

## 2017 MSERA Annual Meeting

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### COMPARING TEACHER ATTRITION IN THE US AND AUSTRALIA

This research is a literature review that examines and compares teacher attrition in the United States and Australia. The research compared teacher attrition in general education and special education looking closely for the historical issues, cause and effects including teacher experience, preparation, and qualifications. Also, how school leadership, staff relations, student issues, and personal factors contribute to teachers leaving a school or the profession. Teacher attrition negatively affects staff relations, student performance, and the credibility of schools in the community. One of the issues discovered was attrition may not be solved totally because there was reasons that can't be controlled as personal factors however the level of attrition can be reduced. Finally, this research offered solutions and suggestion to reduce the level of attrition

issue.

**Basim Shokr**

Mississippi college

**Minadene Waldrop**

Mississippi College

**Michele Morton**

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### **Does Spirituality help College Students deal with Stressful Events? A Qualitative Investigation**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the role spirituality played in Muslim college students' lives. The central research questions aimed at importance of spirituality as a resource to cope up with life's stressors. A purposeful sample technique was utilized. The participants were 35 males and 13 females ages 19 to 38. Salutogenesis was the theoretical framework we used to underpin the theoretical assumptions we had about the central research question (Anthonovsky (1987, 1979). Antonovsky developed in the model, Generalized Resistance Resources (GRRs). The GRRs are three kinds, 1) physiological, biochemical and psychological, 2) cultural and social resources, 3) commitment to institutions –ties between the individual and community. The interview questions related to these concepts. To capture qualitative data, we used four open-ended questions that focused on how and why faith can be a source of strength, meaning, participation and courage. The design was descriptive-interpretive approach that enabled the participants to discuss their spirituality freely in their own context. The qualitative descriptive-interpretive design employs less detailed interviews that are not typical of other qualitative research designs. We used thematic analysis to understand the students' lived experience. The results of our study indicate, spirituality is a significant mechanism, which may play an important role in how people connect to the world. The major themes were worship, seeking, guidance and solution from spiritual rites in times of hardships. These seemed coping mechanisms that help them navigate stressors in life. Finally, the results show how problematic it can be for students when we fail to respond to their faith inside and outside the classroom. The implication of the study is that spirituality shapes students' world view and is central in understanding them for better teaching and connection.

#### **Mohamed A. Ali**

Grand Canyon University

#### **Franco Zengaro**

Delta State University

#### **Sally Franco**

Delta State University

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### Engaging Reluctant Writers: Revision, Collaboration, and Solo Pursuits

College students arrive on campuses with an array of levels of writing competence. While many have been taught revision processes, in high school, they frequently do not possess the efficacy, motivation, or skills required to be successful with writing at the college level. Revision proves to be a particularly daunting obstacle. Faculty members struggle to motivate students to invest in the process in meaningful ways. For students from low-SES households who have been traditionally identified as at-risk, the struggle to learn to write well can seem insurmountable. Review of the literature from various disciplines supports a number of high- and low-tech approaches and modalities aimed at providing the tools that students need to be successful. The Review of Literature for this study includes methodologies applied in both the disciplines of English and education.

This mixed methods study utilizes data gleaned from first-year and advanced writing courses and upper level educational psychology courses as well as information gathered via focus group and personal interviews. Initial findings from a pilot study conducted by one of the researchers indicate that video feedback encouraged motivation at a higher rate than traditional rubric and instructor only comment. This, combined with a revision policy that allows students to resubmit assignments until they are content with their level of mastery/grade, seems to have a positive effect on student achievement. Findings indicate that those students receiving interactive, individualized instructor responses received higher scores on assignments. Data from this ongoing study point toward new methods of enhancing student success across the curriculum.

#### **Gregory Bouck**

Northwestern State University

#### **Lisa Abney**

Northwestern State University

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### **Grenada, Mississippi, 1966: A Historical Case Study of the “School to Prison” Pipeline**

The connection between zero-tolerance policies, the proliferation of police in schools, punitive punishments for non-violent infractions and the incarceration of poor youth and youth of color has been extensively discussed by scholars, activists, and journalists. Often referred to as the “school-to-prison” pipeline, this funneling of students from classrooms to juvenile court, jail and even prison has disproportionately harmed children of color, poor children and children with disabilities or special needs. The purpose of this presentation is to document one of the earliest cases of “school-to-prison” pipeline – the arrest of over 100 African American students in 1966 when they staged a march in Grenada, Mississippi to protest their treatment under “freedom of choice” in two formerly all-White schools. The students were arrested and hauled off to Parchman Penitentiary in cattle carts. Once in prison, they were subjected to horrific treatment, leading Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to send a telegram to the U.S. Assistant Attorney General imploring the federal government to step in and secure their timely release. Data from this historical case study is based on a comprehensive seven-year study of the desegregation of public schools in Mississippi from 1965-1971 that includes oral history interviews with over 100 Mississippians involved in school desegregation and extensive archival research. The research has culminated in a book “Just Trying to Have School”: Working through School Desegregation in Mississippi to be published in 2018 with University Press of Mississippi. The presenters will demonstrate how the school-to-prison pipeline began 50 years ago when local municipalities turned to violence to punish African American students challenging White supremacy and segregation.

**James Adams**

Mississippi State University

**Natalie Adams**

The University of Alabama

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### **Analysis of Reading Comprehension Proficiency Gap between ELL and non-ELL Readers: Latent Growth Curve Modeling Using IRT Scale Scores**

The effect of E2L status on students' reading comprehension test score variations throughout the school year has been extensively studied in the educational field. One issue in the area of reading comprehension assessment is the "ceiling effect" related to using classical test theory (CTT) raw scores. By utilizing item response theory (IRT) scale scores, a greater accuracy of student reading ability may be assessed. In the past, traditional trend analysis was used for the discernment of the shape of reading score growth from repeated measurements such as benchmark assessments. Latent growth modeling (LGM) is a sophisticated statistical method for analysis of longitudinal data to reveal the relationship between the starting point (intercept) and rate of changes (slope) in reading comprehension growth. In this study, data were taken from three reading comprehension tests for 9th grade students. The test items were constructed based on Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which provides uniform guidelines for standardized multiple-choice items. The results showed that although LGM provided a good model-data fit for both CTT raw scores and IRT scale scores, the IRT data demonstrated significant improvement in model-data fit indices. The LGM analysis indicated that E2L status impacted both the intercept and slope parameters for the IRT scale scores while it influenced only the intercept of the CTT raw scores. Implications for E2L teaching instructions and assessment were discussed.

**Daren Li**

Middle Tennessee State University

**Jwa Kim**

Middle Tennessee State University

**Zaya Ahmed**

Middle Tennessee State University

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### **What inclusion model is best for students with moderate to severe disabilities in the secondary setting?**

Students with moderate to severe disabilities are placed in general education classrooms across nation schools without useful practices in inclusive education (McLeskey, Landers, Williamson, & Hoppey, 2010). Academic and social gains vary due to the unevenness in the quality of instruction McLeskey and Waldron (2011). Inclusive education practices will increasingly influence how they are served. This research article examines three inclusion models to determine which model would produce higher gains, both academically and socially in a high school multi-disability classroom. Students were assigned to groups based on intellectual functioning and individual needs. Each group consisted of students that were relatively higher functioning, relatively lower functioning and students with severe needs. The settings included a general education classroom with adult/parapro interaction, a general education setting with peer interactions or a small group instructional classroom with peer directed instructional activities. Academic gains were made by all three groups, but the gains were varied depending on the setting/inclusion model used.

#### **Joseph Akpan**

Jacksonville State University

#### **Duska Fields**

Randolph County Schools

#### **Larry Beard**

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#### **Charles Notar**

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### **Perceptions of Undergraduate Secondary Education Teacher Candidates on the Process of Conducting Action Research to Evaluate Their Teaching**

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of undergraduate secondary education teacher candidates on conducting action research to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. Action research consists of the following steps: identify a problem, plan, collect, analyze, and reflect (Lee, Sachs, & Wheeler, 2014). The InTASC Standard 9 (Council of State School Officers, 2013) emphasize the importance of teachers having the ability to evaluate their own practice and adapt to meet the needs of the learners. Being involved in inquiry also allows teachers to stay up-to-date on best practice and increase their skills. Action research is not designed for broader dissemination as is scholarly research, but requires teachers to reflect on what they do, why they do it, and how they do it in order to change and improve practice. Those who conduct action research use the techniques of research to carefully examine their own practice in a systematic way (Lee et al., 2014). A resulting change in teacher practice is the ultimate goal (Wong, 2011). Requiring teacher candidates to conduct action research during field experiences can help candidates to develop the skills necessary to evaluate their own work and an understanding of a process that can be used for their own professional development throughout their teaching career (Maxwell, 2010). Teacher candidates in an undergraduate secondary education program at a northern Louisiana university have been required to complete an action research project during their practicum the semester prior to completion of their program. During the fall 2017 semester 15 candidates enrolled in the practicum submitted a professional reflection on the action research process. The reflection responses were analyzed to determine the candidates' perceptions of the action research process. Overall, the perceptions were positive, and candidates indicated completing the project helped them to become a better teacher.

**Tina Allen**

Marshall University

**Kimberly McFall**

Marshall University

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### Three Teachers, Three Outcomes: Alternatively Certified Literacy Teachers and Their Use of Support

Alternatively certified teachers play an important role in educating students, especially in high-needs areas. These teachers generally need more support in instruction and classroom management in comparison to their traditionally trained counterparts (Johnson & Birkeland, 2008). The purpose of this research is to examine alternate route teachers' experiences and the literacy supports they used and desired during their first year of teaching. This study documents the lived experiences of three teachers who completed the same licensure coursework, taught literacy in the same grade, and taught in the same school district but who all had varying degrees of success. Researchers used a qualitative, case study approach (Berg, 2009; Merriam 2009) which includes multiple observations, field notes, interviews, and university coursework to find evidence of support. Data were coded following guidelines developed by Strauss (1987) for references to feelings of self-efficacy (e.g. planning, teaching, assessing, etc.) and for explicit references to supports being utilized to make instructional decisions (e.g. materials, colleagues, online resources, etc.). Initial results suggest lead teachers and online resources as the most utilized support for teachers. All teachers cited that they wanted more principal support and training, though one teacher received more support as the year progressed. The school district of these teachers used third-party intervention resources and personnel, yet the teachers concurred that the support was skeletal and lacking in depth. Interestingly, all three teachers utilized around the same amount and types of support, yet they all had varying degrees of success and self-efficacy. These discrepancies fell in the area of instructional practices and attitude toward feedback. Understanding the experiences of first year alternate route teachers allows administration, mentors, teachers and other support groups to meet the needs of these teachers to improve efficacy, job satisfaction and retention.

#### **Karen Cole Toralba**

Mississippi State University

#### **Dr. Kathleen Alley**

Mississippi State University

#### **Dr. Devon Brenner**

Mississippi State University

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### State Policy and MSERA Members: Discussions about Engagement and Advocacy

**Overview of Session** There are an increasing number of reasons for scholars to become involved in state policy. State education policies range from licensure requirements to state approved curriculum to ESSA implementation to bathroom bills. Policies that focus on low-achieving schools and students, often influenced more by ideology than by evidence, can have unintended consequences that narrow curriculum to a focus on skills and routines, both in the K-12 classroom (Cummins, 2007) and in teacher preparation (Atchison, Ogawa, and Speigman, 2004). In this session, presenters will share narratives about their engagement in state policy and lead discussions about the intersection of policy, research and teacher education. In our case, state policy aimed to increase a focus on one aspect of literacy instruction--teaching phonics—without recognition of the evidence that supports a more balanced approach to literacy (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Moats & Foorman, 2003; Shulman, 1986). Our quandary was: How do we successfully advocate for a balanced literacy approach in a code-focused state policy debate without alienating policy makers and colleagues with a different perspective?

**Format of Session/Audience Participation** This interactive session will begin with an introduction to the intersection between education research, state policy, and educator preparation. Then, each presenter will briefly describe ways they have engaged with state policy development and implementation. Following each narrative, attendees will be invited to respond to discussion questions addressing implications for policy engagement in their own contexts. The session will conclude with a brief synthesis and action steps.

**Summaries of Presentations Discussion 1: Contexts for Policy Action** Two years ago, our state legislature passed the Literacy Based Promotion Act (LBPA) (MS SB 2057) requiring schools to base retention decisions on students' reading test scores. The act also commissioned a report evaluating the effectiveness of early literacy teacher preparation (DoE 2016; 2017) and led to recommendations that would impact literacy teacher education. This context will be summarized, and participants will be invited to share about state policies that intersect with research and practice in their own states. **Discussion 2: Advocating in a State Policy Debate** In response to the LBPA, faculty and scholars from across the state have begun to engage with legislators, prominent advocacy organizations, our state department of education, and with other faculty in an attempt to advocate for policy consistent with evidence-based practices. Participants will be invited to consider ways to identify stakeholders and engage with policy makers to advance policy and the ways that cross-university collaboration supports advocacy. **Discussion 3: Opening our Instruction to Outsiders and Each Other** Critiques of our teacher preparation programs have led to both defensive stances that shut down dialogue and important reflection. Several faculty have begun to better document both the process and impact of teacher preparation in order to communicate with stakeholders about the impact of our work and to take a proactive stance in policy making. Participants will be invited to discuss ways to make a case for their research and practice with key policy stakeholders.

**Devon Brenner**

Mississippi State University

**Kathleen Alley**

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**Kristin Javorsky**

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**Julie Rust**

Millsaps College

**Michael Mott**

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### Advancing Literature Discussions One Tweet at a Time

**Purpose:** This descriptive case study explores 27 pre-service teachers' social meaning making interactions via Twitter related to *Fire from the Rock* (Draper, 2008) in an undergraduate YA literature course. Research questions guiding this study were: • In what ways does Tweeting support pre-service teachers' social meaning making surrounding their reading/study of *Fire from the Rock*? • In what ways does Tweeting by pre-service teachers support discussion surrounding their reading/study of *Fire from the Rock*?

**Theoretical Grounding:** I utilized New Literacy theories to frame this study because this body of research as focused on the evolving and transformative nature of ICTs and the implications for literacy instruction (Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear, & Leu, 2008).

**Methodology:** This qualitative, descriptive case study incorporates a convenience sampling of 27 pre-service teachers enrolled in my YA Literature class. Data sources included a questionnaire to determine prior Twitter experiences, students' / instructor's tweets, reflection on a class forum, and a transcript of a focus group discussion. I used NCapture to capture tweets, and NVivo to qualitatively analyze tweets, questionnaire data, reflections, and the discussion transcript using a grounded theory approach with open coding (Struass & Corbin, 1990; Ezzy, 2002). Themes were then identified using Sample's (2010) Twitter Adoption Matrix. I used both data and methodological triangulation to ensure dependability and credibility (Merriam, 2001).

**Results / Conclusions:** All students (n=27) indicated interest in the assignments and volunteered to participate in the study. Twenty-one out students stated they were more likely to use Twitter in their future ELA classroom. Twenty-one reported using Twitter prior to the course; 18 had active accounts, and 9 considered themselves frequent users. The remaining 6 students had never used Twitter previously. Eight students contributed most of the tweets, with 3 being highly active (75+ tweets). Eight others tweeted less than fifteen times. Eleven students tweeted the minimal required. In addition to tweets, students changed their profile pictures (n=23), mentioned someone by using the "@" function (n=19), and replied to tweets (n=27). Nineteen followed someone on Twitter, 27 retweeted a story, 7 unfollowed someone on Twitter, 11 sent a direct message to someone via Twitter, 5 created a list to organize the people they follow, and 12 added a tweet to their "favorite." Twenty-four students indicated they used their cell phones to read or update tweets at least sometimes, and all 27 students shared they used the Twitter website to read and tweet at least sometimes.

**Implications:** Research indicates Twitter use by students better connects them to the content of their courses, and includes sharing, analyzing, and applying the content to students' own ways of understanding and to their own life experiences. Twitter also promotes engagement in courses; both faculty and students became highly engaged in ways that went beyond traditional classroom activities. Twitter also helped instructors to respond to student issues in a timely manner. Twitter also supports the development of a community of learners and the ability to connect with a professional community of practice.

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Mississippi State University

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### TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN CHINA AND SAUDI ARABIA

The rapid growth in technology and globalization requires the need for a common language to be used around the world. English is the chosen business language of most countries. Learning English has become a necessity for individuals seeking to expand opportunities in the international markets. China and Saudi Arabia, two of the fastest growing economies, require English to be taught as a second language in their high schools and universities. With more countries choosing to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) there is also a need for more ESL teachers. These teachers need to know which teaching methods for ESL are the most effective. This thesis explores the challenges of teaching ESL in China and Saudi Arabia from the perspective of which teaching methods to use including technology cooperative learning, and assignments. The teacher-student ratio is also examined as to how it influences the classroom environment. The research is conducted as a literature review and a comparison of how China and Saudi Arabia approach teaching English. One discovery was that technology is being used to teach English but it is not always an effective method.

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### EFFECTIVE SKILLS FOR VISUALLY CHALLENGED STUDENTS

This paper is an autoethnography in an attempt to better understand how the author's experience with a visual impairment is similar or different than other young adults. Experiences have been divided into three categories; life, academic, and work. This paper begins with a review of some challenges experienced by young adults and methods or devices used to overcome the challenges faced by the visually impaired in these categories. Two visually impaired persons from the United States were interviewed about their learning experiences and compared it to the author's experiences. Her experiences are unique because she was an international student studying using her second language in the United States. Her goal for studying in the United States was to experience independence and obtain an education for could possibly lead to employment in the Middle East. This paper should be helpful because it provides the perspective of the visually impaired and blind with what training, accommodations, and technology have been the most helpful for them in terms of life, academic, and work skills.

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**Minadene Waldrop**

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### Developing and Implementing Primary Sources Curriculum: Benefits and Challenges

Wineburg (2001) called for research into how teachers learn to teach with primary sources. Using a grant provided by the Library of Congress (LOC), we collaborated with 24 teachers to develop a grades 3-12 curriculum incorporating primary sources. To prepare the teachers, we provided professional development. The PD provided resources, an understanding of historical thinking skills (Wineburg, 2001), and framework for planning. We also provided continuing support and feedback in the process. Our research question was: What are the benefits and challenges to teachers developing and implementing instruction incorporating primary sources? We used qualitative methods including focus group interviews, pre and post surveys, and analysis of lesson plans.

We identified four factors that characterized the challenges: teacher, student, curricular/pedagogical, and technical factors. Teacher challenges included prior experience using primary sources, content knowledge, and lack of effective planning. Student challenges included language of documents and lack of student knowledge and context. Curriculum challenges included lack of focus on social studies due to standardized testing (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010) and a disjuncture between what the teachers wanted to teach and resources they could locate on the LOC website. Technical challenges included the website user interface and available content.

We identified three factors that characterized the challenges: teacher, student, and curricular/pedagogical. Benefits at the teacher level included a desire to use primary sources more in the classroom. Student benefits identified included student engagement and interest, increased rigor, and autonomy. Curricular and pedagogical benefits included an increase in student research activities and less reliance on the textbook.

Recommendations include initiating teaching with primary sources early in the school year, focusing on images first and then moving to text-based documents once students and teachers are comfortable using primary sources, and developing context and base of knowledge prior to or during a lesson incorporating primary sources.

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### **Influence of Professional Learning on Elementary STEM Teacher Self-Efficacy**

**Abstract:** The purpose of the qualitative study was to determine the influence of key features of professional learning on teacher efficacy/attitudes towards STEM. The study utilized a purposeful sampling of elementary teachers with a minimum of three years of experience in teaching STEM. The seven teachers selected for the study were from three school districts recognized for STEM and they were identified by gatekeepers in those districts as highly confident and effective teachers of STEM. Rather than seeking to identify specific professional development models, the researchers sought a broader understanding of professional learning – specifically seeking to identify learning features that contributed to teacher self-efficacy in STEM. Data collected from structured interviews were analyzed using qualitative methods to answer research questions and determine a grounded theory. The data suggest that the following aspects of professional learning enhanced participants' self-efficacy to teach STEM: a) student focus, b) STEM learning continuum, c) networking, d) e) expertise, and f) culture. In addition, the researchers determined that the five core features first described by Desimone (2009) were present in the data: a) content focus, b) active learning, c) coherence, d) duration, e) collective participation. The researchers conclude by offering practical recommendations for educators seeking to implement STEM, as well as suggestions for future research studies.

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### Understanding Career Counseling Interventions that School Counselors Use with Students in Poverty

School counselors have the responsibility to work with students from diverse socioeconomic statuses (SES) while providing guidance to them in three domains; academic, career, and personal/social (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). Students from low-SES backgrounds have challenges in schools which include lower rates of academic achievement and slower rates of academic progress (American Psychological Association, 2014). In order for school counselors to effectively provide professional career development guidance to students who come from a poverty background, they must use appropriate counseling interventions which will reach these students. The researchers reviewed articles published in the last 10 years from top-tier academic journals in career counseling and education to complete a comprehensive literature review. Given the importance of research in understanding the career development of students in poverty and the roles of school counselors, this study examined research trends of career counseling interventions for students in poverty in counseling journals. First, we found that a relatively small proportion of the literature has explored career issues of students in poverty and relevant counseling interventions. Second, the need to use a model as a framework to understand the career issues and career development of students in poverty will continue to grow. Third, researchers have investigated the factors that affect the psychosocial, educational, and career development of students from low-SES backgrounds. Implications for school counselors include the need to have awareness of the diverse SES and social class their students are coming from, as well as the impact that SES and social class has on educational and occupational aspirations.

