NEWS @ncme

Official Newsletter *of the* NCME Community

PRESIDENT'S *Message*

Dear NCME Colleagues:

As executive branch activity here in the United States continues to disrupt the lives and work of many of our members, I am heartened by the outpouring of support that I have seen so many of us offering to each other. This is what privileged members of strong organizations should do: take actions that support those of us in need.

NCME Executive Director Rich Patz and I have been working with alliances of other professional organizations to monitor the impact of executive actions on our research and practice. NCME is a member of the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (*COPAFS*), and together *we have created a form* to enable documentation of impact on federal data systems and research to guide our advocacy and response. Similar forms also exist for the *impact of IES contract cancellations* and the *impact of executive orders*. As this ongoing volatility threatens to distract, divert, and divide us, we hope to coordinate efforts on behalf of our members and enable us to rededicate ourselves to our strengths and mission.

1) As one measure of the strength of our community, our hardworking program committees are thrilled to see early conference registration numbers for our April 23-26 annual meeting in Denver outpacing those of prior years. To me, this reflects the belief of our members in the importance of in-person community gatherings, especially in times of uncertainty. Our meeting in Denver offers not only presentations of *the latest in measurement scholarship and practice* but *training sessions*, *receptions*, coffee breaks, mentorship, and networking. I look forward to gathering together this April to strengthen our community, in community.

2) In February, our Executive Committee, in consultation with our full Board, *voted unanimously* to extend financial support to presenting members at our upcoming Annual Meeting who are affected directly and financially by executive branch actions. *We will waive annual meeting registration fees for those affected directly.* And remember that NCME membership dues already include financial hardship provisions. Our review committees judged that your

work deserves a platform and an audience. We will do our best to ensure that our community benefits from your attendance.

3) We have also worked with our sibling organization, AERA, to extend our early bird deadline to this coming Monday, March 10, to accommodate ongoing volatility that some of our members are experiencing. *We encourage you to register* before this date and secure hotel rooms at our conference hotel, the *Hilton Denver City Center*, for convenient access to all that our community has to offer.

4) I am thrilled that our next NCME Special Conference will be this fall, October 27-29, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on *Artificial Intelligence in Measurement and Education*. Following on our last successful special conference on *Classroom Assessment in Chicago*, special conferences are excellent opportunities to share knowledge on rapidly evolving and relevant special topics. I am looking forward to attending many cutting-edge presentations on AI in April in Denver. I also look forward to our members presenting their next steps on these projects in October in Pittsburgh.

5) While these frontiers advance, our foundations also evolve. The *fifth edition of Educational Measurement*, the handbook of our field, will be published this year. I had the honor of contributing *the Foreword* to this volume, and sessions that discuss and debate the highlights are on the program in Denver. My congratulations and gratitude go to co-editors Linda Cook and Mary Pitoniak as well as the dozens of authors, editorial board members, and reviewers for their accomplishments and service.

The many accomplishments and forthcoming contributions of our members continue to give me strength and hope through volatile times. I look forward to celebrating these with you in person in April in Denver, towards *continuity, unity, and service*.

Andrew Ho, President
National Council on Measurement in Education

Register now
for the 2025 NCME Annual Meeting

The NCME Annual Meeting will take place at the **Hilton Denver City Center in Denver**, CO from **April 23-26, 2025**. It is an excellent opportunity to present and hear about new research on important topics, to hear different perspectives on timely issues, to network with others in the measurement field, to encourage industry and member engagement, and to connect with others who share your enthusiasm and concern about issues in our field.

National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) will be hosting our 2025 Annual Meeting in conjunction with the 2025 AERA Annual Meeting. AERA is providing registration and housing support to registrants for the NCME Annual Meeting. AERA and NCME member and non-member registrants can register for both meetings separately or jointly. Information on hotel bookings at conference rates is provided in an email *after* registering for one or both conferences.

For questions about your registration, contact the AERA Annual Meeting Registration team via email at *registration@aera.net* or call at (202) 238-3200, option 3 to talk to a registration team member.

PLEASE NOTE: Please allow one (1) week after renewing your membership to register for the Annual Meeting. An updated NCME membership list is provided to AERA every week.

Early Bird Registration Deadline
Extended to March 10

NCME is pleased to announce that the Early Bird Registration deadline for the 2025 NCME Annual Meeting has been extended to Monday, March 10.

We recognize that many of our members are facing uncertainty and disruption due to recent executive branch activity in the United States. In collaboration with our sibling organization, AERA, we have worked to provide this additional flexibility, ensuring that affected members have the time and support needed to secure their participation in this important event.

We deeply value the contributions of all our members and look forward to an inclusive and engaging 2025 NCME Annual Meeting.
  New Early Bird Deadline: March 10, 2025
  Register Here: *AERA Registration*

We appreciate your commitment to NCME and hope to see you at the Annual Meeting!

