

FROM THE PRESIDENT TECHNOLOGY AND THE MEASUREMENT PROFESSIONAL

Richard J. Patz, ACT



If there was a tipping point in the transition from number 2 pencils to digital devices, we seem to have reached it in the realm of large-scale educational assessment. After years of anticipation, hard work, blazed trails, and more than a few difficult lessons learned, the broad adoption of technology in our schools has at last enabled the widespread migration to online testing. Along with this shift in the ed tech center of gravity, our measurement profession continues to evolve in exciting and challenging ways.

For starters, it is clear technology is changing the experience of test takers. We are moving beyond computer-based versions of paper tests and into testing experiences that are more personalized (accessible, accommodating of individual differences, and adaptive), more engaging and interactive, and ultimately more integrated into the systems that support learning in our schools.

The ways tests are created, validated, and delivered are also undergoing transformations, albeit changes less visible to end users:

- Accessible and interactive content is being created and attributed with meta-data in powerful authoring environments.
- Complex arrays of test forms are being assembled with the aid of optimization tools.
- Test delivery rests on sophisticated distributed architectures.
- Examinee responses (selected and constructed) are being captured in new ways and then scored using recognition, natural language, and machine learning tools.
- Score reporting is becoming user-centered, enabling interactive data engagement.

These developments have been building over decades but are now unfolding at a rapid pace, and they are largely positive changes—if not uniformly well executed.

As a professional community, the National Council on Measurement in Education is engaging in these innovations in the best traditions of our organization—with research, scholarship, and support for members of our field.

This month we celebrate the publication of the first volume in NCME's book series, *Technology and Testing—Improving Educational and Psychological Measurement*, edited by Fritz Drasgow (2015). The volume explores the capabilities, possibilities, and challenges of a comprehensive array of assessment-related technologies. One can see from our journals and conference programs that NCME has been providing an outlet for scholarship and collaboration regarding technology in assessment for many years. It is particularly gratifying to see that the first volume of our new book series, through its format and content, showcases both the scholarship and dialog that are hallmarks of our community.

Just as they are affecting test takers, changes in technology are affecting the test makers. Not very long ago, testing organizations had sharp boundaries between functional areas—test developers, psychometricians and technologists inhabited

different fiefdoms and worked sequentially in relative isolation from one another. As test development becomes digital and interactive, and as test delivery and scoring grow algorithmically complex, test publishing now requires deep collaboration among content experts, psychometricians, and technologists throughout the development and validation stages.

Traversing these changes can be aided by curiosity, engagement, and a willingness to learn about and embrace newer tools of the trade. To thrive—and even survive—in our new environment, organizations and experts (including measurement professionals) must understand how to lead interdisciplinary efforts to build and validate measurement instruments delivered through software. This practical perspective, informed by the type of scholarship reflected in the NCME book series' inaugural publication, will well serve our field and its practitioners—that is, us.

It is vitally important that testing changes are navigated with real and rigorous respect for the role information from assessment plays in advancing the quality of education. This is never more true than at a time when the broader education ecosystem is undergoing sizable changes in the way education is delivered and consumed. The faster technologies change, the more essential it is to remember that the fundamental theories, principles, and standards that guide our field—as documented in our *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014)—remain deeply rooted.

We may have reached the tipping point in the transition to online assessment—but the structures and standards that define our field remain indispensable guides in helping us navigate our rapidly changing technology landscape.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Heather Buzick, *Educational Testing Service*

Welcome to the 2015–2016 school year! As our graduate student columnist, Jonathan Rollins, alludes to in the Graduate Student Corner, I hope you experienced a good balance of work and leisure this summer. If this issue of the newsletter is any indication of this balance, we have fewer columns and contributors relative to other issues, but still plenty for you to read.

Amy Hendrickson is our Spotlight member for this issue. She has served NCME in a number of roles, most recently as a board member. I was a student in several of Amy's graduate courses when she taught at the University of Maryland, and she'll be happy to know that I still consult regularly with her course packets. In our new recurring series on fairness in testing, featuring a guest author, Kurt Geisinger, you'll find an overview of noncognitive factors. If you would like to publish comments or reactions to this article, please contact me.



In this issue is an update on the 2016 annual meeting from the co-chairs Andrew Ho and Matthew Johnson, as well as updates from the fund development committee, the membership committee, the publications committee, and the annual meeting committee. The latter update includes the results of the 2015 NCME Annual Meeting Evaluation Survey. We also have a fitness walk/run update, which includes news that Katherine Furgol Castellano will now be organizing the 2016 event with Jill van den Heuvel.

Finally, there's a new link to newsletter archives on the NCME website: <http://www.ncme.org/ncme/News>

I encourage you to send me articles, suggestions for content, and feedback on this or previous issues.

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GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER

THE BALANCING ACT BETWEEN WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE

Jonathan D. Rollins III, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Prior to graduate school, I had the privilege of teaching high school biology. Two important processes that the students learned were photosynthesis and cellular respiration. Photosynthesis describes the process through which plants (and other organisms) create sugar and oxygen by using sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water through a series of chemical reactions. Its counterpart, cellular respiration, explains how consumer organisms use that sugar and oxygen for energy and release carbon dioxide and water as by-products. Each process has a *balanced* chemical formula to describe it. These two processes are synergistic once balance has been achieved within each one. By analogy, we can strike the best balance between work and personal life first by ensuring that each are in order.



The labor-leisure tradeoff from the field of economics provides a good description of how individuals may choose to strike the balance between the satisfaction of challenging, income-based work and satisfaction obtained from leisure time. When considering the balance between work and personal life, individuals place value on their time by analyzing the tradeoff between the two. Challenging work can appeal to some individuals more so than potentially unproductive activities. Likewise, higher income can motivate an individual to place more value on their work. On the other hand, stress from work can cause one to seek out recreational and leisurely activities more frequently to provide an escape. The tradeoff between these two parts of our lives is different for each individual and can change over time by adapting to changing circumstances (Reed, Blunsdon, Blyton, & Dastmalchian, 2005).

An overarching theme to achieving balance between and within our work and personal lives is slowing down in order to speed up. Feeling less stressed makes finding this balance easier. By simply taking time to prioritize and strategize, we allow each part of our lives to be filled with less stress, enabling us to be more efficient with each. While I cannot claim to be an expert on this topic, I can share some wisdom based upon mistakes that I have made in the past along with prudent practices that I have discovered along the way. For the remainder of this column, first I explain some ways in which balance can be found in work life. Next, the same is done for personal life. Finally, I conclude with an explanation as to how the two can be balanced efficiently.