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#### **Na Mi Bang**

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#### **Angela Harless**

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### Number Talks with Preservice Teachers to Develop Three Levels of Unit for Fractions

Teachers' understanding of multiplication of rational numbers is often a procedural understanding that lacks conceptual depth (An, Kulm, & Wu, 2004; Armstrong & Bezuk, 1995; Ball, Lubienski, & Mewborn, 2001; Izsák, 2008; Sowder et al., 1998). Furthermore, Izsák (2008) stated that teachers' ability to understand three different levels of unit in rational numbers is a "necessary but not sufficient" (p. 139) condition for them to be able to respond and interpret students' conceptions of multiplication of fractions. In response, we developed a series of number talks for use with pre-service teachers as a way to develop their understanding of three levels of unit within fractions with the anticipated outcome of teachers' having a better understanding of fraction multiplication. Number talks, or short conversations around mathematical problems that students solve mentally, have been described as useful in K-12 mathematics classrooms. The participants in this study, pre-service elementary teachers in a mathematics content course, engaged in carefully designed number talks on the topic of rational numbers at the beginning of each of their class meetings. The number talks were designed to expose participants to three levels of unit within whole numbers and fractions prior to instruction on multiplication of fractions. This mixed-methods study included pre- and post-tests regarding multiplication of fractions, instructor field notes, student work during the talks, and an open-ended survey about the use of number talks. Preliminary analysis is currently underway and will be presented at the presentation. The pre- and post-test results will be analyzed using a paired t-test. Student responses on the tests will also be analyzed qualitatively, looking for patterns among students' thinking. The remaining data will also be analyzed qualitatively, first using an open-coding scheme to develop themes. Implications for the teacher education community from this study will also be shared.

**Natasha Gerstenschlager**

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**Angela Barlow**

University of Central Arkansas

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### Mississippi Teachers' Knowledge and Perceptions of Student Mental Health

10.9% of school age Mississippi children suffer from an emotional, behavioral, or developmental disability. 26.5 % of those children will exhibit problem social behaviors (National Survey of Children's Health Bureau, 2007). Teachers and administrators are tasked with meeting the emotional and behavioral needs of students, thus, it is important to understand their views of student mental health issues. The current research seeks to describe Mississippi teachers' and administrators' perceptions regarding students' mental health needs, in particular, their experience and training and their beliefs about their roles. School officials (n=32; 78.1% teachers) who attended a state level, annual meeting on middle level education participated in a survey. About one-quarter of surveyed personnel agreed that they had the level of knowledge required to meet the mental health needs of their students. School officials rated their knowledge and skills highest on issues of peer problems and acting out (85% report good to very good knowledge) and lowest on issues of school phobia (46.9% reported poor to fair knowledge) and immigration/cultural adjustment (62.5% poor to fair knowledge). 46.9% rate their training in behavioral interventions as minimal to none. About one third (34.4%) of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they had the skills required to meet the mental health needs of their students. Fortunately, 53.1% of teachers believe they can play a role in ensuring that the mental health needs of students are met, and 78.2% reported that they would be willing to try a new practice even if it were different from what they are used to. Results from this survey provide a better understanding of student mental health from the teachers' and administrators' perspectives and provide direction for training and professional development. Future efforts should focus on increased staff training regarding mental health issues in effort to best meet needs of students.

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### Exploring US and international digital natives academic use of technology

#### Problem Statement

Much has been written about the new generation of students entering higher education. Prensky (2001a; 2001b) characterized these new students as digital natives who learn and use technology differently and more proficiently than their predecessors, the digital immigrants. Subsequent research has challenged these distinctions. A recent EDUCAUSE study (Dahlstrom, Brooks, Grayek & Reeves, 2015) found that while technology is embedded into undergraduate students' lives, their academic use of technology is widespread but not deep.

This exploratory research seeks to build on the existing research on digital natives' use of technology by examining the relationship of culture to students' technology ownership, use and skills. The focus on citizenship is important as international students comprise a significant proportion of undergraduate enrollment in US higher education institutions.

#### Theoretical Framework

This study used the broad view of culture put forth by Spencer-Oatey (2008): Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour. (p. 8) For this study, US citizenship was defined as a type of culture, with participants characterized as belonging to the culture (US citizens) and not belonging (international students). The research question guiding the first stage of this project was, What are the characteristics of US and international undergraduate students' technology use and technology skills considering their citizenship, age, race and gender?

#### Sample

730 undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory technology course at a southeastern university over six semesters. The demographics were: 57% male, 43% female; 46% Asian/Pacific Islander, 37% White, 17% Black/African-American; and 54% US citizens, 46% International. The majority had majors in business, management and marketing (55%) with the remaining spread across the other majors. 90% of the students are full-time and 84% live off campus.

#### Instrument

The survey consisted of 24 questions in four sections. Section 1 consisted of eight questions on student technology ownership. Section 2 consisted of four questions on student technology use. Section 3 consisted of four questions on student technology skills. Section 4 consisted of eight demographic questions. The survey was administered online using Qualtrics.

#### Findings

Descriptive statistics were used to describe US and international students' ownership; and use of technology. A Chi-Square analysis was performed to determine if there was a difference in the two profiles. These results will be presented during the poster session.

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### University Alumni Donor Contributions: A Survey of Student Scholarship Recipients Perceptions of Charitable Giving

The purpose of this study was to investigate alumni donor contributions to an existing undergraduate scholarship at one mid-south university in order to gain an understanding of recipients perceptions associated with decisions to donate. Concerns associated with limited financial reinvestment in the university by past scholarship recipients served as the stimulus for the study. Following IRB approval all past recipients (N = 51) of the scholarship were invited to participate in the electronic survey which was delivered through Qualtrics along with the informed consent. Participants who did not have a functioning email address or those who did not initially respond to the electronic invitation and request received these materials and a return envelope by U.S. Mail. The survey consisted of 22 items and was designed to be completed anonymously within 15 minutes. The content validity of the survey was based on two previous university alumni surveys which in addition to collecting demographic information assessed recipients past experience at the university, use of financial aid, donation patterns, perceptions towards charitable giving, and on-line donations. Aggregated findings from the participants will be presented along with recommendations to enhance alumni donor contributions. Limitations of the study and directions for future research will also be discussed.

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**Chris Williams**

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**Kris Biondolillo**

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### **A Comparison of Basic Subject Areas Content Exam Scores for Fifteen Consecutive Semesters**

One of the requirements of CAEP is that preservice candidates demonstrate knowledge in basic subject areas—science, social studies, reading/language arts, mathematics, health education, the arts, and physical education. A sample consisting of 320 preservice candidates enrolled in the Professional Block Semester, the semester prior to student teaching, was targeted for ascertaining percentages. Candidates were administered a content exam totaling 105 questions at the conclusion of each semester. Across the 15 semesters, students always scored higher in mathematics (80 points or higher). Although students' scores gradually increased from Spring 2010 (75 points) to spring 2014 (85 points) in physical education, it dropped sharply in recent years to 45 points. In all other courses, the scores remained steady in all 15 semesters. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to determine the percentages of Basic Knowledge for each of the seven subject areas.

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### “We Aren’t the Same!” International Student Experiences in Eastern Australia, Lessons for the West

Millions of international students traverse the world to attend universities in the West (IIE, 2016). Universities attempt to understand their needs and offer them systems of support (Chavajay, 2013). Often underutilized, these homogenized systems do not adequately address individual international student academic and, or, non-academic needs (Hwang et al., 2014) leading to their further distress (Khawaja & Dempsey, 2008). Explored within a social constructivist framework, we sought to uncover the experiences of international students attending university in Eastern Australia. Attempting to better understand how their individual realities-influenced by their values and relationships with others (Crotty, 2003; McKinley, 2015)-affected their ability to navigate academic and non-academic, on campus and off campus experiences, we conducted open-ended informal interviews lasting 120-180 minutes. We employed a qualitative methodology and utilized narrative methods including Labov’s Thematic Organization (Riessman, 2008) to structurally analyze and present our narrative findings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Eleven female and male international undergraduate and graduate students participated. General findings included feelings of angst, depression, and low levels of satisfaction from their academic and non-academic, on and off campus experiences. These feelings and experiences varied immensely amongst the students and were situated according to their: ability to converse in English; prior experience with western culture; financial security; family support; interactions with international students; and socialization with Australian students. To address their needs, the international students employed twenty highly unique coping mechanisms. None utilized university supports. The implications of this study suggest that universities’ systems of support may be underutilized, as their structures are unable to address the unique needs of each international student. Universities may need to form systems that are highly flexible and adaptive, perhaps evolving with international students as they study. Lessons from this study can be applied to other Western countries with similarly large international student bodies.

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### **Self-Reported Indicators for Success: Stories from North African Middle Eastern Arab Male University Students transitioning to Western U.S. University**

Many international students struggle transitioning to university in the U.S. Issues of language, culture, stress, homesickness, discrimination (Mohd. 2011) have been identified as contributing factors to international student loneliness, withdrawal, contempt and aggression (Karuppan & Barari, 2011). Universities and researchers continue to struggle to determine best practices when attempting to address these issues with various support services including ESL programs (Daller, & Phelan, 2013), social support groups, counseling services (Alazzi & Chiodo, 2006) and more. They may be unable to do so as they do not account for their international students' unique identities (Lausch, Teman, & Perry, 2017). Employing narrative methods, analyzed within a transformative learning framework, in this qualitative study we examined the stories of two North African, Middle Eastern, Arab (NAMEA) male students. Through individual semi-structured interviews, each reported having undergone changes in their psychological, convictional, and behavioral self. Each participant concluded that the process for his positive transformation occurred as a result of having command of the American-English language and extensive knowledge and experience with American culture prior to his arrival. Each participant theorized that these were the key indicators for their successful navigation of the western U.S. University. While we agreed with our participants' assessment, their stories revealed exceedingly different lived experiences prior to and during their transition. Ali's father, whom also attended university in the U.S., provided him with daily English language practice and his knowledge of the West was gained experientially through swim meets held in Europe. Stories from Yusef indicated his prior English practice was gained through academic K-12 studies and western knowledge through experiences traveling abroad for teacher training. We conclude that further qualitative research is required to explore various factors that may affect NAEMEA student transitions, and quantitative research to determine if any of the factors are universal.

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### **Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education: Problems and Viable Solutions to Better Guarantee Success**

Non-traditional students in higher education generally refer to the populace that join a college at an older age or with more responsibility than the average high school graduate. These students represent one of the fastest growing demographics enrolling in community colleges. However, most colleges target the traditional student (students that enroll directly after finishing high school) and fail to cater to the non-traditional students. This study seeks identify different way that colleges can recruit non-traditional students, how to offer remediation to this segment of the population that is far removed from general education, barriers that keep non-traditional students from joining higher academia, solutions to said barriers that would serve to ease the entrance of non-traditional students into the student body, and finally offer intuitive ways to make the degrees being pursued feel viable to the paying customer. With the rise of non-traditional students' enrollment, colleges will soon have need of differentiating approaches to entice the average adult that seeks to better their standing in society. Furthermore, the potential for further study with regards to methods mentioned inside this article may prove to beneficial due to the lack of knowledge with regards to enticing and keeping the non-traditional student as an active member on campus.

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**Jacquyn Rasco**

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### **Metacognitive Prompts: A Reading Apprenticeship Strategy to Improve Metacognition and Reading Comprehension of At-Risk Community College Students in a Reading-Based Class**

Research in Progress Abstract

At-risk students arrive on community college campuses often lacking the proper preparedness to cope with the amount of assigned reading and the complexity of assigned reading. The study investigates whether using metacognitive prompts, an intervention adapted from Reading Apprenticeship, a metacognitive approach to increasing reading comprehension, could improve both the metacognition and reading comprehension of at-risk community college students in a Western Civilization I class. Metacognition or “thinking about thinking,” is a widely studied learning theory that falls under the umbrella of constructivism. Numerous studies suggest a relationship between metacognitive knowledge and skill and academic success.

For the Pilot Study conducted during the Spring 2017 semester, a convenience sample of Western Civilization I students completed two pretests: a 17 question ACT Compass Sample Reading Test and a researcher-designed pretest that asked participants to annotate their mental processes by making predictions, asking questions, making connections, visualizing, and summarizing their thinking as they read a textbook selection. The semester-long intervention focused on using metacognitive prompts during reading and metacognitive conversation following reading. Posttests were administered at the end of the semester.

At-risk was defined by ACT score and Pell Grant status. Of the 22 participants that completed the process, 16 scored a 17 or below on the ACT and 90.9% received a Pell Grant. A paired-sample t test indicated a statistically significant increase from the metacognitive pretest ( $M = 5.32$ ) to the posttest ( $M = 6.77$ ) and though not statistically significant, participants increased the mean score by 1.18 or an additional correct question answered on the 17-question Compass Reading posttest.

Because of the many studies linking metacognition with academic achievement, the Preliminary Pilot Test results were encouraging and suggested that at-risk community college students benefit from using metacognitive prompts while reading and engaging in metacognitive conversation following reading.

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Coahoma Community College; student at Delta State University

#### **Sally Zengaro**

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### Comparing Supervisors' Satisfaction with Alternately and Traditionally Prepared Teacher Interns

The quality of alternate route teachers has been questioned, especially in comparison to their traditionally prepared peers (Brantlinger & Smith, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2002; Nagy & Wang, 2007). One perspective that has not been garnered about this topic is that of intern supervisors. Research question: Are there differences in supervisor satisfaction with alternate route versus traditionally prepared teacher interns?

Sixty-eight supervisors of alternatively prepared and / or traditionally prepared teachers completed a survey related to supervisor satisfaction of interns. Descriptive statistics and a paired samples T-test were conducted.

Overall, there were no statistically significant differences in satisfaction of supervisors with traditionally or alternately prepared interns for those supervisors who have supervised both types of teachers. Additionally, there were no statistical differences in perceived satisfaction of supervisors between traditionally and alternately prepared teacher candidates on each dimension of satisfaction: overall quality, potentially to be a good teacher in the long run, planning, instruction, assessment, classroom management, creating a productive learning environment, dispositions, and professionalism. The satisfaction with the individual dimensions did vary in interesting ways identifying different strengths of each type of intern. Alternatively prepared interns were rated highest in their professionalism ( $M=4.31$  ( $0.676$ )), whereas the traditionally prepared interns were rated highest in their ability to create a positive learning environment ( $M=4.28$  ( $0.609$ )). Both types of interns were rated lowest on classroom management (with standard deviations in parentheses) (alternate  $M=3.64$  ( $.899$ ); traditional  $M=3.89$  ( $.858$ )) and assessment (alternate  $M=3.64$  ( $.899$ ); traditional  $M=3.87$  ( $.718$ )).

The results of this survey provide interesting insights into the relative strengths and weaknesses of alternatively and traditionally prepared teachers from the perspectives of the teachers' supervisors which can thus inform teacher preparation programs. In addition, it provides evidence that there may be less significant differences in first year teachers based on preparation program than sometimes indicated (Darling-Hammond, 2002).

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### Got Grit? Higher Levels Reported Within Hard Majors

Although there is a substantial literature base describing the impact of intelligence, conscientiousness, and personality on achievement, significant variance among traits has been observed at the individual level. In addition, Grit, a two-factor construct defined as “a perseverance and passion for long-term goals” (Duckworth et al., 2007, p. 1087), has also been found to be correlated with individual achievement. Duckworth and Quinn (2009) developed the Grit Scale to identify: a) the consistency of an individual’s interests (measured by the Consistency of Interest subscale), and b) the level of persistence towards self-identified goals (measured by the Perseverance of Effort subscale). In the present study, we examined the relationship of college student grit to gender, difficulty of undergraduate major (i.e., hard or easy) according to an article by [thebestcolleges.org](#) entitled “Top Ten Easiest and Hardest College Degree Majors of 2016”, and status as traditional versus nontraditional student. Participants (N = 210) each completed a demographic questionnaire along with the 12-item Grit Scale. Results indicated statistically significant differences between students’ grit scores and the difficulty of their college major; students in hard majors self-reported higher levels of grit than those in easy majors. Further, multivariate tests indicated a marginally significant effect of gender on grit subscale scores - Females self-reported greater mean scores on the Consistency of Interest subscale than Males; however, Males self-reported greater mean scores on the Perseverance of Effort subscale than Females. No effect was observed for traditional versus nontraditional student status.

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### **Describing Activity Breaks During The School Day: A Preliminary Analysis**

Abstract Research clearly describes the positive relationships across children’s play/physical activity and mental wellness, physical health, and intellectual success. This mixed- method study identifies ways in which classroom teachers implement play and physical activity during the typical school day. Classroom teachers (pre-k through sixth grade) (n=500) completed surveys identifying the types of play and physical activities (recess, movement breaks) implemented during the day, time allowed for each type of experience, use of software to support movement, and training associated with developmentally appropriate practices. Narrative data explore teachers’ understanding of play and physical activity as a support for children’s health, wellness and academic learning.

**Monica Hill**

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**Kathleen Burriss**

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### **Discussion and Distribution of Play Research: A content Analysis of Existing Play Literature**

In an effort to determine why the existing literature describing the contributions of play for children's learning and development is not more widely accepted by the general public, this content analysis examines play research across the last 20 years. Despite the extensive findings showing the importance of play, data continue to demonstrate the devaluation of play in the public arena.

Using the ERIC database, several factors were analyzed for comparison across 200 research studies in children's play. Authors believe examining the current play research may provide insight into strategies to disseminate to the larger public the findings describing play as integral in the lives of children.

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#### **Kathleen Burriss**

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### Effect of Previous Role and Experience on Principals' Self-Reported Behaviors

Leading schools in the 21st Century is not a straightforward matter. Principals are responsible for the bifurcated role of managing and leading instruction in schools. However, many administrators lack the requisite skills to be instructional leaders. There are no national or state mandates designating a continuum of previous roles and experiences essential to being an effective principal. Despite the immense pressure for principals to cultivate effective learning cultures, there is limited research linking principals' effectiveness or the lack thereof to the progression of their career path. Therefore, this research study was designed to add to the diminutive body of research concerning the effect of previous role and years of experience on the development of principals' instructional leadership behaviors in Arkansas schools. The researcher sought to determine the difference between principals' with a previous role as an instructional leader with focused-learning for adults versus principals without such a previous role in Hallinger's (2008) three domains: Defining the School's Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. This quantitative, casual-comparative study was conducted through the administration of surveys. Surveys were deployed using convenience sampling for elementary, middle and high school principals in Arkansas. The PIMRS was used to collect perceptions of instructional leadership behaviors for novice and non-probationary principals. The survey was submitted for analysis by 263 principals.. A 2 x 2 factorial ANOVA was utilized to examine the data with a 0.5 significance level. There were no statistically, significant difference in the interaction for previous role and years of experiences. The main effect of previous role was significant when Defining the School's Mission and Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate. Likewise, the main effect of years of experience was significant when Managing the Instructional Program.

#### **Kiffany Pride**

Pulaski County Special School District

#### **Lynette Busceme**

Harding University

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### **Accelerating Remedial Math Education: Lessons Learned from Louisiana's Community Colleges**

Increasing demand for college-educated workers has necessitated a need to re-evaluate the ways in which a college education is delivered and to whom it is delivered in order to expand student access and success. For many students, remedial education is the gateway to credit-bearing, college-level courses, and subsequent college completion. Reimagining remedial education delivery, with the goal of increasing student success in remedial courses and progression on to credit-bearing coursework, holds promise for meeting future economic demands for college-educated workers. Five public community colleges in Louisiana participated in a remedial mathematics redesign involving the delivery of developmental instruction concurrently (e.g., as a co-requisite class) with a college-level course in one semester. A mixed-methods approach was used to assess the implementation and success of students. Students who took advantage of the co-requisite opportunity successfully completed (defined as a grade of C or better) college-level math at a rate not statistically different from students who were in the traditional remedial path, which took more than one semester. This, in effect, means that the co-requisite approach is just as successful at moving students through the remedial pipeline as the traditional method of requiring remedial coursework before being allowed to enroll in a college-level math course. In addition, co-requisite students were less likely to not complete the remedial course than students who were in the traditional remedial path. The principal advantage to the student is that the co-requisite approach takes less time.

#### **Rene Cintron**

Louisiana Community & Technical College System

#### **Emily Campbell**

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### **An Examination of Clinical Experiences of Principal Preparation Programs in the South**

Statement of the Problem Throughout the late 20th Century, universities were criticized for not satisfactorily preparing principal candidates with realistic experiences (Hess & Kelly, 2005; Levine, 2005). Consequently, governing boards mandated universities to redesign their principal preparation programs. Yet the continuously changing landscape of education and the increasing accountability to which principals are held prompted the NPBEA to design new standards for school principals, the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership (PSEL). Shortly thereafter, new standards for principal preparation were designed, the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards, which were based on the PSEL. In anticipation of a new mandate to redesign principal preparation again, the present paper examines the clinical experiences of the current principal preparation programs at selected universities in the South. Theoretical Framework The theoretical framework for the study is university-school district collaboration, one of the essential components for principal preparation (Darling-Hammer, LaPointe, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Fry, O'Neill, & Bottoms, 2006). The most recent iteration is a partnership arrangement whereby school districts provide a venue of relevant experiences for principal candidates to meet the challenges of school improvement (Baker, et al 2009; Brown-Ferrigno & Barber, 2010). Methodology Clinical experiences occurring during principal preparation programs are examined using a sample of southern states in the United States. This study has a sequential mixed methods design with a primarily quantitative survey preceding qualitative interviews (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The rationale for using mixed methods is that both kinds of data will provide a more accurate portrayal of current clinical experiences and the extent to which they align with the NELP standards. Results and Conclusions Results for data are described to create a picture of current clinical experiences for prospective principals and are compared not only with one another but also with the NELP standards.

