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and practices regarding the use of computers for teaching and learning in school. This study addressed the following research question: How do teachers perceive the use of computers for teaching and learning in the school? A local elementary school was chosen as the site of this case study because of its accessibility, favorable reports of computer technology use in the school, and a climate of participatory acceptance by the principals and teachers. Methods of data collection included informal interviews with administrators and teachers, classroom and computer lab observations, examination of documents, and the administration of open-ended questionnaires to teachers and to fourth- and fifth- grade students.

Data from the questionnaires were analyzed by comparing, contrasting, grouping, and tabulating responses from open-ended questionnaires. Several themes emerged from the data. Teacher responses were grouped into four categories: (1) teacher computer use, (2) benefits to teachers, (3) benefits to students, and (4) problems. To provide confirmability of this case study, key informants and a peer debriefer reviewed the data analysis. The amounts of money being invested in educational technologies and the mandates from national, state, and local authorities that require teachers to integrate technology into their teaching warrant close investigation of the status of computer use in schools. Integrating technology into teaching is a complex phenomenon. This descriptive case study could help educators and researchers better understand how computers are affecting the teaching/learning process.



## **The Dilemma of Using Technology to Enhance Creativity**

Li-Ching Hung and Lishu Yin, Mississippi State University

Instructional technology is designed to enhance learning. Technology creates a learning-rich environment intended to stimulate and promote students' creativity. However, the failure to adequately train instructors and to appropriately implement technology will limit students' creativity. Technology can create a niche to nurture creativity in a creative mind (Sternberg, 1999). Creativity should possess some degree of quality of the combination of uniqueness and usefulness (Moss, 1996). Technology with visual and audio aids helps increase a spectrum of the occurrence of both uniqueness and usefulness. Incorporating technology into art therapy working with sounds and colors strengthens children's imagination and intuition (Hoy, 1998). However, if technology is not used appropriately in the classrooms, a negative impact may occur. An attempt to utilize various technologies by a teacher results in frustration for both the teacher and the student.

Concerns and specific suggestions were provided in this paper. Examples included: (1) putting students on the computer without giving direction and supervision causes the failure to reach the expected goal, and (2) teachers, because of a lack of training, do not know how to incorporate instructional technology effectively in their daily teaching activity to enhance students' learning.

### **Session 14.3**

**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION – P-12 PARTNERSHIPS..... Mississippi Queen**

**President:** James H. Lampley, East Tennessee State University

#### **Evaluating the Effectiveness of the International Baccalaureate Programme at the Middle School Level: A Partnership Involving University and Public School Faculty**

Paul T. Hackett, Columbus State University; James E. Witte and  
Maria Martinez Witte, Auburn University; Iris Saltiel,  
Troy University; and Mike Johnson and Kathy Hesler,  
Richards Middle School

This paper reported the results of the first-year evaluation of one project aimed at bringing together professionals from postsecondary and K-12 environments. The project was implemented at Richards Middle (RMS) in Columbus, Georgia and involved a collaborative partnership between several universities and RMS, resulting in a school-based evaluation initiative with direct implications for strengthening leadership, training, and instructional practices in schools. Faculty researchers from three universities from two states worked collaboratively with faculty and staff of a middle school that had just completed the first year of implementation of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme program in the sixth grade.

The primary goal of this inquiry was to evaluate the effect of the program on student achievement. A second goal of the investigation was to evaluate the effectiveness of the staff training and development process employed during the initial year in terms of effective professional learning practices. A third goal was to investigate the effectiveness of the collaborative process itself in terms of the implementation of the dialogic approach discussed in Clark et al. (1996).

To effect evaluation of student performance, researchers analyzed quantitative reading and math scores from the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Muscogee Assessment Program (MAP) tests. The research team twice surveyed teachers regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the IB Programme in order to gauge their perception regarding the effectiveness of teacher training and the degree and quality of implementation of IB practices in the classroom. In order to evaluate the collaborative effort itself, team members kept and shared extensive field notes on the implementation of the IB Programme at RMS, on efforts at professional learning, and of the development of the assessment model for the study.

#### **Evaluating a "Professors in the Schools" Program: Lessons Learned**

Beverly M. Klecker and Daniel L. Seth, Morehead State University

This paper described the evaluation for the third year of a continuing "Professors in the Schools" program. A concern for professors in teacher education programs has been the disconnect between the cultures of higher education and P-12 schools. At one university, this concern was addressed through a P-16 effort funding a "Professors in the Schools" fellowship grant. Selected professors (N=22) partnered with public school personnel of their choice. Each professor spent a minimum of 45 hours during one year in the public school. Many studies have focused on the participation of university professors in the public schools (e.g., Carino, 1990; Faetz & Warner, 2001; Hudson-Ross & McWhorter, 1997; Smith, 1969). The evaluation for the first two years of the grant in this study was a qualitative analysis of the journals that each professor maintained throughout the 45 hours (Barnett, Agaard, & Stanley, 2003). The evaluators for year three added quantitative measures to the qualitative analyses to triangulate data to verify and validate the qualitative analysis (Patton, 1990).

The evaluators designed a 10-question survey. Each question was followed by a five-point Likert-type item rating scale. Following each quantitative item, an open-ended question asked respondents to illuminate their quantitative ratings. Data were collected at two points, the beginning and the end of the school year, through electronic survey delivery. Data were analyzed, and the results were presented at the end-of-program meeting for faculty verification. Results indicated a very high degree of learning and satisfaction by the professors. These ratings increased across data collection points one and two. Presenting the qualitative illuminations immediately following the quantitative ratings greatly enhanced the meaning of both the qualitative and quantitative data. Suggestions for improving the program were included in the results.

#### **Community, Collaboration, and Clinical Practice**

Margaret Morris and Carolyn R. Garvin, Mercer University

The past decade has brought to schools of education across the country the challenge of reform within the framework of existing programmatic structures. Governors, governor-appointed commissions, legislators, and the general public have questioned the value, productivity, and relevance of teacher education programs. Accountability became and remains the underlying theme of those same politicians' and citizens' cries for reform. In response, the traditional teacher preparation program has expanded to include the notion of collaboration and "learning coalitions" (Kochan and Kunkel, 1998, p. 325) that present reciprocal opportunities for teaching and learning by school and university faculty. These school-university partnerships (Sandholtz and Finan, 1998) or professional development schools have provided the impetus for a restructuring of teacher preparation programs (Metcalf-Turner and Fuschetti, 1996) wherein the

three-fold purposes of the professional development schools are met. The three purposes, as identified by Stalling and Kowalski (1990) are: (1) to serve as field-placement sites for teacher candidates, (2) to promote the professional development of experienced teachers, and (3) to advance the knowledge base on teaching and learning by supporting reflection, inquiry, and research.

Accordingly, state accreditation agencies, influenced by the findings of the Holmes Group (1990), as well as the Carnegie Forum Report, A Nation Prepared: Teacher for the 21st Century (1986), have attempted to restructure the yardstick used for measuring the effectiveness of teacher education programs. Specific criteria or standards for measurement have resulted from this movement. One area targeted in the state of this university is the inclusion of collaborative efforts with P-12 schools and others (e.g., child-care centers, pre-K programs, etc.) to improve the quality of instruction through formal and informal agreements (Georgia State Standard I.I – Professional Community). Consequently, teacher preparation programs have collectively set to the task of strengthening the school-and-university, university-and-university connections or partnerships. This post described the efforts of one teacher education program in developing and implementing a partnership plan within a diverse community setting.

Community, Collaboration, and Clinical Practice, the title of this presentation, reflects the tenets that provide a framework for The Holistic Child program, a dual-certification program in early childhood education and special education. The aim of this program focuses on collaboration and engagement in various contexts, i.e., 'multiple-site placements with diverse student populations, faculty-teacher exchanges, and candidate involvement.

**Session 14.4**

**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**President:** Nataliya V. Ivankova, University of Alabama - Birmingham

**The Impact of Meta Cognitive Strategies Affecting Learning in a Cross-Cultural Environment\*\***

Srilata Bhattacharyya, New York Institute of Technology

**The Me Box: A Framework for Understanding Students' Cultural, Ethnic, Racial, and Individual Identity**

Shirley J. Bowles

The problem of identity has been extensively explored (Cross, 1987; Hall & Du Gay, 1996; Morrison & Rogers, 1996; Moya, 2000; Tatum, 1997). There is, however, a shortage of systematic data on how to integrate cultural, racial, or individual identity into multicultural courses. For curriculum and instruction in a multicultural perspective to move beyond its current rudimentary stage, teachers must become skilled at instructional strategies that expose students to the study of other cultures. This exposure is vital if students are to gain a deeper and more discriminating appreciation of their own culture, race, ethnicity and individuality. Teachers must help their students to recognize and respect individual differences and to value the ways in which these differences enhance and enrich the quality of our nation.

The basic tenets of this proposal were threefold. First, the author contended that the idea of teaching with a Me Box is a method by which both teacher and student can understand the strength that different individuals bring to our pluralistic classrooms. Second, the Me Box is an expanded opportunity for students to tap into their ethnic and racial identities, as well as to explore their own uniqueness. Finally, the Me Box provides a sound basis for understanding what multicultural curriculum and instruction should be.

**Intercultural Communication in Graduate Seminars: The Experience of International Students "Doing Discussions"**

Fanni L. Coward, University of Alabama – Huntsville

Although most educators believe in the benefits from having international students in American universities, studies have shown that international students are often quiet in the classroom, and that such quiet behavior is detrimental to their academic success. This study was an attempt to explore the nature of the experience in which international students engaged as they participated in the fast-speed exchanges commonly found in graduate-level classrooms.

Three graduate seminar classrooms in different disciplines were observed at an American university. The focus of the study was on the students from China, Korea, and Taiwan, but the other members of the class were also included in data gathering and data analysis in order to gather contextual information for interpreting the experience of the focal participants.

Because previous studies had lacked attention to the processes of participation, and because the participatory processes need to be described in authentic and context-specific ways, the research method utilized was a qualitative method, specifically the grounded theory techniques. The researcher observed and audiotaped recorded classroom discussions over a two-month period, interviewed the selected pool of participants (18 total), and used two questionnaires that included questions about personality tendencies, about experiences with different culture(s), and about specific incidents that were noted by the researcher. Other data resources such as syllabi, readings, discussion guide, and copies of some students' assignments were also examined.

A model was developed that detailed systematically how different factors in the discourse environment interacted with each other in the participatory process of international students. It also illustrated how the students in the class continuously evaluated and readjusted their beliefs and values. The findings of the study informed a better understanding of intercultural communication in the classroom, thereby contributing to improved learning environments for both international and non-international students.

**Session 14.5**

**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. GENDER ISSUES..... Riverboat**

**President:** Christie J. Jones, Mississippi State University

**Emotional Intelligence: Are There Sex Differences?**

Martha Tapia, Berry College, and George E. Marsh II, University of Alabama

This study examined gender differences in emotional intelligence as measured by the Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EII). The EII is a 41-item Likert scale based on the original model of emotional intelligence developed by Salovey and Mayer. An exploratory factor analysis identified four factors, which were named empathy, utilization of feelings, handling relationships, and self-control. Salovey and Mayer define emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's emotions, the emotions of others, and to differentiate among them; and it involves the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to regulate emotions reflectively to promote emotional and intellectual growth. This definition connects intelligence and emotion because it combines the ideas that emotion makes thinking more intelligent and that one thinks intelligently about emotions. From this point of view, a person with these abilities is considered a well-adjusted and emotionally skilled person; the lack of these abilities renders a person socially and emotionally handicapped.

