NCME national council on measurement in education

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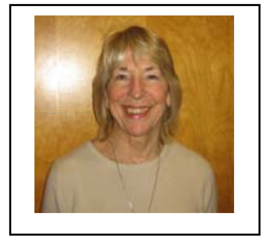
FROM THE PRESIDENT -

Linda L. Cook, Educational Testing Service



Dear Colleagues,

I had a very interesting experience this past week. One of my tasks as a member of the committee that is planning NCME's 75th Anniversary Celebration was to search the archives at Educational Testing Service to see if I could find anything that would be of use or interest as we think about displays or events that we will design for the celebration. What I envisioned would be a time consuming and tedious chore turned into a really interesting and rich experience for me. Of greatest interest to me were the old photos that I encountered. Most of these photos were taken in the fifties and sixties at the ETS Invitational Conferences. As I began my search, I anticipated finding photographs of scientists that had worked at ETS during all or part of their careers; that is, psychometricians such as Fred Lord, Mel Novick and Bill Angoff, but much to my delight, I found pictures of Ledyard Tucker, E. F. Lindquist, R. L. Thorndike, Edward Cureton, Louis Guttman and many others as relatively young men at formal meetings and participating in informal discussions. Some of the pictures included family members; still others showed the person in front of a black board lecturing to a small group. As I perused these photographs, I couldn't help thinking about the legacy of measurement knowledge created by each of the persons in these photographs and their contributions to what was then the early science of educational measurement.

It is really wonderful to think that all of these important figures are part of the history of NCME and that NCME has played a crucial role in providing a forum for discussion and presentation of the many issues associated with the then, emerging science of educational measurement. I think as we plan to celebrate NCME's 75th Anniversary in 2012 that it is very important to celebrate the salient and historical contributions our organization has made to educational research by providing a forum for important discussions that formed the basis of our profession. I also think, as we celebrate NCME's 75th, that we need to focus on the future of the organization; that is, what can we do to continue to build and strengthen NCME so that our organization continues to grow and to fulfill our mission of advancing the science and practice of measurement in education?

I'd like to take some time in this newsletter to tell you about some of the important initiatives that we will undertake this year that I am hopeful will contribute to ensuring that our next 75 years are as fruitful and relevant to educational measurement as our past 75 years have been. These initiatives were discussed by the 2011 NCME Board (Wayne Camara, Greg Cizek, Deb Harris, Mary Pommerich, Michael Rodriguez, Sherry Rose-Bond, James Wollack, and Bruno Zumbo) at the 2011 Annual Meeting and will provide the focus for our work this coming year.

Revamping the NCME Website

Revitalizing the NCME website is critical to the success of our organization. The NCME website is the face of our organization and it not only provides useful information to our current members, but information about our organization that will contribute to attracting new members. The new website will provide our members with interesting information in an easy to access format and will also provide information that will be of interest and use to all educational researchers and practitioners. This important project was initiated in 2010 and is under the leadership of Kris Waltman. Kris has worked incredibly hard; first by staffing the website committee whose members are Emily Lai, Michael Finger, Joy Matthews-Lopez, Chris Domaleski, Patrick Meyer, Ye Tong, April Zenisky, and Rosemary Reshetar. Second, Kris has worked with the group to design the website, and a process for maintaining the website. Kris's third task has been to appoint a website editor, John Willse. Kris, John, and the Website Committee are now working hard with the Rees Group to implement the new website, which will be live by December of 2011 and finalized by March 2012.

Revised Committee Volunteer Process

NCME has initiated a new Committee Volunteer Process which began this past May. The new process replaces a process that was flawed from a number of perspectives. Under the old process, it was impossible to tell whether a member was currently serving on a committee, when they had volunteered for a committee, and whether (if they had not been selected for a committee) if they were still interested in serving on the committee in the future. The new volunteer process corrects these problems and is supported by newly designed software that will create a computerized record of NCME committee chairs, co-chairs, and members, and will provide us with a history of committee volunteer activity. The new processsoftware, which is now available on the NCME will allowwebsite, allows volunteers to make a personal statement of interest in the committee's work and to provide an optional CV. The additional information provided by the volunteers will help committee chairs and co-chairs review the backgrounds of potential committee members and build diverse committees with members who have the appropriate backgrounds and interests for the committee work. I encourage you to go to the NCME website and volunteer to serve on an NCME committee.

Improving the Annual Meeting Program and Processes

The most important service that NCME offers its members is the Annual Meeting. It is the Annual Meeting that provides the forum for intellectual exchange and discussion as well as for activities such as mentoring and networking. A planning group led by Rosemary Reshetar and Cheryl Cardell was formed in the fall of 2010. The group (Luz Bay, Heather Buzick, Joanna Gorin, Chad Gotch, Amy Hendrickson, Bob Henson, Cara Laitusis, Andre Rupp, Sandip Sinharay, and John Willse) consisted of past, present, and future Program and Training Chairs and the Chair of the Graduate Student Issues Committee. This group was charged with evaluating the overall quality of the NCME Annual Meeting and making recommendations for improving the Annual Meeting Program and Processes. The group conducted a survey focusing on satisfaction with the Annual Meeting Program and Processes in December 2010. The results of the survey are summarized in a separate article in this newsletter. Recommendations for improving the Annual Meeting Program and Processes were made to the NCME Board at the 2011 Annual Meeting. The co-chairs for the 2012 Annual Meeting, Joanna Gorin and Andre Rupp, and the 2012 Training Chair, Heather Buzick, are working on implementing a number of these recommendations. Among the recommendations that will be explored for the 2012 Annual Meeting program are the implementation of a plenary session and an increase in sessions such as debates, moderated round tables and panel discussions. We will also continue to explore a variety of training sessions to be offered during the Annual Meeting and will experiment with ways to increase networking opportunities.

Expanding NCME Webcasts

Many of you are aware of the very successful NCME Webcasts that were introduced on a pilot basis for the 2010 NCME training sessions and were continued for the 2011 meeting. Webcasts of selected training sessions have allowed us to reach out to interested parties in underdeveloped countries. This project has been so successful that we have asked Amy Hendrickson and Terry Ackerman to explore the possibility of expanding these webcasts to a broader audience and to times other than the Annual Meeting. Amy and Terry presented a proposal for expanding this work are working on a proposal that will be presented to the NCME Board at their summer Board meeting.

Planning the 75th Anniversary Celebration

An ad hoc committee, consisting of Gretchen Anderson, Mary Lyn Bourque, Linda Cook, Dan Eignor, Dave Frisbie, Karoline Jarr, Neal Kingston (leader), Barbara Plake, Jim Popham, Anita Rawls, Ed Roeber, Gregory Cizek, and Kris Waltman, was formed this past fall to plan a series of activities to commemorate NCME's 75th Anniversary. The committee has developed a proposal for a series of events that will culminate in a very special celebration at the 2013 meeting held in Atlanta. The ad hoc committee will presented their proposal for events celebrating the NCME 75th Anniversary to the NCME Board for approval at the 2011 summer Board meeting.

Designing a Membership Campaign

The celebration of NCME's 75th Anniversary will provide NCME with a perfect opportunity to increase our visibility, to develop a communication plan about the value of membership in NCME, and to reach out to a diverse group of potential members. With the help of the Rees Group, and the Recruitment Committee, we will identify potential groups for membership in NCME and set specific targets for an increase in membership. We plan to launch a campaign to attract new members that will coincide with the events planned for the 75th Anniversary and culminate with the 2013 Annual meeting.