Work Life

Taking some time before beginning a task, no matter how simple or complex, to plan an outline or course of action can prevent us from feeling that we invested seemingly fruitless effort into a task that did not end with a tangible result. In essence, slowing down in the beginning would allow us to achieve better momentum once we are deep into a task because we understand precisely the intermediate steps we must conduct to reach a final goal. By planning beforehand, the goal provides direction at

all steps. Good research practice dictates the importance of defining the purpose of a study and research questions in advance. As such, this also allows the task to be split into manageable chunks, which helps in alleviating the feeling of being overwhelmed.

Slowing down while working would likely be beneficial not only at the beginning of any task, but also throughout the course of working on tasks. For example, taking time to decide whether calculating descriptive statistics by writing program code or using a graphical user interface can be crucial if the task may need to be repeated again if the data changes or future projects may need similar analyses ran. As another example, taking time to comment programming code while initially writing it can save hours when revisiting the code in the future. This should not only apply to the more complex sections of the code, but to all sections. Never overestimate the capacity of memory by depending solely on it. Furthermore, in the event that the code is shared with colleagues, there may be others who are not as familiar with a particular programming language but who may greatly benefit from understanding data-cleaning steps, which files are input or output, the logic behind the code, and the purpose of functions used, among other tasks.

Also keep in mind the importance of documentation in general. While commenting code is one type of documentation, it is also important to keep track of other tasks. For instance, if the data-cleaning steps were performed in an Excel spreadsheet, it helps to have that information available if issues arise during an analysis later down the line that may have resulted from faulty data cleaning. In addition, it may be necessary to explain how the data were cleaned in the event that others are brought onto a project at a later time point. Documenting other work tasks may prove useful as well, such as valuable resources that may prove helpful on future projects.

While considering future projects, the importance of organizing electronic files cannot be underscored enough. Planning an organization system prior to starting multiple projects may prevent an impending difficulty of trying to sort through more than a hundred files a few weeks into a task. This same advice applies to keeping e-mail organized in folders, which can make it easier to quickly find important conversations or announcements. And keeping everything organized along the way is key. It is so much simpler to move a few files each day than to have a folder/file system that is only partially organized. The perks of doing so are vital in terms of cognitive load. By having a clean workspace (including all computer files, too), resuming work from the previous day is always consistent given the structure that the organization scheme provides.

In considering cognitive load, writing a to-do list before leaving work can potentially ease the transition into tasks the following workday. Also, this allows any stress from a difficult task to be placed on paper and left there until the next day. While being a hard worker and thinking on work topics after hours is seemingly of great merit, the risk of psychological burnout is a reality that should be avoided. Working outside of typical work hours may contribute to higher dissatisfaction if it disrupts the balance between work and nonwork life (Sturges & Guest, 2004). Thus, equal considerations must be given to finding balance in our personal lives.

Personal Life

Not surprisingly, the importance of exercise and proper eating habits often are emphasized as crucial to being in optimal health; unfortunately, these activities require time, energy, discipline, and money. However, sacrificing those resources to build healthier habits is better than sacrificing general health and well-being, especially while maintaining a demanding schedule. Simply put, positive thinking will reinforce positive actions that subsequently lead to positive habits. Positive thinking, though, can be harder to attain with a cloudy mind impacted by sleep deprivation.

Sleep is crucial to giving the brain time to clean proteinaceous waste that accumulates throughout the day. Especially with spending so much time learning new concepts every day, the brain must have some rest to be able to store those memories effectively. Caffeine, a presumed necessity for many graduate students and professionals alike, is very effective at masking the symptoms of sleep deprivation. But this likely begs the question of how a graduate student is supposed to accomplish everything, have a balanced personal life, and still get plenty of sleep. The solution often lies in the time when transitioning between tasks.

Time is arguably one of the most important resources we have at our disposal, given that it is finite, nonrenewable, and something of which we never seem to have enough. So it is crucial that we find balance in our personal lives by using the smallest portions of time wisely. Transition minutes turn into hours. Therefore, use transition moments to relax, communicate with friends and loved ones, or complete dull tasks on a lingering to-do list to relieve impending stress. It is often surprising how much can be accomplished within a minute or two. In fact, using those transition moments to slow down and plan other aspects of the day would be a great use of that time.

The Balancing Act

Once we have achieved a reasonable balance in work life and a corresponding balance in personal life, it is important to balance them against each other. This will prevent personal-life issues from conflicting with work life and vice versa. One strategy in achieving the balancing act is to clearly delineate the goals for each. Doing so may reveal unrealistic expectations that may be causing undue stress. While it is admirable to set high goals, it is not desirable to seek goals that are mutually exclusive from both spheres of our lives. In essence, it is much easier to maintain balance if the weight of one side is not too much to manage.

In closing, finding balance in work and personal life is cultivable. By slowing down and taking time to be introspective of each, we can find it easier to situate them in a larger context and find the tradeoff between them. While situations can evolve, being able to evolve with them allows the adaptivity needed to feel satisfaction in both work and nonwork endeavors. In this respect, the balancing act is never a finished process, but must continually be optimized.

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SPOTLIGHT ON THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE OUR ORGANIZATION GREAT

Amy Henderickson, *The College Board*

How did you get into the field?

I had a relatively straight path to the field due to some helpful professors and mentors along the way. I studied psychology at Smith College with a statistics minor and concentration in education. One of my college professors encouraged me to consider graduate school and research and I chose a PhD program in educational psychology at Iowa State University (ISU). During my first year my advisor, Gary Phye, recognized that my interests and skills fit psychometrics and encouraged me to participate in the summer internship at ACT. The seminars that I was exposed to there, presented by folks like Mark Reckase, Mike Nering, Tim Davey, Matt Schulz, Jim Sconing, Sherri Miller, Cyndie Schmeiser, and Deb Harris, were my first exposure to the ideas, models, and processes of psychometrics such as IRT, test development, and equating and really caught my interest. While I was still an intern, Deb Harris encouraged me to go talk to the professors at the University of Iowa (the state rival to ISU, mind you) about admission, and when I was accepted to the measurement program, I was hooked.