The sample consisted of 234 students, 84 males and 150 females, enrolled at a private liberal arts college in the southeast. There were 32 freshmen, 70 sophomores, 67 juniors, and 58 seniors in the sample. The mean age of the participants was 20.50. Data were analyzed using analysis of variance with four factors of emotional intelligence (empathy, utilization of feelings, handling relationships, and self-control) as dependent variables and gender as the independent variable. Significant differences were found on three of the four factors. Females scored significantly higher than males in empathy, handling relationships, and self-control. These results suggested that gender differences in emotional intelligence were reflected in this sample.

### **Gender Differences in Learning Styles Reported on the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ).**

Rebecca R. Jacobson, Troy University – Montgomery; and Sandra Harris, Troy University

The performance of students has been studied in a variety of ways. Earlier studies centered on the influence of "psychological type" and gender. In less than five years, the number of non-traditional students attending college is reported to be between 50 and 75%. This growing population of students is gaining attention, and research should focus on the nontraditional student population in a variety of ways including gender performance and learning strategies.

Nontraditional students are entering, or returning, to the academic environment with different motivations and learning styles. A summary of the literature on self-regulated learning reported that the nontraditional student differs from the traditional student in life style, goal orientation, motivation, and life experience. However, research on the influence of gender on self-regulated learning is just beginning. The literature indicates gender does influence performance.

The present study was an investigation of the differences in motivational factors and learning strategies as measured by the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) between male and female students. The MSLQ was given to 434 students (220 males and 214 females). The MSLQ is made up of 81 questions and divided into two categories: motivation scales and learning strategy scales. Reliability and the factor structure were established. A MANOVA was completed in an effort to evaluate the differences and similarities of student learning styles based on gender, evaluating all factors as reported by the MSLQ. Differences on individual scales were evaluated and significant differences were found on 8 of the 15 subscales. In terms of practical value, understanding the complex issues of strategy use and motivation by male and female students can add to the literature on education and psychology in areas of program design, classroom instruction, examination requirements, distance learning opportunities, and assessment.

### **Middle School Females' Scientific Attitudes and Interests**

Kathleen T. Campbell, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Deborah McCarthy, Academy of the Sacred Heart

As recent studies reveal, females continue to trail males in attitude and achievement in science despite modifications in pedagogy, classroom environment, teacher/student interaction, and textbook. The research shows that the largest gap in achievement favoring males is in physics, and American males scored significantly higher than their female counterparts in self-concept and attitude toward science. Furthermore, although females comprised half of the 2003 AP examiners in mathematics and most science fields, they represented only a small minority in physics and computer science. Mathematics, once considered the gateway to prestigious, higher paying jobs throughout much of the 20th century, has been replaced by science and technology in the 21st century. Yet females are remarkably underrepresented in these fields.

Nearly a decade ago, the present researchers conducted a study comparing attitudes toward and interest in science among three sets of eighth-grade females in three different settings: traditionally single sex, traditionally coed, and newly single sex. Results from the analysis of variance of the self-report, Likert-style questionnaire indicated that the females in the traditionally single sex classes had significantly higher scores on both attitude and interest. The present study compared current eighth-grade females at the same single sex school to the 1996 single sex females. In the present study, an analysis of variance indicated that the 1996 interest and attitude scores were higher than the 2004 scores. A scattergram of the two sets of scores, however, indicated several low-scoring 2004 outliers and several high-scoring 1996 outliers with the majority of scores in the same clustering. The researchers concluded that the attitude and interest in the single sex setting had been maintained overall. Recommendations included a follow-up study of the 2004 subjects during their senior year in high school at the same single sex school.

#### **Session 14.6**

**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. SCHOOL CULTURE..... Creole Queen**

**Presenter:** Ying Wang, Mississippi Valley State University

### **Shaping Public Opinion: A View of Education from a Local Newspaper**

James D. Kirylo and Ann K. Nauman, Southeastern Louisiana University

Particularly as it relates to school reform and accountability, the general public receives a significant portion of its information on public education through the newspaper, a medium capable of shaping and forming public opinion. Knowing this fact, just what is "John Q. Public" being told by way of the news media? Are all aspects of education, both the positive and the negative, being explored? Is the language itself calculated to please a constituency, or is it less than honest, perpetuating a false reality of what schooling is and what authentic reform ought to be?

The Times-Picayune (circulation: 276,762; Sunday: 309,274) is the most widely circulated newspaper in the state of Louisiana, also reaching several Gulf Coast cities in Mississippi. In a computer search to find relevant articles from The Times-Picayune on school reform and school accountability, LexisNexis, an academic database, was used to enable the researchers to locate newspaper articles based on the key terms entered: school reform and school accountability. The time frame of the investigation was from April 1, 2003 to May 1, 2004, wherein 117 articles that had some reference to school reform and accountability were

published.

To that end, this research presentation provided a brief history of how the authors came to be where they are today as it relates to the language of accountability and school reform. In addition, through what politicians, policy makers, and a population of educators are saying via The Times-Picayune, an explanation was given on how the printed media have a powerful role in shaping and forming public opinion, ultimately, rightly or wrongly, defining for the public what education is all about. Lastly, this presentation concluded with some implications relative to the language that politicians, policymakers, and educators use in describing school reform, accountability, and the realities of schooling.

**An Investigation of Culture, Climate, and Principals' Leadership in Low Performing Schools**

Shana Corvers and Bobby Franklin, Louisiana Department of Education

Through its existing accountability system, the state of Louisiana is identifying schools that are high or low performing. The state is seeking to progress beyond the goal of only identifying high performing schools to gain a deeper understanding into "why" schools are high performing. Knowing "the who" does not tell "the why." There has been little effort toward conducting in-depth, contextual studies into areas of school effectiveness that have not been traditionally measured, such as school climate, school culture, and principal leadership. Research studies of these aforementioned environmental components of school effectiveness learning and investigating the role of school climate, school culture, leadership, and other contextual factors upon learning success were done.

The purpose of this research was to uncover some possible contextual differences within schools that were similar in every aspect except for that of school performance and growth. Research supports the idea that the learning environment is crucial. Positive school climate and effective leadership remain key ingredients to a successful school. A strong, well-respected and effective leader is thought to be able to contribute to a positive school climate and an effective learning environment. This study employed the use of survey instruments, detailed classroom and school observations, various interviews, and structured focus groups with students, teachers and the principal. These methods were utilized to learn about the culture-climate of the school, as well as the leadership style and effectiveness of the principal. This information is rarely collected and used in tandem with school-level data about teacher quality (i.e. % of teachers with a master's degree), school demographics (i.e., % of free and reduced priced lunch), achievement data, and financial data.

**A Review of Cross-Cultural Studies on Educational Leadership and Management**

Shujie Liu and Dianne L. Taylor, Louisiana State University

Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) and Bajunid (1996) identify societal culture as a missing variable in educational leadership theory and research. Four dimensions for organizing research on international school leadership are suggested by Paige and Mestenhauser (1999). One third of these, the comparative dimension, involves examining similarities and differences in leadership among various cultures and is used in the present study. Because cross-cultural studies of organizational management greatly influenced cross-cultural studies on educational administration, the authors also used work by Hofstede (1980) that identified leadership differences in 53 cultures as occurring mainly along four continua: power distance, uncertainty, masculinity/femininity, and individualism/collectivism.

Literature was identified for review in this study using three decision criteria: (1) the literature reported or synthesized empirical research, (2) the research was published in an available refereed source, and (3) the study was conducted within the last 40 years. A matrix using the above continua was developed, and the data were coded for comparative analysis.

The authors used the individualism/collectivism continuum to demonstrate the findings. The concept of leadership effectiveness differs in East Asia from that in the West. In China, Thailand, and Japan, Walker and Dimmock (2002) report, effective principals center on ensuring collective harmony and enforcing standard approaches to curriculum and instruction that promote student adaptation to community expectations. By contrast, effective Western principals are inclined to respond to the individual needs or desires of teachers, students, and parents rather than to promote community expectations, which are often ambiguous.

The research strongly suggested expanding conceptualizations of educational leadership to include other cultures. Without such studies, Western scholars, who comprise a small percentage of the world's population, will exert disproportionate influence on theory, policy, and practice. This circumstance leaves educational management with a "vulnerable knowledge base" according to Dimmock and Walker (2000, p. 145).

**Session 14.7**

**8:00 A.M. – 8:50 A.M. CHILDREN GRIEVING: AN EDUCATOR'S ACTION PLAN FOR EMOTIONAL HEALING (TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

Vincent McGrath, Linda McGrath, and Jack Blendinger, Mississippi State University

In this workshop, participants were given time to reflect on their doubts and learn appropriate methods to support students in the grieving process. Packets with information and materials on current practices in other school districts were included as handouts. The facilitators have personally experienced the loss of spouses, have organized a community grief support group, and have conducted several national conference workshops on grief support. Because children and adolescents struggle to understand death, this time of grief often interferes with learning. Teachers sometimes feel uncomfortable becoming grief counselors, and yet, they may be the only adults to whom children and adolescents can openly express their grief. But teachers who are open to innovative ways that have been used successfully by others can handle the situations in wise strategies founded on sound psychological and social research methods and a mix of common sense. To be effective, teachers need to develop the capacity to grasp the traumatic experience through its manifestations from the initial death of a loved one to the period of healing, which may take months and years. Students who are allowed to work through their grief in activities such as puppetry or stories experience less difficulty with their school work and develop healthy coping skills. One-on-one counseling and group discussions are also possible ways to support children and adolescents during their grieving caused not only by death, but also by divorce, chronic or terminal illness, or any other type of change to their normal routines.

**Session 15.1**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. OUTSTANDING PAPERS\*\* ..... Bayou**

**Presenter:** Gahan Bailey, University of South Alabama

**Session 15.2**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. ACHIEVEMENT..... Levee**

**Presenter:** Jeff Whittingham, University of Central Arkansas

**Discriminating Student Collaborative Learning Levels in Higher Education:  
Contributions of Institution and Personal Variables**

John K. Rugutt and Caroline C. Chemosit, Illinois State University,  
and Philip K. Kaloki, Dallas Baptist University

The authors of this study utilized the discriminant function analysis using extreme student groups (top and bottom quartiles) defined by students' collaborative learning scores to develop a model that best predicts group membership of the low and high levels of collaborative college students. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a model exists that significantly increased the researcher's ability to accurately classify the low and high collaborative learning students based on selected institution and personal variables (such as higher order thinking skills (HOTS), student motivation (MO), student faculty interaction (SFI), quality of teaching and learning (QTL), personal involvement of student (PIS), and self-efficacy (EFF) with a sample of 2,190 undergraduate students in a large public university in the South.

This study used measures contained in Student Assessment of Teaching and Learning (SATL, Short-Form), first developed by Ellett, Culross, McMullen, and Rugutt, (1996), and later revised by Ellett, Loup, Culross, McMullen, and Rugutt (1997). The measures assessed a wide variety of factors among college students. The response format for most instrument subscale items used in the study was of the Likert type. The reliability coefficients for HOTS, MO, SFI, QTL, PIS, and EFF were 0.83, 0.86, 0.92, 0.94, 93, and 0.78, respectively. The one-way ANOVA results showed that the groups were significantly different in all the study variables.

The results of the discriminant analysis showed that substantively and statistically significant models exist that enhanced the researcher's ability to accurately predict student's classification into low or high collaborative learning groups based on the institution and personal variables. The lowest total percent correctly classified was at 84%, while the highest total percent correctly classified was at 83%. All of the model variables made significant differences between the low and high collaborative learning groups. Complete results of this study and procedures used were reported. 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.