Strategic and Financial Planning

To ensure that NCME is in good shape to begin the next 75 years of the organization's life, it is important for NCME to both review its Strategic Plan and maintain a sound financial plan. The Strategic Plan will be reviewed by the Board at its fall meeting. Work has already begun to review NCME's financial plan. A meeting, which included Wayne Camara, Linda Cook, Greg Cizek, Anne Fitzpatrick (chair of the NCME Business and Finance Committee and leader of the meeting) and Jerry Melican, was recently held to carry out a review of NCME finances and to put in place a process for making future financial decisions. The group spent the day discussing the NCME investment portfolio, possible sources of new revenue, and 2011 budgeted and unbudgeted expenses. We also talked about the change in the NCME fiscal year that occurred in 2008 and how the NCME committee planning process can be developed so that it crosses fiscal years. The group developed a proposal that was presented to the Board and approved at the summer Board meeting. The proposal included changes in the financial planning process as well as increases in the NCME membership dues and increases in the Annual Meeting registration fees. NCME membership fees have not been increased since 2003. The Annual Meeting registration fees were last increased in 2005. The increase in fees will mean that NCME will be able to pay its operating expenses from its operating revenues, rather than use our invested funds to cover these expenses. The new fee structure is described in the boxes below.

NCME Membership Dues			
Type of Membership	Current dues	Increase in dues	New dues
Active	$60.00	$10.00	$70.00
Associate	$60.00	$10.00	$70.00
Student	$30.00	$5.00	$35.00
Emeritus	$30.00	$5.00	$35.00

Registration Fees for NCME Annual Meeting (early bird registration/regular registration)			
Type of Membership	Current fees	Increase in fees	New fees
Active/Associate	$135/$165	$20/$20	$155/$185
Student	$45/$55	$5/$5	$50/$60
Non Member	$245/$290	$45/$45	$290/$335
Non Member Student	$85/$100	$25/$25	$110/$125
Non Member International	$135/$165	$20/$20	$155/$185

NCME Edited Book Series

NCME has begun planning for an Edited Book Series. The series will attempt to publish books that are on the leading edge of theory, research and science-based practice in educational measurement and assessment. The overall objective of the book series is to inform practice in educational measurement and assessment. The primary audience for the series will be both NCME members and non-members in related fields. It is intended that the series will increase knowledge and understanding about measurement and assessment, as well as stimulate continuing research-based practice in measurement and assessment. Michael Kolen has agreed to lead the work on the series; as a first step he has established the following group of editors: Robert Brennan, Wayne Camara, Edward Haertel, Suzanne Lane, and Rebecca Zwick.

Informing Assessment Policy and Practice

As many of you are aware, this is a particularly critical time in the history of K-12 assessments. Recent federal funding has led to a number of key reform initiatives such as the establishment of Common Core State Standards and the formation of state consortiums to design assessments to reflect these standards. The NCME Board has recently approved the transition of an ad hoc group on Informing Assessment Policy and Practice to a standing committee co-chaired by Kristen Huff and Scott Marion. The committee is now fully staffed and its members are: Judy Koenig, Christina Schneider, Cornelia Orr, Joe Martineau, and Zachary Warner (student member). The committee exists to provide education policy makers with access to the expertise within NCME on issues involving uses of tests in public policy. A second, but related role of the committee is to increase the visibility of NCME as a resource for policy makers in educational assessment. Specific activities this committee is responsible for include: (1) identifying national educational assessment policy issues that could benefit from NCME member expertise and input; (2) coordinating NCME members in an appropriate response to policy issues (including arranging special sessions at NCME annual meeting); (3) acting as liaison to the NCME Board regarding these issues and the NCME member response; and (4) coordinating other related activities as assigned by the President or Board. The committee recognizes the significant challenge associated with trying to accomplish these goals and currently is focusing their work on organizing and disseminating the results of an invited conference session that addresses a critical and current policy challenge.

In closing I would like to say how excited I am about having the opportunity to work with all of you as we plan to celebrate 75 years of important accomplishments and as we look forward to new initiatives that will ensure at least 75 more years that are as important and fruitful as the past years have been. I wish you all a pleasant and restorative summer.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Thanos Patelis, The College Board

In this issue we have the first column from our president, Linda Cook, who has recently retired from Educational Testing Service. We also have a summary of the NCME Annual Meeting Program Survey. Next, our graduate student corner columnist, Chris Orem from James Madison University, interviews Donna Sundre, James Madison University, about the field of higher education assessment. Next, we are also very pleased to offer the results of our interview with Susan Loomis from the National Assessment Governing Board. Then, we have some reflections of our conference in New Orleans from our program co-chairs, Cara Cahalan Laitusis and Sandip Sinharay from ETS and training chair, Amy Hendrickson from The College Board. Additionally, we have commentary from various individuals on the use of student test scores in teacher evaluations. This commentary is offered to stimulate discussion and to enlist the membership to actively become involved in this issue. Finally, we have some interesting information in the *What's New* column followed by other calls and announcements. Sincerely and at your service, Thanos.

REPORT ON PLANS TO IMPROVE THE NCME ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM AND PROCESSES

Rosemary Reshetar, The College Board, & Cheryl Cardell, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges

In the fall of 2010, a planning group led by Rosemary Reshetar and Cheryl Cardell, and consisting of Luz Bay, Heather Buzick, Joanna Gorin, Chad Gotch, Amy Hendrickson, Robert Henson, Cara Laitusis, Andre Rupp, Sandip Sinharay and John Willse, received the following charge:

Evaluate the overall quality of the NCME Annual Meeting and make recommendations for improving the Annual Meeting process and program.

To begin their work on evaluating the Annual Meeting Program and Processes, the group drafted a web-based questionnaire that was administered to the NCME membership in December of 2010. Four hundred and sixty-five members responded to the questionnaire. Table 1, shown below, compares the demographic information of the respondents to that of the overall NCME membership.

Table 1: Comparison of Demographic Information for Survey Respondents and NCME Members

Question	Response	Survey Sample	NCME Membership
Please indicate your membership status	Active Member	76%	73%
	Graduate Student Member	19%	20%
	Associate Member	2%	3%*
	Emeritus Member	3%	4%*
How many years have you been a member of NCME?	1-5	39%	40%*
	6-10	15%	17%*
	More than 10	46%	43%*
What is your gender?	Female	51%	45%**
	Male	49%	53%**

*These numbers do not take into account the members who may have lapsed for a year or two since joining. Percentages are based on information provided when members join NCME.

** The total does not equal 100 because 2 % of members did not supply gender information.

As you can see from the information provided in Table 1, the survey sample was quite representative of the NCME membership.

The questionnaire solicited information about a variety of aspects of the Annual Meeting process and program. The responses to each of these aspects are summarized separately in the following paragraphs.

Conference Registration

Respondents were asked to rank the ease of pre-conference registration and approximately 89% of those responding felt that the process was easy to very easy. Approximately 74% of the respondents felt that it was easy to very easy to secure a hotel room. Eighty-nine percent of respondents felt satisfied or very satisfied with the details that they had received about the meeting. When asked about onsite registration, the majority of those responding said they found the process easy to very easy. When asked if they found the staff at the NCME Information Desk helpful, 96% responded “yes”.

Conference Presentations

The survey solicited information about both the content and format of conference presentations. Approximately 26% of those responding to the survey indicated that they were very satisfied and 54% that they were satisfied with the content of the presentations. Similarly, approximately 24% of the respondents indicated that they were very satisfied and 57% that they were very satisfied with the format of the presentations. When asked about the quality of the presentations, 25% indicated they were very satisfied and 54% that they were satisfied with the presentation quality.