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#### **Mindy Crain-Dorough**

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#### **Randy Parker**

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### **[IR]14: Irrational Reasoning for Improbable Research with Impossible Replicability and Irreproducible Results by Irresponsible Researchers--Ineptly Represented, Inexplicably Rendered, Inappropriately Rehashed and Incomprehensibly Resurrected by Irascible**

(1) Larry G. Daniels - Possum Town and StarkVegas: How Location Can Promote Irresponsible Research (2) Jim McLean - University of Alabama (3) Rachelle Miller & Nykela Jackson - #Fake Research: Irreconcilable Reliability with Inconsistent [but valid] Results (4) Memes, Tweets & Parody: Irrefutable Revelations from Case Studies of Epistemological Irony (5) Kathy Campbell & Dustin Hebert - Cajun Research for Rednecks: No PCness with Boudreaux & Thibodeaux

#### **Walter M. Matthews**

Evaluation Associates of NY/VA/NJ

#### **Larry G. Daniel**

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#### **Jim McLean**

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#### **Rachelle Miller**

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### **Writing to Learn and Learning to Write: Strategies to Integrate Writing in the College Classroom**

**Abstract:** Writing is a literacy skill that is used in two contexts within a classroom setting. Writing to learn (Frey & Fisher, 2007) includes strategies that are used in which writing assists students in learning content. Learning to write includes the basic components of the writing process. Both types of writing can strategically be incorporated into content area courses.

**Scope:** This training will consist of three main components. It will begin with a brief overview of learning to write and writing to learn. Practical writing strategies the trainers use in their undergraduate courses will be introduced. Finally, participants will engage in a roundtable discussion of how they can adapt the strategies and integrate them in their courses.

**Objectives:** By the end of the workshop, participants will differentiate between writing to learn and learning to write. Participants will also be able to identify and adapt practical writing strategies that can be incorporated within their courses.

**Summary of Activities:** The workshop will begin with a brief introduction of the two types of writing. Foundational information will be shared to compare writing to learn and learning to write. Examples of writing strategies will be provided and incorporated throughout the training. Finally, participants will have the opportunity to discuss adaptations of the strategies for use in their own courses.

#### **Erin Klash**

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#### **Sherry Campbell**

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### Office Operational Audit

This study investigated the education office operational processes to determine whether the internal controls of the offices, such as policies and procedures, are sufficient to produce an optimum level of efficiency and effectiveness. The targeted audience consisted of nineteen (19) office staff positions. To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of office policies and procedures, the office personnel completed a twenty-one (21) question perception survey including both quantitative and qualitative type questions. Office staff meetings followed the survey to determine key elements surfacing from the survey. The study revealed that the staff members reported an overall high morale, 26.3% indicated more training needed, 11 respondents agreed communication is efficient but some staff members noted there are some uncomfortable communication pieces such as micromanagement, and dealing with uncooperative people. Regarding willingness to pitch in and assist other staff positions, 17 out 19 agreed to assist others.

Operational audits take considerable time to complete, and it can be harder to determine exactly what is causing issues the more complex operations are. Additionally, even though overhauling operations based on audit results may save the university money in the long run, doing so can rattle employees, cause initial confusion and necessitate increased training or significant staffing alterations. So, this audit was not to alarm office personnel nor cause unsettling feelings or fear of job loss. The goal of this audit was to improve the function of the education offices separately and together. It is believed the most important phase of the audit process is the discussion that happens at the end of the audit with the ultimate goal of this audit is to improve the function of our offices. Therefore, based on these findings, the office staff members met to determine how best to improve communication and policies and processes influencing office communication.

**Clara Carroll**

Harding University

**Jenny Schuthe**

Harding University

**Erin Hasler**

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**Chris Williams**

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**Terry Figley**

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### Developing Empathetic Learners

The United States is fiercely divided politically and culturally with little or no empathy toward those who disagree with their beliefs. This research delves into teaching empathy and is particularly relevant to the southeastern United States that has a history of inequality and an emphasis on traditionalism. To create a more equitable society and improve educational outcomes, students need to think critically, reflect, and develop empathy. This study consisted of university faculty co-teaching controversial topics with high school teachers using student-centered approaches to develop empathy at two high schools in the southeastern United States. The main research questions are: How can we create empathetic lessons; Can teaching controversial topics lead to greater student empathy? The controversial topics included: Institutionalized privilege, LGBTQA+ perspectives, genocide, Islamophobia, iconography and controversial symbols, and athletes and activism. A Reconstructivist theoretical frame that argues socially relevant content to promote critical thinking outlined the research. The study incorporated mixed research methods. An electronic quantitative survey was distributed to 42 spring 2017 seniors in a private and public high school in the southeastern United States. The questionnaire was analyzed using Excel. In addition, the researchers collected qualitative data from the controversial lessons. This data was systematically organized to determine the main themes that emerged. A finding of the research is that if the classroom teacher fostered openness to diverse views then the students were more likely to express empathy toward those who are different. In addition, students were less likely to express empathy toward individuals more out of their norm. This study contributes to understanding the development of empathetic classroom practice and outlines best practices on effectively teaching empathy. Furthermore, this study contributes to understanding how to develop closer partnership ties among university education faculty and local high school teachers.

**Carolyn Casale**

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### **Taking Apart the Whole: A Study of Word Learning Strategies That Work**

The educational emphasis of literacy strands outlined by Common Core have many secondary teachers baffled by the complexity of teaching reading in the content area classroom, particularly the skill of decoding. Bremer, Clapper, and Deshler (2003), provide a specific instructional model, or SIM, that helps teachers align instruction for decoding. The four SIM areas are: paraphrasing, self-questioning, visual imagery, and word identification through the use of context clues and word analysis. Secondary teachers know how to model and teach visual imagery, self-questioning, and paraphrasing; however, when students need the basic reading skill of decoding, they are often unsure which strategies to use to advance students' learning. A survey was given to secondary teachers to gather ideas for research that might be beneficial for future instruction. Survey results indicated that vocabulary instruction was an area of need. The purpose of this study was to determine if morphological knowledge can increase a secondary student's ability to decode unknown vocabulary in the context of a passage. The participants included five teachers and one hundred sixteen high school students. Students were given a pre-test asking what root/affix meanings they know and were asked to provide at least one example word. After the pre-test, teachers provided ten words per week for three weeks. Students were then given a post-test containing two passages with multiple choice questions to measure decoding in context using the various strategies. Research findings from this study supported the idea that teaching morphology does increase student word recognition and determining word meaning in context. The post-assessment resulted in a 54.7% increase after using morphology to decode vocabulary in context. Teachers were excited about these gains and agreed that future study is needed to determine which specific strategies have the greatest impact and how long term instruction would impact overall student reading achievement.

**Jennifer Chambers**

University of the Cumberland

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### Professional Development and Rural World Language Teachers

The role of professional development (PD) in effective teaching is not a novel concept. For decades, teachers have been required to engage in such practices to stay abreast of changes in the field, increase student-learning outcomes, and ultimately renew their teaching certification. PD may even be more crucial for foreign language (FL) teachers in rural settings. Often these educators are isolated—both geographically due to their rural setting (Flora, Flora, & Gasteyer, 2016; NASBE, 2016) and academically given their content area (Author, 2017). Further, research has suggested that few FL teachers in rural areas seek and/or engage in PD opportunities (Authors, 2013; Rhodes & Pufahl, 2008; Rhodes & Pufahl, 2011). This finding is significant given that the attrition rate of FL teachers in rural schools is higher than in urban and suburban areas (Swanson, 2012) and there is already a persistent shortage of FL teachers in rural settings (NASBE, 2016). These issues may be due to the unique needs and challenges of rural FL teachers that lead to emotional distress and leaving the profession prematurely (Acheson, Luna, & Taylor, 2016) as well as the difficulty in attracting FL teachers to rural areas.

It is clear that novice teachers benefit from mentoring and professional engagement. The final standard used to evaluate FL teacher education programs is related to professionalism (ACTFL/CAEP, 2013). Yet, the role that teacher education programs take in assisting new teachers as they grow professionally, mentoring new teachers, and exploring the impact and effectiveness of their own program is unclear (Huhn, 2012).

In the Fall 2017, two first-year Spanish teachers and recent graduates of a FL education program in a rural area attended a national professional conference in their discipline with the researchers to explore the impact of the experience on their identity and professionalism. These participants engaged in multiple reflective activities and discussions to make theory to practice connections throughout the experience. This small qualitative case study was designed using the following research questions as a guide:

What are the needs of novice FL teachers in a rural setting? How do novice FL teachers in a rural setting view PD? What is the impact of this PD experience on their own identity (as novice FL teachers in a rural setting) and their practice?

All data (focus group discussions with the researchers prior, during and following the conference in many forms, artifacts such as philosophies of teaching, etc.) were initially reviewed independently by the researchers that led to discussions about their own findings and identification of codes. The development of codes led to discussions together related to the participants' experiences and perspectives, and codes were modified based on input from both researchers.

Among the salient findings include FL teachers' difficulty in negotiating their own beliefs about teaching and learning with those articulated at the conference (e.g., finding one's own professional voice in the crowd); gaining confidence and a sense of value in their own practice by being surrounded by other likeminded individuals (e.g., "there are others here just like me!"); and first year challenges are not unique to them (e.g., "frustration is normal—I just can't give up at this. Everyone is going through the same things.").

While we cannot conclusively argue that these teachers will remain in the field for longer than those who did not attend a similar experience, but we do believe that this experience may play a central role in fostering a commitment to growing as a professional educator. This commitment may then not only impact their students in their classrooms but will also hopefully provide these teachers with the minimal support needed to remain in the classroom and combat many of the issues that rural teachers often face in rural contexts (e.g., isolation, perceived lack of value of practice).

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### Problem-Based Instruction: Moving From Passive to Active STEM Instruction

Elementary teachers are often forced to make difficult choices with limited resources and instructional time in cultures that favor language arts programs over science instruction. When teachers incorporate science lessons they often teach science the way they were taught science - giving students definitions followed by lecture and testing. However, project based learning changes the classroom dynamic and gives students ownership in the learning. The use of authentic problems shifts learning from learning's sake to learning to solve a problem. Moreover, the problem solving process involves multiple disciplines and the soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership. Partnership goals included increased science instruction, use of project based activities, deepening participant knowledge of science content, and self-efficacy in teaching science. To accomplish these goals, teachers participated in science labs, field trips, lessons to increase their science content knowledge, experienced model science lessons launched from trade books, and applied the new Science Standards as they developed project based science lessons. Data collection included pretest/posttest measures of science standards, science content knowledge, and the Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument followed by a program evaluation survey. Results from the program evaluation survey (4 point scale, strongly agree to strongly disagree) indicated the PD benefited teachers' content knowledge ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ , 3 items); confidence in teaching science ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ , 3 items); and familiarity with the new standards ( $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 0.50$ , 1 item). Participants indicated the training was useful for their students ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ , 2 items) and that they believe they will spend more time teaching science ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ , 1 item). The presenters will share findings, lessons learned, and insights from participating teachers of what was most useful for elementary science PD.

#### **Gail Hughes**

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#### **Kelly Chaney**

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#### **Lundon Pinneo**

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#### **Sandra Leiterman**

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#### **Anne Lindsay**

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### Learner Perceptions of Demotivator in EFL Classroom: Experiences of Failure on Learning Outcomes

If motivation pushes learning for life, demotivation calls a halt to it. While the literature on identifying and listing the demotivators in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom are voluminous, little has been done to account for how different learners process demotivators, what is happening during the learner's state of demotivation, and how demotivators affect performance. To measure demotivation, the English version of the 'demotivation scale' designed and validated by Kikuchi (2009) was utilized. The scale gauges two external demotivating factors including teacher behaviors and classroom environment, and two internal demotivating factors containing lack of interest and experiences of failure. One hundred two college EFL learners in China were surveyed to identify which demotivator can best predict academic performance. Experiences of failure were shown to predict performance ( $\beta = -.714$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This could be explained by the fact that repeated failures erode self-efficacy which in turn translates into weak performance. Contrary to most occidental findings, external demotivating triggers such as teacher behavior was not the most damaging demotivator which could be clarified by the philosophy of self-reflection in Confucianism. Demotivator attribution discrepancies were analyzed between different academic performing groups and genders. Although high-performing students remain unaffected by all the demotivating triggers, internal demotivating factors including experiences of failure and loss of interest were considered as statistically significant demotivators by low, average, and above-average achieving groups. Significant statistics were also found in both female and male groups in terms of internal demotivating triggers despite the fact that there is a huge achievement gap between them.

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#### **Tianlan Wei**

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#### **Yan Zeng**

Jiangxi Agricultural University

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### **Analysis of Service-Learning: Perceived Outcomes and Influential Factors**

Rooted in experiential learning, service-learning as an educational pedagogy has received much attention in the past decades due to its anecdotal positive effect on student learning outcomes (Lovat, T., & Clement, N., 2016 ), but there is a deficiency in empirical evidence such claims. Moreover, previous researchers have focused on the learning outcomes of service-learning participation, but little empirical research in higher education has examined which factors influence the outcomes of service-learning participation and perceived learning expectations. The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore undergraduate students' perceived learning outcomes while engaged in an intensive University-wide service-learning program. This research is grounded in Kolb's experiential learning theory which is a four-stage cyclical theory of learning that emphasizes a holistic perspective that combines experience, perception, cognition, and behavior. Data were collected from 8 undergraduates in the Montgomery Leadership Program (MLP) through semi-structured interviews, observations, and artifacts. Interview questions focused on influential factors shaping their experience with the service-learning program and perceived outcomes. Using content analysis method, data were grouped and reviewed by researchers to identify common themes. Findings suggested that MLP students' leadership skill was enhanced, and they felt they met all of their learning objectives. Content analysis revealed two service-learning factors influence learning outcomes: structure of the service-learning program, and the challenge of experience that students were facing while doing service work. Most students experienced many challenges in MLP, but interestingly, they saw those challenges as positive learning experiences for their growth in both academic and personal life. Limitation of this study is the small number of participants. This study is significant because it begins a line of inquiry that could improve service-learning curriculum development, program planning and facilitation, and student learning outcomes.

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### **Effect of Parental Involvement in Student Extracurricular Activities on Student Academic Success**

This literature review examines the benefits of parental involvement in a student's extracurricular activities on the student's academic achievement. These benefits include, but are not limited to, higher student academic motivation (Xu et al., 2009), lower anxiety levels about school, (Tan & Goldberg, 2009), and higher overall Grade Point Average (GPA). Research on low socioeconomic status families demonstrates a common lack of parental involvement in school life. This is often a result of parents' thinking that they are under-educated and would be no help to the student's academic career. However, studies show that under-educated parents engage in more school related discussions with their child when they are involved in extracurricular activities, which leads to academic discussions as well (O'Bryan et al., 2006). The extracurricular activities provide a sense of belonging and security to the student, as well as social interactions with peers (Teachman, 2008). Additionally, extracurricular engagement positively correlates with student GPA. While some parents fear that extracurricular activities might distract students from their academic success, these fears are unfounded (Camacho & Fuligni, 2015). Although, as a general rule, parental involvement in extracurricular activities benefits the student's academic achievement, in some instances it can be detrimental. For example, older children tend to want/need less parental involvement in comparison to younger children (Garret et al., 2010). Overbearing parenting styles can also negatively affect the student's academic achievement. Implications for future studies include a need for more research of the role of extracurricular activities acting as a gateway to parental involvement in academics. Also, while mothers' involvement has more of an overall impact on the students' academic situation, it is not clear whether differences in benefits exist based on a student's gender or type of activity they choose to participate in (i.e., sports, or chess club).

**Jessica Childs**

**Kasia Gallo**

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### Developing Cultural Competency: A Program Evaluation

Dr. Teresa Clark and Dr. Landon Clark, assistant professors at Murray State University (Murray, KY) created Cultural Leadership Academy (CLA), an educational program tailored to police officers and community leaders. CLA is organized into four in-person training modules focusing on key topics such as social and emotional intelligence and intercultural group dynamics. Using pre- and post-survey data, Clark and Clark conducted an evaluation of the CLA's effectiveness to accomplish the following 1) increase participants' level of comfort with four specific dimensions that include social issues regarding multicultural populations; and 2) decrease participants' perceived need for further training in four key categories, including defining and analyzing social issues regarding multicultural populations. Session attendees will learn about this unique program and partnership, its perceived effectiveness, and implications for future training programs.

**Teresa Clark**

Murray State University

**Landon Clark**

Murray State University

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### **Administration to Faculty: A Qualitative Study of a New Career Path**

Transition and change are constant in higher education. Tomorrow's leader is likely today's faculty or staff member. Higher education places an emphasis on preparing individuals to take on increasing levels of responsibility. However, there is little focus on the transition from administrative role to the faculty. The transition from administration to faculty could be the result of an individual's desire to return to the classroom. Another cause could be a need to give-back to the profession. Or, the transition could be prompted by administrative burn-out or other negative experiences. This paper discusses research investigating the transition from administration to faculty. The research focuses on former administrators who have joined the faculty. Through a qualitative approach, the researchers have greater insight into this often overlooked career pathway.

**Randy Wilson**

Murray State University

**Teresa Clark**

Murray State University

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### **Study of Data-Gathering Software Use by K-6 Teachers in General and Special Education**

General and special education teachers are stultified by the data collection mandated by administration and government requirements. This pilot study used a technology-based self-monitoring platform and post-surveys to compare pre-service and in-service teachers' use, quality, and collaboration in developing lesson plans. In-service and pre-service teachers used features of a software platform to share and collaborate lesson plans. When given the opportunity, most in-service and pre-service teachers will use a software platform for completing a required task. Certain grade level teachers were more likely to collaborate than others. Frequency of usage of the software platform was not a quality indicator for lesson plans.

**Dr. Sharon Rouse**

University of Southern Mississippi

**Dr. Rose Jones**

University of Southern Mississippi

**Dr. Jonnie Cleveland**

Ryland Co

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### **Preparing Black Female Faculty for Prominence, Power and Presence in the Academy**

**Problem Statement:** In order for the United States workforce to remain competitive in a globalized society, colleges and university faculty must become more diverse. A diverse—gender, race, and ethnic—faculty brings fresh perspectives to classroom and research environments which will ultimately yield diverse scholars and researchers who will be able to contribute creative and progressive ideas to the global marketplace. The number of faculty of color remains stagnant. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) reports that in 2013 of the all degree-granting institutions, 79% of the full time faculty were White, 6% were Black, 5% were Hispanic, and 10% were Asian/Pacific Islander. (2015).

**Research Description:** A two-day symposium was designed to explore how Black female faculty at predominantly white institutions navigate the promotion and tenure process. Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), Black Feminist Thought (2008), and Anti-Oppressive Framework (Kumashiro, 2000) served as theoretical foundations for the study.

**Summary of Methodology:** Twenty-seven ( 27) participants including current and former deans, department chairs, and an assistant provost from 12 major research institutions in the Southeast participated in focus groups and informative sessions. Three facilitators each led a 90- minute discussion with nine (9) randomly selected participants. Discussions were audio recorded and transcribed.

**Results:** Focus group interviews yielded strategies that Black female faculty might use to combat issues that could take their attention away from their teaching and research responsibilities and eventually deter their progress towards gaining promotion and tenure.

**Conclusions:** The outcomes from this conference serve as a baseline for instituting pathways capable of forestalling negative encounters prevalent in higher education settings. The impact will reach across disciplines and institutional types to increase the diversity and quality of the nation's STEM workforce.

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Mississippi State University

**C. LaShan Simpson**

Mississippi State University

**Melody Fisher**

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**Pamela Scott-Bracey**

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### Educator Usage of Technology in Mississippi Classrooms

Technological progress has left few areas untouched, and the usage of technology in education is no exception. Recent research has indicated that teachers use technology in either teacher-centered or learner-centered ways (Montrieaux, Vanderlinde, Schellens, De Marez, 2015). Teacher-centered usage is common, and focuses on using technology in a way that presents knowledge or a set of skills to students, usually only using technology as a display (Gibson, 2001). These lessons are typically considered “instrumental” and would be the same with or without technology (Montrieaux, Vanderlinde, Schellens, De Marez, 2015). Learner-centered teaching practice is a collaborative process that focuses on the construction of knowledge, as opposed to the transference of knowledge. Employing elements of technological “innovation” to empower students, this approach to learning emphasizes free expression, student directed learning, and multiple learning pathways (Gibson, 2001; Hannum, W. H., & McCombs, B. L., 2008). This research project focuses on the usage of technology by 32 teachers located in various school districts across Mississippi. Through direct classroom observations, teacher usage of technology was monitored and assessed. Teachers were observed to use multiple forms of technology in ways consistent with teacher-centered/student-centered model. Observations indicated that technology was most often used in the classroom in a teacher-centered manner, with 59% of classrooms relying solely on this model. Classrooms that made use of both approaches accounted for 31%, while observations that only indicated learner-centered approaches were evident in 10% of classrooms. Echoing research by Gorder (2008), differences in technology usage in grade and subject area were noted, with teachers in upper grade math or science classes observed to be 30% more likely to assume learner-centered approaches. Implications of this research indicates that additional work remains to be done in educating teachers about the importance of taking a learner-centered approach to pedagogy in the classroom.