**The Interrelationships Among Rural Values, Parent Religiosity, Parent Involvement,  
and Student Outcomes in a Small, Rural Middle School**

Stephen K. Miller, University of Louisville, and Carolyn B. Tucker,  
Webster County (KY) Board of Education

Literature consistently reports that achievement lags in middle schools, rural areas, and the South. Rural values, parent religiosity, and parent involvement have all been linked to achievement. No research on the combined effects of these factors was located. Accordingly, this study examined demographic factors, rural values (anti-intellectualism, social conservatism/traditionalism, ethnocentricity, stewardship of earth, good old boy), parent religiosity (belief, ritual, experience, affiliation, bond), and parent involvement (belief, action) to determine their interrelationships with student achievement (GPA) in a small, rural, southern middle school. The students (N = 108) of the seventh and eighth grades and their parents comprised the population. A mail survey yielded 38 participants (both parents and students).

The researchers developed scales to represent the larger constructs--five rural values, five parent religiosity, and two parent involvement--based on the literature. Psychometric analyses (Cronbach's alpha and inter-scale correlations) were utilized to check these theoretically-based measures and reduce the scales to overall constructs, if warranted. Initial calculations confirmed that the scales functioned as intended so that factor analysis was not performed. Parent and student responses were combined when possible. The final set of scales included the five rural values and composite constructs for both parent religiosity and parent involvement. Forward stepwise regression was used to examine the relationships among the three types of independent variables--demographic, parent values (rural values and parent religiosity), and mediating variables (parent involvement)--and the criterion, overall student GPA. Results indicated that one demographic factor, specially designed instruction (student's enrollment in special education), and anti-intellectualism were the only significant factors in the full model, with an effect size of .37. These results were discussed in terms of the small sample, selection of participants, and educational implications for rural schools, including intriguing relationships among the scales.

**Christian Faith on the Christian College Campus**

James Lampley, East Tennessee State University

This research was conducted at a church-related, private, four-year college located in northeast Tennessee. Undergraduate and graduate students were surveyed to gain an understanding of their decision-making process when deciding to attend a Christian college. Social, religious, and academic areas were addressed in the survey questions. Prayer in the classroom, chapel and convocation requirements, and faith-based opportunities beyond the required on-campus religious services were also addressed. Other areas addressed in the research were the level of commitment to Christian values by the college, student body, and faculty and staff at the college. Findings of this research were surprising in some areas and predictable in other areas. It provided insight about the "Christian atmosphere" of this particular Christian college.

**Session 15.3**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT..... Mississippi Queen**

**Presenter:** Angela R. Lee, Louisiana State University

**NCATE Electronic Exhibits**

Glenn Sheets and David Bell, Arkansas Tech University

Accreditation has been a topic of great discussion/debate across the nation in recent years. In 1985 the state of Arkansas implemented a policy that in

order for colleges/universities to have a teacher education program and be able to have their candidates licensed they would have to be accredited by NCATE. With universities meeting new performance-based standards, documentation of evidence has become even more important. At present, universities have the option of having a paper-based exhibit room or an electronic exhibit room. Universities are beginning to make the transition from a paper-based exhibit room to an electronic exhibit room, some with great difficulty. The statement of the problem in this study dealt with the following questions: What is an electronic exhibit room? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using an electronic exhibit room vs. a paper-based exhibit room? What aspects need to be considered in the development and its continued maintenance and operation? Is an electronic exhibit better when all factors are considered?

### **The Communication of Faculty Development by Administrators at a Research II Institution**

Terry D. Allen, University of North Texas

This study examined the communication practices used by administrators to communicate faculty development at a mid-sized, urban, research-based institution of higher education. Specifically, the formal and informal systemwide network communication, the communication used to facilitate change, small group communication, and the resulting organizational climate from superior-subordinate communication in the dissemination of faculty development were investigated.

The study was limited, because of time constraints, to a sample of convenience. A single research institution in the Carnegie 2000 category of Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive, or more accurately a "Research II" university in the Carnegie 1994 category, located in the central United States, was used for the study population. Administrators were selected from organizational charts provided by the university web site based on job description and/or management responsibilities. A total population of 78 administrators was identified for this institution. The study population was composed of a university provost, a university director and assistant director, nine deans, seven associate deans, one special staff, 50 department heads/chairs, and eight program coordinators from five colleges and four schools.

A 62-item survey was hand distributed to each administrator. Anonymity was provided through survey return by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Of the population of 78 only 11 responses were received, providing a response rate of 14.1%. Statistically, these results cannot be meaningfully generalized to the population, but practical significance was also considered.

The sample of 11 was composed of seven men and four women and, as a minimum, represented all four levels of administration. A limited description of the responding sample's communication practices was obtained through application of a descriptive research design. The practicality of utilizing this level of investigation and the resultant implications were assessed for future research.

### **Educator Ethics Violations: A Study of One State's Reported Violations**

Rosa L. Weaver, Northern Kentucky University

This study examined the reported educator ethics violations over a four-year period. Data were obtained from the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board, the agency that certifies, suspends, revokes and denies certification for teachers and administrators. The purpose of this study was to look at the frequency and severity of the violations and to share this information with educator preparation programs and districts that are responsible for ongoing ethics training for educators.

There were over 600 cases reported between 2001 and 2004. Demographics of the educators included the kind of charge, the length of licensure, whether the educator worked in urban or rural districts, and the disposition of the cases. The cases included conduct unbecoming a teacher which sometimes occurred outside of school. Some educators were charged with inappropriate relationships with students, which can include border crossing. Other cases involved felony and misdemeanor charges, assault, testing violations, and breach of contract. When the cases were investigated, some educators were dismissed, while others were admonished, sent to an ethics class, some are still awaiting court decisions, and many lost their licensure for periods ranging from a month to life.

The findings of the study demonstrate the importance of ongoing ethics training at the preservice level and during the careers of teachers and administrators. Discussions at the school and district level help educators understand the values of the community in which they work. Teachers and administrators make hundreds of decisions each day. It is imperative that an ongoing conversation occurs to help educators make the best choices and not risk losing their licensure or hurting a child.

#### **Session 15.4**

**9:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. INCREASING AWARENESS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY  
IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS (SYMPOSIUM)..... Delta Queen**

**Organizer:** Christie J. Jones, Mississippi State University

LaQuanta Watson and Victoria Bowers, Mississippi State University,  
and Anitra Shelton-Quinn, Humble Independent School District

As professionals collaborate to meet mental health and educational needs of culturally diverse students, it becomes imperative to employ culturally appropriate assessments, consultations, and interventions. This workshop blended essential aspects of cultural awareness, effective communication, and best practices into a symposium for effective research and service delivery.

#### **Session 15.5**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. MATHEMATICS EDUCATION..... Riverboat**

**President:** Martha Tapia, Berry College

#### **Mathematics Self-Efficacy and Mathematics Anxiety**

Reid Jones, Darlene Crone-Todd, Heidi Eyre, and Scott Hutchens, Delta State University

Substantial literature exists on mathematics anxiety, but little on how self-efficacy predicts mathematics performance. A previous report showed that mathematics self-efficacy was a better predictor of college algebra course grades than was mathematics anxiety. The present report was a replication and extension with a new cohort (n=182) that also evaluated the effect of variables on final examination scores.

Students taking either College Algebra or lower division psychology courses completed surveys and allowed access to their academic and course records. Surveys were administered one week before final examinations, suggesting that anxiety would be high. The Mathematics Anxiety Rating Scale (MARS-R; Chronbach=.92) and instruments developed to measure Mathematics Self-Efficacy (MSE; Chronbach=.89) and Mathematics Aversion (MAV; Chronbach=.74) were used. Other data included course grades and final exam scores in College Algebra, ACT-Mathematics, and Overall GPA. MSE(r=.52), MARS-R (r=.41), and MAV (r=.35) were significantly ( $p<.01$ ) associated with course grades. Using survey variables to predict grades yielded a significant multiple  $R=.556[F(3,142)=21.22;p<.01]$ . MSE and MARS-R were significant ( $p<.01$ ) contributors. Final Exam scores were used as the dependent variable in the same model yielding a multiple  $R$  of .603 $[F(3,67)=12.735;p<.01]$ . Once again MARS-R and MSE were significant contributors to regression, with MARS-R somewhat stronger in this model. Similar results were found in a statistics class (n=23). Affective and cognitive variables predict College Algebra performance almost as effectively as aptitude scores (ACT-M) and general academic performance (overall GPA). However, few institutions of higher education consider affective and cognitive variables in developmental mathematics courses. The MSE and the MARS-R could be administered in those courses, and students could be offered assistance as needed.

### **Cases Studies of Math Anxiety of Developmental Mathematics' Students**

Christopher W. Guillory, Louisiana State University

These cases studies examined the affect of math anxiety on community college developmental mathematic students to determine: (1) how math anxiety affects student performance and attitudes in a college-level mathematics class, (2) how students' preparation time affects the amount of math anxiety they feel, and (3) to contrast the level of math anxiety between male and female students in different anxiety groups. Math anxiety has been defined as "feelings of tension and anxiety that interfere with the manipulation of numbers and solving of mathematical problems in a wide array of ordinary life and academic situations" (Richardson and Suinn, 1972). Green (1990) determined in a study of students enrolled in developmental math classes that student performance was best determined by a test anxiety pretest. Hancock (2001) showed students with high levels of test anxiety performed poorly in highly competitive situations.

A study of college students determined math ACT scores and general test anxiety to be significant predictors for math anxiety for male college students, and ACT scores, perceived math ability, perceived high school math teachers' teaching method, and attitude toward mathematics to be significant predictors of math anxiety in female college students. There was a significant difference in math performance between anxiety groups, but there was no significant difference in math performance between male and female students. Students who were better prepared for the class were better able to deal with the affects of math anxiety. Implications of these case studies suggested that students have different ways of coping with math anxiety, such as preparation and class involvement.

### **Preservice Teachers' Beliefs About Mathematics Before and After Completion of a Mathematics Methods Course**

Marilyn Larmon, Gwen Autin, and Leigh Ann Beard,  
Southeastern Louisiana University

Preservice teachers often respond to mathematics with feelings of anxiety. Contributing factors may include failure to understand mathematical content, a lack of success in mathematics classes, a feeling of lack of support in mathematics, and unfounded beliefs about mathematics. Teachers who experience mathematics anxiety tend to spend less time teaching mathematics, give more seatwork, and avoid other more helpful strategies.

There is emphasis today on the acquisition of content knowledge while some question the importance of methodology. This study examined whether mathematics beliefs change after completion of a mathematics methods course.

An adapted version of The Beliefs Inventory by Andrea Troutman was administered at the beginning of each semester to a total of 97 students. Students responded to 23 statements by choosing five levels of agreement. The course emphasized a constructivist view of teaching mathematics. Students also worked with classroom teachers in a field setting. At the end of the semester, the inventory was again administered.

Data were analyzed with independent t-tests. Using a Bonferroni Correction, significance was set at  $<.002$ . Responses to 10 of the statements changed significantly. Others, though not significant, moved in a more positive direction.

The study appeared to favor the body of evidence that views both content and pedagogy as important in the development of preservice teachers. While students' beliefs about mathematics were fairly favorable after courses in the content area alone, the methods course appeared to move students toward more positive beliefs about mathematics.

#### **Session 15.6**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. ENGLISH EDUCATION..... Creole Queen**

**President:** Mitzi Trahan, Louisiana State University

### **The Effect of Error-Based Grammar Instruction on the Writing of Rural Students in Fourth Grade and Eighth Grade: A Modified Replication of Feng and Powers' 2004 Study**

Linda H. Thornton, Zhangli Niu, and Renee Gray, Harding University

This study explored whether the results Shoudong Feng presented at the 2004 annual meeting of MSERA would be replicable in rural settings at different grade levels. Arkansas teachers are charged with improving the writing of students to prepare them for the state Benchmark Exams in literacy administered at the fourth grade, sixth grade, and eighth grade. Feng and Powers (2004) tested the recommendations of Constance Weaver (1996) for improving the writing of 19 fifth-grade students in a suburban school in Arkansas. Their results provided possible evidence of the effectiveness of the treatment, but because of their single-group pretest-posttest design, the evidence needed to be strengthened by replication.