If you weren't in this field, what would you do?

I would likely be a teacher, some sort of engineer, or perhaps in project management or logistics. It's a good thing I don't have to choose, as I'm really not sure.

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

Explore lots of options while you are in school. Take a variety of classes (including programming and statistical theory) and participate in a variety of assistantships or research projects with different professors. Most importantly, seek out internships at a variety of places, even if they don't already exist. Internships help you to figure out what you may like to do after school but maybe more importantly, what you don't want to do or where you don't want to work. Find the program and advisor that is right for you even if that means making a change. Each year at the annual conference try to meet at least one new person in the field that you look up to and attend a variety of sessions. Consider academia as your first job out of graduate school. You likely won't regret it.

What do you like to do for fun outside of work?

I have three young children, so I spend most of my time outside of work with them. I love to travel, especially to warm beach locations. I like to swim and am trying to convince myself that I like running and cycling for exercise. I like to go dancing, to entertain friends and family, to read, and to create scrapbooks.

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

I believe that tests developed with increased teacher involvement, related to core standards of achievement, and with methods that allow for real evidence of student's knowledge, skills, and abilities, such as evidence-centered design are among the biggest innovations in our field in recent history.

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

I choose sessions that link to my own work at the time and that represent important current or emerging ideas in measurement that I find interesting or feel that I should know more about. I also go to the silly sessions and those that are likely to be the most enjoyable and/or the most talked about sessions because of their controversial nature or importance of the topic or speaker.

Who has been a significant influence in your professional life?

Those professors and mentors mentioned above who helped me get into the field certainly were significant. Through my various roles within NCME I've been impressed and inspired by the contributions to our field and community from Barb Plake, Laurie Wise, Dave Frisbie, Linda Cook, Terry Ackerman, Wayne Camara, Suzanne Lane, and Anne Fitzpatrick. Those individuals who have been particularly influential throughout various phases of my career are Mike Kolen, Jerry Melican, and Kristen Huff. I was Mike's first student at the University of Iowa and I've been fortunate to be able to work with him on various projects through my time at the College Board. I admire Mike's ability to home in on the real issues at hand and to offer up several possible solutions considering both psychometric and political concerns. I look to Mike for advice on psychometric issues of all types but most importantly for any important career decisions that I've made. He has not yet steered me wrong. Jerry Melican helped me to create a graduate internship at AICPA, and we've been friends ever since. I was very privileged to get to work closely with him on several projects at the College Board and am glad he still lives close enough so we can go to lunch now that he's retired. I admire Jerry's creative problem solving and fortitude to question the status quo. Kristen and I met and became friends in graduate school and our lives have interwoven throughout the years. I admire Kristen's tenacity, depth of knowledge, and passion for the field and look to her for advice both personally and professionally.

A SERIES ON FAIRNESS AND TESTING NONCOGNITIVE FACTORS

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In the June issue of this newsletter (vol. 23, no. 2), we introduced a new series on fairness and testing that is intended to showcase a variety of perspectives, commentaries, and conceptualizations on fairness in test validity. In this issue, we present perspectives on fairness in assessing noncognitive factors in four contexts: international assessment, K-12 education, higher education, and industry. More specifically, a brief explanation of each perspective is presented, along with discussion of fairness, potential threats to validity, and implications for test development.

We use the term *noncognitive factors* to denote dispositional and attitudinal factors such as persistence, curiosity, and flexibility that affect behavior. These noncognitive factors are interdependent with and support cognitive skills, and research supports noncognitive factors as predictors of grades in kindergarten through high school, social outcomes, training success, and job performance (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000; Kyllonen, 2005; Nagaoka et al., 2013; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). The growing recognition that college and career preparedness not only requires academic content knowledge and skills, but also noncognitive factors, has implications for instruction and assessment.

Underlying our discussion are the perspectives conveyed in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (American Educational Research Association [AERA], American Psychological Association [APA], & National Council on Measurement in Education [NCME], 2014) on the need to have evidence to support the claims warranted by the scores (i.e., validation) and evidence of fairness including (a) fairness during testing, (b) fairness based on a lack of measurement bias, (c) fairness in access to the construct(s) being measured, and (d) validity of interpretations and uses.

International Assessment

Noncognitive factors are shaped by culture and related sociocultural contexts that affect the structures, opportunities, interactions, and experiences of a situation (Farrington et al., 2012). In our increasingly interconnected and culturally and linguistically diverse education and work environments, instructional resources often are translated or transadapted from one language to another to provide access to a range of learners. Such alteration of resources for use with learners from different cultural backgrounds and/or in different cultural settings, however, typically is not sufficient (e.g., Cohen, Gafni, & Hanani, 2007; Turkan & Oliveri, 2014). In assessment, insufficient consideration of culture has implications for fairness and validity, because culture and the sociocultural context shape individuals' understanding of and responses to information and experiences, and constructs may not be comparably applicable or relevant across cultures (Kowalewski, Massen, & Mullins, 2010). Such issues are of particular import to international assessments (e.g., PISA) that are administered across multiple countries and cultures because these issues pose a threat to the validity of inferences drawn from performance outcomes across participating countries and cultures.

Research from instructional design and cross-cultural psychology (e.g., de Klerk, 2008; Hall, 1983; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Levine, 1997; Lewis, 2006; Nisbett, 2003; Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010) can be used to examine and operationalize the influence of culture and sociocultural context on noncognitive factors of culturally and linguistically diverse test takers. For example, the cultural dimensions of learning framework (CDLF; adapted from Hall, 1983; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Levine, 1997; Lewis, 2006; and Nisbett, 2003) presents dimensions of key cultural differences that affect learning. These dimensions are made up of spectrums or continua of elements of variability, rather than generalized differences among cultures, and each dimension can be considered, as appropriate, in the design and development of instructional materials (Ngeow & Kong, 2002; Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010). The CDLF's three cultural dimensions that affect learning are social relationships, epistemological beliefs, and temporal perceptions. The spectrums that make up each dimension, some of which have noncognitive factors, are listed in Figure 1 (for a more detailed discussion of the dimensions and spectrums, see Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010).



Figure 1. The dimensions and spectrums of the cultural dimensions of learning framework.