**Shane McGregor**

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**Nicole Miller**

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**Karen Cole**

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**Anastasia Elder**

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### **Educator Satisfaction and Principal/Supervisor Leadership Style**

The purpose of this study was to explore the difference between educators' perceptions of their principals'/supervisors' leadership style and the socio-economic level of students served in terms of their job satisfaction levels. The study used a survey research design with descriptive and statistical analysis. Surveys were e-mailed to a convenience sample of 256 educators enrolled in graduate education programs in a private university in Alabama. The surveys provided scores for job satisfaction, identification of the principal's/supervisor's predominate leadership style, and the socio-economic level of students served. There were five leadership style options: autocratic, laissez-faire, servant, transactional, and transformational. The data were analyzed using a factorial ANOVA statistical test. The research questions addressed included: Is there a difference between educators' job satisfaction and the perception of their principals'/supervisors' leadership style? Is there a difference between educators' job satisfaction and the reported socio-economic level of the students served? Is there a difference between educators' job satisfaction and the perception of their principals'/supervisors' leadership style and the reported socio-economic level of the students served? The results revealed a significant difference between educators' job satisfaction and their principals'/supervisors' leadership style and medium effect size. This research provides insight to the field of education regarding educators' perception of their principals'/supervisors' leadership styles and the difference in the resulting educator satisfaction level. It provides an opportunity for educator preparation programs to incorporate leadership style as it relates to educator satisfaction, recruitment, and retention.

**Jodi Newton**

Samford University

**Peggy Connell**

Samford University

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### **Understanding the Use of Experiential Education in Online Counselor Education Programs to Increase Counselor Skill Development and Multicultural Counseling Competency**

The number of counselor education programs that use online teaching methods is continually increasing. In graduate level counselor education programs such as: school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and rehabilitation counseling, students are required to take courses that assist in the development of basic counseling skills which they will use in the future with their diverse client populations. The researcher searched the current literature to understand how educators were combining online education with experiential education for increasing basic counseling skills and multicultural counseling competence. Academic journals, whose focus was on online education, counseling, and experiential education, were reviewed to see what the trends, teaching methods, and learner outcomes were. Trends and teaching methods in online education included: an increase in educator attempts to bring the real world into the virtual classroom, experiential assignments for the students to complete and reflect upon, as well as a heightened awareness of using service learning as a tool to deconstruct prejudices. Students reported participation in multicultural experiential experiences helped to gain knowledge, sensitivity, and skills needed to work with diverse populations effectively. Personal contact was a more robust way for counselors in training to increase their level of comfort with and to decrease their level of anxiety about individuals who are different from them. Implications for counselor educators who teach in online programs included; an increased need to use assignments with an experiential component for the students to interact within the community, as well as, creating a space for students to reflect upon their activities individually and in groups.

**Valerie Couture**

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### **Phenomena, the 5E Model, and New Science Standards: Implications for Student Success**

States have grappled with the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and many states have developed their own standards based on the NGSS. Adoption criteria and timeframe have varied from state to state, but the addition of engineering standards has proven to strengthen and enhance state standards across the country. Although central to science and engineering, the use of phenomena has been essentially missing from standards and content. Natural phenomena are observable events that can be explained using science knowledge (NGSS, 2016). By using culturally or personally relevant phenomena, students are engaged in understanding “how science ideas help us explain aspects of real world context or design solutions to science-related problems that matter to students, their communities, and society” (NGSS, 2016).

The 5E Model (Bybee, 1997) is a research-based instructional strategy that facilitates student learning through engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation. Use of the 5E Model to investigate phenomena has promising implications for teaching effectiveness and student success (BCSC, 2013).

The research methodology included a thorough content analysis of standards adoption of NGSS, state by state, available through state department of education websites. The study also reviewed extant literature on phenomena and how the 5E Model of instruction can engage, enhance, and extend learning in the science classroom.

The studies showed that using phenomena as an anchor for science instruction supports student initiative in building science and engineering knowledge. Student learning shifts from “learning about a topic to figuring out why or how something happens” (NGSS, 2016). Multiple studies indicated the effectiveness of the 5E Model of instruction as a tool for implementing standards (Peterman, 2015; NSTA, 2016), teaching content (Verstynen, 2017), and increasing student achievement in science (BSCS, 2013).

**Susannah Craig**  
Southern University

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### **The 20-Question Model and Concept Mapping: Illuminating Science Misconceptions**

With the adoption of new science standards in Louisiana, student achievement in science continues to be at the forefront of science education. Researching effective instructional strategies is essential to acquiring long-term science knowledge. The purpose of this study was to investigate how the 20-Question Model and concept-mapping in life science illuminates misconceptions.

This mixed methodology study focused multiple-choice items, specifically five matched pairs of multiple-choice items, text -only and same-text with a photograph. Statistics from 11 multiple-choice items were utilized to characterize student performance on photograph-based multiple-choice items. Data from all Louisiana 8th grade students taking Form 3 (n=1130) and Form 4 (n=1182) were analyzed to compare student performance on each item type.

Additional case study research was conducted in two schools. Within each school, one 8th grade class was exposed to the 20-Question Model (Wandersee, 2000), the remaining 8th grade classes were not. Questionnaires were given to all 8th grade students at each school which focused on the student's experience when answering the test questions with a photograph. In addition, four 8th grade students, who were contrasted on gender and on high or low academic performance, were interviewed and asked to co-construct six concept maps related to six different test items used in the study (four with photographs, two without photographs). The analysis of the quantitative data showed a significant difference on the heron item. There was a moderate positive correlation between achievement level and mean number correct on the photograph-based items ( $r_s=.1536$ ). The data show that students performing at low achievement levels benefitted from the photograph-based item. The qualitative data analysis revealed positive student perception when working with photographs during classroom instruction and taking assessments. The student interviews and concept maps with the four students revealed student's misconceptions about life science concepts, even when students answered the test items correctly. The variations in the cognitive level of each student interviewed were revealed by the level of complexity of the created concept map.

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### So You Want to Be a Faculty Member? Volume 4

This session is a networking opportunity for graduate students and new faculty who are trying to "find their way" in academia. The panelists represent three different roles of higher education professionals from three different institutions, and all three followed different career paths to their current positions. Attendees at this session will engage in an informal Q&A with panelists about the culture of higher education, how to initiate a scholarship agenda, what tenure means and how to work toward it, and how to be successful as a faculty member regardless of what prior experience one has.

**Dustin Hebert**

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

**Franz Reneau**

Florida A&M University

**Mindy Crain-Dorough**

Southeastern Louisiana University

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### **Research Skills Utilized by Principals: A Review of Relevant Literature and Instructional Applications**

This paper is both a review of the literature and a conceptual discussion regarding the research skills principals need in order to exhibit effective data leadership. Statement of the Problem: Data-driven decision-making has become commonplace in schools for several reasons including: popularity as an education initiative; improvements in technology allowing for better data management; and increased research on effective data use practices (Mandinach & Gummer, 2011; 2013). What research skills are most relevant to being an effective data leader in a school? Methods of Identifying Literature: Two areas of literature are described in this paper: literature on principals' research skills (e.g., Matthews, 2016; Marsh, 2012; Teal et al., 2015) and literature on effective teaching of research methods (e.g., Earley, 2014; Kilburn, Nind, & Wiles, 2014; Wagner, Garner, & Kawulich, 2011). Reporting of Findings from the Literature: A comparison is made between traditional topics covered in a research course (e.g., sampling, instrumentation, research design, analyses) and the literature-defined research skills needed by principals. Specific instructional activities are described. Implications: The information in this paper can be useful to those providing principal preparation instruction or those providing professional development for practicing principals.

**Mindy Crain-Dorough**

Southeastern Louisiana University

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### **Undergraduate Intern Perspectives as Participants of a Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program in Nutrition and Dietetics**

Delta State University offers an undergraduate Coordinated Program in Nutrition and Dietetics, which combines the didactic coursework and the supervised practice/internship required for students to sit for the registered dietitian examination. New dietetic interns can feel insecure and overwhelmed, and are not always comfortable seeking help from their instructors. A review of current research on peer mentoring (Leidenfrost, Strassnig, Schabmann, & Spiel, 2011; Colvin & Ashman, 2010; Terrion & Leonard, 2007) along with suggestions from student interns during an exit interview their last semester of coursework led faculty to establish a volunteer mentoring program, which includes policy describing the rationale as well as supervised practice areas for senior interns to mentor junior interns. At the completion of the internship, student interns (N= 15) were asked to complete a brief survey describing their participation and reaction to the peer mentoring program. The results of these surveys showed that the mentoring program was helpful to junior interns, developed leadership skills in senior interns, and should be further developed and continued.

#### **Ensley Howell**

Delta State University

#### **Jacqueline Craven**

Delta State University

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### Factors Influencing Geometry Students' Ability to Compute Area of Polygons

When transitioning from middle school to high school, students demonstrate a lack of transfer with regards to their knowledge of area of polygons and the hierarchical nature of quadrilaterals. Specifically, this action research examined 1) the influence of prior knowledge of area of polygons on one's ability to compute area of polygons using algebraic methods, and 2) the relationship between knowledge of the hierarchy of quadrilaterals and one's ability to determine area of polygons. Previous research has found that students should be presented with experiences that focus on a conceptual understanding of area through which area is understood as a covering of a surface rather than a formula; and this understanding of area should occur prior to any formula use for computing area (Muir, 2006; Casa, Spinelli, & Gavin, 2006). A convenience sample of 81 high-school geometry students were administered a pre-test and post-test consisting of ten area items and 20 quadrilateral hierarchy items to assess knowledge of calculating area of polygons and the hierarchical relationships of quadrilaterals. Students then participated in three sequential research-based geometry lessons focused on the hierarchy of quadrilaterals, area formulas, and calculating area using algebraic methods. Pre-test results yielded an average area score of 54% and an average quadrilateral score of 61.5%. Post-test results revealed an average area score of 84% (an increase of 30%); however, the average quadrilateral post-test score was 64% (an increase of only 2.5%). It appears that there is little influence of one's prior knowledge of area of polygons on one's ability to algebraically compute area of polygons, but through the use of research-based pedagogy, the lack of transfer between middle school and high school can be successfully addressed. Further data analysis will include individual item response descriptive statistics to identify misconceptions concerning the hierarchy of quadrilaterals.

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**Rebecca Robichaux-Davis**

Mississippi State University

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### Relation between STAR scores and passing scores on the MKAS2 Test

Reading is an essential skill that result in an increase in academic performance in the students. Students who fail to acquire basic reading skills in primary grades are unlikely to become proficient readers and successful students in intermediate and later grades (Carnine and Carnine 2004; O'Reilly and McNamara 2007; Visone 2010). Research supports that reading fluency strongly correlates with reading comprehension (Hudson et al. 2005; Kuhn & Stahl 2003). According to The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2002 (Grigg, Daane, Jin, & Campbell, 2003), more than 50% of students in the United States score below grade level on tests of reading. The use of computerized programs in the school setting has been used as supplemental instruction (Gibson, et al., 2011). Recently, the use of computer technology has been adapted in the schools to improve students' reading performance (Gibson, Cartledge, & Keyes, 2011). Accelerated Reader™ is one of many computer-assisted a software that has been recently adopted by the schools to help improving reading performance (e.g. fluency and comprehension) in the students. Accelerated Reader™ is used in over 45,000 schools across the United States, including the elementary school in which this study took place (Topping, 1999). The purpose of this study was to make analysis of how Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading (STAR) scores predicts passing scores on the Mississippi K-3 Assessment Support System (MKAS2). This study was conducted with existent data from 113 students currently in grades four and five. Using previous STAR and MKAS2 data from an elementary school in Mississippi. Results from this study indicates that, from the data that was available, STAR scores from Spring 2nd grade have a better correlation with passing scores in the MKAS2 test than scores from Fall 1st grade.

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### A Survey of Master's Level Capstone Experiences at a Metropolitan University

**Problem Statement** This study contributes to the scarce literature on master's level capstones by examining the capstone experiences of programs at a master's level metropolitan university.

**Literature** Capstone experiences have taken on greater importance as higher education responds to criticisms that students are not prepared to work in a climate of continual change and innovation. Capstones are used as a culminating experience to integrate and apply what students learn during a program of study (Kuh et al., 2013). As such, capstones can provide students with opportunities to link program expectations, work-related environments, lifelong learning skills, and transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem solving (Cuseo, 1998; Henscheid, 2000).

**Methods** In this descriptive study 21 master's level program coordinators participated in individual semi-structured interviews to discuss the capstone(s) of their program. The sample provides a meaningful representation of graduate programs at the university. Using a constant-comparative approach, codes were refined, leading to the identification of overarching themes.

**Results** Four major themes of capstone experiences emerged from the data: capstones as authentic experience, as contributions to scholarship, as demonstrations of domain knowledge, and as growth as a professional. Capstone experiences required writing and drawing connections to domain knowledge, whether for the development of a research study or for application in a practicum, internship, or consultation, and capstone experiences linked program content to authentic work-related experiences.

**Conclusion** As capstones provide the opportunity to engage students in complex tasks related to the work place, it is important to understand how current capstone experiences align with employer expectations. In addition, at a time when the relevance of higher education is being questioned, the ability to explain how culminating experiences prepare students for the work place, academics, or other future endeavors is paramount.

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### **The Impact of Reading Interventions on Self-Esteem and Self-Perception in Struggling Readers**

This project addressed the maladaptive thoughts that often develop in struggling readers secondary to poor grades, frustration to grasp information, bullying, etc. Literature suggests that individuals with dyslexia are vulnerable and are at risk for having low self-esteem and a negative sense of self. Empirical evidence proposes that a significant relationship exists between self-esteem and school achievement (Alesi, Rappo, & Pepi, 2012) and that fear of revealing a learning disability results in negative affective states of mind (Nalavany, Carawan, & Sauber, 2015). Furthermore, a child's self-esteem is impacted by achievement and appreciation demonstrated at school and is a strong indicator of educational outcomes (Alesi, Rappo, & Pepi, 2012). How individuals feel about themselves influences school motivation and achievement (Humphrey, 2002). Positive experiences throughout early childhood create a foundation for healthy social-emotional development. However, individuals with dyslexia continue to struggle with difficulties throughout various life phases (Nalavany & Carawan, 2011), and these struggles create a negative self-concept (Terras, Thompson, & Minnis, 2009). While some research suggests that individuals with strong supportive relationships have an increased number of positive experiences, which then influences their self-esteem and emotional well-being (Nalavany & Carawan, 2011), we don't know the impact of an individualized reading program on a child's self-esteem. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact that an individualized summer reading program has on an individual's self-esteem and self-efficacy. Participants consisted of 20 children, diagnosed with dyslexia, who were enrolled in a summer reading program designed to address academic gaps in achievement and reading difficulty. The summer reading program was 5 weeks, 4 hours per day and consisted of one-on-one intervention, as well as large group activities throughout the day. Pre- and post tests consisted of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Academic Motivation Scale and were analyzed through one-way repeated ANOVA.

#### **Nikole Roberts**

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#### **Kathy Prater**

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#### **Jessica Cunningham**

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### STEM camp: Malleability of students' spatial skills

Spatial visualization and mental rotations skills are considered a strong predictor of success in STEM fields (Wai, Lubinski, & Benbow, 2009). This study analyzed the malleability and amount of change in fourth through sixth grade students (N=47) using the Revised PSVT:R (Yoon, 2011). Participants were high achieving students who engaged in a STEM camp driven by maker pedagogy and focused on the engineering design process. Throughout the camp experience students created by designing and fabricating various objects using both physical and digital design. A pre/post design revealed increased spatial visualization mental rotation abilities of the sample and the results were found to be statistically significant. The conclusions from this study indicate that the participants' spatial abilities increased after engaging in a STEM camp experience.

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#### **Deborah Dailey**

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### Teacher Candidates' Data Literacy: Learning Through Integrated Technology Tools

Data driven decision making is an essential skill for teachers. They are required to develop pedagogical practices that meet the needs of each individual student. This study examines the use of student information software on teachers' decision making skills and their perception of their ability to successfully create intervention plans based on assessment and diagnostic data. This presentation describes the efforts of program faculty to support candidates' data literacy through technology integrated tools. Faculty partnered with the state department of education in a project to integrate data-driven instructional tools into an existing teacher education program of study. The technology tools provided allowed for mobile access to student level data including standardized performance results; intervention outcomes; attendance, discipline, and behavioral records; and demographic information. The impact on candidates' data literacy was measured through a structured quasi-experimental study. Initial results indicate that teacher candidates are concerned with how data driven decision making (DDDM) will impact them personally while they also desire to learn more about the impact of DDDM on their future instructional practices.

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### Research on Improving Schools: The Role of the Teacher and the Engagement of Students

In the current standards-oriented, high stakes environment, school leaders are regularly challenged to engage in activities designed to improve schools. This symposium will feature three papers by advanced education graduate students who are regularly involved in the schools in which they work as well as thoughtful discussion by a professor of educational leadership at another institution of higher learning located in the Mid-South. The student presenters have shared their papers with the discussant ahead of the MSERA conference so that there can be generous dialogue about the the topic. All papers have been written to include thorough grounding in the literature on school improvement. After all presentations are made, followed by the discussant's comments, the session chair will invite the audience to react to the papers and to share additional information about the topic of school improvement.

The author of the first paper, "Build Your Teachers, Build Your School: Teacher Capacity and School Improvement" has built a case for using three strategies--instructional coaching, data analysis, and intentionally planned professional development--as major vehicles for improving teacher capacity. Further, the author has provided a review of research to show how these strategies work interdependently to improve schools, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement.

In the second paper, "The Importance of Teacher Morale in School Improvement," the author has examined literature on teacher morale and workplace factors that tend to either enhance or diminish morale. Findings from the research literature have been synthesized regarding important linkages between teacher morale and various outcome variables.

In the final paper, "Improving Schools with Student Engagement," the author has presented a solid rationale for learning environments featuring a strong commitment to student engagement. Higher student engagement has been found to correlate with increased student achievement; however, the presence of mandated curriculum and standards-based lesson planning may sometimes limit student engagement.

The discussant will provide critical feedback on each paper, identify common themes across papers, and proffer suggestions for future research on school improvement.

**Larry Daniel**

The Citadel

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### Research Findings, Educational Policy, and School Improvement

This symposium is the outgrowth of conversations between a professor of education who has engaged in scholarship related to school improvement over time and two graduate students who are developing ideas for their own research as they contemplate entry into a doctoral program in education. The symposium will feature three papers exploring the relationships among research findings, educational policy development, and school improvement initiatives. Collectively, the authors will make the case, using specific examples, as to how there are often disconnections between research findings and policy development in regards to school improvement initiatives. The goal of the symposium is to engage audience members in conversation around the specific reform initiatives presented in the several papers as well as the larger issue of school improvement policies and practices. The symposium will be useful to all graduate students in education and for researchers focused on educational policy and/or school improvement.

In the first paper, "Thinking Beyond Finland: Creating Effective Schools Systematically," the graduate student author has identified fallacies in blindly applying findings from schools in various international settings to school settings in the United States, especially in school systems characterized by poverty, social problems, and a history of low achievement. The author has called for a more systematic approach to school improvement based on research findings, stakeholder involvement, and teacher empowerment.

The graduate student author of the second paper, "Sustainability of Turnaround Schools," has explored the growing body of research on turnaround schools. Though often touted as the desirable way to improve chronically underperforming schools, turnaround models do not necessarily lead to sustained improvement. Research findings have produced mixed results, and, considering the increased costs associated with strategies such as school takeovers, restaffing, and replacement governance models, the efficacy of the models has been called into question by many policy researchers. Research findings on the limited success of turnaround models are presented, and suggestions for implementing and sustaining meaningful school improvement are proffered.

In the final paper, "Charter Schools and Vouchers: Is Choice the Answer to School Improvement?" the author (professor of education) has explored the history of the choice movement in education over the last three decades. Choice advocates have argued that increased competition for schooling will increase quality of education, especially for students from lower socio-economic communities. These claims are examined, and research results are reported examining success of charter schools and other educational choice options. Research findings are mixed, and the author has provided guidelines for untangling research findings with the intent of fully understanding when and under what circumstances charter schools and vouchers can present effective alternatives.

Following presentation of the three papers, the session chair will lead a conversation about school improvement and educational policy.

#### **Sylvester Rolack**

The Citadel

#### **TaKara Hart**

The Citadel

#### **Larry Daniel**

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### Mokken Scale Analysis and Statistics Anxiety

This paper presents a discussion and illustration of Mokken scale analysis (MSA), a nonparametric form of item response theory (IRT), in relation to common IRT models such as Rasch and Guttman scaling. MSA was developed by Robert Mokken in 1971 and is useful during the development or revision of assessments, particularly for affective variables such as attitude. The procedure can be used for dichotomous and ordinal polytomous data commonly used with questionnaires. MSA has been used in the health science field to examine instruments related to depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Within education, MSA has been used to examine instruments to measure scientific reasoning, inclusive education, and attitudes of students toward statistics. The assumptions of MSA are discussed as well as characteristics that differentiate a Mokken scale from a Guttman scale. MSA is illustrated using the mokken package with R Studio and a data set that includes over 3,000 responses to a modified version of the Statistical Anxiety Rating Scale. Issues addressed in the illustration include monotonicity, scalability, and invariant ordering. The R script for the illustration is provided.