The convenience samples consisted of 35 fourth graders, reduced to 33 by mortality, and 16 eighth graders, all in small rural schools in eastern Arkansas. Fourteen of the eighth graders were African American. All remaining participants were Caucasian. The researchers collected and analyzed for

grammar errors pretest essays from all participants, then developed and presented grammar instruction in individual, small-group, and large-group lessons based on the errors found in the essays. The students were then assigned essays to write on a similar topic, and the errors in them were coded by categories and counted. Results were generally consistent with those of Feng and Powers and indicated that in all categories of mechanical, sentence structure, and usage, errors were fewer in the posttest essays, except for apostrophe errors, which remained similar. Error category frequency counts were analyzed using chi square analysis, and the differences were statistically significant. Because of the threats inherent in single-group designs, further study of error-based grammar instruction using randomized controlled trials and a larger sample was recommended.

### **Making Strides on the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: A Middle School Case Study**

Daphne W. Hubbard, University of South Alabama

In the state of Alabama, fifth-, seventh- and tenth-grade public school students are required to take the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing (ADAW). The state assessment for seventh graders consists of holistic composition, writing mechanics, sentence formation, and grammar and usage. The ADAW scores do not limit students' progression through sequential grades or keep them from graduating from high school; however, the ADAW scores are used as one accountability measure for respective schools to meet their annual accountability goals or to determine their adequate yearly progress (Alabama State Department of Education, 2005).

Teaching students to write well is one of the most challenging instructional areas for teachers (Nagin, 2003); however, one rural, middle school in the deep south has increased scores on the ADAW by 56% over the past two years. The middle school is ranked fourth in the largest school district in the state of Alabama for its high scores on the ADAW, yet 73% of its students receive free or reduced lunches and live in a rural area with high poverty rates. In the middle school of approximately 650 students and 31 teachers, many teachers attribute three factors to the rise in student scores on the ADAW: the principal, the school culture, and teachers who are committed to best practice.

This case study examined the three leading factors attributed to raising student scores on the ADAW by examining quantitative data from actual student scores on the ADAW and qualitative data from structured interviews with the principal and teachers at the school. In an era of accountability with a renewed focus on writing well, the data collected from this study may provide concrete, practical ways for principals and teachers to increase student achievement in writing.

### **Effects of Writing Process on Student Achievement Attitude Towards Peer Feedback in a Rural School Serving a Predominantly Low Income African American Community**

Danjuma R. Saulawa and Nicole Tolbert, Alabama State University

This study was conducted to find out if teaching writing as a process would have an impact on students' overall writing achievement. Specifically, the objective of the study was to answer the following questions: (1) What are the effects of teaching writing as a process on low achieving students' writing development and achievement? (2) What are the effects of teaching writing as a process on students' attitudes towards writing? and (3) What are the effects of teaching writing as a process on students' acceptance of peer suggestions? Subjects of this study were students in an elementary school in a rural central Alabama county. They were on free or reduced lunch. Most of them scored on level one in the state writing assessment. They were selected from a pool of 75 fifth graders, representing the number of students who returned their parental permission slips. A total of 35 students (13 males and 22 females) were randomly selected for the study.

Data for this study were collected using two seven-item attitude surveys, a pretest and a posttest. The pre- and posttest were analyzed using the rubric that teachers use in order to prepare students for the Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing.

The results of this study indicated that after frequent exposure to teachers teaching writing as a process, students' overall writing abilities were enhanced. Students who mostly scored at level one scored at levels two, three, and even four. In addition to their overall writing abilities improving, students' acceptance of peer feedback improved. The findings of the study also showed that students' attitudes towards writing changed slightly after exposure to teachers who teach writing as a process.

#### **Session 15.7**

**9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. MAKE SHOW AND TELL COOL-TRAINING WORKSHOP OF PHOTO STORY 3 FOR WINDOWS (TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

Feng Sun and Jeff Anderson, University of Alabama – Birmingham

One must have a lot of photos stored in one's hard drive after this long summer vacation. This one-hour training introduced Microsoft Photo Story 3 for Windows in detail. It was a free program that brought life into one's favorite memories by adding motion, effects, music, and more to digital photos. The trainers worked through with the attendees about how to use this program to make the digital pictures as a live slide show for easy sharing with people and friends in a whole new way.

The workshop used digital pictures as an example to cover the following features of this program: (1) downloading and installing, (2) picture importing, (3) photo editing, (4) adding effects, (5) auto cropping, (6) adding captions and titles, (7) adding narration and motion animation and transition, (8) music importing, and (9) saving and sharing.

#### **Session 16.1**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. LEADERSHIP REDESIGN..... Bayou**

**President:** Sonja Y. Harrington, Alabama State University

### **Mercer University's Educational Leadership Program: A Journey to a New Level of Leader Preparation**

Penny L. Elkins, Kathy Arnett, Vic Verdi, and Bruce Sliger, Mercer University

In response to a growing demand for quality school leaders and by recommendation of such organizations as the Southern Regional Education Board



(SREB), universities around the nation must develop and/or revise educational leadership programs that, among other things: (1) “give significantly more emphasis to preparing leaders who can improve the core function of the school curriculum – instruction and student learning, and (2) give more time and attention to mentoring and internships that allow aspiring leaders to practice leadership skills with master educational leaders in well-planned quality experiences.” (Preparing a New Breed of School Principals: It’s Time for Action, SREB, 2001, p. 25)

Mercer University has developed a new master’s level, initial certification program in educational leadership designed to address these national concerns and to exceed current standards of school leadership in Georgia. Mercer’s program has been designed to provide leadership candidates with a solid blend of educational theory and practice, giving them opportunities to apply research-based knowledge to solve field-based problems. Recognizing the importance of having the program relevant to both the opportunities and challenges facing today’s schools, Mercer faculty sought input from many sources when developing the program, including local schools systems, other prominent leadership programs, and the most current national standards of NCATE – the Educational Leadership Constituent Consortium (ELCC).

This session focused on the development of this program, as well as outlined the four unique aspects of candidate preparation: the Leadership Academy, the Leadership Portfolio, the Online Leadership Network, and the Mentoring and Internship experiences. Both qualitative and quantitative data were provided to document the evolution of the program, with specific attention given to successes and challenges since its inception in January 2005.

### **The Principal Internship: A Standards-Driven Field Experience Model**

Jerry G. Mathews and James E. Davis, Mississippi State University, and Mark Neill, Idaho State University

The Principal Internship model illustrated in this paper was designed based on standards for effective school leadership. College of Education Standards for Advanced Professionals, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, and state principal certification standards provided the conceptual framework for it. The model emphasizes the combined efforts of principal interns, practicing professionals, and university faculty. The multiple and diverse roles and responsibilities of building-level leadership were described.

This paper illustrated the connections of the principal internship program expectations, based on actual practice, with the described standards for principal preparation. The practical applications of theoretical constructs served to provide prospective school leaders with meaningful, contextualized experiences in the field of effective building-level leadership.

The model included a comprehensive portfolio based on contextualized experiences carefully aligned with program standards. Five hundred forty hours of comprehensive principalship experiences are required at three education levels: elementary, middle/junior high, and high school.

Effective school leadership is the key to school improvement. A recent study by Hess and Kelly (2005) has questioned the viability of principal preparation in American colleges and universities. A similar indictment of educational leadership preparation programs was leveled by Levine (2005). Both of these critiques suggest a blend of strong content (rigor) and meaningful application. Both advocate a training program based on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of future-focused leaders: those with leadership skills that are more practical than theoretical, and those with a deep understanding of the critical issues confronting education in an era of accountability. Today’s educational climate requires front-line leaders with an appropriate balance of theoretical constructs and meaningful, contextual experience. The model illustrated in this paper meets all these requirements.

### **Construct Validity of the 21st Century School Administrator Skills Assessment**

Gerald D. Coker, Ouachita Parish (LA) Schools, Cathy Stockton, Richland Parish (LA) Schools, and Susie Watts, University of Louisiana – Monroe

The 21st Century School Administrator Skills assessment, developed by NASSP in 2001, is used extensively across the United States to assess leadership skills. However, NASSP has not reported validity or reliability estimates for the instrument. Researchers have estimated that the instrument content measures administrator behaviors for which inferences were made (NASSP, 2001). The self assessment and observer assessment forms of the survey contain 67 behavioral statements that are arranged into 10 skill dimensions and four skill areas. Raters use a five-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always) to rate the frequency for which each behavior is observed. Quotient scores are calculated to compare average ratings on skill dimensions.

The purpose of this study was to explore the construct validity of the 21st Century School Administrator Skills assessment. A total of 1,060 teachers rated the skills of their principals using this assessment instrument. Although there are 10 skill dimensions on the survey, factor analysis extracted only eight factors that had eigenvalues greater than one. Behavioral statements that discriminate judgment and results orientation as skill dimensions on the instrument loaded on a common factor. Similarly, statements that discriminate development of others and understanding one’s own strengths and weaknesses as skill dimensions loaded on a common factor. Skill dimensions that failed to differentiate when factor analyzed were common to a skill area on the survey instrument. Each of the six remaining factors extracted from the factor analysis corresponded to a skill dimension from the survey. With the exception of one behavioral statement, statements associated with a common skill dimension on the survey also loaded on a common factor. Although further studies are needed, this paper presented evidence to support the construct validity of the 21st Century School Administrator Skills assessment.

#### **Session 16.2**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. COGNITION..... Levee**

**President:** Linda H. Thornton, Harding University

#### **Aging and Driving: A Pilot Study Examining the Impact of Chemotherapy on Everyday Cognition**

Linda Morse, Carolyn E. Adams-Price, Elisabeth Wells-Parker,  
and Marsha T. Williams, Mississippi State University

There is considerable evidence that examined the impact of age on driving behaviors, although few studies have investigated the impact of aging and driving when the individual has taken adjuvant chemotherapy for treatment of cancer. This pilot study examined the effects of chemotherapy on the cognitive performance of female breast cancer survivors, and in particular, how it is related to critical daily activities such as driving performance. Participants included 40 women between the ages of 22 and 80 who completed chemotherapy for breast cancer at least six months prior to testing, and 30 age and education-related matched controls who had had general anesthesia for a surgical procedure at least six months previously. Participants completed a battery of instruments including the Mini Mental Status Exam, neuropsychological assessment, background information, and the Useful Field of View (UFOV).

Older subjects performed more poorly than did controls on the MMSE, suggesting that chemotherapy may have had a general effect on cognition. The

chemotherapy subjects performed significantly worse than controls on Trails B, which is especially related to everyday thinking problems such as driving. The UFOVÓ, which measures visual attention and which predicts driving performance and accident rates in older adults, consists of three measures: (1) processing speed, (2) divided attention, and (3) selective attention. The chemotherapy subjects were slower than the other subjects on processing speed, but did not seem to be affected on the other two UFOVÓ measures. Age affected all three measures of the UFOVÓ. This suggests that chemotherapy may affect the speed of visual processing, especially in older cancer patients, and that it may be predictive of driving difficulties. Much more definitive research is needed to address this issue fully. Additionally, more research on how to retrain older individuals' driving skills, as well as for cancer patients, is needed.

### **Barnett and Ceci's Taxonomic Framework for Assessing Far Transfer of Learning: Implications for Future Research**

Gerald J. Calais, McNeese State University

Despite a century of research, debates about the nature of far transfer, the frequency of its occurrence, and the essence of its fundamental mechanisms have yet to be resolved. This confusion is due to the lack of a clearly operational definition of transfer and the failure to identify the various relevant dimensions for determining if and when transfer materializes, resulting in a comparison of "apples and oranges." To overcome this chaos, a taxonomic framework is employed to view previously published studies within this framework along nine pertinent contextual and content dimensions.