Frameworks such as the CDLF reflect that there is more than one perspective or “right” way to engage with information or in a situation, as well as provide insights into how culture-bound behaviors, including those manifesting noncognitive factors, might be identified and supported, accommodated, or modified in order to achieve a particular learning outcome (Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010). The implication for assessment is that frameworks such as the CDLF can help designers and developers of tests systematically consider whether culture-bound tendencies might affect the way a learner engages with an assessment task and consequently whether variations in learner engagement with the task might affect the measurement of the targeted construct (de Klerk, 2008; Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010). Such frameworks extend beyond current common treatments of culture in assessment design and development (e.g., as reflected in many item-writing and test-development guidelines) and articulate culturally based learning differences, including those that are noncognitive in nature, that can support the development of assessments that yield valid, meaningful outcomes across cultural groups.

K-12 Education

To state the obvious, there are numerous assessments that exist and continue to be introduced in elementary and secondary schools that cover a variety of skills, knowledge, and abilities. Psychologists and educators have defined the various constructs to be measured and utilize assessments to measure these skills for a variety of purposes. For whatever historical, practical reasons, the skills have been generally classified as cognitive and noncognitive skills. While some have argued over the accuracy of such a dichotomy (see, for example, Conley, 2013), the dichotomy in terminology persists.

In the psychological realm since the 1980s, assessment strategies for children and adolescents utilized various assessment methods for measuring a child's or adolescent's behavioral, social, and emotional functions (e.g., Achenbach, McConaughy, & Howell, 1987; Martin, 1988; Martin, Hooper, & Snow, 1986). These approaches, which have been called multimethod, multisource, and multisetting or multiaxial empirically based assessment, provided the opportunity to represent more fully the construct being measured with fidelity, allowing the possibility of more valid assessment scores.

A recent review of noncognitive skills has identified 16 key sets of skills (see Educational Policy Improvement Center, 2013), and these noncognitive skills can be aligned to the Big Five personality factors of conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness, and extraversion (Roberts, Martin, & Olaru, 2015). For example, Roberts et al. (2015) indicated that the noncognitive skills of assertiveness, cheerfulness, communication, friendliness, leadership, liveliness, and sociability among others fall under extraversion.

The context in elementary and secondary schools is complex and diverse. As the use of the noncognitive instruments increases, efforts to provide validation evidence and assurances of fairness issues are needed. In order to undertake validation studies, not only must the construct be clearly defined, but the purpose that the instrument will serve must be specified including the claims to be made. Purposes can vary and involve uses for accountability, advising/guidance, placement, selection, and retention. Information can be provided at the individual or aggregate levels. These uses influence the nature of the assessment and the design of the validation studies.

Furthermore, as we have seen in the study of the relationship between personality and its cultural context, culture can influence the construct at different levels (McAdams & Pals, 2006). While there are features that are generalized across cultures (e.g., McCrae, Terracciano, & 78 members of the Personality Profiles of Cultures Project, 2005), there can be differences. For example, Yang (2006) suggested that in individualist cultures, personal-oriented personality traits are more developed, differentiated, and influential in everyday life, whereas in collectivist cultures, social-oriented personality traits are more developed, differentiated, and influential.

Because schools are increasingly diverse with varied school environments and multiple subcultures, the construct(s) being measured must be adequately represented by the assessments. In order to ensure the inferences made from the scores are applicable across the cultural context of schools, the emic (within specific cultural context)-etic (cross-cultural invariance) approach to both the definition of the construct and the validation research might be utilized (see Cheung, van de Vijver, & Leong, 2011, for description of this approach). This approach integrates mainstream and cultural perspectives. As Cheung et al. (2011) argued, living in multicultural environments is becoming the norm rather than the exception. Therefore, the long tradition of establishing psychometric norms (for example) of new instruments assuming a homogeneous nature of the population is unrealistic. Instruments must be able to describe the personalities of individuals living in culturally heterogeneous environments (Ponterotto, 2010).

So, as noncognitive assessments are increasing in popularity in schools, the fundamental methodologies to develop and validate them still apply. Of particular note is the importance of the specification of the purpose and definition of the construct to be measured. Because of the complexity and the heterogeneity in schools, evidence that assessment scores mean the same thing across heterogeneous groups is important (as suggested by Bartram, 2008); further, the applicability and comparability of constructs across cultures can be informed by combining universal (global) and culture-specific (local) approaches. This is not easily done and might involve additional effort, but is necessary to ensure valid and fair inferences.

Higher Education

The assessment of noncognitive factors and the investigation of their inclusion in the higher education admissions decision-making process are increasingly becoming more prominent topics. Findings from research on the measurement of personality traits and noncognitive (level of motivation, ability to work well in teams, and communicative skills) characteristics of applicants suggest that these skills play an important role in predicting success for students in higher education (Kyllonen, 2012). These characteristics play a critical role in enrollment and graduate degree completion and are neither directly measured

by nor revealed by applicants' standardized assessment scores, grade point average (GPA), or other cognitively based admissions criteria (Kyllonen, 2012). Their inclusion in decision-making can be useful to augment the predictive validity of the sole use of cognitively based measures; increasing the diversity of measures used in admissions; and, providing a richer, more comprehensive understanding of applicants' probability of success in graduate school (Oliveri & Ezzo, 2014; Schmitt et al., 2009).

However, despite clear interest in the assessment of noncognitive constructs for admissions decision making, such assessments have yet to be widely implemented. Various challenges lead to their underutilization. One stems from an opaque understanding of what noncognitive constructs are and which ones are most predictive of readiness. Second, many noncognitive constructs such as collaboration are composed of multiple factors including cognitive, personality, and affective traits elevating the complexity of obtaining reliable and valid measurements with which to accurately predict academic readiness. Nonetheless, noncognitive constructs are top-ranked among higher education student learning outcomes as being of central importance for success (Hart Research Associates, 2015; Kyllonen, 2012). It is therefore of utmost importance to focus on ways to enhance their assessment particularly within a diverse and multicultural context.

One suggestion is to extend the evidence-centered design (ECD; Mislevy, Steinberg, & Almond, 2003) to the development of measures of complex noncognitive constructs that yield valid score-based inferences when assessing multiple populations. ECD provides common terminology and parameters to make the assessment design and the underlying evidentiary structure explicit and render reusable the operational elements of an assessment. The use of ECD can be helpful in the development of assessments for culturally and linguistically diverse populations if their characteristics are captured in the instrument's design patterns. The timing of capturing such characteristics would also likely be important. For example, doing so preemptively during the domain analysis and test design stages also would likely be useful (Oliveri & von Davier, in press).