**Thomas DeVaney**

Southeastern Louisiana University

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### **Latent Growth Curve Analysis of Third Graders' Performance Throughout the Year on Reading Benchmark Assessments**

Third graders' (n=4,781) scores on four reading benchmark assessments throughout a school year were analyzed to determine whether students' initial performance was related to their change in performance over time. The goal was to determine if students who started out with low scores tended to make less progress over time than students who started out with high scores (i.e. Matthew effect), tended to make more progress over time (i.e. compensatory effect), or neither. A latent growth curve analysis (LGCA) was conducted to assess for a relationship between intercept (score on the first assessment) and slope (change over time) for students' total scores and again for students' scaled scores on the assessments. Furthermore, item response theory (IRT) was used to develop new scaled scores to determine if the scaled benchmark scores provided by the test company could be improved upon; LGCA was conducted with the new scale estimates as well. For all three models, the correlation between intercept and slope was weak or nonexistent, suggesting that neither the Matthew effect nor the compensatory model applies for this sample. However, of the three models, the one with the new scaled score estimates was the best fit for the data. This has implications for both the development and interpretation of tests that are used for educational purposes. Future analyses will include an examination of whether or not performance patterns differ based on the content of the assessment questions.

#### **Emily Dodge**

Middle Tennessee State University

#### **Jwa Kim**

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### **An Exploration of Teacher Educators' Implementation of Differentiated Instruction**

The purpose of this research was to examine perceptions of instructors who teach at an institution of higher learning (IHL) in teacher education programs, either undergraduate or master's level, about their DI practices (if any). Research questions included: What are higher education instructors' (instructors who teach in teacher education programs) perceptions of DI, and how is DI being utilized in teacher education courses if it is really being consciously used at all?

University instructors (n=116) in teacher education programs were surveyed to examine their use of differentiating instruction in teacher education programs. A survey was developed because no other instrument could be found that measured differentiated instruction assessment specifically for instructors who teach in teacher preparation programs at the college level. The survey included five components: preassessment for student learning preferences, preassessment for student learning strengths, content, process/methodology, and product/assessment.

Fewer than half who responded preassessed their students for their learning preferences, strengths, and content knowledge. Almost all participants responded they differentiated the way they taught course material, their methodology. About half indicated differentiating the way they assessed. Qualitative responses indicate instructors noted an importance of modeling the use of differentiated instruction in a teacher education program, but that they struggled with implementing it themselves. They also indicated it was easier to implement DI in a methods (pedagogy) course than in content (e.g., mathematics, English) courses. Overall, participants did utilize differentiated instruction in their teacher education program on some level.

Most education programs require teachers to demonstrate how they differentiate instruction for learners, and most teacher rubrics evaluate for these practices. The data from this research will provide a clear understanding how differentiated instruction is approached in university classrooms and possible improvements to make this abstract concept more concrete.

#### **Nykela Jackson**

University of Central Arkansas

#### **Jeannie Lockley**

William Carey University

#### **Allison Downing**

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#### **Jalynn Roberts**

William Carey University

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### **Precollege Credit Programs: Which Programs Work for Which Students?**

Precollege credit programs were initially developed as an accelerated program for high-achieving students, but have since been implemented at increasing rates nationwide for a more diverse group of students to promote postsecondary access and success. Research has found positive relationships between these programs and postsecondary outcomes; however, there are concerns with the implementation of these programs as a “one size fits all” solution to the complex issue of college readiness.

The purpose of this study was to examine differences in college achievement between students who take AP and/or DE versus students who do not participate in either program. Differences in these relationships across ethnicity and SES were also of interest. A mixed methods design was used for three recent freshmen cohorts at a large institution (n=15,933). First, factorial ANOVA and ANCOVA were used to ascertain differences between the participation groups on college GPA and time to degree controlling for preexisting academic differences. Second, interactions were examined to determine if ethnicity and/or SES moderated these differences. Finally, students completed an open-ended online questionnaire that asked them to share their perceptions of the degree to which these programs affected their college performance (n=761).

Results showed that students who took AP performed significantly better than students who did not take a precollege credit class and DE students had the lowest GPAs. The difference in time to degree was significant but small, with a less than one semester difference between AP/DE students and their peers. The results showed these differences were moderated by ethnicity and SES. Qualitative findings showed students felt the rigor of these classes did not adequately prepare them for college. The findings suggest that these programs can be beneficial, but the rigor needs to be improved. The study also highlights the importance of localized versus national studies on these programs.

#### **Guadalupe Lamadrid**

Louisiana Board of Regents

#### **Adam Elder**

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### **Social and Emotional Learning: Addressing a Missing Link in Teacher Preparation**

**Problem Statement:** Lack of an intentional focus on social emotional learning (SEL) in teacher preparation at one university, lead faculty to develop a sustainable framework for SEL integration in teacher education.

**Research Overview:** Social emotional learning has been identified as a missing link in teacher preparation by Rojas (2012) and others (Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013). Problems created by the absence of SEL may contribute to teacher burnout (Chan, 2006) and negative student interactions (Perry & Ball, 2005; 2007). District HR issues may be associated with true grit as described by Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth (2014) that are needed by novice teachers and fostered through EQ competencies.

**Methodology:** Teacher candidates (TC) in their first methods course were participants in SEL integration grant funded by the Gates Foundation. They completed the Social Emotional Inventory (SEI) assessment prior to implementation and engaged in an EQ course with coursework as follow-up including teaching and their own participation in SEL teaching practices. Using case study research on program implementation, after one semester, TC completed two surveys to capture impact about using emotional competencies in their own lives and teaching.

**Results:** An integrated SEL curriculum spiraling from introductory to culminating, residency courses was established with positive results: Faculty (N=15) and TC (N=36) responses were documented based on data collected at mid-year implementation. An increase in both TC SEL awareness (55% increase) and knowledge of EQ competencies (60% increase) were noted. The majority of TC (75%) indicated they felt confident in integrating SEL instruction. The Morning Meeting Survey provided additional details.

**Conclusions:** Data support the notion that perhaps SEL is a missing link in teacher preparation and should continue to be explored through university-school partnerships. Helping TC to learn about EQ competencies in their own lives and in teaching appear to enhance their understanding of working with others and enhance classroom learning environments.

**Cindy Elliott**

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### **New Teachers and Self-Efficacy: A Theoretical Approach**

Teacher attrition is a widely recognized and critical concern in education, nationally and internationally. It is a problem that has been plaguing school districts for decades and attrition numbers have been steadily increasing- especially in urban areas. The effects of teacher attrition have costly implications for students, school districts, and communities as attrition is currently the major factor in the shortage of qualified teachers in the classroom. New teachers are often overwhelmed and quickly realize that effectiveness is more than content knowledge and delivery. In order to help the new teachers, there must be strategies in place to mentor and induct teachers into the profession that help to reduce common stressors, impede teacher burnout, and decrease job dissatisfaction. New teacher induction programs serve as a means to decrease some of the anxiety of teaching by providing a mentor (a teacher and administrator), as well as, a cohort of teachers to provide support. Through an induction program new teachers receive critical feedback (formal and informal) that provides much needed information about their growth. Informal feedback, from mentors and peers, give opportunities for new teachers to learn from mishaps, stretch their comfort zones, and reflect on their teaching. The support of a mentor can enhance beginning teachers' morale and retention, while building confidence and self-efficacy (Weiss, 1999). The purpose of this research is to examine and evaluate the status of new teacher self-efficacy as impacted by an induction and mentorship program throughout a school year and to answer the following research questions: (1) how has the support (mentor, administrative, and cohort) affected how the new teachers feel about teaching and (2) is there a difference between the self-efficacy of teachers that participate in an online induction program and those that have a program face-to-face?

**Krystal Flantroy**

University of Alabama

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### **Understanding the impact of professional development on graduate teaching assistants role-identity as chemistry laboratory instructors**

As GTAs (Graduate Teaching Assistants) in chemistry, we act as laboratory instructors for introductory chemistry classes; in this way, we have an impact on undergraduate retention rates in STEM fields. GTAs often have little training in epistemological or pedagogical theory or method. The use of a symbolic interactionist theoretical framework allowed me to investigate the role and identity of GTAs, as they developed over one semester. I worked as a participant observer in a PD (Professional Development) designed to positively impact GTA teaching and learning practices, in six workshops. I obtained approval from the Internal Review Board and informed consent from each participant. GTA student evaluation scores were compared to determine the efficacy of the PD. Audio and video recordings of each workshop allowed for the exploration of peer interactions. The RTOP (Reformed Teaching Observational Protocol) provided data about GTA methods before and after the PD, informing identity. The TBI (Teacher Beliefs Interview) informed GTA role, by providing data about teaching from the each participant. The qualitative software AtlasTI assisted in the data analysis to determine a grounded theory for the role-identity of GTAs and the changes resulting from PD participation.

**Tasha Frick**

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### **Hands-on workshop: The science behind successfully teaching (and learning) APA manuscript formatting.**

We will lead participants in mock classroom activities instructors can use to help unseasoned scientific writers master the APA format AND become better writers. While intended for faculty, this workshop will also be beneficial to students required to use the APA manuscript format. Using short scientific articles and mock student writing samples, we will simulate a classroom environment, engaging participants in individual and group activities. We will highlight certain instruction methods that may work better than others, and explain why they do so, based on educational psychology and cognitive science research. Session's goal: To highlight beginners' common scientific writing mistakes AND research-based tools for addressing them in the classroom. Session's objectives: - Learn to help students to extract the salient information from scientific literature they read. (Activity: identify five key points one must understand about a scientific article; practice finding them in a short experiment report.) - Improve the flow of student scientific writing. (Sample activity: generate synonyms for common weak phrases, including "authors looked at" and "authors found") - Teach students proper in-text referencing techniques (Activity: fix incorrect in-text references in a mock writing sample). - Instill in students an understanding of writing as a creative, iterative process, through emphasizing multiple revisions. (Activity: create a multi-phase writing assignment) - Demonstrate techniques for successful self- and peer-editing. (Activity: do a mock peer-edit of a provided writing sample.) - Help students to create error-free cover sheets and references sections. (Activities: find errors in a mock References section and a mock cover sheet; learn to recognize when to include issue number in a reference and when to omit it) - Help students to navigate the few most common problems pertaining to APA formatting of Microsoft Word documents. (Activity: spot the formatting mistakes; review the fix-it handout for students).

#### **Kasia Gallo**

MS State Univ, Counseling, Ed. Psych and Foundations

#### **Kaitlyn May**

University of Alabama

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### Body Weight and Self-Esteem: A Meta-Analytic Study from 1994-2017

Much literature addresses the prevalence of eating disorders, especially among females, which may be a reaction to societal standards of body weight and body image. Being overweight likely corresponds to lowered self-esteem, and may manifest in unhealthful eating behaviors. Youth and College-age students appear to be especially prone to these problems, hence educators should be aware of the reality that many may be at risk. However, the last quantitative synthesis of the relationship between body weight and self esteem was published in 1998, and only reviewed available study data up to 1994. The purpose of this symposium is to bring the literature synthesis up to date. We outline our procedures, findings, and the implications for educators and mental health professionals.

#### Review of Prior Literature

Several research syntheses exist, but only one of those was quantitative. We first enumerate what was previously identified concerning the relationship of body weight and self-esteem, as well as what is known about moderator variables. Finally, the limitations of the existing research reviews are explained.

#### Methodology, Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria, Search and Coding

Our search covered nine electronic databases. Search logic, results, abstract/title review and final set of studies used for the meta-analysis are described. Additionally, we give inclusion criteria for reviewed studies, and outline examples of studies that nearly made inclusion.

#### Derivation of Effect Sizes and Risk of Bias

We discuss how we derived effect sizes (correlation coefficients) from the selected studies. While direct reports of correlation were easy to use, many studies required indirect estimation of correlations. The estimation methods are outlined. Finally, we discuss the checks we conducted for possible concern due to possible publication bias as well as checks for whether a single population or multiple populations of study effects was the more realistic situation and the implications for effect size estimation and agglomeration.

#### Results of the Meta-Analysis

While the overall effect size, using a random effects model, may be succinctly summarized as  $r = -.17$  (95% CI:  $-.20, -.14$ ), this only begins to tell the story of what our analyses revealed. Moderator variables such as sex, age, type of esteem measure, method of weight measure, method of ES estimation, and clinical status of participant all make a difference. We discuss the results in detail, as well as address the relative precision of the ES estimates that were derived.

#### Discussion and Implications for Practitioners and Future Research

The final portion of the project centers on giving meaning to the results and what implications for both practitioners and future researchers may be gleaned from our work. We make specific recommendations for the way in which future research should be conducted, to avoid the limitations of a number of studies that we reviewed. As well, we make specific recommendations as to how the moderator variables that we examined were found to make a difference (e.g., self-reported body weight vs. measured) as well as those that made little or no difference (e.g., year of publication).

#### **David Morse**

CEPF: Mississippi State University

#### **Meng-Te Hung**

Mississippi State University

**Jianling Xie**

Mississippi State University

**Kimberly Peeples**

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**Katie Huston**

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### Becoming a Special Educator: Investigating Preservice Teachers' Preferences

A chronic, national shortage of special educators has negatively impacted the quality and appropriateness of the education of students with disabilities. Little research describes factors that influence an individual's decision to pursue a career in special education. Understanding these factors may be beneficial in addressing the critical need for more special educators. This display highlights a mixed-methods study investigating 109 preservice teachers' interest in primarily teaching students with disabilities before and after initial experiences in a dual elementary and special education program. Quantitative data were obtained using a pre and post survey collected from two groups of participants over consecutive semesters (46 Spring and 63 Fall). In addition to indicating their interest in primarily teaching in a special education classroom, participants rated their knowledge of and comfort level regarding nine categories of special needs using a 5-point scale. Qualitative data were collected from 34 Spring participants who responded to the questions: "Was there anything about your coursework or field experience that made you more willing to teach special education? If so, what?" Although some increase was reported, results indicated no significant change in the preservice teachers' interest in primarily teaching special education before and after initial coursework and field experiences in special education. Results indicated a significant relationship between preservice teachers' interest in teaching special education and their comfort working with students with disabilities across all nine categories. Qualitative data revealed five factors which influenced the preservice teachers' interest in primarily teaching special education with field experiences as the most often coded factor. While this study identified some factors that may contribute to preservice teachers' decision to pursue a career in special education, more research is needed to understand and determine additional factors as well as to examine effective practices for recruiting more individuals interested in teaching special education.

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#### **Rebecca Giles**

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#### **Todd Johnson**

University of South Alabama

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### Preservice Teachers' Understanding of Twice-Exceptional Learners (ADHD/Gifted)

Overexcitabilities are intense behaviors that persist among learners who are Attention-Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), as well as among the exceptionally gifted. These overlapping behaviors among these two populations of learners make identification challenging and could potentially result in a misdiagnosis of ADHD only, the prescribing of a stimulant medication, and possible exclusion from a gifted program. The purpose of this study was to examine preservice teachers' understanding of twice-exceptional (2e) learners who present with behaviors characteristic of both ADHD and gifted. Participants included 28 preservice teachers, all secondary education majors, enrolled in a southeastern university. Presented with a vignette approved by a panel of experts, describing a twice-exceptional learner who is ADHD and gifted, they were asked to provide an explanation for the underlying behaviors. A chi-square test for goodness-of-fit was conducted to assess whether diagnoses by preservice teachers were equally distributed. The result of the test was significant,  $\chi^2(3, N = 28) = 28.29, p < .001, V = .58$ , which indicated this sample of preservice teachers did not have the necessary knowledge to correctly identify twice-exceptional learners who are ADHD and gifted, suggesting there is a need among teacher education programs to include additional training about twice-exceptional learners among secondary education majors. Using a sample of secondary education majors and the sample size were the primary limitations of this study. Because early identification should occur at the elementary level, future research will be needed among preservice and in-service elementary teachers to determine their understanding of 2e learners and learners who are ADHD or gifted, and to show there is a potential for misdiagnosis without a knowledge of the overlapping behaviors that exist among those who are ADHD or gifted.

**Candy Grant**

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### **Mobile Device Usage during Instructional Time: Faculty and Student Perspectives**

Despite instructor and university policies prohibiting the use of mobile devices in the college classroom, students still use them for text messaging and to access the Internet, social media, and apps. This study examined the experiences and perspectives of faculty and students regarding mobile device usage in the college classroom and addressed three research questions: 1) What are the experiences and perspectives of faculty and students regarding the use of mobile devices during instructional time in the college classroom? 2) How are faculty members policing mobile device usage during instructional time? 3) What factors contribute to the students' use of mobile devices during instructional time? A qualitative study was conducted and data was obtained through in-depth interviews and observations. Participants were four faculty members and four students from a southeastern university. Data analysis revealed that faculty members are not actively policing mobile device usage, and that both faculty and students view mobile devices as distractions. These findings suggest that mobile device usage affects student engagement and the learning process, more specifically students are distracted by others using cell phones in their near proximity.

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### **Information literacy of STEM majors: A collaboration between STEM and library faculty**

The purpose of this research was to improve information literacy instruction in STEM courses at a large state university.

Information literacy can be described as the ability of individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information." (ACRL, 2017b). Students entering higher education today are considered digital natives (Bennett, Maton, and Kevin, 2008) which have been immersed in technology and information since beginning their education. As such, they have had a plethora of information available to them. However, it is unclear how students interpret or utilize this information in their respective fields of study.

In order to further understand STEM majors' information literacy, faculty in biology and geology departments agreed to collaborate with library faculty for the project. For each course, lesson plans were developed by the librarian in conjunction with faculty course assignments using the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, 2017a). Rubrics were created based on lesson plans and the information literacy framework to assess the course assignments. Two individuals (a librarian and research assistant) scored assignments to ensure inter-rater reliability. A total of 33 assignments were reviewed and scored using the rubrics.

Results indicate that biology and geology students had a thorough understanding of the authority and sources of information. Both biology students and geology students scored low on their assignments in regards value of information such as tables and figures in sources. Additionally, geology students also scored low for disseminating the information from sources.

These results have provided information regarding the level of information literacy in STEM students. This will allow for further development of library instruction to increase information literacy in the areas that need the most improvement for STEM students.

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#### **Christy Groves**

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### **Challenges and Barriers to Success as Experienced by One International Graduate Student within the Psychosocial context in the Initial Acculturation Process**

Particular challenges facing international students include: culture shock, adapting to new teaching / learning environments, understanding the American higher education system and U.S. social norms, adapting to food, climate, legal systems, as well dealing with feelings of homesickness and isolation. This acculturation (cross-cultural transition) process presents psychosocial challenges and barriers to success that require adaptation. In addition to receiving correct and updated information, international students require professors and university personnel willing to be prepared not only academically but also socially and culturally to meet their needs. The poster identifies challenges and potential barriers to success facing one international graduate student during the initial transition process.

**Maria Gutierrez**

MTSU

**Dr. Barbara N. Young**

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### “This Class Was Exactly How I Learned to Swim”: Reflections on Immersion Model Field Experiences

**Problem** In 2011 Ken Zeichner prescribed programmatic changes to teacher education that create “hybrid spaces” where both academic and practitioner knowledge “come together in new less hierarchical ways in the service of teacher learning” (p. 89). In response to this call, researchers redesigned a preservice course model from one-on-one tutoring to small-group instruction within a public elementary school. This immersive model is the focus of this study.

**Theory** The study model provides interactive learning experiences between preservice teachers, collaborating elementary classroom teachers, and university instructors. The structural features supporting this model included reform activities (i.e., mentoring, coaching, and learning communities), collective participation of preservice teachers and the elementary classroom teacher, and sustained training (Garet et al., 2001). These features support a social constructivist approach to learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Mascolo & Fischer, 2005).

**Methodology** A qualitative approach of immersion in the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) was used to analyze coursework from twenty preservice students. Two data analysis processes were employed to identify and consider examples of participants’ understanding of the experience. Initially identified themes and ongoing analyses were merged using axial coding (Priest, Roberts & Woods, 2002). Codes were analyzed for frequency using Hill et al.’s (1997) categories of “general,” “typical,” and “variant.”

**Results** No general (100% participants) codes were found. Six codes were typical (50-99%): Student Identity, Teacher Identity, Hands-On Learning, Collaboration/Co-Teaching, Improving One’s Pedagogy, Literacy Teaching Challenges. Five codes were variant (<50%): Assumptions of Teachers’ Roles, Mentor Teachers as Models, Teaching as a Mission, Economics of Teaching, Defining Literacy, Anti-Banking Model Pedagogy.

**Conclusions** Codes reveal an emphasis on the challenges of teaching, the possibilities of co-teaching/collaboration, and an exploration of teacher and student identity within the classroom. This emerging understanding of student understandings assist teacher education designers to build and revise programmatic experiences to better prepare the teaching force.

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### **A Comparison of Cross-Disciplinary Trends in Biology and Mathematics Education Research**

In this on-going study, we sought to compare methodological trends between two emerging educational fields, biology education research (BER) and mathematics education research (MER). BER is an emergent field of inquiry that has two decades of research. Similarly, MER gained notoriety over the last two decades due to scholarship of dedicated research journals.

For this study, we examined two education research journals, CBE-Life Science Education (CBE) and Journal for Research in Mathematics Education (JRME), and the research articles dated from 2002 to 2015. A comprehensive review of methodological trends in BER and MER from all research articles ( $n = 339$ ;  $n=200$ ) in the journals resulted in a sample that was reviewed by the research team. We extracted relevant research trends by using an online tool to collect the data. Specifically, we characterized the various research paradigms, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and methodologies used in BER over the last fifteen years. We analyzed data from CBE by synthesis, comparison, and gap analysis to identify methodological trends in BER research. We are currently analyzing data gathered from JRME utilizing the same characterizations as done in CBE. Final steps will include comparing trends characterized in CBE with those found within JRME. We aim to promote cross-disciplinary discussion regarding the similarities and differences in BER and MER. We argue that examining and discussing the methodological trends of these two fields allows for reflection on ways to progress each field forward in a productive manner.