Information gleaned from articles and empirical studies was selected from psychologists of various theoretical orientations, including, but not limited to, the following: Susan Barnett, John Bransford, Anne Brown, Stephen Ceci, Zhe Chen, Micheline Chi, Mary Gick, Diane Halpern, Robert Haskell, Keith Holyoak, Lauren Resnick, and Robert Sternberg.

Barnett and Ceci's paradigmatic shift entails a definition of far transfer predicated on a taxonomic framework for interpreting the research literature on transfer along three content dimensions (learned skill, performance change, and memory demands) and six context dimensions (knowledge domain, physical context, temporal context, functional context, social context, and modality). Their proposed taxonomy addressed only the end points of the transfer process, not the components of the transition process per se.

Systematic explorations of the interactions of the taxonomic dimensions should facilitate one's ability to predict when, where, and how far transfer occurs. However, since this taxonomic framework centers only on the end points of transfer, a complete theory of transfer awaits acknowledgement of the systematic variations in transfer because of individual differences in the representation and deployment of knowledge, metacognition, or underlying educative processes. This paradigmatic shift in assessing transfer, undoubtedly, will also impact classroom instruction and assessment, curricular design, teacher educator programs, national standards, and state standards and benchmarks.

### **Piaget's Formal Operations and Parental Educational Level**

Penny P. Ward, Denise Taylor, and Linda Morse, Mississippi State University

The first study used a pretest/posttest design to find out if college undergraduate students could be taught to reason on Piaget's formal operational level using an independent training method. The second study was conducted to further explore notable correlations from the first study of mother's education with posttest score and father's education with pretest score.

A pretest-posttest design was utilized in both studies to examine the effects of a training procedure based on Piaget's Pendulum Problem. The pretest and posttest contained questions that included three second-order formal operations: (1) combinations, (2) propositional logic, and (3) proportionality. Some questions were added and some altered for the second study to make the pretest and posttest more similar. The training method utilized the Pendulum Problem. The Pendulum Problem was broken down into small steps that were explained in detail.

Participants for both studies were recruited from sections of Early American History. There were 90 undergraduate students in the first study and 77 undergraduate students in the second study.

The second study corroborated the findings of the first, in that the average score went down from pretest to posttest, both as a whole and for most of the questions. The scores did improve significantly, however, on the combinational reasoning question, which may be the most similar to the instructional Pendulum Problem. The authors think that the decrease in scores is largely because of participant fatigue. Although the effect of mother's educational level did not appear in the second study, father's educational level did significantly correlate with pretest score.

### **Session 16.3**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. READING..... Mississippi Queen**

**President:** Daphne W. Hubbard, University of South Alabama

### **First-Grade Readers' Gains in Reading Accuracy, Fluency, and Comprehension Following Varied Enrichment Strategies**

Brenda Beverly, Rebecca M. Giles, and Keri L. Buck, University of South Alabama

This study investigated reading differences for first graders who received systematic phonics instruction with decodable texts (Texts group) compared to first graders who received phonics instruction only (Phonics group) and first graders who were read aloud to from authentic literature (Literature group).

Participants (n = 32) were quasi-randomly assigned to groups and seen in 16, 30-minute treatment sessions. Reading was assessed pre- and posttreatment using the Gray Oral Reading Test, 4th Ed. (GORT-4; Weiderholt & Bryant, 2001) and a benchmark measure associated with Preventing Academic Failure (PAF; Bertin & Perlman, 1998). Texts treatment was characterized by multisensory, systematic phonics instruction using modified PAF materials and Merrill Readers.

Analysis of variance revealed a significant Time by Reading Measure interaction but not a Group main effect or interactions. Planned comparisons revealed significant gains in accuracy, fluency, and comprehension by the Literature group; however, the Texts group had significant accuracy and fluency but not comprehension gains. Findings varied for reading level. In the Texts group, below average readers demonstrated greater increases in comprehension than average readers, and their GORT-4 Oral Reading Quotient gains were significantly different. In contrast, comprehension improvements in the Literature and Phonics groups were led by average readers.

All groups displayed measurable reading improvements, but average readers benefited from authentic literature with comprehension strategies.

Comprehension by below average readers benefited from small group, phonics instruction plus reading practice; after all, reading accuracy is a prerequisite for successful comprehension. A differential effect of decodable texts cannot be concluded (see Jenkins, Peyton, Sanders, & Vadasy, 2004). Balanced literacy programs – when truly balanced for word study, exposure to varied texts, and comprehension instruction, and when modified for individual needs – were indirectly supported. Findings were preliminary, and investigation has been underway to compare treated groups with untreated children using school-based measures.

### **The Impact of Book Clubs on the Attitudes of Middle School Students Toward Reading\*\***

Jeff Whittingham, Patricia Phelps, and Stephanie Huffman, University of Central Arkansas

### **An Examination of Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) Scores Using Generalizability Theory**

Richard Kazelskis, Dana G. Thames, and Carolyn Reeves-Kazelskis, University of Southern Mississippi

The majority of reliability information available for the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) consists of alpha coefficients. Recently, Cronbach expressed doubts about the viability of coefficient alpha for estimating score reliability and suggested that generalizability theory provides the best information about score reliability (Cronbach & Shavelson, 2004). In particular, generalizability theory provides a framework for examining the extent to which an individual's observed score can be generalized to their universe score, where the score universe is defined over the set of admissible observations consisting of all combinations of facets that define how the measurements were taken (Cronbach, Gleser, Nanda, & Rajaratnam, 1972; Shavelson & Webb, 1991).

This study examined the reliability of ERAS scores using the methods provided by generalizability theory. A two-facet, crossed, persons-by-items-by-occasions design was used to carry out both generalizability (G) and decision (D) studies. The two facets were considered random. Analyses were carried out by racial group, gender, and total group for each of the subscale areas, recreational reading and academic reading, and for total attitude scores on the ERAS. Respondents were 755 students in grades four through six from schools in a southeastern state. The participant sample was almost evenly divided by gender. Nearly one-half of the respondents were European Americans (49.7%), and the rest were African Americans (50.3%).

Similar results were found across groups and across ERAS scores for both the generalizability and decision studies. Substantial variance components were found for items and the interactions between persons and items and between persons and occasions. Typically, two administrations of the ERAS were required to obtain generalizability and dependability values of .70, and at least three administrations were required for these values to exceed .80. Implications for school personnel who administer and interpret the ERAS were discussed.

#### **Session 16.4**

**10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION..... Delta Queen**

**President:** Rosa L. Weaver, Northern Kentucky University

#### **Coalition Building in Communities: A Program Evaluation of Federally Funded Anti-Drug Projects**

Sharon K. McDonough, Glennelle Halpin, and Gerald Halpin, Auburn University

The state of Alabama has entered into a cooperative agreement between the Office of the Governor and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to develop a state-wide strategy to prevent the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD). One goal of the project is to improve prevention efforts by coordinating various state and federal resources to target communities, children, families, schools and workplaces. Relevant literature dealing with coalition building and sustainability planning was reviewed to provide a framework for the study.

With the \$9 million federal grant, two types of projects were funded – six implementation projects and six capacity building projects. This study focused on the six projects funded for capacity building and their processes of building coalitions during the first year of funding. Before prevention programs could be implemented, the first year of funding for these six projects was to be directed at building coalitions within their communities that would be able to both implement and sustain ATOD prevention programs. From this literature review came recommendations for capacity building of relevance not only to the capacity builders in this evaluation but also to others in various settings charged with the task of working together for the common good.

This presentation highlighted how research-based guidelines are being used in the Alabama substance abuse prevention efforts along with suggestions for others. Lessons from the field were shared about how research and practice are coming together, as well as implications for coalition building and program sustainability efforts within communities.

#### **Changes on Adolescents' Behavioral Intentions, Risk-Taking Behaviors, and Action Plans Over Time**

Tina Vazin and Huey-Ling Lin, Alabama State University

The purpose of this study was to determine the change of the self-reported risk-taking behavior (alcoholic beverages, and gotten drunk), outcome variable (had sex), behavioral intention, and action plan for students during 2001 to 2004. In 2004 data, a pretest was administered to a group of 6,209 seventh to 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Forty-three percent were females, while the remaining 57% were males. The participants were ethnically diverse with 69% African American, 19% Caucasians, and 12% others. Control group data have been collected based on selected characteristics. The control group was matched on any characteristics that would cause them to differ on their having sex when neither of them received the intervention. Selection bias has been considered into the resulting program effect estimate.

The instrument contained 41 closed-ended items. All of the variables were examined for content validity, and indices were tested for internal consistency. The dependent variable was the teen sexual experience that measured on a dichotomy scale. Response consistency was evaluated by correlating the dependent variables with independent variables. In order to review the trend of those key variables, descriptive analyses have been employed with the data set each year.

The percentage of students reporting "having a few sips of an alcoholic beverage within the last 12 months" increased over the years. The percentage of having alcoholic beverages, getting drunk, and having sex decreased after two-week intervention. Pretest and posttest results indicated that adolescents in abstinence group were less likely to report conducting the risk-taking behaviors, behavioral intention, and action plan after the intervention.

Teens are more likely to report their intention to not having sex and their intention to stay abstinent after two-week intervention. After a two-week intervention, teens are more likely to agree that the best way to avoid unwanted pregnancy and to protect health is to not be sexually active.

## Session 16.5

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. ATTITUDES..... Riverboat

**Presider:** Mary M. Merrill-Lusk, Louisiana State University - Shreveport

### Homework: Perceptions of First- and Third-Grade Parents and Teachers

Marilyn Larmon, Southeastern Louisiana University; Rose B. Jones and Mary Beth Evans, University of Southern Mississippi; and Phyllis Cuevas and Faye White, McNeese State University

While the use of homework to reinforce classroom activities has traditionally been a common practice in many school systems in the United States, best practices in its use continues to be the subject of debate. The strengthening of national and state standards and the publication of high stakes testing results have raised the level of school and teacher accountability. One outcome of the concern over these test results may be more stringent homework requirements at lower grades.

This study examined and compared the perceptions of first- and third-grade parents and teachers in two neighboring southern states toward homework assignments. Ninety-eight parents (64 first-grade and 34 third-grade) and 15 teachers (8 first-grade and 7 third-grade) in two schools completed a brief survey regarding their perceptions of homework requirements. Questions dealt with such items as the number of days homework was assigned, the amount of time to complete the homework, the type of assignments, the effectiveness of homework, and whether homework caused conflict or interfered with family life.

Data were analyzed using chi square. Several levels of significance were found between first- and third-grade parent responses, and limited significance was found when comparing states.

This study supported the idea that parents and teachers see the benefits of homework. It also appeared to show a trend for an increased amount of days for homework and time spent on homework at the lower grades that was above the amount recommended by research reported in previous literature.

### Examining Perfectionism and Dispositions

Gloria D. Richardson, University of West Alabama

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between educators' attitudes toward perfectionism and toward the dispositions selected by the College of Education at a rural, southern university. Two surveys were conducted to obtain data. The study was a pilot for the survey of perfectionism, Educator Self-Assessment of Perfectionism (ESP) and a continuation of the use of the revised version of the Survey of Dispositions of Inservice and Preservice Teachers (SDIPT2).