Industry

In the first half of the last century, personality and other noncognitive measures were widely used in personnel selection. Then, after Whyte's (1956) volume on succeeding in organizations included an oft-cited and reprinted chapter on how to fake personality tests to succeed in employment settings, the use of such measures went down. However, other noncognitive measures such as biodata inventories continued to be widely used, and a sufficient amount of validity evidence was collected. Such inventories often required candidates to provide names and addresses of individuals who could confirm the evidence supplied in the inventory to prevent cheating or faking. When properly analyzed and measured, personality variables are important determinants of work performance. According to Hough and Connelly (2013), personality characteristics can be effective predictors of many variables, including motivation to learn, job knowledge, training outcomes, overall job performance, occupational and career attainment, leadership, managerial effectiveness, interpersonal effectiveness, counterproductive job behavior, and a host of other variables. These characteristics also generally have considerably less adverse impact than most cognitive measures, a real plus for organizations seeking diversity in their workforce. Such measures are normally assessed using self-report inventories.

Differences across cultures have been found in noncognitive factors such as resilience, response to stress, and creativity. Such behaviors also are contextually dependent and may be responded to differentially depending on whether they are accompanied by certain features such as whether more or less control is given to the test taker or whether situations were presented in interdependent communal relationships, for example (Lubart, 1989; Niu & Sternberg, 2001; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Xie, 2000). Such differences point to the importance of examining measurement comparability across examinees from different cultures. These differences also point to the importance of investigating whether the measured construct or traits are universally relevant or translatable (e.g., Cheung, 2004; Cheung et al., 1996).

In this issue, we gave an overview of noncognitive factors and perspectives on fairness in four contexts, discussing some potential threats to validity and implications for test development. The next issue will continue the discussion of fairness and testing vis-à-vis the implementation of the goals and vision described in the 2014 *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014). If you would like to publish comments or reactions to this article in the next issue, contact the newsletter editor, Heather Buzick.

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Author note: We thank Maria Elena Oliveri for assistance with this article.

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

Andrew Ho, Harvard
Matt Johnson, Columbia

We have 19 volunteer review panels hard at work reviewing 524 proposals, including 59 coordinated session proposals. We couldn't be more pleased at the outpouring of support from our distinguished panelists, who include multiple NCME past presidents, multiple past (and current!) presidents of the Psychometric Society, and, of course, the usual slate of renowned scholars and expert practitioners.



New to the review process this year is a phone conference that we are encouraging panel chairs to convene, once individual reviews are complete. The purpose of the call is for panelists to discuss their ratings to inform the panel chair's final recommendations. This reflects our continued efforts to raise the standards on the reliability and rigor of our proposal review process.

We fully expect to have decisions complete by Halloween, as promised.

FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

Linda Hargrove, Wayne Camara, Linda Cook, Deborah Harris, Suzanne Lane, Ida Lawrence, Seohong Pak, and Cathy Wendler



Linda Hargrove (chair)



Wayne Camara



Linda Cook



Deborah Harris



Suzanne Lane



Ida Lawrence



Seohong Pak



Cathy Wendler

At the April 2015 NCME annual meeting breakfast in Chicago, the Fund Development Committee reported on the status of NCME's mission fund. More than 120 members contributed almost \$39,000 in the first year. The fund provides a donor-supported avenue for advancing NCME's mission in the science and practice of measurement in education. Based on this support, NCME's Board of Directors approved the first activity slated for mission fund support: a June 2015 presession workshop at the National Conference on Student Assessment (NCSA).

On June 22, three members of the committee who authored the most recent edition of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014)—Linda Cook, Laura Hamilton, and Laress Wise—contributed to the presentation of NCME's presession workshop at NCSA. The workshop was designed to help state testing personnel understand implications of the *Standards* in everyday practice and how the *Standards* can be used in preparation for the peer review process. About 40 state testing personnel participated in the interactive workshop presented by Laress Wise and Linda Cook, who introduced validity, fairness, accountability, and other relevant testing issues for discussion. The workshop also was provided remotely to a few participants. Members can access slides and audio from the workshop on NCME's website ([click here](#) to view the presentation).



Figure 1. Participants in the NCME pre-session workshop on the new *Standards* at the National Conference on Student Assessment (NCSA).



Figure 2. Lauress Wise presenting on the new *Standards* at NCME’s pre-session workshop at NCSA.

Mission fund support of the NCSA workshop is just one example of a type of activity that can be supported through donor contributions. As outlined in the NCME mission fund brochure ([click here](#)), types of examples include:

- Workshops or small conferences designed to improve measurement and testing theory and application or expansion of measurement knowledge into other fields, such as teacher education
- Funding for the dissemination of measurement knowledge and procedures both domestically and internationally, such as projects for promoting proper test use
- Outreach activities such as grants to encourage exchange in the science and practice of measurement
- Support for the professional development of graduate students and early career scholars

NCME members who desire to make one or more tax-deductible cash donations to the mission fund can either donate:

1. On the [NCME website](#) by clicking the Sign In link (member login required), choosing the Donate link (you need to be signed in to use this link to donate), and entering the amount for the Mission Fund before moving to complete credit card payment information.

OR

2. Via the downloadable Mission Fund brochure ([click here](#)). Print, complete, and detach the contribution form in the brochure and mail or fax to NCME as instructed in the brochure.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE: TIME TO VOLUNTEER!

Joni Lakin, Auburn University

Members like you play an essential role in supporting NCME’s mission to advance the science and practice of measurement in education.

We count on volunteers from our community to serve on committees that support this mission. We have a wide variety of committees that can match your talents and interests. Program committees coordinate action on a variety of projects and programs such as the annual meeting, outreach, and partnerships, while award committees review nominations and select recipients for NCME awards.



What’s in it for you? **Committees are a valuable experience for many members** because they offer the opportunity to impact our organization and professional field. It’s also a great way to meet other members and stay connected to the field.