#### **Lucy Watson**

Middle Tennessee State University

#### **Joshua Reid**

Middle Tennessee State University

#### **Amdeberhan Tessema**

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#### **Melanie Haupt**

Middle Tennessee State University

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### **APA and Microsoft Word: A Hands-On "How-To" on Formatting APA Documents**

Ever wonder if someone must be a tech genius to format an APA manuscript in Microsoft Word? APA style prescribes specific formatting requirements that are relatively easy to use in Microsoft Word if an author knows what steps to take before, during, and after preparing a manuscript in order to experience that ease in formatting. Formatting documents per APA style is a task that one can presume all researchers must take on at some point, but, still, students and faculty alike seem to struggle with this task despite numerous attempts. This training session will seek to alleviate that struggle and provide attendees with demonstrations and hands-on activities on the following:

1. Pagination 2. Table of contents 3. Heading styles 4. Sections 5. Tables and figures 6. References

A Q&A will also be offered, time permitting, for other formatting needs attendees may have.

**Dustin Hebert**

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

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### Statistics Related Attitudes & Perceptions for Graduate Students from Social Sciences

Research frequently uses quantitative approaches to explore undergraduates' (or undergraduates and graduates') attitudes toward statistics. However, few studies of adults' statistics attitudes use qualitative methods or focus solely on graduate students. This line of study is important to pursue since graduate students tend to have different backgrounds, learning motivations, and learning habits compared to their undergraduate counterparts. Overall, limited qualitative research is available on social science graduate students' 1) statistics anxiety and 2) actions taken to decrease anxiety and make statistics learning enjoyable. This study seeks to fill this gap by incorporating a qualitative approach to explore social science graduate students' attitudes toward statistics learning processes. Like on Crotty's (1998) model, this study is composed of four parts: (1) an epistemology of constructivism, (2) a theoretical perspective of interpretivism, (3) a methodology of phenomenology, and (4) a method of semi-structured interviewing. The participants include five doctoral students who were enrolled in a graduate-level statistics course from a large, research institution in the southern United States. Findings suggest that the graduate students have more positive attitudes and less anxiety toward statistics, high confidence in dealing with statistical challenges, and a strong willingness to learn statistics well. Moreover, four activities were generalized from the comments to reduce statistics anxiety and make statistics learning enjoyable. These four activities are 1) emphasizing the basic concepts to ensure mastery, 2) leaving more time for statistics learning, 3) focusing on fewer materials each time to increase learning, and 4) relating statistics learning to students' research areas. These findings are important for institutions to consider in developing effective instructional and policy approaches to helping specific populations of students to help develop interest in statistics and a desire to learn statistics well.

**Liuli Huang**

Louisiana State University

**Erin Scott-Stewart**

Louisiana State University

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### The Preferred Statistics Learning Styles for Social Science Graduate Students

With contemporary developments in technology, educators are better positioned than ever before to be responsive to a variety of student learning styles. The online and flipped methods in teaching styles are growing in popularity relative to traditional lecture classes, yet research as to which methods are most effective has not yet provided clear answers (Allen, Seaman, and Garret 2007; Bowen, Chingos, Lack, and Nygren 2012). In addition, very limited qualitative research is available in this area historically, and research implications on factors leading to student learning preferences are rarely discussed. Moreover, most studies in this area focus on undergraduate students, the graduate students, who tend to have different backgrounds, learning motivations, and learning habits, are rarely discussed. This study seeks to fill this gap by incorporating the qualitative approach in these areas by means of a focus on social science adult learners. Like on Crotty's (1998) model, this study is composed of an epistemology of constructivism, a theoretical perspective of interpretivism, a methodology of phenomenology, and a method of semi-structured interviewing. The participants include five doctoral students who were enrolled in a graduate-level statistics course from a large, research institution in the southern United States. Results indicate that the online learning style is inappropriate for an introductory statistics course for adult learners from social science. Major factors that contribute to in-class preferences, noted by student response, include a barrier to an online learning style, enablers to an in-class learning style, and the fact that statistics as a math natured subject. Therefore, these findings become important for institutions to consider, in order to provide effective educational approaches in targeting a specific population of students to not only develop interest in statistics, but also to effectively learn statistics.

**Liuli Huang**

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### Paths to Teacher Licensure

Licensing of teachers to teach in public schools is a right granted to each state and, thus, licensure requirements vary among states. As the number of alternative (non-higher education based) routes to teacher licensure have also evolved, teaching pathways have changed. All MSERA states provide a traditional licensure option as part of an undergraduate degree program. In addition, Arkansas and Kentucky have Teacher for America Programs; Alabama and Tennessee offer alternative certification programs for career technical; Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, and Tennessee participate in the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence; and other options exist within each state. The discussion will include the requirements for, and routes to, teacher licensure for states in the mid-south and a comparison of the differences in admission requirements, licensure standards, and anticipated time to completion.

#### **Gail Hughes**

University of Arkansas Little Rock

#### **Melissa Sigel**

University of Arkansas Little Rock

#### **Jennifer Hune**

University of Arkansas Little Rock

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### Using Emergent Design Research Method to Design an Electrochemistry Laboratory Activity

The purpose of our study is to design an electrochemistry activity that promotes meaningful learning in chemistry laboratory. Chemistry has always been a learning by doing subject (Pickering, 1993), and laboratory has been an essential part of learning chemistry by allowing students to experience phenomena first hand (Hofstein, 2004). Laboratory activities allow students to construct their own understanding of chemistry concepts in a way that cannot be accomplished by lecture or demonstration methods alone (Bruck & Town, 2013). However, while laboratory provides students with opportunities to integrate cognitive, affective and hands-on learning (Galloway, Malakpa, Bretz, 2016), the relationship between engaging in laboratory activities and meaningful learning are rarely examined. In order to design a better electrochemistry activity, we first need to understand how engaging in laboratory promotes meaningful learning. In the first stage of this research, we investigated what was transpiring in the laboratory by audio taping the discourse of group members as they were working through an electrochemistry laboratory. Using an emergent design and grounded theory inquiry framework, we examined the discourse of 8 pairs of students enrolled in General Chemistry II laboratory in the Fall of 2016. Data were collected in the form of digital audio recordings which were transcribed, coded and analyzed using constant comparison analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The results were compared to the results collected in the Fall of 2012. Both sets of data provide us with the insight into how students constructed and reconstructed their understanding of electrochemistry while working on laboratory activities. This enhanced understanding of how the laboratory experience impacts the learning of students provided the foundation necessary to redesign the electrochemistry laboratory experiment to better promote meaningful learning in chemistry laboratory. We plan to implement the pilot study in the Fall of 2017.

#### **Vichuda Hunter**

Middle Tennessee State University

#### **Amy Phelps**

Middle Tennessee State University

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### Teacher Candidates Self-Efficacy Toward Classroom Management

The purpose of this research was to investigate differences in self-efficacy regarding classroom management styles and practices between candidates pursuing alternate route to teaching and those seeking the traditional route. The following research question guided this study: Are teacher candidates' efficacy in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management influenced by their teacher education program, when age and pretest efficacy scores are controlled?

The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (long form) (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) was used as the pre/post instrument before and after a semester course on classroom management. The sample was divided into two groups: teacher candidates pursuing a traditional route (n=12) and teacher candidates seeking a non-traditional route (n=60). The mean scores for student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management were similar, with traditional certification teachers indicating a slightly higher amount of efficacy. Efficacy toward student engagement was lowest for both groups. Qualitative results shared by both groups indicate a change in dispositions after taking the course. The qualitative data emphasize the need for more real life experiences, observations, and working with teachers in the field; however, the results indicated that alternate route teachers felt a similar level of confidence of their approach to classroom management even though their course did not include a field component.

Since classroom management is a common concern for preservice teachers and a continual challenge for novice teachers (Sokal, Smith, & Mowat, 2003), it is important to investigate teachers' attitudes toward being prepared to manage the classroom effectively. With the increased numbers of students in alternate certification programs, research in this area is critical to investigate what program changes should be made, if any, to better prepare them to have successful instruction and effective classroom environment.

#### **Nykela Jackson**

University of Central Arkansas

#### **Rachelle Miller**

University of Central Arkansas

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### **NCAA's Amateurism Policy: A Viable Model or the Modern Day Exploitation of Today's Student-Athletes?**

This paper explores the current NCAA definitions, enforcement, and implications of Amateurism policies for Division I & Division II student-athletes. Articles and information provided by the NCAA, legal precedents, and other experts were reviewed in an attempt to determine if the current policy of Amateurism is antiquated due to the recent massive influx in revenue from exclusive licensing agreements and television contracts built upon the backs of an unpaid labor force. Suggestions for the evolution and amending of the current Amateurism policy are offered as a means towards re-aligning collegiate athletic departments with university mission statements towards student-athlete's rights and education.

**Andrew Jakiel**

University of North Georgia

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### **Correlational Study Between Tenth Graders' GPA and and STAR Assesment Academic Growth**

Abstract Historically, snapshot standardized assessments, such as the SAT and ACT, have been used by high schools and colleges to rank, predict, and assess student success. This type of assessment, however, does not account for student growth. The STAR test is a series of short assessments taken by students over the course of an academic school year. STAR reacts to the students' immediate responses to a question and adjusts its follow up question in accordance with the response. If the student answered incorrectly, the assessment adjusts the level of question to an easier skill question. The research sought to determine if a correlation exists between K-12 students' grade point averages and the Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) score of the STAR Mathematics and STAR Reading tests for tenth graders. The research focused on the correlation of trend data, data sampled over a minimum of three STAR assessments, and high school tenth graders end-of-year grade point average (GPA). The results of the STAR assessments and end-of-year grade point average demonstrated a 36% correlation between STAR Reading and HSGPA and a 28% correlation between STAR Mathematics and GPA. The reading correlation had the greater influence on the student assessment scores. This result would suggest that a greater emphasis on reading in all the subject areas could provide an impact on student assessment scores. The scores did not show overall growth in student performance during the school year. The results bring into question the assumption that current practices address student weaknesses and strengths. Further research is needed to address the teachers' knowledge base, experience, and effort in administering the STAR Reading and STAR Mathematics tests.

**Barron Jonathon**

Samford University

**Newton Jodi**

Samford University

**Connell Peggy**

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### **A Hermeneutic Phenomenological Exploration: The Challenges of African American Women in Doctoral Education**

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges that influenced the persistence of African American women in doctoral education. This research study was designed to discover why African American women persisted and understand the conditions that prevented successful completion. A qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological design was used to explore the lived experiences of African American women enrolled in a doctoral program. Data were collected through a demographic questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed through triangulation, bracketing, epoche-suspension, and horizontalization. The results of the study exposed various barriers which impeded the success of African American women in doctoral programs. The results revealed four core themes: (a) It is not the quantity of faculty of color, but the lack of quality, (b) I do not feel like a scholar, (c) my sisters helped me persevere, and (d) access is not enough. The findings implied higher education leaders must proactively identify problem areas where inclusion initiatives are not an integral part of the academic and social experience for minorities. Although four core themes were revealed, only one of the four essential themes will be the focus of the presentation, I do not feel like a scholar, which pertains to identity development as an African American woman pursuing a doctorate.

**Dr. Jessica Jones**

University of Phoenix/University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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### Preparation for Teaching in Rural Schools: Alternate Route Certified Teachers' Perspectives

This study examined the perspectives of alternate route certified teachers with varying content areas and years of teaching, and their feeling of preparedness for teaching in a rural school. The case study participants were four alternate route certified teachers at a secondary school (~900). The researcher conducted interviews and observations, and collected artifacts and documents to take a close look at how well prepared alternate route certified teachers felt for teaching. The researcher conducted conversational, semi-structured interviews with each teacher and observed them while teaching. Semi-structured interviews focused on the following topics: background of teacher, alternate route program, motivation to teach, teacher preparation, mentoring and internship. All interviews were taped and transcribed by the researcher. Observations were conducted following the semi-structured interview in order to document the participant's teaching, and verify and strengthen the findings from the interviews. Data were analyzed using the qualitative software NVivo 10. Two major themes emerged through the data analysis. They were teacher preparation and career switching, which is a factor unique to alternate route preparation. In the theme of teacher preparation were teachers' perspectives on coursework, practice teaching and internship, mentoring, and content area knowledge. Findings showed that the alternate certified teachers have different levels of feeling prepared for teaching. Many of the teachers reported that mentoring was important to their first years' success, but that more coursework and practice teaching were not seen as beneficial overall. While the advantages of alternate route certification allowed them to switch careers and become teachers more quickly, most cited strong content knowledge as a positive component of alternate route programs. The study further suggested alternate route certified teachers lack preparation and struggled in their first year of teaching. The findings of the study suggest implications for future classroom teachers, teacher preparation programs, and teacher educators.

**Autumn K. Jordon**

Mississippi State University

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### **The Effects of Computerized and Traditional Ear Training Programs on Aural Skills of Elementary Students**

#### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of computerized and traditional ear training methods on the aural skills abilities of elementary music students. Klonoski (2000) indicated that many students have more difficulty learning aural skills concepts than other musical skill sets such as notation and interval analysis. One reason for this difficulty is that aural skills are more complicated to assess than written theory skills or tangible performance skills. The sample consisted of 20 students who were randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group. The experimental group was taught for five sessions using computerized ear training program while the control group was taught for five sessions using traditional, non-computerized ear training methods. At the end of the five sessions, students were tested. Data were collected by administering a test to both experimental and control groups that measured students' ability to identify by ear eleven different pitch intervals and three different qualities of chords. Students were also administered a survey to measure their attitudes toward their experience in the ear training program. Data were analyzed using independent t-tests. The results indicated a significant difference between the test scores of the control and experimental groups. The students in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group. There was no significant difference found between the experimental and control groups regarding their attitude survey results. The results of this study suggest that the use of computerized ear training instruction is beneficial in achieving aural skills.

**Zachary Ross**

Milligan College

**Patrick Kariuki**

Milligan College

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### Changing Course with Metacognitive Strategies

Students transitioning to post-secondary education become conscious of their lack of study skills for handling rigorous curriculum.

Mississippi State University's Learning Center offers the College Reading & Study Skills course designed to equip students with metacognitive strategies for becoming more efficient and effective learners. The institution evaluates the success of the course based on the growth in overall student data measured by the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI).

Prior to the summer of 2016 multiple instructors taught the course with varied presentation styles. At the end of the spring 2016 semester, two instructors collaborated to restructure the presentation style of the course and implemented opportunities for students to apply metacognitive strategies throughout the course beginning in the summer of 2016. Collaboration centered around impacts the presentation style of the curriculum had on students' ability to pass the course's tests and/or on how well students were able to apply the necessary metacognitive strategies to be successful in all academic endeavors.

Using the scale from the LASSI, a comparison of pre- and post- data analyzed the new presentation approach to the metacognitive strategies. During the spring of 2016, 48% of students averaged a Post LASSI score of 50% or higher. At the end of the fall 2016 semester, 53.06% of students averaged a Post LASSI score of 50% or higher; therefore, collectively the instructors continued to implement opportunities for metacognitive strategies in each lesson.

#### **Christa King**

Mississippi State University

#### **Chelsey Vincent**

Mississippi State University

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### Defining and Measuring Critical Thinking Skills for a Quality Enhancement Plan

Since 2004, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has required institutions seeking reaccreditation to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). This paper describes the evaluation of a critical-thinking QEP embedded in first-year seminar (FYS) classes at a doctoral-granting southern public university. A university-wide professional learning community (PLC) reviewed critical thinking literature (e.g., Ennis, 2011; Facione, 1990; Paul & Elder, 2006) then defined the construct for this QEP as: M=monitor assumptions, S=scrutinize evidence, U=uncover solutions. The PLC developed critical-thinking activities for FYS classes. Strategies used to teach the defined critical thinking skills were: opportunity for dialogue, situated problems, examples, and mentoring. This 2017 evaluation study used a content analysis of the fall 2016 SWS. Trained raters determined whether evidence of critical-thinking skills was present in the SWS. Raters (N=6) had taught undergraduate classes and were experienced evaluators. Two hundred and seven SWS were selected for the study. The rubric included: 1=No Evidence; 2=Insufficient Evidence; 3=Sufficient Evidence, 4=Overwhelming Evidence. Each SWS was reviewed by at least two raters. Inter-rater agreement (exact agreement) (IRA) (Graham, Milanowski, & Millan, 2012) ranged from 67% to 100%. The data were analyzed using Excel. In 75 Moral Development SWS, evidence of Monitor Assumptions was observed in 66 (88%). Raters found evidence of Scrutinize Evidence in 42 (56%), and evidence of Uncover Solutions in 45 (56%). In 18 Wikipedia SWS, evidence of Monitor Assumptions was observed in 14 (77.8%). Raters found evidence of Scrutinize Evidence in 42 (56%) SWS, and evidence of Uncover Solutions in 45 (56%). Evidence of Monitor Assumptions was observed in 25(75,8%) of the Ethical Dilemma: Cheating on a Final Exam 33 SWS; Evidence of Scrutinize Evidence in 16 (48.5%), and Uncover Solutions in 20 (60.6%). Feedback from raters was included. Discussion of defining critical thinking and designing content-analysis evaluation processes was invited.

#### **Beverly McCauley Klecker**

Morehead State University, Morehead, KY

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### **How does lesson study promote pedagogical content knowledge of pre-service teachers in a science methods course?**

Often in teacher education there is a disconnect between acquiring knowledge in university coursework and applying that knowledge in the classroom (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1986; Kennedy, 1999). This theory-to-practice gap is a major factor contributing to the lack of success of many teacher education programs in influencing teacher learning (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1999). One potential method of bridging the gap between theory and practice could be through the process of lesson study. Originating in Japan, lesson study is a type of teacher professional development that has been credited for the steady improvement of Japanese instruction (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004; Stigler & Hiebert, 1997) and has gained popularity in the U.S. (Kriewaldt, 2012; Lewis, Perry, & Murta, 2006). This study evaluated the potential that lesson study holds for advancing pre-service teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in science teaching in an elementary science methods course. Data sources included multiple sources from the science methods classroom and the teacher candidates' field experience placements. Data was coded in two phases. In the first phase, the coding scheme consisted of the five categories of PCK based on Magnusson et al., (1999). In the second phase, a cross-case analysis of the participants was conducted which examined the data set for patterns and themes across individual participants. Findings indicate that implementation of lesson study in a science methods classroom was a helpful tool in advancing pre-service teachers' PCK for science teaching. While several studies have documented K-12 teachers' participation in lesson study (Lewis, et al., 2009; Perry and Lewis, 2009; Saunders, Goldenberg, & Gallimore, 2009), few have examined the impacts of this form of professional development on pre-service science teachers ( Juhler, 2016; Marble, 2007). This study builds upon the limited research of utilization of lesson study in a science methods classroom.

**Sandra Lampley**

University of Alabama in Huntsville

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### Using peer evaluation to improve teaching

Many college professors are trained in their field rather than trained as teachers. This, coupled with the need to balance research efforts with their assigned course loads, can result in a lack of prioritization on the time and effort to keep courses updated, relevant, and student-focused. One strategy we have incorporated in our Department to promote this priority is peer teaching evaluations. During the past four semesters, one to two courses/instructors have been peer-evaluated by two to three colleagues. Once those being evaluated and evaluators were identified, those being evaluated either gave examples or gave access to course syllabus, lecture material, and assessments, and evaluators completed course content forms based on this course material. Evaluators each attended, unannounced, at least one class session before the midterm and one class session after the midterm. During these class observations, evaluators completed observation rubrics. Both of these forms/rubrics were designed to provide feedback on both course material (quality of syllabus, clarity of content, assessments, proper learning objectives) and teaching quality (presence in the classroom, clear delivery, variety of assessments, maintain interest of students). After all class observations were completed, the rubrics were tallied and further summary points were compiled and provided to the instructor and the Department Head. The objective of this activity was to find areas of strength and places where improvements could be made. Ideally, teaching is a constantly evolving activity and peer evaluation serves as a mechanism to get a fresh perspective and new ideas for improvement. We have found that the evaluators often benefited from the process by witnessing new ideas and making changes in their courses as well. Gaining perspective from the students' point-of-view can be a good reminder for all teachers.

#### **Jamie Larson**

Mississippi State University Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences

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### "Race Mixing is Communism": Fighting Subversion on Southern Campuses

Threatened by the international expansion of postwar communism, American conservatives experienced a quiet political revival midcentury. Across the nation, conservatives mobilized to combat communist subversives in schools, churches, and other public spheres through nonviolent campaigns that raised awareness to threats against American constitutional liberties. In the South, however, distinctly regional brands of conservatism emerged. Leaders of Southern conservatives associated Soviet communism with several American civil rights movements of the New Left, especially in the arenas of education and religion. For many Southerners, Supreme Court legislation mandating the integration of public schools, the activities of SNCC's student civil rights workers, and the politicization of the SCLC, posed more than a threat to the end of Jim Crow traditions. This research will explore the Southern response to perceived communist infiltration in public education from the perspective of populist and militant conservatives.