Respondents were asked to indicate their preference for presentation formats from the perspective of a conference attendee. Approximately 55% said that they felt Coordinated Paper Sessions were most preferable, 38% found Paper Sessions to be most preferable and 5% found Poster Sessions to be most preferable. When asked the same question from the perspective of a conference presenter, 51% found Coordinated Paper Sessions most preferable, 49% found Paper Sessions to be most preferable and 10% found Poster Sessions to be most preferable.

The survey also solicited information regarding new presentation formats that conference attendees might like to see at future Annual Meetings. Approximately 52% said they would be interested in attending Structured Poster Sessions, 78% of respondents said they would be interested in attending a Plenary Session, 83% said they would like to see more Debates on the program, 92% were interested in Moderated Panels, and 44% in Round Table Discussions. Respondents also expressed an interest in sessions that foster audience participation, sessions that flesh out current policy issues, and sessions with an International focus that present divergent perspectives.
Respondents stressed that they would like to see NCME broaden the coverage of topics while focusing more strongly on current educational issues such as race to the top initiatives. They felt that the program typically includes too many sessions that focus on a narrow area of methodological research that does not appear to have much practical importance. An overwhelming number of comments called for an increase in focus on the practical relevance/implications of research at the expense of decreasing the number of technical papers that address very similar issues and results (as an example, numerous comparative studies of common methodologies was cited) . Those responding to the questionnaire would like to see more sessions that specifically address how research can be applied in practice and translated into practical guidelines.

Proposal Review Process

When asked how satisfied they were with the proposal review process, 16% of respondents said they were very satisfied, 50% that they were satisfied and 10% responded that they were very dissatisfied. Respondents were asked to identify the optimal number of proposals to review and 89% chose 1-5, with only 11% indicating that they would be willing to review 6-11 proposals. Twenty-two percent of respondents felt that proposals that were sent to them matched their expertise and interest very well and 61% felt that the proposals they received matched their expertise and interest well.

A number of suggestions were received for improving the proposal review process. These included:

- Improving feedback provided by reviewers; requiring reviewers to make comments
- Providing a better match of proposals to reviewers
- Providing better rubrics for reviews
- Providing better criteria for reviews
- Accepting only proposals for completed studies
- Developing a policy for graduate student reviews

Annual Meeting Breakfast

Respondents were asked if they attended the Annual Meeting Breakfast, and those who responded no (54%) were asked why they didn’t attend. Thirty-nine percent stated cost was the main factor while 45% stated that they did not attend the Breakfast because of a schedule conflict. Suggestions for improving the breakfast included finding ways to reduce the cost of tickets and finding ways to make members feel more welcome.

NCME AERA Division D Joint Reception

Suggestions for improving the Joint Reception included ensuring that the room is large enough and providing sufficient tables to gather around and use for food and drinks. There was support for entertainment of some type, but respondents definitely wanted to be sure that the entertainment did not interfere with the ability to socialize.

Mentoring Activities

Seventy percent of respondents felt that NCME provides a sufficient number of mentoring activities for graduate students and early career scholars. Of those responding, 11% were very satisfied and 40% were satisfied with mentoring activities. Some suggestions for improving mentoring activities were:

- Provide small group or one on one mentoring activities during the meeting with follow-up after the meeting
- Provide coaching for graduate students as discussants
- Provide training session for topics such as presenting research or exploring avenues for future research
- Provide sessions geared toward obtaining the first job

Professional Development and Training

Respondents were asked if they were satisfied with the onsite registration for the training sessions; 26% answered very satisfied and 38% answered satisfied. Thirty-two percent of those responding to the questionnaire said they were very satisfied with the content of the training sessions and 58% said they were satisfied with the content. Similarly, thirty percent of respondents were very satisfied with the delivery of the training sessions and 55% were satisfied with the delivery. Of those responding that they have not attended a training session in the past five years, 39% gave cost as a reason and 49% gave timing. When asked about the timing of the training sessions, 42% said they were more likely to attend a training session if it was offered before the Annual Meeting and 44% said they were more likely to attend if the training session was offered during the Annual Meeting. Thirty-five percent responded that they would attend a training session if it were offered at a separate time and place. Suggestions for improving the training sessions included:

- Offering training sessions throughout the Annual Meeting
- Making the timing of the training sessions known earlier
- Offer training sessions at times other than the Annual Meeting
- Focus the training sessions on solutions for everyday problems
- Offer more beginner or refresher courses
- Offer more applied psychometric sessions

Other Suggestions

Additional comments for improving the Annual Meeting included a diverse set of topics. For example, there was a strong desire for providing more opportunities to network. Respondents felt that this was an important aspect of the conference and difficult to accomplish given the packed conference agenda and the need to navigate sessions in different hotels, elevators, etc., that takes up time between sessions. Other suggestions included an online paper archive and an increase in web training offerings.

Recommendations

As a result of the survey findings, the planning group made the following recommendations for improving the Annual Meeting program and processes to the NCME Board at their April 2011 meeting.

<u>Conference Presentations</u>

- Add a plenary session
- Increase number of coordinated paper sessions
- Increase number of debates, moderated round tables, panel sessions
- Improve balance between applied and theoretical papers—stress connections between research and practice
- Experiment with sessions that promote audience participation and interaction of presenters and presenters and audience

<u>Proposal Review Process</u>

- Improve feedback from reviewers—emphasize need for reviewers to provide comments
- Provide more specific criteria for proposal reviews

- Clarify role of graduate students in the review process
- Accept proposals only for completed studies

Annual Meeting Breakfast/Joint Reception

- Publicize the breakfast—make it clear that the meeting is open to all NCME members
- Try to find ways to keep the cost for the breakfast down
- Offer entertainment at the Joint Reception, but minimize impact on conversations
- Provide more tables and space for Joint Reception

Mentoring Activities

- Enhance small group mentoring options
- Include opportunities to interact in small group settings with established professionals
- Offer sessions that assist in navigating job placement options

Professional Development and Training

- Publicize training sessions earlier
- Offer some training sessions during the conference (This suggestion was successfully piloted at the 2011 meeting and will be implemented for the 2012 Annual Meeting.)
- Explore offering training sessions at times other than the Annual Meeting

Other

- Add some facility for networking—a "lounge-type area" or a formal coffee break

Although it may not be possible to implement all of these recommendations in the near future, a number have been adopted for the 2012 Annual Meeting Program. You may have noticed in the Call for the conference that new formats and new content are emphasized. We will continue to monitor satisfaction with the Annual Meeting program and process and hope that you will find that the changes implemented for the 2012 program contribute to a more informative and enjoyable experience for everyone who attends.

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER: CAREER ADVICE, POLICY, AND WHAT LIES AHEAD – AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. DONNA L. SUNDRE

Chris Orem, James Madison University

If you are anything like me, you've already been giving at least some thought to your career prospects after graduate school. That is, when you're not thinking about your research, exams, papers, and various responsibilities that are often bestowed upon graduate students. It's never too early to be thinking about what lies ahead. For this issue, I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Donna Sundre, the Executive Director of the Center for Assessment and Research Studies at James Madison University. Dr. Sundre has devoted her career to bettering the fields of assessment and measurement, and is highly knowledgeable about the kinds of careers graduates can pursue after graduation, as well as the skills needed to thrive in them. Our exchange follows:

What careers in higher education assessment are available to students who have measurement expertise?

There are many opportunities for graduates with sound psychometric training across higher education settings. We are now seeing increasing numbers of career opportunities in more specialized assessment areas. It used to be that a Director of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness position would be the norm; we now see Directors of Assessment positions in Student Affairs, Engineering, General Education, College of Business, or Education. With the maturation of accreditation across many disciplines and fields we will probably see more of these. Community colleges are moving forward as well, and we see more positions at the state level for individuals with real assessment and measurement expertise to guide policy and assessment practice.