Our new website has made it easier than ever to volunteer. From the “Members Only” section, choose “Volunteer” and select all of the committees you are willing to serve on. Don’t worry—members only serve on one committee at a time, so mark all that interest you. NCME maintains a list of all volunteers, and committees use this list to replace outgoing members as needed. Most committees have three-year terms and are led by a chair and co-chair. These are the committees NCME currently maintains:

- Annual Meeting
- Annual Meeting Program
- Archives Committee
- Budget and Finance
- Diversity Issues and Testing
- The Fund Development (Mission Fund) Committee
- Graduate Student Issues
- NCME Membership
- Nominations and Elections
- Outreach and Partnerships
- Publications
- Standards and Test Use
- Training and Professional Development
- Webinar Development Committee
- Website Management

Graduate students are strongly encouraged to volunteer as well. Many committees require graduate student representatives, and the Graduate Student Issues Committee is run entirely by graduate student members of NCME.

For more information, details about the committee roles, and current members, refer to the “About” section of the NCME website. Committees accomplish important work for NCME and the field of measurement. Please consider volunteering for a committee today.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Rose C. McCallin, Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies

***EM:IP* Editor Appointed**

The NCME Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Howard T. Everson has been named Editor of *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice (EM:IP)* for the 2016–2018 editorial term. Dr. Everson is a professor of educational psychology and director of the Center for Advanced Study in Education at the City University of New York. His research and scholarly interests focus on the intersection of cognition and assessment. He has published widely on a variety of educational measurement topics, including item response theory, differential item functioning, cognitive diagnostic measurement models, national standards and assessments, test anxiety, and intended and unintended uses of high-stakes assessments. In addition to his contributions to NCME, Dr. Everson is an elected fellow of both the American Educational Research Association and the



American Psychological Association and is a charter member of the Association for Psychological Science. Dr. Everson's editorial term covers *EM:IP* volumes 35–37. We look forward to his editorship and thank him for this service to NCME and to the field of educational measurement.



Howard T. Everson
EM:IP Editor



Fritz Drasgow
Editor of *Technology and Testing*

First Volume Published in the NCME Book Series

The editorial board of the NCME Applications of Educational Measurement and Assessment book series is pleased to announce publication of the first volume, edited by Fritz Drasgow, titled *Technology and Testing—Improving Educational and Psychological Measurement*. It is fitting to initiate the series with a volume on the use of technology, which has become central to a wide range of aspects of tests and assessments, including item and test development, delivery, scoring, analysis, and score reporting. Fritz Drasgow, professor of psychology and dean of the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has been at the forefront of the use of technology in tests and assessments since the late 1970s and has authored several books in the measurement field. Readers of this first volume will appreciate the impressive lineup of chapter authors and the excellent content.

Technology and Testing is organized into four sections, each with several related chapters, followed by comments from a leading expert on testing. Each chapter includes an overview of existing literature and groundbreaking research and considers the technological, practical, and ethical considerations of this rapidly changing area. The book begins with a chapter on managing change and rapid development and deployment of assessment innovations and is followed by three chapters that describe new approaches to assessment: game-based assessment, simulation-based assessment, and video-based assessment. The second set of chapters examines the use of technology to generate items in multiple languages, automated test assembly, and validity and automated scoring. The third section of the book addresses issues of growing importance due to technology. Chapters in this section include an overview of the systems required by a state-of-the-art computer-based testing program, assessments via smart phones and other handheld devices, increasing the accessibility of assessments through technology; and technology and its effects on test security. The final section considers issues and opportunities provided by growing technological capabilities. Chapters examine the uneven availability of requisite hardware and software infrastructure and score comparability across varying test delivery formats; the emerging field of diagnostic classification models to provide insights into a test taker's multidimensional profile of skills; how the use of alternative IRT models can play roles in item generation, understanding response times, and identifying test compromise; and the use of prizes to facilitate change in educational assessment. Ideal for researchers and professionals in testing and assessment, *Technology and Testing* provides a critical and in-depth look at one of the most pressing topics in educational testing today and for years to come.

The NCME Applications of Educational Measurement and Assessment book series was launched during Wayne Camara's 2010–2011 year as NCME president. The primary purpose of the book series is to increase understanding of and inform research-based applied educational measurement and assessment. Editorial Board members include:

Michael J. Kolen, The University of Iowa, Editor
Robert L. Brennan, The University of Iowa
Wayne Camara, ACT
Edward H. Haertel, Stanford University
Suzanne Lane, University of Pittsburgh
Rebecca Zwick, Educational Testing Service

Forthcoming volumes (titles are provisional):

Meeting the Challenges to Measurement in an Era of Accountability, edited by Henry Braun (anticipated date of publication is early 2016).

Testing in the Professions: Credentialing Policies and Practice, edited by Susan Davis-Becker and Chad W. Buckendahl

Fairness in Educational Assessment and Measurement, edited by Neil J. Dorans and Linda L. Cook

Validation of Score Meaning in the Next Generation of Assessments, edited by Kadriye Ercikan and James W. Pellegrino

The NCME Applications of Educational Measurement and Assessment book series is published by Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group. Additional information about the series is posted on the [NCME website](http://www.ncme.org).

Please visit Routledge at <https://www.routledge.com/series/NCME> to purchase *Technology and Testing—Improving Educational and Psychological Measurement* (date of publication is September 2015) and to keep apprised of publication dates and the availability of forthcoming volumes.

ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Terry Ackerman, University of North Carolina – Greensboro

Currently we are working with NCME’s new management firm, Fernley & Fernley, to finish creating an annual meeting guide. This guide will detail each event associated with the annual meeting, including the history of the event, people/committees responsible, timelines, and potential costs, among other things. When completed, the guide will serve as a seminal resource for the NCME board of directors, officers, and committee chairs, as well as our organization’s management company.



Survey of NCME Members Who Attended the 2015 Annual Meeting

Another responsibility of the Annual Meeting Committee is to help in the evaluation of the annual meeting. Here are the responses to the selected response questions from the 2015 NCME Annual Meeting Evaluation Survey. Of the 1,316 attendees, 201 responded to the survey (15.3% response rate).