The ESP is an instrument with 40 items and responses that indicate a range from Not at all Characteristic of Me to Very Characteristic of Me. The SDIPT2 has 40 items with responses that range from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree; the alpha reliability coefficient is .92 (95% Confidence Interval [CI] = .90, .94). Research has identified characteristics of teachers that are similar across populations (Carr & Glaxton, 2002; Giovannelli, 2003); Levine (2002); Minor, Onweugbuzie, Witcher & James (2002); however, an investigation of perfectionism has traditionally been found primarily in the psychological arena (Tolin, Woods & Abramowitz, 2003; Rice & Slaney, 2002; Kawamura & Frost, 2004).

The research question for the study was: Do educators' tendencies toward perfectionism correlate with their attitudes toward selected dispositions? A sample of 48 teachers, counselors, administrators, and other individuals participating in education classes at the university completed the two instruments and a demographic survey. Analysis of the reliability of the ESP were included in the report. Results of the correlation between perfectionism and dispositions were shared. Discussion and recommendations for further use of the ESP were explored.

### Anxiety and Attitude of Graduate Students in Online vs. On-Campus Statistics Courses

Thomas A. DeVaney, Southeastern Louisiana University

The use of this study was to compare the level of anxiety and attitudes of students enrolled in online and on-campus sections of a graduate educational statistics course. Students were asked to complete a web-based survey at the beginning of summer 2005 term and again at the completion of the term. In addition, personal characteristics, information regarding the student's degree program, and number of online courses completed were collected. The anxiety component of the survey consisted of three subscales from the Statistics Anxiety Rating Scale, which uses a five-point scale ranging from No Anxiety to Very Much Anxiety. The attitudinal component consisted of four subscales from the Survey of Attitudes toward Statistics, which uses a seven-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

One hundred thirty-eight students completed the survey at the beginning of the term. Examination of the demographic information showed no difference in the gender distribution for the on-campus and online sections (approximately 80% female). However, differences did exist between the sections with respect to ethnicity and degree program. Analysis of data collected at the beginning of summer term indicated statistically significant differences on the test and class anxiety subscale and the affective attitudinal subscale. These results indicated that students in the online sections had higher levels of anxiety towards the class and tests while also having more negative feelings toward statistics. Cohen's effect size estimates associated with these differences were .77 and .81.

Upon completion of the end of term survey, analyses were conducted to determine differences in anxiety and attitude between on-campus and online students. Results were examined concerning changes in anxiety and attitude from the beginning to the end of the term. Limitations to the current research and recommendations for future research were discussed.

## Session 16.6

10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT..... Creole Queen

**Presider:** Vincent McGrath, Mississippi State University

### **Arkansas' Act 603, The Parent Involvement Plan: How Are We Doing?**

Shelly Albritton, Jack Klotz, and Jackie McBride, University of Central Arkansas; Marcia Lamkin, Arkansas State University; and Kim Truslow, Maumelle (AR) Middle School

This presentation shared findings from the first year of a three-year study (2004-2007) that focused on parents' perceptions to determine whether public schools in Arkansas made progress in their implementation of the parental involvement programs mandated by Arkansas Act 603 passed into law in 2003. Act 603 directed each school building in Arkansas to implement a parent involvement plan by September 1, 2003. Drawing from the diverse literature that demonstrates the many benefits of parents' active involvement in the education process of their children, a number of studies have highlighted the positive impact that family involvement bears on student success, in addition to services and events that draw parents into deeper involvement with their students' academic lives (Epstein, 1991, 1995; Bagin, Gallagher, & Kindred, 1997; Fuller & Olsen, 1998; Henderson, 1988; Henderson & Berta, 1994; Lewis, 2001; Lumsden, 1998; and Peterson, 1989).

A convenience sampling of parents was drawn from Arkansas' P-12 schools. Subjects were asked to complete an attitudinal survey consisting of 32 items that was created using similar language from Act 603 in efforts to measure her/his perceptions of the school's parental involvement program and five demographic items designed for descriptive purposes and for comparing respondents' perceptions among grouping variables.

The presenters provided participants a summary of the first-year data gathered to examine statistical analyses of differences in parents' perceptions regarding the parental involvement plan at schools between respondents' age groups, race/ethnic groups, family structures, gender, grade level groups, and school building size. Participants in this session had the opportunity to discuss the first-year findings and implications, and to share professional experiences with parent involvement. Handouts were provided.

### **A Qualitative Study of Rural Values and Parent Religiosity in a Rural Southern Community**

Carolyn B. Tucker, Webster County (KY) Board of Education, and Stephen K. Miller, University of Louisville

Middle schools, the South, and rural areas typically do not fare well on achievement assessments. In this qualitative supplement to a larger study, the researchers examined rural values (anti-intellectualism, social conservatism/traditionalism, ethnocentricity, stewardship of earth, good old boy) and parent religiosity (belief, ritual, experience, affiliation, bond) to explore their connection to middle school parent involvement in a rural southern community. The school and the surrounding local area comprised the community under study. The researchers gleaned data from interviews (students, teacher, bus driver, custodian, and community members), documents (school reports, community newspapers, and local church publications), and detailed researcher field notes (compiled by the senior author throughout the two-year study).

Interviews with subjects from various levels of parent involvement and student achievement (e.g., high parent-high student, medium parent-low student, low parent-medium student) and other school/community members, documents, and researcher field notes were analyzed holistically and presented in narrative format. Included in the analysis are quotes from interviewees focusing on both factual information and tacit revelations, as well as anecdotes, and illustrative scenarios pulled from other sources of data. The participant-observer role of the lead researcher allowed an otherwise unattainable perspective due to insider acceptance and understanding of the ethnocentric-xenophobic culture of this rural community.

Religiosity and rural values emerged as overlapping spheres of influence. Religion reportedly gained admission into the "next" life; cultivating a marijuana crop was acceptable if financially necessary in "this" life. Social and religious conservatism data were consistent with previous findings. Specific variables indicating promise for future investigation included stewardship of earth, good old boy, anti-intellectualism, primary affiliation, and affiliation bond. A multidimensional, multifaceted, richly textured study evolved, revealing a flavorful slice of American life. Implications were discussed for educators, researchers, and policymakers in rural areas.

### **Parent/Family Centers in Mississippi: A Descriptive Study**

Rotiffany S. Pearson-Poxes and Thelma J. Roberson, University of Southern Mississippi

The intent of this study was to describe the characteristics of parent/family centers in Mississippi by determining: (1) the characteristics of parent/family centers in the state, including the types of resources, programs, activities, and materials they possessed, (2) the types of funding sources used to support parent/family centers, including the revenue sources and percentage of Title I money allocated, (3) how parent/family centers assessed their programs, and (4) the general role and/or function of Mississippi parent/family center directors. Three sources were used for obtaining data in this study: (1) parent/family center directors, (2) school district federal program coordinators, and (3) the Mississippi Department of Education.

All 152 public school districts in the state of Mississippi were contacted by phone. Representatives from the school districts self-reported the existence of 146 active school building-based and/or district-based parent/family centers. All were invited to take part in the study of parent/family centers. Only 42 superintendents granted formal permission for the study to be conducted in their school districts. A total of 62 school-based and district-based centers were housed in the school districts that consented to participate. The researcher designed two data collection instruments for use in the study: (1) the Mississippi School District Federal Program Coordinator Questionnaire, used to collect data on parent/family centers from federal program coordinators, and (2) the Parent/Family Center Profile Questionnaire, used to collect data on parent/family centers from parent/family center directors. Questionnaire distribution began in September 2004.

The research findings suggested that parent/family centers in the state of Mississippi were characterized by their ability to provide resourceful and well-equipped facilities. In addition, the parent/family centers were characteristically family-oriented and communicative. The variety of activities, programs, and services offered by the centers helped to emphasize those characteristics. The proper handouts and all references related to this study were given.

#### **Session 16.7**

**10:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. USING DRAWING-TOOLS IN FLASH MX 2004 TO ENHANCE COMPUTER BASED DESIGN (2-HOUR TRAINING SESSION)..... Meeting Room 253**

Ai-Lun Wu, University of Tennessee

This presentation was designed to help the teachers who are interested in becoming a more independent, proficient 2 D designer to work with the drawing-tools that are located in Flash MX 2004 with the Wacom Pen and Tablet. Flash MX allows teachers to develop interactive images that they can use for the classroom setting. This training session was aimed at helping the teachers who have the Wacom Pen and Tablet and want to know more about the wide range of possibilities for using them with Flash MX.

The Wacom pen and tablet provide the teacher with a comfortable and easy way to work with different types of graphic images. One of the great advantages of using the Wacom pen and tablet is that users have greater control over their images than they do with a mouse. Teachers can easily edit digital photos, draw, paint, and sketch using a wide variety of software using the Wacom pen and tablet. (The Wacom tablet is compatible with both PC and Mac.)

The objectives of this presentation were: (1) introduction of the Wacom pen and tablet, (2) explanation of the difference between bitmap and vector-based images and the advantages and disadvantages of using these formats, (3) exploration of all the drawing and painting tools in Flash MX 2004, (4) demonstration of the use of the Wacom Pen to draw shapes and lines, (5) explanation of the multiple ways to use color in drawings, and (6) discussion of current copyright law, including the teacher's use of images for educational purposes.

There were three activities in this presentation: (1) connecting the Wacom Pen and Tablet to a personal computer, (2) exploring Drawing-Tools in Flash MX, and (3) creating a simple drawing in Flash MX.

## **Session 17.1**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION..... Bayou**

**President:** Rose B. Jones, University of Southern Mississippi

### **The Pattern of Language Produced by Preschool Children at the Computer Center**

Shoudong Feng, University of Central Arkansas

While the role of computers in promoting young children's social and cognitive development has long been recognized (Clements, 1994; Haugland, 1992), the effect on language development has not been well researched. Bhargava and Escobedo (1997) examined the effect of the computer on the language patterns of a group of preschool students in an instructional setting and found that informing and directing were the most prevalent types of language produced, each taking up about 30% of the utterances. At present, what remains unclear, however, is the language pattern in a non-instructional setting. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to describe the language pattern of preschool students at the computer center during their free choice time. This effort will add a missing piece to the complete picture of the effect of computers on child language production.

Research generally finds positive effects of computers on young children's cognitive and social development (Clements, 1994; 1997; Heft & Swaminathan, 2002). Yet, research has not addressed the effect of computer on children's language development adequately. The only existing research on this issue, Bhargava and Escobedo's (1997), examined the language produced at the computer by a group of preschool children when they were receiving instruction on a software program. The current research described the nature of the language produced in a non-instructional context.

Participants were 18 preschool children enrolled in a rural Head Start Program. Videotaped data were collected through non-participant observations. Seven clips of various lengths were analyzed. A coding scheme based on Tough's (1977) language function taxonomy was developed and used to analyze the data.

It is found that, of the four types of language functions defined by Tough, directing and informing were the most widely used. The most striking difference between the instructional and non-instructional contexts is that directing is by far the most common type of language in the latter. The results may help classroom teachers and software developers to better utilize computers to enhance children's language development.

### **Spontaneous Forms of Writing Used by Young Children**

Karyn Wellhousen, University of South Alabama

Sulzby (1986) studied young children's attempts to make meaning through writing using non-conventional forms. Five types of spontaneous forms of writing were identified: drawing pictures, scribble-writing, letter strings, invented spelling, and conventional orthography. Later research centered on transitions in children's spontaneous forms of writing once the phonemic relationship between letters and sounds was learned and used. Results revealed children's tendency to continue using scribble-writing and letter strings after the appearance of invented spelling as a form of writing (1998, 2001). It has been suggested that children continue using various spontaneous forms at once while the use of invented spelling gradually increases among older kindergarten students (2001).