What skills are important for new professionals to possess who are pursuing careers in higher education assessment, above and beyond measurement expertise?

Effective assessment practice requires sound research methods, assessment, statistical, psychometric, and consulting skills. Beyond understanding measurement, it's important for assessment experts to have practical experience with instrument design, performance assessment, development of rubrics, and how to train their clients [both students and faculty] to use them.

What are the best ways for students to gain these additional skills?

Assessment is a field where learning about is not as important as learning how…and actually doing it. Every institution must be engaged in assessment—hopefully for program improvement, but for many they will feel coerced to engage for accreditation purposes. I would encourage students to actively pursue practice opportunities at their home institution. Build into your graduate program some practicum or independent study experiences, and use those credit hours to gain practical experience. The opportunities are there, and many offices across every campus would LOVE to have someone work with them to facilitate their progress.

What are the important policy issues facing measurement and assessment professionals in higher education?

We are at a critical juncture in higher education policy. Unfortunately, policy may soon overtake the status of practice in higher education accountability. This is of international scope now, and many countries are making rapid progress. The Bologna Process, the tuning of degrees across nations--and now hemispheres, looks quite imposing. The U.S. has several initiatives in place, but we have many challenges to confront. The recent publication of the book *Academically Adrift* has brought this conversation front and center. It's a good time to be an assessment practitioner; hopefully, we will have a seat at the policy makers' table to influence policies that recognize the centrality of measurement to successful practice.

What are your thoughts about the current state of measurement within higher education?

Much of what I see in practice on many campuses across our country and in my visits to Puerto Rico, Australia, and Norway makes it abundantly clear that administrators and assessment practitioners have yet to really understand how prerequisite sound measurement is to assessment. Consideration of the very basic premises of reliability and validity to studying student learning outcomes is sorely missing. The compliance mode is alive and well. Most institutions are simply purchasing instruments off the shelf without faculty involvement or due consideration of the instruments' alignment to the experiences and learning opportunities students are supposed to be receiving. You can compound this major flaw with the administration of these very expensive instruments to convenience samples, and unbelievably, there is no attention to the monitoring or managing of examinee motivation. The final result is a very expensive data set that faculty will legitimately dismiss and ignore. Any graduate student with one course in measurement theory should be able to count several lethal threats to the validity of any inferences we might hope to make about the efficacy of our programs and student learning that might be based on such poorly collected data.

Is there advice you have for students with measurement expertise who want to pursue careers in assessment?

This may have sounded depressing, but consider the important challenges we must directly meet. This is a wonderful and very fulfilling area of practice. Researching student learning and development resides at the very heart of higher education's mission. When this work is conducted well, it is among the most intellectually stimulating and rewarding efforts with which we can engage. My advice would be to seek out opportunities on your campuses to practice your research and measurement competencies. Turn these opportunities into course credits—or use them for a class project. A good place to start would be to identify programs on your campus with strong assessment demands to achieve accreditation—such as nursing, social work, engineering, colleges of business, and many others. They will have assessment designs in place that have produced data that you could analyze. Your offer to analyze this data and improve the measurement should be met with enthusiasm. Many of our JMU students have widely presented and published measurement related papers that originated with student assessment work across student affairs, general education, and our academic majors. There are plenty of opportunities and promising careers awaiting you. I have found this career to be a 'path with heart.'

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Both Dr. Sundre and I share the belief that assessment and measurement work hand in hand, especially within higher education. On many campuses, however, assessment directors do not possess the kinds of measurement skills that graduate students reading this column develop throughout our education. Within institutions, faculty members need guidance from assessment experts with sound measurement skills to ensure that students are assessed in accurate and meaningful ways. Additionally, agencies around the country continue to move towards using standardized measures to compare learning across institutions. Therefore, it is critical that we, as budding measurement experts, use our skills to create instruments that support appropriate decision making. We have the unique opportunity to shape the fields of assessment and measurement, in whatever careers we choose, to ensure that higher education both meets the demands of stakeholders and improves the quality of education for students.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE OUR ORGANIZATION GREAT – SUSAN LOOMIS, NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD

For this issue, we are fortunate to receive some insights and reflections from Dr. Susan Loomis. Below are her responses to our questions. Many thanks for her responsiveness and time. It's a great opportunity to get to know one of our members.

1. How did you get into the field?

Getting a job at ACT doing policy research! I was already working in survey research. While at ACT, I was asked to be involved in the first NAEP achievement levels-setting project, and that got me into the field.

2. If you weren't doing this, what would you do?

I would probably be teaching political geography at a college. I came to Iowa with a MA degree in political science and several years of professional research work. There weren't many professional jobs there, other than in medicine. But, I did find a research position in the Laboratory for Political Research at the University of Iowa. Through personal contacts, I learned about political geography and started taking some graduate courses to see how I really liked it. I also took some courses in economics and planning. I became interested in Public Choice Theory and how spatial features affect actual and perceived value of goods. Specifically, I was studying the political behavior of elected officials, bureaucrats, and citizens in decisions about the allocation of public goods and how the actual and perceived quality of goods diminish with distance from the source. .

3. What advice would you have for graduate students who want to get into this field?

My advice is for students to get as many technical skills as possible. I also advise them to have some policy focus or to get into an applied area to go beyond just analysis of data.

4. When not undertaking your work at NAGB, what do you do or like doing outside work?

I love anything outdoors – hiking, canoeing, biking. Unfortunately, I don't do as much of these activities as I want since I live in downtown DC. I also love to cook.

5. What would you say has been one of the biggest innovations in psychometrics in the last decade or two?

I would say that advances in artificial intelligence including the introduction of game theory in assessment are important innovations. I would also include the introduction of computer adaptive testing.

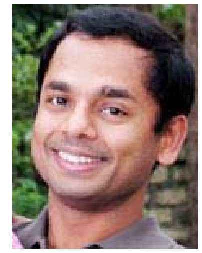
6. When you go to conferences, how do you pick what sessions to attend?

I like to know who the presenters are as I decide which sessions to attend. But, I always try to go to at least one session related to something that I don't know much about.. Sometimes, I pick a session just for me – just because I'm interested in it!

7. Who has been a significant influence in your professional life?

There are a number of people. Mark Reckase, who got me involved in NAEP standard setting work initially. I also was influence by Bob Brennan, Mike Kane, Bob Forsyth, all of whom I have been fortunate to work with. Bob Forsyth still comes to observe standard settings, and interacting with him is great. Currently, in my position at NAGB, one of the nicest things is that I am fortunate to interact with some of the greatest minds. I get such insights from them into so many issues. It's truly awesome and one of the biggest treats of my job.

NCME Annual Meeting - Reflections from the Chairs
2011 Annual Meeting and Training Sessions
Pre-Conference Training Sessions, April 7-8, 2011
Annual Meeting, April 9-11, 2011
in New Orleans, LA, USA



Our program co-chairs, Cara Laitusis and Sandip Sinharay from ETS, produced a wonderful program for our annual meeting in New Orleans. Below please find their comments. Please also join us in extending our deepest appreciation for all of their efforts. Thank you!

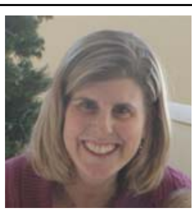
This year's NCME program included 17 training sessions, 17 invited sessions, 28 coordinated sessions and 236 individual papers. Table 1 displays the submission and acceptance rates compared to last year. We had over 359 NCME reviewers participate in reviewing the submitted proposals. In nearly all cases each proposal was reviewed by at least three NCME members.