NCME 2025 Annual Meeting
Preliminary Program Now Available!

Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for (audience)? Why should they care (benefit)? What do I want them to do (call-to-action)?

Create a great offer by adding words like "free," "personalized," "complimentary," or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take action, so consider inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"

Sponsoring the Annual Meeting is a terrific way to show support for NCME, the research that is shared at our Annual Meeting, and the amazing collaboration opportunities this conference provides. Individuals and universities may sponsor at a very affordable Friend level. Other organizations may take advantage of many sponsor benefits at Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels.

We are offering a special incentive for a first-time Platinum sponsor— contact ***Rich Patz*** to learn more.

Find out more in our ***Sponsor Prospectus***, direct any questions to ***Rich*** or ***NCME staff***, and please lend your visible support to our Annual Meeting.

Read more news on NEWS@ncme webpage

UPCOMING EVENTS

Data Access and Website Tour on TIMSS & PIRLS

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) provide comprehensive international assessments of student achievement in mathematics, science, and reading. With data spanning over 20 years and covering more than 60 countries, these studies enable researchers to analyze educational performance and examine key factors influencing academic success.

This session will provide a guided tour of the TIMSS & PIRLS website, demonstrating how to locate and download public-use data. Participants will gain insight into the types of available data, key variables, and the process for requesting restricted-use files. Additionally, the session will introduce tools for data analysis, including the IEA's International Database (IDB) Analyzer, with practical examples from the latest TIMSS & PIRLS assessment cycles.

  Presenter: Lillian Tyack
  Date: Thursday, March 6, 2025
  Time: 2:00–3:00 PM EST
  Location: Zoom
Join the Meeting:
  Zoom Link

This event is hosted by LSA SIGIMIE. We look forward to your participation!

Introduction to Longitudinal Diagnostic Classification Models

The NCME Diagnostic Measurement SIGIMIE invites you to an engaging session on Longitudinal Diagnostic Classification Models (DCMs)—an advanced psychometric approach designed to track examinee learning over time.

DCMs provide actionable feedback by classifying examinees based on specific attributes. This session builds upon foundational DCM knowledge, exploring longitudinal DCMs as the psychometric basis for categorical growth models.

Participants will gain:
✔ A conceptual and statistical understanding of longitudinal DCMs
✔ Hands-on experience in estimating models using a newly developed R package
✔ Practical insights into interpreting model results for educational assessments

Who Should Attend?
☐ Graduate students, researchers, and practitioners with a basic knowledge of DCMs and psychometrics.

Event Agenda:
☐ 3:00 – 3:25 PM | Conceptual & Technical Overview
☐ 3:25 – 3:50 PM | Hands-on Analysis & Interpretation
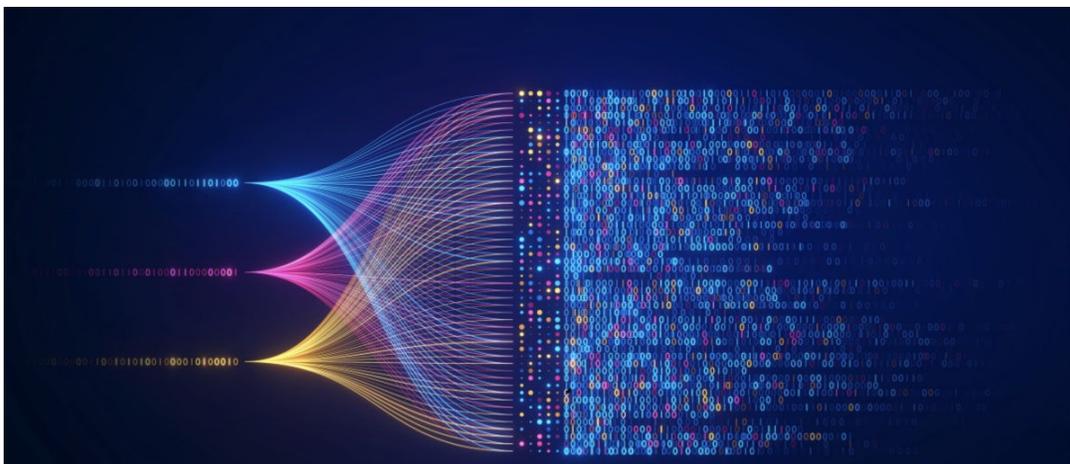☐ 3:50 – 4:00 PM | Q&A and Discussion

Presenter:
☐ Matthew Madison, Assistant Professor of Quantitative Methodology, University of Georgia
Dr. Madison specializes in multivariate psychometric models, particularly DCMs in educational contexts. His research focuses on leveraging these models to improve assessment utility, including the development of the TDCM R package for estimating longitudinal DCMs.