**Lauren Lassabe**

The University of Southern Mississippi

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### Investigating the Leadership Behaviors of Successful Turnaround Leaders

Since the 1960s, education and political leaders have enacted school improvement legislation and other mandates to improve education for students in low-performing schools. Taxpayers continue to spend billions of dollars on education reform movements. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive examination of successful turnaround programs for low-performing schools in a southern state. Based on academic research, the principal is the guiding factor in the successful turnaround of a school. Transformational and transactional leadership theories serve as the foundation to guide this study which will analyze successful school leadership behaviors perceived by principals and teachers. Using a mixed methods approach, this research will be based on data from schools considered academically unacceptable by state mandated criteria. State School Performance Scores from 2006 through 2016 will be used to identify elementary and middle schools that were deemed academically unacceptable during that time period. Schools will then be grouped into three categories: (a) schools that successfully and consistently turned around academic achievement, (b) schools that achieved some academic success but then returned to unacceptable status, and (c) schools that never achieved academic success and remained in unacceptable status. A semi-structured interview protocol will be used to interview principals in order to gain background knowledge about school improvement programs implemented at each school. Principals and teachers will complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to measure perceived leadership behaviors of each principal. ANOVA and Scheffe' techniques will be used to analyze the data and determine significant differences among the three groups of principals and teachers. Recommendations for practice and further research will be included. Identifying and defining strong leadership behaviors associated with transforming failing schools will provide useful information about what effective leaders do in order to achieve successful school turnaround.

#### **Annette Lee**

Louisiana Tech University/Caddo Parish Schools

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### **Explicitly Educating Pre-Service Candidates on the Importance of Applying Professional Dispositions during Field Experiences**

Scope of the Session: The scope of this training session is to present the audience with a detailed description of how to explicitly discuss the importance of applying professional dispositions to pre-service candidates prior to conducting field experience. The presenters will discuss a list of professional dispositions that are required for pre-service candidates to adhere to throughout their matriculation in the Elementary Education program at their institution. A brief history of how the list has evolved will be shared with the audience as well as the compliments provided by clinical teachers and administrators on the behavior of pre-service candidates who conduct field experiences and internship at various field placements. The process for addressing and providing intervention for pre-service candidates who do not adhere to these dispositions will also be discussed.

Objectives: The learner will: • Be introduced to a hands-on model for educating pre-service candidates on applying professional dispositions during field experiences. • Be aware of the positive results that develop from explicitly educating pre-service candidates on professional dispositions. • Discuss how their licensure program addresses and communicates professional dispositions with their candidates.

Summary of Activities: The presenters will provide audience members with a detailed power-point presentation that discusses how we explicitly communicate expectations for pre-service candidates' behavior during field experience, as well as the positive comments from school personnel who host our candidates. Audience members will be given pertinent handouts throughout the presentation. At the end of the presentation, audience members will have an opportunity to discuss their approach for educating their candidates on applying professional dispositions during field experiences and continue the conversation for revisions, deletions, etc. within respective programs at various institutions.

**Katina Leland**

UA Little Rock

**Anne Lindsay**

UA Little Rock

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### The Use of Authentic Contexts in Elementary Mathematics Pedagogy to Facilitate the Mathematical Practices

The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics define standards that place emphasis on conceptual understanding of rigorous content and on applying concepts to authentic, real-world situations through higher-order thinking. The Standards for Mathematical Practice underscore the need for students of mathematics to “think like mathematicians” in their problem solving endeavors. Students are expected to persevere in solving challenging problems, realizing that multiple approaches might be necessary to reach a solution. Thus, the purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the extent to which instructional activities involving authentic contexts facilitated the use of four specific Mathematical Practices. The research questions were: For which authentic contexts (1) do third and fourth grade students persevere in problem solving the most (MP #1)? (2) do third and fourth grade students most easily oscillate between quantitative and abstract reasoning (MP #2)? (3) do third and fourth grade students most readily construct viable arguments (MP #3)? (4) do third and fourth grade students most consistently attend to precision (MP #6)? Participants were three 3rd graders and three 4th graders who engaged in one activity per week for ten weeks. Qualitative data were gathered through task-specific interview protocols and analyzed by coding statements made or written by the students that provided evidence of the four mathematical practices under investigation. Participants also completed pre- and post-content assessments. The themes of “uses mathematical language” and “abstract reasoning” were coded most often. Overall, these students 1) persevered less when the content was fractions; (2) reasoned more abstractly than quantitatively, even though all content was presented quantitatively; (3) attempted to defend their thinking regardless of the context; and (4) consistently used appropriate referents, but struggled to use mathematical precise descriptions of concepts. More specific results will be shared and implications of these results will be discussed.

**Rebecca Robichaux-Davis**

Mississippi State University

**Harley Middleton**

Mississippi State University

**Madison Lessley**

Mississippi State University

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### A Comparative Study of African American Males Students in AVID

Public high schools in the United States had an all-time high graduation rate of 80% for the 2011-2012 school year (National Center for Education statistics). While rates differ by state, the overall graduation rate has remained near or above the 2011 school year (U. S. Department of Education, ED Facts/Consolidated State Performance Report). Indisputably, these data indicate the steady increase in the number of students graduating from high school, but, there remains a disparity in graduation rates, suspensions rates, math and reading scores, and advance placement enrollment among African American males in comparison to Caucasian male students. The poor academic performance of African American males is consistently contributing to the widening of the achievement gap (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2015, National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). African American male students continue to yield an academic climate of only 10% deemed proficient in 8th grade reading and 53 % graduating from high school. African American males are more likely to drop out of high school before graduating compared with Caucasian males. They are less likely to attend 4 year postsecondary institution after graduation. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college-readiness system on the academic success of African American male students by analyzing students' grade point average, attendance, suspension rates, end of course exam proficiency rates and ACT scores. The study provided a framework to enhance the academic potential of underprepared and historically underrepresented students, especially African American males. This study utilized a comparative research design to address three research questions. A pool of 90 African American male high school seniors, who had been enrolled in AVID for at least three consecutive years while in high school, was randomly selected as participants for this study. A similar group of African American male high school seniors, who never enrolled in AVID was randomly selected to act as a control group for the study. The overall results of this study indicated a positive correlations between enrollment in AVID and students' academic performance, attendance, and suspension rates. A series of t-test revealed no significant differences between the AVID and non-AVID groups on 10th, 11th and 12 grade assessment; however, the AVID group performed at a higher rate than the non-AVID group. The AVID performed significantly better with regard to GPA in comparison to the non-AVID groups' GPA. There was no effect of AVID on attendance from ninth grade to 12th grade. The suspension rate between the two groups was not significant, but the AVID group was suspended more days than non-AVID. At the same time, the AVID group had considerable fewer students with discipline problems as compared with the non-AVID group. The results of this research supported the data surrounding AVID's role in this school district in closing the achievement gap for African American males and led to positive correlations between enrollment in AVID and students' academic performance, attendance, and suspension rates. The AVID students also held slightly higher math scores on Algebra 1 end of course test and other assessment measures. Considering the academic risk factors that AVID students exhibit, without AVID, these students may not have performed at the proficiency level or advanced proficiency level. Furthermore, a common expectation for AVID students is to enroll in courses that are rigorous and complete at least one advanced-placement course prior to high school graduation. In order to fulfil the original intent of A Nation at Risk and offer every student a rigorous core curriculum that will prepare them for college and work by the time they graduate from high school there must be an understanding among educators, school officials, and stakeholders that all schools are not created equal and that each student is unique in his or her academic approach. This is especially true as it relates to African American males and the academic barriers they face, which in part, derive from both environmental and institutional low expectations. This study provides evidence to the notion that school context can better the otherwise negative impact of assumed academic barriers. The AVID system provides various academic and social supports, as the data from this research revealed, is closing the achievement gap.

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Middle Tennessee State University

**Jamie Lomax**

AVID Eastern Division

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### **Taking Your Research Public: Presentation and Display for Non-Academicians**

MSERA provides a broad range of resources and support for novice researchers, graduate students, new faculty, and other research oriented folks through the annual meeting sessions that focus on publishing, job seeking, as well as an assortment of research methods; it also provides personal support through the experience of the MSERA mentors and regular publications. Yet, increasingly there is a need for these same audiences to have skills necessary to present their data and research findings to a broad array of audiences, both within and outside university settings. However well intentioned or well prepared the presenter and technically sound the data, judgments are made on the ability to communicate effectively and efficiently. This workshop session is designed to offer guidance on how to make presentations and display data in meaningful and understandable ways. Using humor and fun, participants will be involved in identifying ineffective presentation methods. Examples of clear, understandable data display presentation are contrasted with those that lead the audience to sleep, weep or walk out. Participants will be given a wide array of information to take with them. These will include contrasting visual comparisons along with guidelines for preparing, practicing, and presenting data; references, weblinks, and resources to use long after the MSERA meeting is over will be provided. A Top Ten checklist for designing effective presentations will also be included.

**Jane Nell Luster**

Com-Link, LLC

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### Literacy Teachers` Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Practice: An Overview

**Problem Statement:** Literacy instructors are encountering accumulative challenges in today`s classrooms. Large-scale high-stake assessments and managerial/parental expectations have doubled the pressure on teachers to produce high-achieving literacy learners. This discussion will focus on the recent focus on Pedagogical Content Knowledge and its optimal use in classrooms. **Brief Description:** Nearly two decades of research (Moats, 1994) have shown that reading instructors` knowledge of core reading skills including orthography, phonology, and morphology are poor. This lack of knowledge impedes the delivery of effective and research-based instruction, which can result in the failure to acquire reading skills and subsequent content knowledge (e.g., science, math), which requires adequate reading skills to extract meaning from text. However, more recent research has demonstrated that Pedagogical Content Knowledge is amenable to change through perceptions and mentality about their practice and responsibilities (Opfer & Peddler, 2011). **Summary of Methodology:** This discussion was informed by a review of the literature of both Pedagogical Content Knowledge and professional development focused on increasing content knowledge as well as changing perceptions of teachers their roles and the instructional methods they use. **Results:** The latest findings assert that the quality of literacy instructors` practice has mainly been gauged by the practical knowledge obtained by passage of time in classroom; however, the role of pedagogical content knowledge, as a rich repertoire of guidance, has been shunned. **Conclusion/Implications:** Pedagogical knowledge, along with content knowledge, assists teachers in coordinating instructional elements effectively by providing validated and beneficial responses to learners` developing knowledge of literacy practice. Making researchers, teacher preparation programs, and teachers more aware of the importance of Pedagogical Content Knowledge can improve student outcomes by ensuring practitioners are well equipped to provide efficient and quality instruction.

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### Changing the politics of teacher quality: How history offers support for plurality

We critique historical approaches to teacher quality, suggesting innovations based in both educational pluralism and labor market realities. Early 20th Century Scientific Management approaches in practice tended to treat teachers as interchangeable (female) factory workers, to be supervised by male professionals (Callahan, 1962; Rousmaniere, 2013). By the late 20th Century these were largely supplanted by Weberian approaches using state and university based certification regimes. By the 1970s these systems proved inadequate in the face of a changed labor markets for women, lessened respect for Weberian bureaucracy, and increased use of data in policy-making. We argue for fundamentally different approaches to teacher quality based on plural professionalism (Mehta and Teles, 2014) and transparency of objective teacher qualifications. We propose that the field of education embrace plural professionalism in the mode of professions like psychology and architecture, acknowledging that different modes of teaching may succeed in different schools and for different populations. This would represent a dramatic break from the Scientific Management related origins of educational leadership, and the Romantic origins of curriculum and instruction. This approach would recognize that education is already a field that is pluralistic in both its means and ends, and allow for a more authentic and congruent pairing of the theory and practice experienced in training with subsequent classroom practice.

Callahan, R.E. (1962). *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mehta, J. & S. Teles. (2014). *Professionalism 2.0: The Case for Plural Professionalism*, pp. 109-134 in F. M. Hess & M. Q. McShane edited *Teacher Quality 2.0: Toward a New Era in Education Reform*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Rousmaniere, K. (2013). *The Principal's Office: A social history of the American school principal*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

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### **An Experiential Learning Experience for Teacher Candidates: Mentoring a 5th Grade Social Studies Exhibition**

In Spring 2017, nineteen senior methods teacher candidates at ...University, mentored groups of fifth graders through development of a Social Studies action project for the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme at a local school. The purpose of the accompanying study was to explore factors that contribute to a successful experiential learning experience and to ascertain its benefits and impact on teacher candidates' feelings towards teaching social studies. Dewey, Piaget, Kolb and others advocated instruction through experience. Brain research, the National Society for Experiential Education and National Council for the Social Studies' C-3 Framework support the theorists. Data was collected through weekly teacher candidate reflections, observations, conversations, class discussions, final written comments, a graphic organizer and recommendations. A cross-case thematic analysis was conducted on all data. Leading themes emerging from reflections were: under "What went well", group cooperation (52%), under "What could be changed", off task behavior (26%), and under "How the students reacted", 86% were positive responses. Observations verified numerous reflection annotations. Conclusion of exhibition comments highlighted benefits as improving mentoring skills (73%), and challenges as student motivation (63%). Comments (47%) indicated no change in feelings about teaching social studies while 42% consequently reported positive feelings. Ten percent indicated negative feelings. Graphic organizer descriptors were 68% positive. Recommendations emphasized greater outside support, clear instructions (63%) and thorough training (47%). Data indicated that the experience allowed teacher candidates to improve mentoring skills, observe student growth and appreciate the power of instruction resulting in action. Significantly, 42% of the teacher candidates were positively impacted by the experience while those reporting prior positive feelings (44%) remained unaffected. Implications are that training, clear expectations, outside support, group cooperation and interest are factors contributing to a successful mentorship. Benefits of this mentorship appear to justify the value placed on experiential learning in college programs.

**Deborah McCarthy**

Southeastern Louisiana University

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### **An Investigation of Hidden Curriculum in Children's Cartoons**

This research presents data drawn from a larger study that considers how children's cartoons support the norms, values, and narratives that are valued by employers in a capitalist society. In supporting these constructs, the hidden curriculum expressed in many children's cartoons represents a form of social conditioning that takes place early in children's lives and serves to shape their worldviews in ways that impact their relationship with work, their relationships with other individuals, and their relationships with things. The theoretical framework for this research is informed by a coupling of two related constructs. These constructs are represented by a sociological facet of social conditioning, and the facilitation of social conditioning through mass media using a model pioneered by Edward Bernays in the early 20th century. The collective consciousness of a society represents the collection of understandings shared by the average members of that society (Allan & Daynes, 2005). These common beliefs serve to unify society (Jary & Jary, 2005), shape our individual worldviews, and facilitate our behavior (Greenwood, 2004). Selection of children's cartoons to include in this project was informed by the researchers' personal experience viewing hundreds of hours of children's television programs. The cartoons selected for inclusion in this study aired on the top two preschool children's television channels, Disney and Nick Jr. (Barnes, B. & Chozick, A., 2013). The researcher viewed 10 randomly selected episodes of each series from our media library. The findings of this research indicate consistent capitalist-based themes in all series examined in this study, including authoritarian relationships, skill based themes that center on STEM fields, competition to complete tasks, deferment to authority figures, transactional relationships, property rights, and procedural themes.

**Shane McGregor**

Mississippi State University

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### **Pre-service Teachers' Ability to Identify Story Problem Structures: A 10-Year Longitudinal Study**

Amongst elementary pre-service and in-service teachers, there is a pervasive mindset that addition means "join" and subtraction means "take-away." However, "join" and "take away" are only two of four possible meanings of those operations. According to national standards, elementary students should have problem solving experiences that reflect all meanings of each operation. Thus, the purpose of this exploratory investigation was to determine the extent to which pre-service teachers' could accurately identify story problem structures for addition, subtraction, and division after participating in multiple story problem structure activities. The particular story problem structures assessed were: Part-Part-Whole and Separate for Addition; Join and Compare for Subtraction; and Measurement and Partition for Division. The participants were 662 pre-service elementary teachers who were enrolled in a senior level mathematics methods course over the past 10 years. Preliminary descriptive statistics indicate that when first tested on the story problem structures only four of the 662 participants (0.6%) were able to correctly identify the Part-Part-Whole Addition story problem structure; 32 were able to correctly identify the Separate Addition story problem structure (4.8%); and only 18 were able to correctly identify the Compare Subtraction story problem structure (2.7%). Of the 662 participants, 580 were also given Join Subtraction and Measurement Division story problem structures to identify. Of those 580 participants, 39 were able to correctly identify the Join Subtraction story problem (6.7%), while 223 were able to correctly identify the Measurement Division story problem structure (38.4%). Further analysis is being conducted to determine relationships between correct responses across operations and to identify misconceptions based on incorrect responses. Additionally trend analyses will be conducted to determine if changes in thought have occurred over time. Implications concerning elementary teacher preparation include the need for impactful activities to facilitate more flexible thinking about the four basic operations.

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### **An analysis of three assessment methods in secondary career and technical education**

College- and career-readiness in high school career and technical education (CTE) pathways is measured largely by assessments of technical skill attainment. In fact, states that receive federal funding for secondary CTE pathways under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 must have their own accountability systems for assessing and reporting their effectiveness in state CTE programming. Methods and forms of assessment in CTE, however, vary across states; in some states they vary further across districts and schools.

Mississippi's Department of Education operates with the theory that selected-response, standardized tests can measure technical skill attainment of students in CTE programs validly and reliably. However, Mississippi's Department of Education also employs performance-based assessments and industry credentialing exams in select CTE pathways, heeding the national call for more robust assessment methods for hands-on, problem-based curricula and demands from industry employers.

This study is a multi-year, quantitative analysis of three methods of statewide assessment being used concurrently in Mississippi to assess high school CTE students: state-developed selected-response tests, state-developed performance-based assessments (PBA), and national certification or industry credentialing exams. All three methods of assessment discussed in this study are used by the state to provide measurement of (a) student technical skill attainment for Perkins funding under the U.S. Department of Education, (b) college and career readiness, and (c) program effectiveness for the Mississippi Department of Education.

Assessment reliability is highlighted, including the results of item analysis on the selected-response assessments against the benchmark of Cronbach's alpha score of 0.7 and G studies conducted on the performance-based assessment results. For select national certification pathways, statewide field tests were conducted in which students took both national certification exams and selected-response assessments, with results compared. Each assessment type's advantages and disadvantages are discussed, including validity, reliability, scalability, and portability.

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#### **Ashley Priebe Brown**

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### Effect of Visualization and Animation in a Slide-based eLearning Presentation

While research suggests including dominant visual images in a slide-based presentation may offer benefits to learners, it is not clear whether the complete absence of text or addition of animation adds or detracts from the positive effects on engagement and learning. Participants in this study were directed to watch one of four eLearning presentations all designed with a dominant congruent image but with text and animation variations. A MANOVA was conducted to assess differences on participants' comprehension and perceptions across these four presentation conditions. Results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in comprehension and perceptions among the four groups. The findings suggest that any variation of the simplified visually-rich presentation style is effective.

**Michael Mills**

University of Central Arkansas

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### Grocery Vocabulary Acquisition: Which Method Works for ESL Adult Learners?

The increasing influx of immigrants to the United States has brought about a great quantity of non-English-speaking foreigners, who are in need of acquiring ESL. Minors have the opportunity to learn English language at public elementary, middle, or high schools; however, adults have to recourse to English institutes to study English for daily communication. In typical immigrant families, husbands go to work to financially support the whole family while wives stay at home, shopping, cooking, etc. One of the initial difficulties encountered by these female immigrants is the inability to use English in daily life, especially shopping at grocery stores. As a consequence, ESL classes with concentration on basic grocery lexis emerge as a necessity to support these true English beginners in purchasing food and beverages at grocery shops. In traditional vocabulary approaches, teachers explicitly taught lexical units in isolation (Schmitt, 2000) while alternative vocabulary instructions encouraged contextualized lexis being taught via visual aids and demonstration (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Brown, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Both methods were utilized to train grocery vocabulary to two groups of participants in eight weeks (i.e., four weeks/method). Pre- and posttest scores were collected for each method employing dependent-sample t statistic to determine the more efficient method. Findings showed that the posttest scores in both methods were statistically higher than pretest scores, which documented that learners' acquisition of new grocery-related words were systematically changed by the effect of learning with Method 1 and Method 2 (Cohen's  $d = 1.94$  and Cohen's  $d = 1.29$ ). Within the scope of the current study, it is recommended that beginners are first taught vocabulary with traditional approaches and then contextualization method. Additionally, immigrants should be empowered to shop for grocery independently by being gradually trained derivation skills via authentic materials like simplified real-life dialogues recorded in local supermarkets.

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### **Educator Use of Social Media: Ethical, Legal, and Policy Ramifications for Educational Leaders**

The increased availability, access, and use of social media create unique challenges and issues for both educators and school leaders. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, along with email correspondence and text messaging have become commonplace and provide educators with a useful and almost instantaneous means of communicating with students, parents, colleagues and others in the broader cyber-community. This literature review focuses on the ethical, legal, and policy issues encountered by educators and educational leaders regarding the appropriate use of social media by educators and will provide suggestions to help ensure that such use is lawful, ethical, and appropriate.

A review of established case law and current court cases will be included to provide insight into the issues of (a) First Amendment Rights, (b) Fourth Amendment Rights, (c) Fourteenth Amendment Rights, (d) Student Contact, (e) Parental Contact, (f) Content of Postings, and (g) development and implementation of appropriate school and district policies regarding employee use of social media. Generally courts have held that these rights must be balanced with the needs of the school districts to ensure efficiency, harmony, and good working relationships. In a review of recent decisions, courts have addressed the issue along four lines of reasoning: (a) constitutional rights, (b) nature of the conduct, (c) nexus between the conduct and job performance, and (d) school board policy. The courts have relied on case law such as *Pickering v. Board* (1968), *Mt. Healthy v. Doyle* (1977), *Connick v. Myers* (1983), *O'Conner v. Ortega* (1987), *City of Ontario v. Quon* (2010), and *Garcetti v. Ceballos* (2006) to guide their rulings.

Inappropriate use of social media by educators will be examined and examples of district and school social media policies will be presented. Specific recommendations for school leaders and practitioners will also be presented.