It was difficult to find enough expert reviewers for several key areas—we request all of you to volunteer to be reviewers to ensure a fair and efficient proposal review process.

This year's NCME program included a few changes such as including three new session formats (debate, historical perspective, and an open forum on the Joint Standards). Feedback on these sessions indicated that most members would like to see these session formats included in future programs.

Table 1. Number of Proposals Submitted and Accepted for NCME Annual Meetings, 2010 and 2011

	2010		2011	
	accepted	submitted	accepted	submitted
Training Session	18	--	17	--
Invited Sessions	13	--	17	--
Coordinated Sessions	20	49	28	49
Individual Papers	217	376	236	403



Amy Hendrickson from the College Board, chair of the 2011 NCME Development and Training Committee, continued the tradition of offering high quality workshops. Please extend our appreciation to her and the committee for a wonderful set of workshops! Seventeen workshops were offered by the NCME Training and Development Committee in conjunction with the annual meeting in New Orleans, covering everything from test development to IRT software to vertical scaling. The workshops were very well attended and positively received. Amy actually participated in one of the workshops and she said: "I attended the 'Using R for Everyday Research' workshop with Brian Habing, myself, and was impressed by the amount and quality of the information conveyed in a short amount of time, the hands-on nature of the workshop and the active participation of the audience. As to the training program as a whole, I was struck by the number of people who attended multiple training sessions and their variety of reasons for doing so, including to learn something that will enable them to complete their job-related work, to learn about an area that's related to a research interest, just for fun, or to learn about software or techniques that they can then teach (or catch up to) their own students".

For the first time, one session was offered on the first official day of the conference rather than as a pre-conference session. The enrollment for this session was equivalent to the pre-conference sessions and allowed some members to attend a workshop who may not have been able to make it to a pre-conference session. Future training and development committees will be encouraged to offer additional workshops during the conference, based on the success of this session.

The committee instituted a paper-based evaluation system this year after using web-based evaluations for a couple of years. We are very happy with the response rates and with the quality of the feedback. This information will be very helpful to the instructors for improving their sessions and to the committee for maintaining the quality of the training program as a whole.

Four of the training sessions were webcast live to over 80 sites around the world. Participants at these sites linked in during the middle of the night, in some cases, to attend the workshops (See pictures below). They were able to ask questions and participate just like the in-person audience. Due to the positive feedback surrounding these webcasts as well as the mission of NCME, an ad hoc committee, led by myself and Terry Ackerman, is investigating ways to expand NCME's professional development offerings via the web, both internationally and domestically. Please let Amy know if you are interested in offering such a training, have suggestions for the expansion, or would be interested in being part of the committee.

Seen below are some photos from 2011 webcast training sessions.

Photo 1. Participants from the Institute of Educational Measurement, Beijing Language and Culture University, Beijing, China

Photo 2. Participants from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Photo 3. Participants from the National Center for Assessment Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Amy expresses her thanks to all of the 2011 presenters and participants for their contribution to such a successful training program. Amy concluded by saying: " I encourage all NCME members to submit training proposals for the 2012 conference".

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS AND FRIENDS[1]: THE USE OF STUDENTS TEST SCORES TO EVALUATE TEACHERS

Multi-Dimensional Set of Measures

Susan M. Brookhart, Consultant

How should student test scores be used in teacher evaluations? I'll get there, but first, some background thoughts. (1) Different kinds of teacher evaluations serve different purposes. Formative evaluations for coaching and professional development should be frequent, collaborative, and based on standards for effective instructional and assessment practices. Summative evaluations for employment decisions should, similarly, be based on standards for effective instructional and assessment practices. Teacher knowledge, skill, and repertoire for such practices are elements under teachers' control, and thus it is reasonable to hold teachers accountable for them. (2) Logic, and what it means that instructional and assessment practices are "effective," suggests that student achievement is the ultimate goal, and some measures of student achievement might be relevant for teacher evaluation. Following this logic, however, the student achievement of interest is writ broadly: If "effective instructional and assessment practices" are the catalyst or cause of interest, then everything students learn as a result of teachers' work are effects of interest. (3) We do not currently have a set of measures that is multi-dimensional and rich enough to be valid "outcome" measures of student achievement in this sense. And even if we did, there would need to be agreement on what constitutes "growth" (the field is close to that) and how to pull out non-teacher-related variance in that growth (the field is less close to agreement on what those factors should be). If we had a multi-dimensional set of measures, and agreement on these analysis considerations, student test scores might be one part of the information for teacher evaluation. (Therefore) Student test scores *could* be used in a well-designed multi-dimensional student evaluation system that contributed some information to a teacher evaluation system. Student test scores should not be used as a proxy for that now, without the rest of the system. If we do that we'll stop looking for the rest of the system. Student test scores are the easy piece of the puzzle.

Multiple Data Sources Should Inform Judgments

Dolores Burton, New York Institute of Technology

The New York State Board of Regents adopted regulations on May 16 that will implement a statewide teacher and principal performance evaluation system that includes multiple measures of educator effectiveness. The required annual professional performance review (APPR) will yield a score for each teacher and principal in New York State. The performance evaluation system requires "20% of the evaluation of teachers and principals be based on student growth on state assessments or a comparable measure of student achievement growth; 20% on locally-selected measures of student achievement that are determined to be rigorous and comparable across classrooms, and 60% based on other measures of teacher/principal effectiveness."

To respond to the question of whether test scores are an appropriate way to evaluate teachers, a more fundamental question of the focus and purpose of schooling must be answered. If the focus of schooling is to provide opportunities for students to reach their potential and the purpose is support student achievement, then the success of teachers to facilitate these ends is an important component of the evaluation of their effectiveness. One cannot dismiss the impact on student achievement of factors such as poverty, lack of facility with English language or other environmental factors beyond the control of teachers. However, some teachers and principals have achieving students despite these barriers. If students do not make progress, as measured by standardized tests that are properly created and administered, toward national and local standards of academic achievement, why have a national public education system and curriculum standards?

Prior legislation (NCLB, 2001; IDEA, 2004) have required schools to put programs in place to use evidence based instructional strategies and appropriate progress monitoring and analysis of data to identify students that need specialized resources to learn and to provide those resources. One such program is Response to Intervention. However, that being said, like any valid inquiry, multiple data sources should inform judgments about teachers. Multiple data sources for evaluation may consist of review of teaching materials and assessments, documentation of professional development activity, successful action research, participation in school improvement initiatives and observations of the teacher in practice. The answer to the question of how best to evaluate effectiveness of teachers will take time to refine but, I believe, New York State has made a first step on that journey.

[1] Contributors are listed in alphabetical order.

My Preference: Understand What and How Students Learn

Ellen Forte, edCount, LLC

It seems that there are those in our field who are generally more enamored of variance patterns in large sets of data and those who are more fundamentally drawn to understand patterns in what and how students learn and how that manifests in an assessment process. I'm not suggesting that these are two 'types'...more that each of us has preferences for what we prioritize in our work. The former prioritize patterns in large data sets and associations between student outcomes and external variables, like teachers. The latter prioritize understanding of the complex, often discontinuous, and variable pathways students take as they acquire knowledge and skills, where what one is measuring is critically important to the interpretation and use of students' scores. My own bias is probably clear: my preferences are the latter. I do understand the powerful draw of the rhetoric around using student test scores for teacher evaluation and believe that test scores may, in some cases, provide useful information about what's happening in classrooms. However, using test scores alone or as an otherwise deciding indicator when evaluating teachers is unjustifiable given the complexities of the learning process and the other factors (not all of which are randomly distributed) that contribute to students' performance on tests. Student test scores can go up with or without meaningful learning taking place and meaningful learning can occur in the absence of test score increases. Better measurement tools that are based on better understandings of the learning process and of student performance models may improve this situation over time, but we are certainly not at a point where I would be comfortable defending in court teacher evaluation systems that rely exclusively or heavily on student's test scores. I don't think I ever would be. Fortunately, we'll probably get over this fad soon, just like we did when it gained popularity in the 1980s. Remember?