Event Details:
☐ Date: **March 19, 2025**
☐ Time: **3:00 – 4:00 PM (ET)**
☐ Location: Online (Zoom)
☐ Join Here: ***Zoom Link***

Don't miss this opportunity to deepen your understanding of longitudinal DCMs and their practical applications!

Generating Automatic Feedback for Open-Ended Questions with Fine-Tuned LLMs

The NCME Artificial Intelligence in Measurement and Education (AIME) SIGIMIE is hosting an upcoming event on the use of fine-tuned Large Language Models (LLMs) to generate automatic feedback for open-ended responses in high-stakes assessments.

Providing high-quality feedback for open-ended responses is a challenging task, as test-takers often approach the same question in diverse ways. While proprietary GPT models have shown promise in previous research using engineered prompts, there is potential to enhance feedback quality through fine-tuning. Additionally, open-source LLMs, such as Llama, offer a cost-effective and privacy-conscious alternative to proprietary models.

This session will present findings from two studies that examined:
① The effectiveness of fine-tuning LLMs to generate feedback aligned with best practices.
② The performance of open-source Llama models compared to proprietary GPT models.
③ The impact of fine-tuning on feedback quality versus base model outputs.

Using responses from a high-stakes situational judgment test and a curated set of training examples, researchers fine-tuned GPT and Llama models to generate instructional feedback. The feedback was evaluated using structured rubrics, automated similarity metrics, and expert assessments.

Results reveal key differences between Llama and GPT models and highlight the role of fine-tuning in optimizing AI-driven feedback generation. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on integrating AI into educational measurement and assessment.

Presenters:
☐ Okan Bulut & Elisabetta Mazzullo, University of Alberta
Event Details:
☐ Date: **March 19, 2025**
☐ Time: **4:00 PM – 5:00 PM (ET)**
☐ Location: Online (Zoom)
☐ Join Here: *Zoom Link*

Contact:
☐ Christopher Ormerod – *christopher.ormerod@cambiumassessment.com*

Join us for this insightful discussion on leveraging AI to enhance assessment

feedback!

The biggest test equating study in the world … Ever!

The NCME Contemporary Issues in Scaling, Linking & Equating SIGIMIE is hosting an upcoming event that delves into the complexities of test equating—a critical process in educational measurement that ensures scores from different assessments can be meaningfully compared.

Equating often relies on common items across tests to align scores taken by different groups of students. While numerous equating techniques exist in the psychometric literature, there is little consensus on which methods yield the most accurate results under varying conditions.

To address this challenge, researchers conducted the largest empirical study of equating methods to date. Analyzing data from 1,000 real assessments, they systematically compared over fifty equating techniques. The study simulated real-world scenarios by breaking each test into overlapping forms and assigning students to different conditions. The researchers examined the impact of factors such as anchor test length, sample size, and group ability differences, assessing how well each method recovered the "true" score relationships.

Findings from this extensive study suggest that just six equating methods consistently provide strong performance across diverse testing conditions.

This session, presented by *Tom Benton* and *Matthew Carroll* of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, will provide a deep dive into the study's methodology, key findings, and practical implications for practitioners in the field.
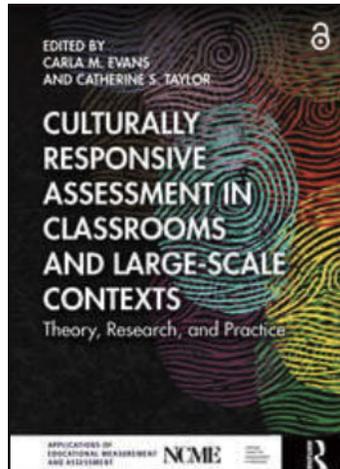
Event Details:

☐ Date: **March 26, 2025**
☐ Time: **11:00 AM – 12:00 PM (ET)**
☐ Location: Online (Zoom)
☐ Join Here: *Zoom Link*

Note: The views expressed in this presentation are solely those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of NCME or the SLE SIGIMIE committee. The session is intended to foster open discussion and critical thinking in the field of psychometric research.

Don't miss this opportunity to gain evidence-based insights into best practices for test equating.

New NCME Book Release

Culturally Responsive Assessment in Classrooms and Large-Scale Contexts

The NCME Book Series is excited to announce the upcoming release of Culturally Responsive Assessment in Classrooms and Large-Scale Contexts, edited by Carla Evans and Catherine Taylor. The book will be published on March 10, 2025, and is available as an open-access resource.