Findings have suggested that children build a repertoire of linguistic tools in their attempt to communicate through writing and gradually abandon those that no longer serve their purpose. Manning and Underbakke (2005) reviewed multiple children's writing samples over time, and their observations revealed a gradual growth from drawing pictures to conventional spelling suggesting that there is a linear pattern to children's writing development. Levels ranging from 0-5 were established for the purpose of assessing children's writing and informing parents about their child's spelling development. A description was provided for each level. These corresponded closely but not precisely to Sulzby's five spontaneous forms of writing. A review of the research on spontaneous forms of writing provided a definitive source for understanding the body of research on this topic. Relatively few studies have compared the progression of children's writing development using spontaneous forms so all relevant research identified were included. The implications of the literature review was that further studies are needed to determine precisely how and when children adopt and abandon non-phonetic forms of spontaneous writing.

### **Examining the Relationship Between Home Environment and Early Literacy Skills**

Mary M. Merrill-Lusk and Michael Welch, Louisiana State University – Shreveport

Although reading is an integral component of daily functioning, 21-23% of adults in the United States read at the lowest literacy level. In the South, reading statistics are bleak for both adult and childhood populations. Specifically, in Louisiana, 28% of adults are unable to complete a job application because of illiteracy. Additionally, 42% of fourth-grade and 51% of eighth-grade Louisiana students read below their grade level. Despite national efforts to increase reading skills, there has been no change in reading rates within the last 10 years.

As their child's first teacher, all parents have the opportunity to build a strong literacy foundation. Research suggests that a child's home environment has an impact on the acquisition of preliteracy skills. Within these skills lie the five building blocks of basic reading, which include spoken language exposure, print awareness, sounds knowledge, letter knowledge, and exposure to reading aloud. Children living in enriched environments that provide developmentally enhancing opportunities (i.e., books, parental responsiveness, communication and reading aloud styles) typically become better readers than their counterparts with fewer resources. Financially and instructionally, it is more efficient to prevent reading deficits than to be forced to remediate failed readers. That is, children reap greater benefits from early intervention versus remediation of their skills following their reading failure. Therefore, focusing on the home environment is critical, as this context affects early reading skills development before entry into formal education. Prevention of reading failure requires an understanding of the home environment. To further understanding, this research in progress examined the home environment of preschool children as it relates to their reading ability. Home

environment factors that were examined included exposure to spoken language, reading aloud, printed materials, as well as parental responsiveness. Parental self-reports of home environments were compared to general outcome measures for early literacy.

## **Session 17.2**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. ADMINISTRATION..... Levee**

**President:** David LaVetter, Arkansas State University

### **A Profile of South Carolina Superintendents and Their Contracts**

Edward P. Cox, University of South Carolina

This paper presented the results of a recent statewide study of South Carolina superintendents and their employment contracts. The results of a survey mailed to each superintendent and data from the State Department of Education were utilized to create a demographic and contractual profile. Demographic information including race, gender, educational level, and age was summarized and compared with a national profile. Contract provisions regarding salary, fringe benefits, and job protection were also reviewed and compared with a national profile of superintendents' contracts and earlier statewide studies of superintendents. All 85 superintendents were surveyed, and 62 (72%) voluntarily provided information regarding their 2003-2004 contract.

The results indicated that South Carolina has a greater proportion of female superintendents than the national average. As a group, they are also older and hold proportionally more doctoral degrees than the national average. They have less experience as a superintendent and have been in their current position less than the national average. Some trends in the superintendents' employment contracts, like longer contracts, more specific severance arrangements, and pay for performance incentives, parallel national trends. Other trends, like less use of a district automobile, may not reflect the pattern in other areas of the country. The implications for aspiring superintendents were discussed. Charts and tables were used to present the most relevant results.

### **Why Are Graduate Students Entering the Field of Educational Administration in this Stressful Era of Accountability?**

Geoffry Haines, Thelma Roberson, and Rose M. McNeese, University of Southern Mississippi

This paper presented the findings of a recent survey of 100 students enrolled in Educational Leadership graduate degree programs at a local university in the southern United States. With so many veteran school leaders leaving the field, why are these graduate students pursuing degrees in educational administration? The idea for the study began with a survey of novice, experienced, and retired principals who reported that school accountability was the number one issue facing school leaders of the day (Styron, Roberson, & Schweinle, 2003). Stress from higher accountability standards has been cited as the reason some principals have opted out of the profession. Currently, more than one half of the 403 school districts nationwide had trouble filling their vacancies. This, coupled with the fact that 40% of the 93,200 principals in the United States are nearing retirement, indicates that the situation of administrator shortages is getting worse (Rodriguez, 1999). Research has indicated that during the last decade there was a 42% turnover in elementary school administration and a 50 % turnover in the secondary schools (Norton 2003) in the United States. This trend is expected to continue in the current decade. Understanding why some educators continue to pursue the field can be important to the recruitment and the retention of future school leaders and has implications for both K-12 schools and university EDA programs.

The researcher developed the survey instrument and provided copies to attendees along with the paper, which included an overview of related literature, the design concept of the study, the findings, and the implications. This study laid the groundwork for the researcher's dissertation.

### **The Need for Substitute Teacher Training**

Tina Smith, Tennessee State University

The average student in the United States spends one year of education (kindergarten through high school graduation) being taught by substitute teachers (Smith, 1998; Russo, 2001), of which there is a growing shortage (Hopkins, 2002). Dorward, Hawkins, & Smith (2000) surveyed 500 school systems nationwide on issues regarding substitute teaching. Most of these districts do not require substitute teachers to have any kind of training. Students spend a significant amount of time with substitute teachers. Many of these teachers have not been trained on teaching methods or skills. These substitutes have the desire to do a good job, but lack the training that can give them the skills and confidence to adequately perform in the classroom.

Research has suggested that training can improve substitute teachers' skills and confidence level (Goldenhersh, 2995). Ostapczuk (1994) suggested that the most important area for improving substitute teaching is providing training on topics such as discipline and classroom management.

This study examined the perceptions and opinions of administrators and classroom teachers in Middle Tennessee regarding performance and training of substitute teachers. It also explored various types of substitute teacher training currently being done by a few school systems. The teachers and administrators completed surveys regarding substitute teacher performance and training. The surveys were developed by the Substitute Teaching Institute at Utah State University. The results determine if training is needed and if so, the type of training to be done.

## **Session 17.3**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. HIGHER EDUCATION..... Mississippi Queen**

**President:** Paul T. Hackett, Columbus State University

### **Faculty Evaluations on the Internet: Construct and External Validity**

A. J. Guarino, Auburn University, and Rebecca R. Robichaux, Independent Consultant

Several Internet sites provide students an opportunity to evaluate postsecondary faculty members. These sites vary greatly in type of services provided, especially course selection and teaching effectiveness.

The purpose of this investigation was to explore the psychometric properties of a popular faculty evaluation web-site's 15-item web survey and external validity. Developed by students, this survey was based on student experiences with standardized evaluation instruments. Missing from the survey, however, was important student demographic information (e.g., year in school, class size, and expected grade) that previous research has found to affect professor evaluations. With regards to construct validity, a common framework used in developing student rating instruments is Marsh's Student Evaluations of Educational Quality, which defines nine dimensions of effective instruction: (1) learning, (2) enthusiasm, (3) organization, (4) group interaction, (5) individual rapport, (6) breadth, (7) examinations, (8) assignments, and (9) work/load difficulty.

Findings of this study revealed that these nine dimensions were poorly represented in the survey. Three of the dimensions (learning value, enthusiasm, and work/load difficulty) were missing entirely. The survey also lacked external validity in that no professor had more than 10 student evaluations, and over 90% of the professors were evaluated by only one student. Additionally, there was no procedure to verify that students completing evaluations had actually taken a class from that professor. After careful review of this faculty survey and student responses, the researchers offered limited support in terms of construct and external validity. The instrument is weighted heavily toward the dimension of examinations and fails to represent other critical dimensions of college teaching. Furthermore, the nature of responses suggests a possible "halo" effect. Finally, because the respondents were from a voluntary sample, it was difficult to evaluate biases introduced in such samples, and the representativeness of such samples was weak.

**Gender as a Factor in Online Education: Is Self-Selection a Determining Factor in Enrollment and Successful Student Outcomes?**

Sherri L. Restauri, Gordon Nelson, and Frank King, Jacksonville State University

The substantial growth in student enrollment in online classes within higher education may indicate that a number of important variables are influencing student course selection and subsequent enrollment and retention. Along with this increase in student enrollment as a whole across online classes in higher education, the male gender has been noted within a tremendous amount of recent research as having a decline in enrollment within higher education overall, including specifically the online mode of learning. This study investigated the variables that may potentially be influencing the decline of the male higher education student's enrollment in online classes. The creation of a Likert-scale, closed-response survey addressed the issues of: (1) interest in the online format, (2) comfort in the online teaching and learning format, (3) Internet access patterns, (4) student's perceived learning styles, and (5) learning approach. To address gender as a potential factor in the responses to these five variables, these anonymous student responses were evaluated based on gender using ANOVA.

The sample in this study included a minimum of 100 participants from a southeastern university. They were selected based on heterogeneous qualities in online courses offered during the current summer terms. This selection of diverse courses allowed for generalization to a broad spectrum of disciplines. The results of this study aided researchers in further discerning the important gender-related student enrollment variables that are currently shaping our online higher education market today.

**Enhancing WebCT with Centra to Deliver Online Content in an Educational Leadership Program Leaving No Graduate Student Behind**

Shelly Albritton, Jack Klotz, and Anita Johnston, University of Central Arkansas

This presentation focused on a single case study of one principal preparatory program's instructional delivery to students in a distance learning setting. To guard against leaving a graduate student behind, this program has combined the best features of two online learning systems, WebCT and Centra. According to Auyeung (2004), "Both campus-based learning and distance learning have been transformed by technology..." and effective use of online learning systems "can be used to promote dialogue between instructors and students, as well as enhance collaborative learning" (p. 120).

Utilizing WebCT capabilities, all of the program information and materials are organized and maintained, and asynchronous dialog, through the use of the WebCT email and assignment tools, promote ongoing interaction between the instructors and students. Additionally, WebCT is used to promote small student groups working collaboratively on on-going learning projects by employing WebCT team tools, email, discussion bulletin boards, and chat rooms. For synchronous class meetings, Centra provides real-time, interactive class sessions utilizing audio and video technology as opposed to relying on strictly WebCT-based text chats for these class sessions. Effective teaching and learning is dependent upon meaningful, reciprocated communication (Ferguson, 2001). As opposed to traditional text chat formats, learners are able to contribute verbally to the flow of synchronous class interactions with the use of Centra without getting lost in a barrage of text chat on a computer screen.

The presenters provided participants an overview of the combined distant learning systems used to deliver online instruction in this program. The presenters also provided a summary of this program's student perceptions regarding utilization of the two systems in terms of their effectiveness for asynchronous and synchronous instructional delivery, as well as the impact on their learning experiences during class sessions and with collaborative learning experiences with their peers.

**Session 17.4**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. CULTURE..... Delta Queen**

**Presenter:** Rotiffany S. Pearson-Poxes, University of Southern Mississippi

**"We Have Teacher Day in China, They Have Secretary Day in the United States": Exploring an Asian Chinese Professor's Experience in the United States: A Case Study**

Ying Wang, Mississippi Valley State University

The purpose of this single case study was to explore the cultural impact on an Asian Chinese professor's perspective on the United States education and social interaction with native English speakers. The study also sought explanation about why, after all of these years of living and teaching in the United States, this professor remains unchanged.

Using a single case study, the researcher interviewed an Asian Chinese professor who had taught in the United States for 19 years, twice in the fall 2002 semester at a university in the southeastern United States. The researcher observed this professor while taking his two courses in the summer 2001 and in the Spring 2002 semester. Data collection ended when saturation was reached. The data were then coded, and themes were identified through categorical aggregation (Creswell, 2005; Stake, 2000).