Developing and Selecting Assessments of Student Growth for Use in Teacher Evaluation Systems

Joan Herman, CRESST/UCLA

The use of student growth measures in teacher evaluation is hotly contested, and controversy rages on whether and what value added models may be appropriate for this purpose. My CRESST colleagues, Margaret Heritage and Pete Goldschmidt, and I believe that the debate has given short shrift to a critically important issue: the quality of the student growth measures that are used to estimate teacher effectiveness. We think it important to substantiate the chain of inferences that justifies the use of measures for this specific purpose.

Our validity argument comprises a series of propositions, with associated claims and evidence, that link performance on particular assessments to specific interpretations of the meaning of the scores and to specific conclusions or decisions made on the basis of test performance (Kane, 2004, 2006).

<u>Propositions</u>

The general propositions are:

1. Standards clearly define what students are expected to learn
2. The assessment instruments are designed to accurately and fairly address what students are expected to learn
3. Student assessment scores accurately and fairly measure what students have learned
4. Student assessment scores accurately and fairly measure student growth
5. Students' growth scores based on the assessments can be accurately and fairly attributed to the contributions of individual teachers

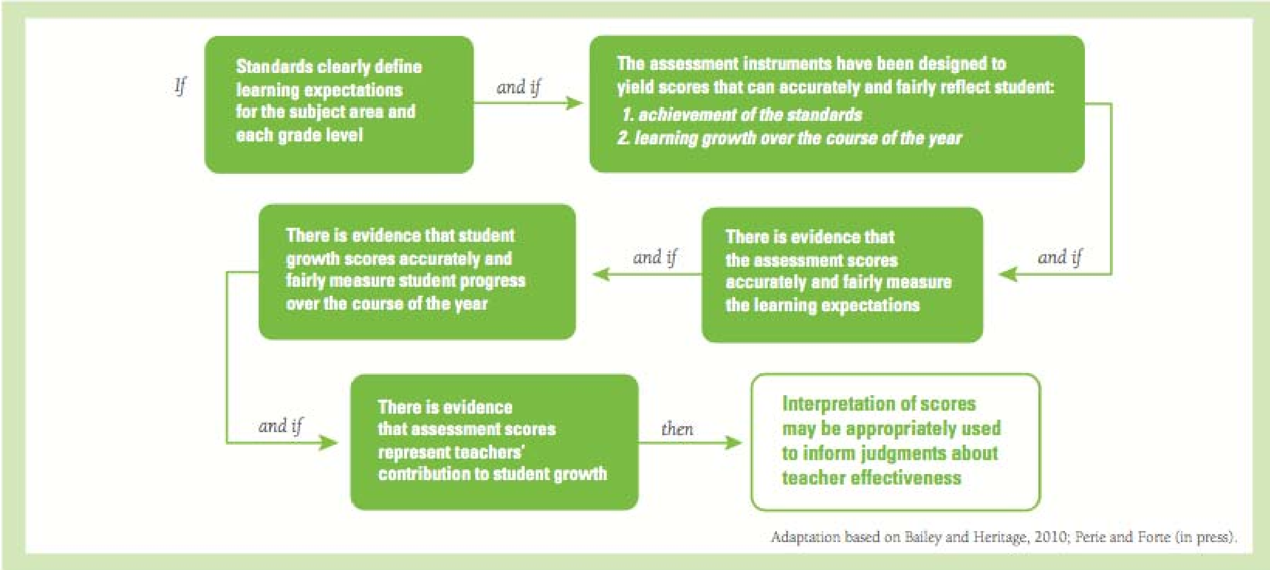


Figure 1. Propositions that justify the use of these measures for evaluating teacher effectiveness.

The earlier propositions provide the foundation for the later ones, and thus the framework suggests a sequence of concerns that states and districts must address as they develop or select student measures that can serve teacher evaluation purposes. Although the full argument requires a rich and varied evidence base and a long term R&D agenda, states and districts can use the propositions to structure their efforts. First things first: the student learning expectations on which teachers are to be evaluated must be clearly defined; assessments must be developed or selected to be well aligned with those expectations and designed to be fair and accurate. These are characteristics that can be largely judged and improved through structured, expert reviews. As the measures are fielded, data on the accuracy and fairness of scores can be evaluated.

Just as educators are expected to use evidence of student learning to improve their practice, so too should states and districts plan to use accumulated validity evidence to improve their student growth measures for use in teacher evaluation. (For more information, see Herman, Heritage, & Goldschmidt (2011) Guidance for Developing and Selecting Assessments of Student Growth for Use in Teacher Evaluation at http://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/policy/shortTermGrowthMeasures_v6.pdf)

Counter to Good Measurement

Amanda C. Soto & Lisa A. Keller, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

The notion of using student achievement measures to evaluate teacher effectiveness is counter to good measurement. However, states that banned the linkage of student performance data to teacher effectiveness measures were ineligible for the Race to the Top grant competition. Thus, regardless of the technical merit of doing so, states are essentially forced to link student achievement to teacher effectiveness.

Many states are incorporating value-added models for measuring teacher effectiveness, where background variables of students can be incorporated into the model, to attempt to mitigate the effects of teacher's non-random assignment to schools and student's non-random assignment to classrooms. As such, while value-added methods may be justified for making judgments about effectiveness at the school or district level, they should not be generalized to making individual decisions about teachers.

Students' scores are influenced by many factors that are not within the teacher's control. Not surprisingly, then, research has shown that value-added estimates are unstable and that teacher classification can vary from year to year, which can lead to the incorrect classification of both effective and ineffective teachers. While it is critical to evaluate teacher effectiveness, rewarding or penalizing teachers for something that is widely outside their control will serve as a further disincentive for good people to go into a profession that is woefully in short supply.

The Challenges of Incorporating Student Performance Results from "Non-Tested" Grades and Subjects into Educator Effectiveness Determinations

Scott F. Marion, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

Education leaders, especially those submitting Race-to-the-Top (RTTT) applications, have quickly realized that teacher evaluation systems relying on student performance or growth results have data available for only one-quarter or so of the teaching force. Many of the RTTT applications contained promises (or hopes) that states would use other forms of data to calculate student growth results for teachers in subjects and grades not assessed by state standardized tests. However, the challenge of non-tested grades and subjects is nagging at many measurement and evaluation experts working on these reforms.

If the issue was that we simply did not have technically adequate tests for these non-tested subjects and grades and some entity was willing to spend enormous sums of money, there is little doubt that a testing enterprise could be started to provide external tests in science, social studies, and many other subjects. Those tests could provide the data necessary for calculating growth or value-added quantities, but this would still not eliminate concerns with using test scores to evaluate educators as many have pointed out (Baker, et al., 2010, Braun, et al., 2010). More realistically, though, the resources are simply not available to support such an endeavor and few people would argue for such an increase in external testing in the first place.

Others have suggested that interim tests could supplement current state tests or fill the need in these non-tested subjects and grades. It might be possible to have some interim assessments used in subjects and grades where the technical quality and intended uses are appropriate, but there are several problems with this hope. First, the technical quality of current interim assessments leaves a lot to be desired (e.g., Buckley, et at., 2010, Goren, 2010, Li, et al., 2010, Perie, et al, 2009, Shepard, 2010). Simply inserting low quality assessments into this gap might solve one problem, but would likely create many more. Further, even if these assessments could be used to plug the shortage in these non-tested grades and subjects, there would still be a significant shortfall because most interim assessments have been targeted to reading and mathematics as a way to help schools prepare for NCLB end of year tests (Perie, et al., 2009).