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### **A Step-by-Step Guide to Publishing Journal Articles for Beginning, Emergent, and Experienced Authors**

Because research is for the most part, a personal, self-taught, and self-mastered activity that is minimally discussed—if at all—beyond its findings, it can be difficult for faculty members to find solutions to the difficulties that they encounter attempting to establish and/or to maintain an active research agenda. Thus, the overall goal of this interactive training session is to provide a meta-framework for publishing that contains steps that are continuous, iterative, interactive, holistic, dynamic, and synergistic. Specifically, the purpose of this training session is twofold. First, the presenter—who has secured more than 400 publications—will summarize 30 steps to publishing. In so doing, the presenter will present standards and evidence-based guidelines for publishing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research articles from the author, reviewer, and editor points of views. Second, the presenter will outline strategies for helping authors secure impactful publications—which are publications that help to advance their fields. This session is applicable for all emergent scholars—including doctoral students—who would like to learn how to secure quality publications. Also, this session is useful for beginning faculty members and experienced faculty members alike, regardless of their fields/disciplines. Therefore, it is anticipated that this structured dialogue will serve as a vehicle from which individuals from an array of disciplines with diverse publication experiences can interact on a topic of extreme scope and importance. Not only will this dialogue be useful for faculty members but also for administrators because they will obtain a better picture of the issues and challenges that face faculty members as they attempt to achieve and to maintain adequate publication productivity. Audience members will have had the opportunity to share their experiences and ideas related to publishing and to obtain insights about publishing that will provide them with the tools to reach their full potential.

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### **A Meta-Framework for Writing the Literature Review Section of Dissertations, Research Articles, and Other Works**

Writing the literature review section of research reports—including dissertations—is extremely challenging for many authors. At the doctoral level, the literature review section often represents one of the most overwhelming chapter of dissertations. At the post-doctorate level, as many as 40% who submit manuscripts for possible publication in journals write inadequate literature reviews, with authors who submit manuscripts that contain poorly written literature reviews being more than six times more likely to have their manuscripts rejected than are their counterparts. Unfortunately, few students and beginning faculty members receive adequate supervision or mentorship with respect to writing literature reviews. Consequently, many authors lack guidance and hence, confidence, as to how to write literature reviews; and this is reflected in the quality of literature reviews that they produce, with these sections lacking a logical, consistent, and clear pattern of discoveries and concepts that form a point of view or synthesis. Thus, the purpose of this interactive presentation is to provide a meta-framework for helping authors find a writing flow in a way that leads to an effective presentation of a comprehensive literature review. This meta-framework comprises the following three phases: pre-draft-writing phase, draft-writing phase, and draft-audit phase. In particular, we outline 14 decisions made at the pre-draft-writing phase, 14 decisions made at the draft-writing phase, and 18 recommendations for auditing the first and subsequent writing drafts during the draft-audit phase. This session is applicable for all emergent writers—especially doctoral students and other emergent writers—who would like to learn how to improve their ability to contextualize a topic of interest and to establish a path of argumentation. Also, this session is useful for advisors, dissertation chairs, dissertation members, and mentors who are interested in learning strategies that help students write literature reviews that are both warranted and transparent.

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### **A Study of the Effects of Phonemic Awareness Interventions for Kindergarteners in Poverty**

Many high poverty schools have below proficient reading scores. In what way could phonemic awareness deficits impact the children of poverty at kindergarten entrance and in what way could remediation affect their reading proficiency when focused on individual needs in phonological processing? Limited research literature addressed this issue. The study describes the effects of phonemic awareness intervention on phonological processing skills and overall reading proficiency for kindergarten children from a high poverty area who entered kindergarten with deficiencies in phonological processing compared to students who entered proficient in phonological processing. Kindergarten students in one elementary school were pre- and post-assessed individually with the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP). Students were grouped based on assessed levels of proficiency. The researchers developed and instructed focused lessons to promote the development of phonological skills for 20 weeks for the below proficient students. Additionally, the STAR Kindergarten Readiness Skills Test was given as an entrance and exit assessment of overall reading proficiency. The results were analyzed for statistical significance in skill development, applying the results from composite and individual subtest percentile scores for the CTOPP and the overall scaled scores for the STAR Test. A Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test revealed a statistically significant increase in overall reading skills following participation in the phonological awareness intervention,  $z = -2.936$ ,  $p = .003$ , with a large effect size ( $r = .63$ ). The median score on the STAR Kindergarten Readiness Test from pre-program (Md = 460 SS) increased to post-program (Md = 681 SS). A Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test revealed a statistically significant increase in phonemic awareness skills following participation in the phonological awareness intervention,  $z = -2.934$ ,  $p = .003$ , with a large effect size ( $r = .626$ ). The median score on the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Awareness (CTOPP) from pre-program (Md = 12%ile) increased to post-program (Md = 58%ile). Results reflected the statistically significant increase in phonological processing skills and overall reading proficiency with the application of explicit, systematic, sequential phonological processing skills.

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### The Level of Assessment Literacy Among Charter Schools' Leaders and Teachers

The worth of schools, school leaders, and teachers is judged by assessments. Assessment knowledge is a critical component needed to ensure effective school practices (Popham, 2014). Not only do educators need to take ownership of their environment and maintain an "assessment rich vocabulary" they also must understand how individual student, classroom, school, and state level assessment data determine their professional value. Two significant problems were noted regarding educators' understanding of assessment: the lack of pre-service teacher training and the lack of appropriate professional development for teachers (Stiggins, 1998; Black & William, 1998). The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate the levels of assessment literacy among elementary teachers and school leaders in a charter school network. Although assessment literacy has been explored from various standpoints in public schools, studies have not examined the level of assessment literacy in school leaders and teachers operating within a charter network. Charter schools have become a distinct and growing part of the public-school system. The purpose of charter schools is to improve the public school system and close the achievement gap. Due to its unique set-up, a charter school has the freedom to be more innovative and flexible in its organization, structure, and instruction. Alternative teacher education programs are preparing teachers to work in hard-to-staff urban school districts, often predominantly charter schools. Limited studies were found regarding the levels of assessment literacy among educators attending alternative education programs. The target population was approximately 200 educators from one elementary charter school network with schools an urban district in Tennessee and an urban district in California. Eighty-six of the 200 educators attempted the survey but only 63 participants ( 5 school leaders and 58 teachers) completed the entire survey. The instrument used was the Classroom Assessment Literacy Inventory (CALI) and was administered through Survey Monkey. The inventory consists of two sections. The first section of the survey consists of demographic questions regarding years of experience, level of education, intensity of assessment training, and type of teacher education program. The second section uses the CALI to measure the level of assessment literacy of teachers and school leaders. The survey result showed that teachers and school leaders averaged 20.23 out of 35 questions correct (57.8%). Out of the seven competency areas, the highest overall performance was found for in using assessment results to make decisions (M=3.65 with 5 being maximum score) and the lowest performance was found in recognizing unethical or illegal practices (M=1.44 with 5 being maximum score). Findings indicated that the level of assessment literacy has not changed significantly in over twenty years when compared with results obtained in studies by Flake et al. (1993) and by Mertler (2003). The data from this study showed that even in an era of increased accountability and data-driven decision making, there is not an overall increase in assessment knowledge. Teachers with less than five years of experience scored overall higher than those with more than five years of experience. But the most surprising outcome of the data indicated that the one of the weakest area was recognizing unethical or illegal practices. When all the data were considered, the level of assessment literacy decreased over the last 20 years. The researcher assumed that the scores would have increased due to the immense impact the accountability movement had on school leaders and teacher evaluations. Often with new innovation comes an increased in training, materials, and supervision. Nevertheless, the researcher was left attempting to offer possible reasons for these results. Within the established limitations of this study, several conclusions seemed justified.

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**Mareen Pfeiffer-Hoens**

Rocketship Education



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### **Kahoot's Gaming Potential on College-Level Student Motivation, Achievement, and Metacognition**

Taken from its popularity among young people, gaming is gradually adapting to the learning experiences of this segment of the population. To that effect, gamification is perceived as a learning tool. Gamification refers to the use of games not for entertainment but for educational purposes (Morris, Croker, Zimmerman, Gill, & Romig, 2013). To test this notion, the researchers of this study implemented Kahoot! a cloud-based game platform. The goal of the study was to assess the potential of gaming on undergraduate students' learning. The participants (n=47) for this study were drawn from two instructional technology classes in a major southeastern University in U.S. Because these courses offer basic education about widely used computer applications (i.e. Word, Excel, PowerPoint) in both the academic and business arenas, exposure to game-based learning was two-fold; (a) an opportunity for students to learn with alternative instruction methods and (b) an opportunity for instructors to gauge students' learning using gaming. The current study employed a treatment and a control group: the treatment group was instructed using the game Kahoot! at the completion of each module, while the control group did not. The researchers grounded their research on theories of motivation and metacognition. Elements of motivation were measured using the self-determination instrument developed by Deci and Ryan (2004). Additionally, metacognitive abilities were assessed using Schraw's and Dennison's (1994) inventory about metacognitive awareness (MAI). Furthermore, students' achievement in learning was assessed by students' scores in different software modules, namely Word and Excel. Using MANCOVA, we controlled for game usage and frequency. The findings indicated partial significant impact on motivation, and metacognition, but no effect on achievement scores. These results have implications on the use of Kahoot! as a pedagogical tool. Limitations and future research are discussed.

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### **Universal Design for Learning and Multimedia Technology: Supporting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for designing instruction to address the needs of a range of learners. The UDL guidelines define ways in which flexible options can be integrated into curriculum and instruction. It presents three classroom projects that illustrate how UDL was integrated into teaching and learning to support the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse K-12 students. In each project, teachers used readily-available software and created multimedia projects that addressed specific instructional goals, taking into account the needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms. It provides information on how UDL checkpoints are addressed by each project, defining ways in which teachers can use digital media in creative ways to support the learning process.

**Lavasha Sherman**

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### **Investigating the association between reading teachers' reading habits and teaching practices: A meta-analysis**

Over the past two decades, educational reforms such as No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and Every Student Succeed Act (2015) focused on K-12 students' reading performance and assessing the accountability of schools' and school districts' in successfully reaching the expected student learning outcomes. Consequently, many teachers address passing statewide reading tests more than any other subject areas to ensure students meet these standards. While it is important to examine best practices of teaching reading to improve students' reading performance, this meta-analysis study investigated the role of reading teachers' personal reading habits that influence both teaching practices and student reading engagement. In the past thirty years, educators investigated the association between reading teachers' reading habits and their pedagogical practices in classroom, widely concluding that avid reading teachers send a strong message to children that reading is important and enjoyable. In the review, critique, and selection of these empirical investigations examining the relationship between teachers' personal reading habits and the effectiveness of classroom reading practices, we followed the meta-analysis techniques recommended by Cooper (2010). Study coding followed the research synthesis coding guide by Cooper (2010). Despite the varying statistical evaluation methods ( $t$ ,  $F$ ,  $\chi^2$ ,  $r$ ) applied in these studies, we employed a common evaluation rubric of Hedges's  $g$  using conversion formulas provided by Card (2012). The moderate effect sizes for outcomes in 16 studies meeting the inclusion criteria indicated that reading teachers' reading habits influence instructional practices, promote class engagement and produce enhanced reading outcomes. The results imply that the teacher education programs need to address and nurture the personal reading habits of the students in their literacy and literature study programs, and that schools and school districts need to foster the development of the reading habits of faculty.

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### **Cheating behaviors in online proctored and unproctored environments**

Online courses are continuing to grow in popularity. As the perceived risk for cheating in these courses is greater than for courses taken in a face-to-face context, measures to prevent cheating in online courses have been put in place to deter cheating behavior, including the use of proctoring for online assessments. A need exists to validate the utility of these efforts beyond the issue of student validation, as conducting online examinations through a proctoring service typically comes at an additional cost to the student and testing institution.

The purpose of this study was to describe the frequencies and types of cheating behaviors occurring within proctored and unproctored testing environments for students enrolled in online courses and taking online tests. In addition, this study examined relationships between demographic variables and online cheating behaviors for students who had taken online assessments through proctored methods. Participants in this study included students enrolled as distance learning campus students who took online courses and online assessments at a single institution. Participants were asked to report their frequency in engaging in online cheating behaviors through the Online Assessment Cheating Behaviors Survey (OACBS).

The study found that distance students who took unproctored exams reported more frequently engaging in overall cheating behaviors than proctored students. No differences were found in overall cheating behaviors for those taking exams through face to face and remotely proctored methods. Individual item analyses revealed that those taking unproctored exams reported more frequently used web searches during online exams to search for answers.

The study also found female distance students more frequently reported engaging in cheating behaviors than male distance students. In addition, females, those with a "C" GPA, and undergraduate distance students more frequently utilized web searches during an online proctored exam and used brain dump sites to obtain test questions and answers.

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### **Middle school students in mathematics competitions**

It is indisputable that males have higher achievement in mathematics and higher levels of enrollment in mathematics courses, but whether the results are caused by socialization factors or innate differences has been a matter of dispute. Gender differences in mathematics have long been explained as deficits, particularly inferior spatial visualization among girls. Some presume this to be a sex-linked characteristic of females. Justification for this point of view is often based on deficits found in boys, such as higher levels of reading disabilities and attention deficit disorders, as well as the superiority of males on spatial tests. As a result, innate differences have long been used to explain the performance gap between the sexes. The achievement differences may be due to differential treatment of girls in the classroom, curricula that either ignores or stereotypes women, and gender bias that undermines girls' self-esteem.

One way of increasing students' interest in mathematics is through their participation in mathematics competitions. These competitions also help develop talent through the excitement of solving challenging math problems in timed situations.

This study examined the independence of gender and correctness of the responses on a 20-item multiple choice test. The sample consisted of 98 7th and 8th grade students, 54 males and 44 females, participating in a 7th-8th grade mathematics competition. The students were enrolled in 13 schools in Northwest Georgia.

Data were analyzed using a chi-square test of independence of gender and correctness of the responses for each one of the 20 multiple choice questions. The chi-square test results indicated there was an association of gender and correctness of the response on six of the twenty items of the test. These results indicated that for 7th and 8th grade students participating in mathematics competitions, there is a difference in the performance of students due to gender.

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### **Dynamic Mathematics Software Scaffold Students' Sense-Making in Problem Solving**

In this research study, students engaged in problem-solving instruction with the support of a dynamic mathematics software. The dynamic mathematics software, GeoGebra applet, was used as a means for learning or as an intervention for learning. The GeoGebra applet was designed to scaffold students' problem-solving learning by allowing for mathematical experimentation and explorations. The purpose of this research study specifically was to examine how technology supported students' meaning making during problem-solving instruction. To this end, I posed the following research question: How do dynamic mathematics software (GeoGebra) scaffold students meaning making when they solve a cubic function problem? This study was an experimental design based qualitative research study. Thirty-two freshmen precalculus students participated. The data collected through video and students' worksheets. The recorded data were categorized or grouped based on relevant events that showed when students were struggling to solve the problem. The selected events highlighted students' thinking when they were trying to solve the problem. Results showed that the GeoGebra applet supported students' mathematical sense making during their struggle to solve non-routine mathematics problems. Moreover, the applet scaffolded students' thinking by generating or creating connections among different mathematics concepts. Additionally, the cognitive tool scaffolded students' thinking by triggering their sense making through visualizing the main concepts of the problem-solving task.

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### Considering the Context of Preschool Teacher Compensation

Existing investigations into the low compensation of preschool teachers offer little consideration of the nuances and context of these numbers. This was a two-part study of preschool teacher compensation intended to break new ground in how the issue is considered by researchers (and, in turn, policymakers) by considering income-to-needs ratios of teachers rather than simple salary numbers. Income-to-needs ratios consider the depth of poverty for an individual or family. As such, they provide more context than the poverty line, in that they indicate not just whether a family is above or below a threshold, but their relative distance from the poverty line for their family size.

The first part of the study was a descriptive analysis of teacher compensation data, using income-to-needs data from the sample of teachers surveyed in the National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education's Teacher Professional Development Study. The second part was an exploratory analysis of income-to-needs within the context of cost of living and familial need, using multiple combinations of cost-of-living data for different United States locations and family structures (i.e., number of adults and children). Descriptive analysis results indicated that the ratios of many teachers who have reached levels of education suggested by early childhood researchers—either associate's degrees or bachelor's degrees—have ratios keeping them at or close to poverty. Results from the exploratory analysis into cost-of-living suggested that at current salaries, teachers would have great difficulty reaching even a modest standard of living in a wide range of locations. These results support the author's assertion that studies of preschool compensation must consider the issue in more complex and practical ways, to provide key context that may effectively influence those making salary decisions.

**Bridget Thomas**

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### **Communicating Research to Policymakers and Practitioners: Understanding Divergent Perspectives and Sharing Data Effectively**

Though many education researchers recognize the importance of sharing their work beyond the proverbial ivory tower, the majority of training most receive in research communication focuses on academic venues such as research conferences or scholarly journals. This training is intended to help graduate students and early career researchers understand the needs of varied groups outside of academia; recognize the pitfalls common to researchers communicating outside their comfort zones; and consider communication and dissemination techniques that will allow them to share their research in ways that maximizes its potential for different audiences.

The training will focus on three key areas: 1) understanding the cultural and professional differences that make the research needs of policymakers and practitioners distinctly different from those of academic researchers; 2) recognizing how the language chosen by researchers can unintentionally push away the very individuals they hope will embrace and benefit from their work; and 3) distilling the key points from studies and communicating them to stakeholders. The multimedia workshop session will include slides, video clips, small group activities, and large group discussion. The slide presentation (split into parts throughout the session) will provide background information from the literature about the differences in roles, needs, and perspectives that can make researchers and non-researchers approach things very differently. Video clips will be used to demonstrate how important modifying communication can be to effective sharing of research. The small group activities will allow direct, interactive ways of working with research information to see how the same data could be either baffling or easily comprehensible. Finally, the session will return to large group discussion several times throughout the workshop, in order to share experiences, discuss revelations from the small group activities, and answer questions.

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### **Innovative Strategies in Community College Organizational Structure**

Efficacy of operations coupled with innovative methods that reinforce internal and external relationships in an effort to advance the college are presented through a college reorganization model. Administrative Leadership and Organizational structure are often overlooked as a mechanism by which to shift campus culture and climate. Northshore Technical Community College re-envisioned operations to include a Division of Strategic Initiatives to support and align all non-credit and workforce college initiatives. Best practices and lessons learned will be shared in regard to how the division actively works to forge both internal and external relationships. Efforts have allowed for goals and objectives for the college to be met, and in some cases exceeded, at both institutional and state levels.

The Division is responsible for developing internal employee and departmental relationships, as well as developing and forging external relationships that benefit the college. The college has evolved from departments operating in silos to operating as cohesive units. The Division executes cohesive efforts that target Adult Education, Workforce Development, Institutional Advancement, College Communications and Career Services and fold into academic initiatives as well. The college has experienced unprecedented growth during a time of enrollment decline. NTCC celebrated an Annual Employee Internal Giving campaign with 100% employee participation. Campus climate and culture have both been influenced significantly. Innovative workforce programs and partnerships were designed to touch both students and the community at large. Hear of what went right and what particular barriers and challenges were encountered along the way as a result of a unique college reorganization.

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Northshore Technical Community College

**Tina Tinney**

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### **Integrating Socratic Seminar with Twitter in Teacher Preparation Courses**

**Description** The project used the Socratic Method combined with Twitter in Teacher Preparation Courses to increase motivation and engagement in reading. Information was not delivered by lecture. The students generated questions leading to deeper understanding of the content. This project moved learning from a teacher-centered classroom to a student-centered classroom. The instructor served as a facilitator.

**Significance** The Socratic Method is used in classrooms to engage students and promote higher level critical thinking. Students are encouraged to make statements or draw conclusions about a topic and then to question those statements or conclusions. Students work together in a group and learn the content in a meaningful way by applying their knowledge and being more active in the learning process.

There is a large focus in education to use the hottest teaching trends and best education technology. Some colleagues are doing project-based learning while others are trying the flipped classroom concept. But sometimes we need to return to the most classic methods of teaching and combine it with technology like Twitter for an innovative, motivational, and engaging classroom.

**Methods** The instructor provided material for participants to review before the event. One group of students (inner circle) participated in the Socratic Method while the other group (outer circle) commented on the questions through tweets made on Twitter. The students were assigned a class hashtag so their comments could be displayed during the seminar on the Smartboard.

**Research Questions** 1. Are students more interested and engaged in class discussion when participating in a Socratic Seminar integrating Twitter? 2. Are students better prepared for class discussion when participating in a Socratic Seminar integrating Twitter? 3. Does participation in a Socratic Seminar integrating Twitter increase academic learning and pedagogy?

These questions were addressed in a survey given to participants and the results were calculated.

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### **Interest, Affect, and Achievement Motivation: Rediscovering the Role of Academic Interest**

Despite the consistent findings that interest positively correlates with motivation and performance in academic settings, research on academic interest appeared to lack a guiding theory, and had not advanced much over the past two decades. The purpose of this review was to demystify the concept of interest and provide theoretical justifications for continued endeavors in this line of research. It begins with a general review of the concept of interest, discusses the role of interest and related affective experiences in major motivational theories, and introduces the theoretical basis for investigating gender, ethnic, and developmental differences in academic interest. This review concludes that (a) the social cognitive theory guided motivational perspective represents a promising direction for ongoing and future endeavors in interest research; (b) there is a need for more research to address the interplay among the three approaches (i.e., personal interest, situational interest, and interestingness) to interest research; (c) Gender, ethnic, and developmental differences in interest are well-documented in the literature, and these differences are worth careful investigations; (d) psychometric evaluations of existing interest measures are warranted.

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