About the Book

As the field of educational assessment evolves, there is an increasing emphasis on equity, fairness, and cultural responsiveness in both classroom and large-scale testing contexts. This book brings together leading scholars and practitioners to explore frameworks, methodologies, and real-world applications that promote culturally responsive assessment practices. Topics include:

✔ Theoretical foundations of culturally responsive assessment
✔ Practical strategies for educators and policymakers
✔ Challenges and opportunities in large-scale testing
✔ Case studies and applied examples

This essential resource provides insights for researchers, educators, policymakers, and assessment professionals who seek to integrate culturally responsive principles into their work.

☐ Read the Book Here: *Culturally Responsive Assessment in Classrooms and Large-Scale Contexts*

☐ Don't miss this important contribution to the field of educational measurement!

2025 Pipeline Scholarship Recipients Announced by NCME

The National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) is proud to reveal the recipients of the prestigious 2025 Pipeline Scholarships. This year's winners, hailing from esteemed institutions, have been awarded financial support to present their research and deliver training at the upcoming Annual Meeting in Denver.

The distinguished scholars are:
1. **Catherina Villafuerte** from the University of Connecticut, recognized for the training session on "Positionality in Action: Developing Tools to Recognize Bias Across Settings."
2. **Fernando José Mena Serrano** from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, whose research explores "Comparing NAEP Mathematics Items Performance Between 2019 and 2022 in Puerto Rican Students" within the coordinated paper session "Using NAEP Data to Quantify and Address Educational Inequities."
3. **Jeneve Swaby** from Boston College, who is presenting an individual paper on "Digital Literacy for Digital Assessments: Evidence from PIRLS 2021."
4. **Jose Mendez** from the University of California Irvine, whose research explores "Improving Student Social-Emotional Learning Measurements in Service of ALL Students" within the coordinated paper session "Social-Emotional Learning Measurements in Service of ALL Students: Lessons Learned around COVID."
5. **Sandra Cruz Fuentes** from George Washington University, whose research explores "Exploring the Association of Non-cognitive Factors with NAEP Mathematics Scores for Puerto Rican Students" within the coordinated paper session "Using NAEP Data to Quantify and Address Educational Inequities."

NCME commends these scholars for their outstanding contributions and extends gratitude to the Diversity Issues in Testing Committee for their diligent oversight of the scholarship program.

Remembering Craig Mills, EdD
A Leader, a Mentor

With deep sorrow, we share the

passing of Dr. Craig Mills on January 1 at the age of 71. Others have written—and will continue to write—about his tremendous impact on the profession, particularly his contributions to computerized testing. Yet Craig's influence extended well beyond policies and programs: he shaped careers, built confidence, and inspired those fortunate to work alongside him.

For me, Craig's impact was profound. From the start of my career at AICPA and through my journey at NBME, Craig was both a trusted leader and a mentor who led with generosity, humor, and an unwavering belief in people's potential. He had a remarkable ability to see strengths in others, and never hesitated to offer guidance (or a well-placed challenge) to push us to be better.

Craig's legacy isn't just in the work he accomplished but in the people he inspired along the way. Many in our field can trace their professional growth back to a conversation with Craig, a lesson he imparted, or an opportunity he made possible. As we reflect on Craig's impact, I invite you to share your own stories of how he influenced your life and career. Please join us on social media to celebrate his legacy—not just in our profession, but in the personal connections and moments of inspiration that made him so special to all of us.

Our thoughts are with Craig's family during this difficult time.

Jonathan Rubright
Co-Chair, NCME Mission Fund

News From Other Institution

Call for Submissions: Pacific Rim Objective Measurement Symposium (PROMS2025) – Singapore, July 21-23, 2025

The Pacific Rim Objective Measurement Symposium (PROMS) invites researchers and practitioners to submit proposals for its 2025 conference,

taking place July 21-23 in Singapore. PROMS is an annual international symposium dedicated to advancing objective measurement and Rasch measurement research in the Pacific Region. The event serves as a collaborative platform for experts from various disciplines to share insights and innovations in measurement science.

Theme: Next Generation Measurement – When Innovation Meets Objectivity

PROMS2025 will explore the evolving relationship between measurement invariance and technological advancements. As emerging tools reshape how we collect, analyze, and interpret data, this theme encourages a critical examination of innovation's role in enhancing precision, accuracy, and fairness in measurement practices across diverse disciplines.

Call for Submissions

Submissions are welcome from any field within the human sciences, including business, education, health, and psychology. Topics may include:
✔ Applications of the Rasch model
✔ Advancements in measurement practices
✔ Reviews of modern measurement theory

Conference Details

☐ Dates: July 21-23, 2025
☐ Location: Singapore
For more details, visit PROMS2025 website or contact *proms@suss.edu.sg*.

☐ Join us in shaping the future of measurement at PROMS2025! We look forward to your submissions and participation.