Several states proposed a variety of approaches to determine how much students have learned either through a particular school year or from one year to the next. Some approaches involve simply feeding the data from classroom-based measures into some sort of analytic method used to calculate growth or a value-added quantity. Others have proposed a variation on this theme whereby teachers use classroom-based and/or other information to establish goals (e.g., Student Learning Objectives) for either individual students and/or the class as a whole and then evaluate the degree of success in terms of meeting these goals using similar or other relevant measures. Each approach addresses certain challenges, but raises new obstacles.

While the lack of quality measures is a huge problem, those of us working in this area have come to fear the analytic problem even more. In other words, even if schools and districts could create high quality social studies assessments, for example, few districts have the technical capacity to analyze the resulting data is ways that can lead to valid inferences about student growth and teacher attribution. Even when district personnel have the skills to run VAM or similar analyses, they will be doing so with much smaller samples than when states use similar models. Further, district analysts will most often be conducting growth analyses for the non-tested subjects and grades, especially in secondary school, with only a single prior score. We know that lower sample sizes and use of a single prior score leads to much less reliable results than when multiple priors are available.

So what do I recommend? First, the policy expectations and requirements must be tempered. Having the student growth component count 40-60% of the evaluation of teachers from non-tested grades and subjects does not appear defensible. One approach might involve including the student performance results at a much lower weight (e.g., 10-15%) in the evaluation until we develop a better understanding of the issues and come up with more valid approaches for using student assessment results in educator evaluations. Another recommendation involves holding teachers accountable for improvements in assessment literacy and data use rather than simply on some potentially arbitrary outcomes. The assumption behind this recommendation is that as teachers become more assessment literate, they will be able to generate higher quality data for both student and educator evaluations. Of course, every potential solution carries a considerable risk of unintended negative consequences and anyone working in this area needs to be on the lookout for such consequences in the design of any system.

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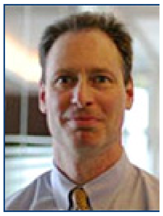
Assessment for Educator Effectiveness: Central but not Sufficient

Stanley Rabinowitz,WestEd



Like it or not, political and statistical reality requires any model of educator effectiveness (EE) to have assessment data as its centerpiece. Results from assessments are believed by many policy makers and the general public to represent important outcomes of the education process. And while measurement specialists are fully aware of the limitations of most assessments, even the best developed, to capture all that is valued in good instructional practices, in many grades and content areas they are the most technically sound and efficient set of indicators available. When available, they should be weighted prominently in educator effectiveness models. And to provide growth measures or in specific instances where a state assessment may be lacking, a model may choose to include local summative and interim assessments that meet technical adequacy criteria (but please: never formative!).

Any fully valid EE model must reach beyond assessment results alone for several important reasons. First, without a "silver bullet" of educator effectiveness, we need to incorporate the principle of triangulation—what we can't measure directly, we must surround. Next, there are certain grades (e.g., K-2) and content areas (e.g., dance, world languages) that we do not want to subject to traditional mostly multiple choice assessments that are the easiest (and cheapest) to develop. Third, high assessment results, while important, can be obtained with instructional practices we do not fully endorse or respect—some kids learn even in the face of poor instruction. Fourth, there is more to the role of teaching than academic achievement; good teachers support and nurture the social and moral development of youngsters. Finally, why rely only on the tests we currently have for ELA and math—shouldn't we find more robust measures in those areas too?

Fully reliable and valid EE models should be built around the following characteristics (regardless of the specific model selected).

<u>Characteristics of Reliable and Valid Models of Educator Effectiveness</u>

- Multiple measures (triangulation)

- Assessment driven (as available) supplemented with additional outcome and process indicators (e.g., observations, classroom work samples, lesson plans, surveys)

- Indicators should be included and weighted based on:
    - Availability
    - Technical adequacy
    - Educator and public confidence
    - Cost

- Value vs. Burden—indicators should be included based on the incremental validity they provide towards determining whether a teacher is effective relative to other possible indicators; the burden on teachers and principals to provide these data should also be factored into the equation—many so called "good ideas" do not stand up to the cost of implementation (human and material)

- Dynamic (research driven across planned phases): Currently available EE models do not come close to ideal—we simply do not have available or trust the range of indicators to fully measure all we value of great teaching. But if we plan properly and allow ourselves the vision this complex challenge deserves, we can implement a phased research supported dynamic plan that utilizes new technologies and new public supports and understandings, as they evolve. I suggest from the outset we plan four phases:
    - Today: this is all we can do now—best to acknowledge this limitation and indicate where we wish to go in the future; and implement research studies that will get us there.
    - Year 3: we can now begin to take advantage of our phase I research and add some proven indicators that more fully measure EE.

- Year 5: By this time we should have enough research and public support to have a mature model of EE, supported by teachers and the public.
- Year 10: We may never get to this point. Given the shelf life of education reform, 10 years out represents multiple reform cycles (and administrations). But without a 10 year vision we may never meet the full potential of our current, three-year, and five year goals.

Our dynamic model includes indicators based on the confidence we have in their technical adequacy and their uniformity across the state or district. Specifically, we propose three levels as follows:

- Level 1: Technically sound student-level assessment data available to serve as the centerpiece measure of educator effectiveness.
- Level 2: Other assessment/outcome data (e.g., from aligned interim measures administered at the district level) that can be used as direct measures of student learning. Key factors include the extent these data are available uniformly across the state.
- Level 3: Other sources of information (e.g., observations, surveys, pre-service academic history) available that can be used to supplement the more technically rigorous data from Level 1 or 2.

Initially, lower level indicators may receive relatively lower weights in our accountability model. Over time, given advances in research and public acceptance, indicators can move up a level, and be more prominently featured in our EE model.

Bottom line: purpose(s) drive our definition of "adequate." As stakes rise, so does the need for technically sound and publically supported indicators. Our assessment centered, research based, dynamic approach has the potential to mature over time and gain support from all constituencies, within and beyond the education and policy communities.

WHAT'S NEW?

This is a recent column to the NCME Newsletter. It is an opportunity for the membership to share new things of interest to each other. Please send any new items that are of interest to our members (e.g., new or forthcoming books, members who have changed jobs, or new applications) by email to the editor (tpatelis@collegeboard.org). I hope you find this informative.

Members on the Move:

N. Scott Bishop → Assistant Vice President of Performance Assessments and Development Systems with ACT
David Chuah → Associate Psychometrician in Research and Development with The College Board
Jeff Hauger → Director of Student Learning Assessment for the State of New Jersey Department of Education
Leah Kaira → working at Pearson Evaluation Systems
Lisa Keller → received tenure and promoted to Associate Professor at UMASS-Amherst
Tia Sukin → working at Measured Progress
Hanwook Yoo → working at Educational Testing Service

New Books

- *Structural Equation Modeling with Mplus: Basic Concepts, Applications, and Programming* (2011) by Barbara Byrne Published in July 2011 by Psychology Press

This recently published book (Psychology Press, 2011) provides various analyses within structural equation modeling framework using MPlus. Great for courses and accompanies the MPlus manual and text books very well. The author reviews SEM applications based on actual data taken from her own research. Using non-mathematical language, it is written for the novice SEM user.