Table 1 Respondent Characteristics

What is your current place of employment?	No. of responses
Testing/licensure/certification company	65
Academia/faculty	47
Graduate student	26
Nonacademic research agency/company	16
Other	13
Federal education agency	4
Independent researcher/consultant	4
State education agency	3
Retired	1
Total	179

How long have you been a member of NCME?	No. of responses
New member to 1 year	30
2 years to 5 years	42
6 years to 10 years	36
11 years to 20 years	36
21+ years	32
Total	176

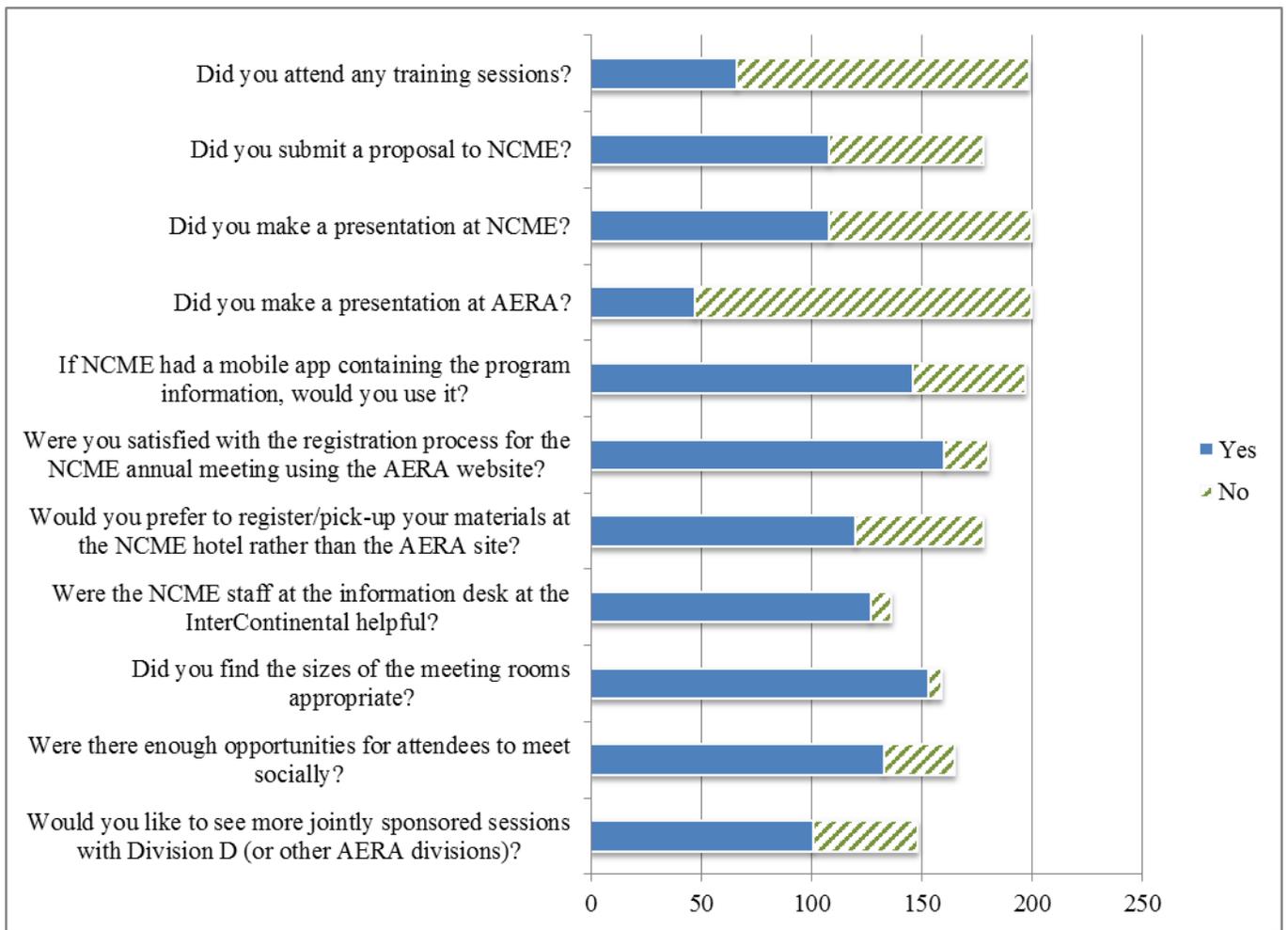


Figure 1. Survey responses.

Table 2. Survey Responses

How many NCME annual meeting sessions did you attend overall?	No. of responses
0-5	72
6-10	93
11-15	29
16 or more sessions	7
Total	201

How many AERA Division D sessions did you attend?	No. of responses
0	92
1-2	60
3-4	18
5+	9
Total	179

How many electronic board sessions (e.g., each session had 25 presentations) did you attend?	No. of responses
0	91
1	66
2	29
3 or more	15
Total	201

What is the most important reason that you attended the 2015 annual meeting in Chicago?	No. of responses
Proposal accepted at NCME and/or AERA	87
Wanted to see the city of Chicago	3
It conveniently coincided with important events for me or family	4
Price was good	0
No other meetings etc. at the same time	1
I always attend the annual meeting	75
Other	30
Total	200

Would you prefer:	No. of responses
Program and abstracts combined in one printed book (as in 2015)	142
Program and abstracts in separate, printed books	5
Program in printed book with abstracts online only	50
Total	197

Overall programming quality	Very much	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	Rating average	No. of responses
Was the conference educational/informative?	107	72	11	0	3.51	190
Were you satisfied with the overall quality of the conference?	99	78	9	3	3.44	189
Did the conference influence your thoughts about measurement or measurement-related issues?	77	77	36	0	3.22	190
Did the conference improve your skills or knowledge about measurement?	59	85	41	4	3.05	189

Overall programming quality	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Rating average	No. of responses
General organization	86	81	21	0	3.35	188
Allotment of time	75	92	18	2	3.28	187
Value/usefulness of topics	73	78	31	6	3.16	188
Quality of speakers	58	97	26	7	3.1	188
Audio/visual services (both from the perspective of you as an attendee and/or you as a presenter)	89	88	7	0	3.45	184

NCME breakfast & business meeting; presidential address	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Rating average	No. of responses
Business meeting	19	54	8	1	3.11	82
Presidential address	36	41	12	4	3.17	93
Awards presentation	21	50	13	2	3.05	86
Schedule/time slot in agenda	26	54	11	0	3.16	91

Proposal submission and review procedures	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know/no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A	No. of responses
A 50-word abstract and up to 800-word description are sufficient.	48	52	3	10	5	14	132
Knowing that more proposals might be accepted for the 2015 program encouraged me to submit a proposal.	22	29	23	26	12	20	132
It is appropriate that membership in NCME be a requirement for presenters at the annual meetings.	45	43	12	16	3	14	133
Positive and something that should be continued for future meetings of NCME.	29	36	15	2	1	34	117