The influences of culture and social knowledge are complex and far beyond description. After 19 years of living in the United States, this professor still asks his American colleagues to take off their shoes before they enter his house. He still calls those who had come to this country and earned their doctorate degrees earlier than he did Dr. so and so. Culture is such a mark that is deeply branded in one's blood.

It is important for one to understand the complexity of the human experience and how a culture influences one's perspective and interaction within and outside the cultural group. The process of acculturation is longitudinal, if not endless. Furthermore, while some may be willing to immerse and assimilate into the main stream, others may choose to maintain their heritage culture. Understanding and accommodating the differences or uniqueness from both of cultural groups should be promoted and advocated.

### **The Educational Autobiography: A Study in Black And White**

Jenetta R. Waddell, Delta State University

This qualitative study investigated the life history of educational leaders who work in the Mississippi Delta. The participants were 20 students enrolled in advanced graduate courses in curriculum studies and educational philosophy. Some were school- and district-level administrators, while others were teacher leaders in P12 and higher education. The participants were purposefully chosen by the researcher to provide insight into the lived experiences of black and white educational leaders. They responded with written narratives to this question: What people, experiences, and events influenced your choice to become an educator and continue to influence your practice as an educator? The constant comparison method of data analysis was used to identify themes and relationships across the narratives.

The study was based on the theoretical frameworks of currere, the significance of place, and Critical Race Theory. Currere focuses on a highly personal interpretation of educational experiences that emphasizes intrapersonal understanding. The significance of place studies the impact that local geography, history, and culture have on one's past, present, and future. Critical Race Theory, including Critical White Studies, interprets the lived experiences of blacks and whites, with the intent of identifying factors that either oppress or emancipate. Finally, the researcher intertwined her educational autobiography with that of the participants, adding an auto-ethnographic component to the study. As a white educator, the author centered the story on insights from the field of Critical White Studies, which investigates and seeks to end the conferred dominance and unearned privileges of whiteness.

### **That Should be Easy for You. . . You're Black: An "Insider's" Reflections on the Problematics of Positionality, Representation, and Researcher Responsibility in a Qualitative Research Study**

Tony T. Latiker, Jackson State University

This paper examined the major ethical dilemmas and methodological challenges that were encountered as an "insider" studying students at the author's undergraduate alma mater, a private black college. By critically examining status or position as an "insider," the author was able to expose some of the internal conflicts that minority researchers are likely to face while conducting research within their own communities. Drawing on personal experiences and the selected work of established minority researchers such as Vanessa Siddle Walker and Sophia Villenas, the author discussed how to address the issues of positionality, representation, and researcher responsibility while conducting quality qualitative research. Furthermore, the author argued that a researcher can strengthen her/his study by acknowledging the effects of cultural reference and addressing the challenges and dilemmas that arise from it through proper definition of researcher stance, triangulation in methodological approach, and critical reflexivity.

#### **Session 17.5**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. ACCOUNTABILITY..... Riverboat**

**Presider:** John R. Petry, University of Memphis

#### **The Intractability of Demographic Influence: Accountability Results for Urban Middle Schools in Kentucky**

Stephen K. Miller and Beverly Derington Moore, University of Louisville

This study examined accountability data in Kentucky for middle schools in a large urban district. Based on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), the purpose was to determine the influence of seven socio-demographic factors on CATS performance assessment results for 2002 data. Results inform the policy debate surrounding high stakes standards-based accountability. All middle schools in the district constituted the population (N = 24). Outcomes came from the norm-referenced CTBS for Reading and Mathematics, criterion-referenced Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) in Reading and Mathematics, and the Norm Referenced Test (NRT) Index and Academic Index used for calculating the overall Accountability Index. Actual dependent variables at the school level included: mean CTBS NCE scores for Reading and Mathematics (6th grade), mean KCCT scale scores for Reading (seventh-grade) and for Mathematics (eighth-grade), and the NRT and Academic indices. The independent variables were the school-wide percentage of students for the following factors (mobility is different): %Females, %HiSES (not eligible for free/reduced lunch), %Blacks, Mobility Rate (measure of student transfers), %Dual-Parent Families (reside with both parents, not blended or other family structures), %gifted, and %disability (special education).

Forward stepwise multiple regressions determined the significant demographic predictors of achievement and provided R2 effect sizes. Results indicated that the combination of comprehensive reform and high stakes accountability have been unsuccessful in eliminating the influence of demographic background. The R2 (variance explained) for the six regressions ranged from .85 to .89. Effect sizes this large (out of 1.0) are almost unheard of, indicating that in this urban district, demography is almost destiny. This is devastating, given the goal of Kentucky reform to produce both excellence and equity. These results were discussed in terms of specific variables that were significant, the policy debate on accountability reform, and efforts to close the achievement gap.

#### **A Longitudinal Study of Student Participation Rates Before and After the Implementation of a High Stakes Accountability Program**

Eugene Kennedy and Christopher Guillory, Louisiana State University

Most states have implemented high-stakes school accountability models in which school performance indices change from year to year. For example,

the performance of students in the 2004-05 cohort may be used to set growth expectations for the 2005-06 cohort. A criticism of these models is that schools that serve large numbers of disadvantaged students, despite the fact that these students may show considerable academic growth, are more likely to fail to meet school-level growth expectations because their students rarely achieve at the levels of their more advantaged counterparts. A related concern among policy makers is that educators may be tempted to displace or otherwise remove from their schools students that are unlikely to demonstrate high levels of performance on standardized tests used for school accountability purposes. Of particular concern are suspensions, expulsions, within-grade retention rates, dropouts, and transfer rates.

The current study is concerned with changes in suspensions, dropouts, and expulsions for elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high schools (9-12) in Louisiana. The focus of the study was on the trend of these data before the 1997 implementation of the high-stakes school-accountability program and following its implementation. These data were modeled as a function of student demographics (percent free lunch, percentage minority) and school instructional resources (percent certified teachers, teacher turnover rate) using a random effects Poisson regression model. Separate models were fitted for each of the following dependent variables: suspensions per 1000 students, expulsions per 1000 students, and dropouts per 1000 students. Data on these measures were captured for five years prior to implementation of the accountability model and for five years following implementation of the model. A piecewise modeling strategy was used to compare the two trends. Hedeger's MIXPREG program was used to fit the models studied in this project.

### **Impact of an End-of-Course Examination on Tennessee Social Studies Teachers' Instructional Practices**

Kenneth E. Vogler, University of South Carolina

The purpose of this study was to determine the manner in which an accountability examination influences instructional practices. Data were obtained from a survey instrument given to a stratified random sample of Tennessee social studies teachers who taught the same content tested on their state's End-of-Course examination. An analysis showed teachers using predominately teacher-centered practices, and those spending the most time preparing students for the examination were using the greatest percentage of lecturing, textbooks, multiple-choice questions, supplementary materials, and textbook-based assignments. Also, a relationship was found between influence factors and time spent on test preparation.

### **A Validation Study of the Alternative Statistical Methods of Modeling the Valued-Added Effects of Teachers**

Angela R. Lee and Eugene Kennedy, Louisiana State University

A major topic of discussion in the contemporary educational literature is the utility of the value-added (VA) approach to teacher and school accountability. Proponents put forth the proposition that VA accountability models have the potential to generate estimates of teacher and school effects that are independent of the confounding influences of the socio-economic backgrounds of students and other factors external to the school environment. Others point out the considerable challenges, both technical and practical, of realizing this goal. Despite the uncertainty reflected in these debates, the number of approaches to VA accountability has proliferated, and the number of states and school systems that are adopting or exploring this approach continues to grow. A persistent question both proponents and skeptics agree with, however, is whether VA models generate performance ratings that are valid. One approach to this question is to compare the relationship of various models with agreed upon indicators of effectiveness.

The purpose of the study reported in this paper was to compare teacher performance rankings from two of the more widely recognized VA models with measures of supervisor ratings of classroom instruction. The VA model studied is based on teacher impact on the growth trajectories of elementary students on a series of vertically linked benchmark examinations, which are given each nine weeks of the school year in a large urban school district. The authors produced VA rankings of these teachers using a hierarchical linear model and the layered mixed effects model and compare these with rankings based on supervisors' evaluations using the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching. The classroom observation and achievement data were cleaned and analyzed.

#### **Session 17.6**

**11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. IMPROVING STUDENT PERFORMANCE..... Creole Queen**

**President:** Marilyn Larmon, Southeastern Louisiana University

### **An Exploratory Investigation of the Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory**

Mitzi Trahan and Shujie Liu, Louisiana State University

Higher education has moved from focusing on curriculum content to curriculum outcomes that emphasize critical thinking. Because of this shift, research is needed to ensure that critical thinking activities are goal directed, measurable, and result in optimal learning. Researchers and educators have proposed taxonomies that elaborate on practical behaviors and attributes of critical thinking that promote thoughtful, competent, and effective problem-solving skills (Edman, Bart, Robey, & Silverman, 2000; Ennis, 1985), but it is not known if these constructs behave as intended.

Because of the increased emphasis on pedagogies that promote critical thinking, it is important that test developers create reliable and valid measures for testing the underlying constructs of critical thinking. The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychometric properties of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI). This study is important because the psychometric properties of the CCTDI have not been investigated within a higher education setting in previous studies.

The instrument was administered to an incoming freshman class at a large southern Research I institution (N=2,027). Cronbach's alpha internal consistency procedures and exploratory factor analysis, using a Principal Axis factoring extraction method, were used to statistically investigate the interrelationships between the constructs embedded in the CCTDI. A six-factor model was selected as the final solution based on the percentage of variance explained, range of loading values for all models, possible presence of specific factors, and number of cross-loadings.

The results of this study are important from several perspectives. The six factors were matched to previous research on critical thinking. Additionally, the correlational aspects of the factors in this study continue to support the theoretical dispositions of critical thinking and their link to encouraging critical thinking practices in higher education. Further support for the use of the CCTDI in evaluating the quality of educational interventions, however, has been recommended.

### **Pre-Teaching Service Students' Perceptions Toward School Services for Gifted**

Stacy L. Bliss, Stephani Choate, Katherine Sager, and Sherry K. Bain, University of Tennessee

The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of the school services for children who are gifted. The authors questioned a group consisting of 285 undergraduate students in two courses, human development and educational psychology. The participants were asked to respond to a series of questions, organized into the following three categories: forms and issues related to service delivery, the need for special services, and egalitarian versus elitist views of gifted services. In this presentation, the authors examined the responses to these questions and discussed them in terms of actual practices and misguided beliefs as represented in the professional literature on giftedness. Such perceptions can have a not-so-subtle impact on the acceptability of services and should be evaluated in terms of educational imperatives. Discussion also centered on the notion of dividing the gap between those children who were served as gifted and those who were not. Finally, the authors discussed the implications of the findings for teacher education programs and the impact such perceptions might have on the provision of programs for students who are gifted.

### **An Extended Experimental Analysis Based on Response to Intervention**

Christie J. Jones and Laura Kuhn, Mississippi State University


Intervention design often presents educators with a challenge, as individual students respond differently to various interventions. The purpose of this single subject design study was due to the widespread use of the Response to Intervention Model as a means for enhancing student performance. In this study it was utilized to enhance the performance of a second-grader, instructional in reading and frustrational in math on a first-grade level. To address reading, a home-based Repeated Reading intervention was implemented, and math skills were addressed using various mathematical interventions over time, inclusive of the Folding-in Technique, Cover-Copy-Compare, and Repeated Math Practice with Goal Setting. The implementation of Repeated Reading and Repeated Math Practice with Goal Setting were the most effective academic interventions for the second grader's success to mastery on grade level. Therefore, this model is a useful method for providing educators with simple, effective strategies to enhance student performance.



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