Further details at: http://www.taylorandfrancis.com/books/details/9781848728394/

- *Testwise: Understanding Educational Assessment, Volume 1.* By Nora Vivian Odendahl. (2011). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Intended to promote assessment literacy on multiple levels, *Testwise* explains the central concepts and issues in a manner that is accessible to students in an introductory measurement course or to other readers who are not psychometricians. Yet the discussion conveys the complexities of the subject and guides the reader toward relevant technical literature. Helpful features include chapter summaries, checklists, selected readings, lists of additional resources, and an extensive glossary.

Further details at:
http://www.rowmaneducation.com/Catalog/SingleBook.shtml?command=Search&db=^DB/CATALOG.db&eqSKUdata=1610480120

ANNOUNCEMENTS: NCME

NEW NCME NEWSLETTER EDITOR!!

Susan Davis-Becker, Senior Psychometrician at Alpine Testing Solutions, will be the new editor of the NCME Newsletter. Her responsibility will start with the March 2012 issue. Susan has been actively involved in the newsletter as not only a contributor, but also as a member of the NCME Newsletter Advisory Committee working with two editors over a six-year period. Before going to Alpine Testing Solutions, Susan worked at the Buros Center for Testing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Susan received her doctorate from James Madison University. We are very fortunate to have Susan as the new NCME Newsletter Editor.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The next NCME Annual Meeting will be in Vancouver, British Columbia Canada from April 12 – 16, 2012. Please go to www.ncme.org for details about proposal submission.

Proposals are due August 1, 2011.

Reminder: You will need a valid passport to travel to this meeting (unless you are Canadian).

75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Save the date at the 2013 Annual Meeting!

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to be on the committee to plan the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of NCME. We have been able to form an excellent committee under the leadership of Neal Kingston from the University of Kansas. The committee members are; Neal Kingston (chair), Mary Lyn Borque, Dan Eignor, Anne Fitzpatrick, Dave Frisbie, Karoline Jarr (Graduate Student Representative), Barbara Plake, Jim Popham, Anta Rawls, Ed Roeber, Kris Waltman, and Gretchen Anderson (professional assistant).

The committee's charge is to design, plan, and oversee the 75th Anniversary celebration. The celebration will consist of a series of events culminating in a very special celebration that will be held at the 2013 Annual Meeting. The committee would like your suggestions for events that you would like to attend or participate in as part of the yearlong celebration. Please send any suggestions that you may have for celebrating this important event to Neal Kingston, nkingsto@ku.edu.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Nominations for ITEMS Editor

The Publications Committee is soliciting nominations for the editor of the NCME publication ITEMS: The Instructional Topics in Educational Measurement Series. The goal of ITEMS is to improve the understanding of educational measurement principles by providing brief instructional units on timely topics in the field, modules developed for use by college faculty and students as well as by workshop leaders and participants. Instructional modules appear in the NCME publication Educational Issues: Measurement and Practice (EM:IP) and are designed to be learner-oriented and consist of an abstract, tutorial content, exercises, and annotated references. The teaching aids accompanying most modules are designed to support the use of the instructional modules in teaching and workshop settings by providing supplemental student exercises, references, test items, and figures or masters for transparencies. The ITEMS Editor needs to have a willingness to solicit manuscript authors and the organizational skills to track multiple modules through their various stages of completion. The editor's term will run from January 2012 and December 2014. Nominations will be reviewed by the NCME Publications Committee. The committee offers a slate to the president who, in turn, makes a recommendation for appointment to the NCME Board of Directors. This appointment process is designed to provide for a smooth transition between incoming and outgoing editors. If you are interested in this position, if you would like to nominate a colleague, or if you would like additional information, please contact Krista Breithaupt (kbreithaupt@mcc.ca) by Friday September 16, 2011.

Thanks.

Mark Gierl and Krista Breithaupt, Publications Committee Co-Chairs

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OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

APA Division 5 (Evaluation, Measurement, & Statistics) Sessions at the 2011 Convention, Washington, DC

Division 5 has an outstanding program this year in Washington, DC and we hope that you will plan to attend. The programming begins on Thursday August 4 at 9:00 a.m. and continues through Sunday, August 6, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. Information about the program is available on the Division 5 website: http://www.apa.org/divisions/div5/

Selected presentations that may be of interest:

- *New Developments in Meta‑Analysis* presented by Noel A. Card, University of Arizona
- *Advances in Multilevel Structural EquationModeling* symposium involving Kristopher J. Preacher, University of Kansas, Laura M. Stapleton, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Paras D. Mehta, University of Houston, James L. Peugh, University of Virginia, & Natasha Beretvas, PhD, University of Texas at Austin.
- *New Perspectives on Old Measurement Issues* symposium involving Ken Kelley, University of Notre Dame, Scott Hofer, University of Victoria, R.J. Wirth, University of Washington, Michael C. Edwards, The Ohio State University, & Sonya K. Sterba, Vanderbilt University.
- *Why the Items Versus Parcels Controversy Needn't Be One* (Presidential Address) presented by Todd D. Little, University of Kansas.
- *Diversity in Psychometrics* symposium involving Anita M. Wells, Avis D. Jackson, and Mercy Mugo, Morgan State University with Lisa L. Harlow, University of Rhode Island and Kurt F. Geisinger, University of Nebraska—Lincoln serving as discussants.
- *Revising the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing—Summary of Comments on the Initial Draft* symposium involving Lauress L. Wise, Human Resources Research Organization, Frank C. Worrell, University of California—Berkeley, Antonio E. Puente, University of North Carolina at Wilmington with Wayne J. Camara, The College Board as discussant.
- *Design and Analysis Issues for Missing Data* symposium involving Mijke Rhemtulla, University of Kansas, John W. Graham, Penn State University Park, Stephen A. Mistler, Arizona State University, & Wei Wu, University of Kansas.
- Ethical Challenges in Psychological Assessment:Practical Perspectives from Across the Field symposium involving Stephen G. Sireci, University of Massachusetts- Amherst, Radhika Krishnamurthy, Florida Institute of Technology Melbourne, Antonio E. Puente, University of North Carolina Wilmington, & Ginger Calloway, Independent Practice, with Susana P. Urbina, University of North Florida Jacksonville serving as discussant.
- *Bayesian Methods for Non‑Normal and Non‑Ignorable Missing Data Analysis* symposium involving Zhiyong Zhang, Lijuan Wang, Zhenqiu Lu, & Xin Tong, MS, University of Notre Dame.
- *Evaluating Quality in Qualitative Inquiry* symposium involving Michael Bamberg, Clark University, Scott D. Churchill, University of Dallas, Mark Freeman, College of the Holy Cross, Kenneth Gergen, Swarthmore College, & Ruthellen Josselson, Fielding Graduate University with Michelle Fine, City University of New York Graduate Center, and David M. Frost, San Francisco State University serving as discussants.
- *Interim Assessment—Reliability and Validity Evidence* is a symposium involving Neal Kingston, Laura Kramer, Wenhao Wang & Angela E. Broaddus, University of Kansas with Marianne Perie, National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment serving as discussant.

International Association of Computerized Adaptive Testing (IACAT), an organization devoted to the advancement of the science and implementation of adaptive testing, has its second annual IACAT conference is being held October 3-5, 2011 in Pacific Grove, CA, and hosted by CTB/McGraw-Hill. Go to the following web site for more information: www.iacat.org.

The Psychometric Society is pleased to announce that the 75th Annual Conference of the Society will take place at the University of Georgia between the 6th and 9th of July, 2010.

The 2011 meeting of the Psychometric Society will be held on the campus of the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Pre-conference workshops will be held on Monday, July 18th, with the full conference running from Tuesday, July 19th through Friday, July 22nd. Go to the web for details: www.psychometrika.org

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