Program format and abstracts	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know/no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No. of responses
Including abstracts in the program made it easy for me to decide which sessions I wanted to attend.	100	51	12	4	1	168
Allowing 15 minutes for each presentation resulted in better sessions overall.	61	70	33	8	0	172

Type of sessions	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know/no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No. of responses
The electronic paper sessions were well organized with coherent themes.	20	51	67	10	3	151
Presenters for the electronic papers sessions did not seem to understand how these sessions were supposed to work.	7	26	69	34	12	148
Shortening the electronic paper sessions to one hour was helpful.	11	40	87	5	4	147
Having electronic paper sessions for only 60 minutes and not concurrent was very helpful.	13	38	88	7	2	148
The quality of the electronic paper sessions was equal to that of most other conference sessions that I attended.	17	29	81	17	6	150
The mix of session types (debates, electronic boards, paper, etc.) provided variety and made for a more interesting and engaging conference.	44	71	32	8	3	158

Featured speaker: Please check the plenary sessions you attended	No. of responses
a. John King	38
b. Satirical session	71
c. Debates: Popham & Kingston vs. Way & Fremer; Briggs vs. van der Linden	57
Total	113

Featured speaker	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know/no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No. of responses
Having plenary sessions really added value to my experience at NCME this year.	31	48	56	7	2	144
The policy perspectives presented by John King were beneficial to me as a measurement professional.	15	21	85	5	3	129
The satirical session on contemporary problems in educational measurement was fun to attend.	23	26	63	14	9	135
The debates were very informative and this format should be continued.	32	40	59	1	1	133

NCME FITNESS WALK/RUN CORNER

Jill van den Heuvel, Alpine Testing Solutions
Katherine Furgol Castellano, Educational Testing Service
(with Brian French, Washington State University, Pullman, advising)



We hope your summer has been outstanding! We know all of you are looking forward to the beautiful fall walking and running weather. We are in the planning stages for the 26th annual NCME Fitness Walk/Run in Washington, DC.

Please notice that Katherine will be assisting Jill this year for the event. Just ask Brian (after 10 years of leading the event) what he is up to when you see him. Katherine has been a strong supporter of the event, bringing successful teams with her each year. We are excited to have her help. And now for a fun fact: Did you know that the first NCME run/walk was organized by the same folks who organized the Boston Marathon? Ask Ron Berk for the story sometime. See you in DC and keep moving!

Erratum in Volume 23, Number 2 (June 2015, p. 7): The correct title of the article authored by S. E. Phillips is "LEGAL CORNER: PARENTS OPTING OUT OF STATEWIDE TESTING"



The 10th Conference of the International Test Commission (ITC2016)

Call for Proposals

Dear ITC members, participants, and community members,

The 10th Conference of the International Test Commission will be held in Vancouver from July 14, 2016. We are happy to announce that the Conference is now open for abstract submission. The 10th Conference theme is “*Improving Policy and Practice: Opportunities and Challenges in an International Context.*” Your participation will contribute to a state of the art experience for everyone at the Conference and will contribute to the field of measurement and assessment. We invite you to submit your proposals through <http://itc2016.educ.ubc.ca/submit>

Types of Submissions:

Workshop
Symposium
Single paper presentation
Poster

All types of submissions should be an APA style abstract in text only format of no more than 300 words. The closing deadline for all types of submissions is **December 21, 2015 (except for the workshop, which is October 20, 2016).**

You can go to our website at http://itc2016.educ.ubc.ca/call_for_proposals for submission information or you can download a PDF version of the guidelines at <http://itc2016.educ.ubc.ca/guidelines>.

All submissions will be subject to a blind review process by at least two independent peers. The ITC Scientific Committee will notify the authors on the decision by **February 28, 2016**. Early bird registration for the conference begins on **November 01, 2015**.

Thank you for your continued interest in participating in the ITC Conference. The ITC Organizing Committee stands ready to assist you with any questions or concerns. Please contact us by e mail at itc.2016@ubc.ca

We look forward to seeing you in Vancouver in July 2016.



The 10th Conference of the International Test Commission (ITC 2016)

Call for Reviewers

Dear ITC members, participants, and community partners,

The International Test Commission is seeking volunteers to serve as peer reviewers for submissions to the 2016 conference to be held in Vancouver from July 1–4, 2016. We rely on your breadth and depth of expertise in testing/assessment to scrutinize the contents and quality of the submissions for the conference program. We deeply value your participation in shaping the program for the conference and contributing to the field of testing, assessment and measurement. The deadline to sign-up as a volunteer reviewer is **October 20, 2015**.

If you are interested in signing up, create a user profile at <http://itc2016.educ.ubc.ca/reviewer>. Please note the following:

- **Create Account as a Reviewer:** please ensure you check the Reviewer box before you submit; this is the final question on the form.
- **Identify Reviewing Interests:** identify five key words that describe your areas of expertise.

Volunteers selected to join review panels will receive an invitation in **early December 2015**. Reviewers will receive assignments organized by subthemes (tracks) in **mid-January 2016**. Each reviewer will typically be asked to review a **minimum of 10** abstracts in total, each of 300 words. The actual number of assignments will fluctuate depending on the final number of submissions to each subtheme and the number of selected volunteer reviewers. Reviewers will have a **3-week time** period to complete the reviews. Please keep this in mind as you consider volunteering your service and contribution.

Thank you for your continued interest in contributing to the high quality of the ITC Conferences. The ITC Conference Program Committee stands ready to assist you with any questions or concerns. Please contact us by email at itc.2016@ubc.ca.

Sincerely,

Kadriye Ercikan
ITC 2016 conference chair



The NCME Mission Fund

Make a Difference!

Advance NCME's Mission,
Vision, & Goals

- *The Mission Fund allows NCME the potential to carry out a variety of mission-driven activities such as workshops and small conferences, outreach, dissemination, and support of early career scholars and students.*
- *The first activity supported through the Mission Fund was a workshop at the June 2015 CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment to help state personnel understand implications of the newly released AERA/APA/NCME Standards. [Click here](#) to view the presentation.*
- *Please help NCME reach its \$50,000 goal for Year 2. Make your tax-deductible contribution today at <http://ncme.org> (member login required).*

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