

The NERA
Researcher is a
quarterly
newsletter for
members of the
Northeastern
Educational
Research
Association

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The NERA Researcher

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The President's Message



Lynn Shelley-Sireci

Research is Not My First Priority! Conducting Research at an Institution that Does Not Support Research: Advice for the New Professional

If you work or study where research is expected, supported, and valued, this article will not apply to you. But, if you are at an institution where research is NOT your first priority, and you barely have time to breathe, forget building a research program... then read on, this article is for you.

For most of my career I've taught a 4-4. Yes, you read that correctly, at my institution professors typically teach four classes every semester. Throw in committees and advising, and that leaves little time for research. Although challenging, conducting research at a non-research institution can be incredibly rewarding. However, creativity is essential. This article describes some of the challenges, as well as solutions of being a little fish, in a big ocean of researchers.

Challenge 1: My Real Life Takes Up Too Much Time

Being a new professional is tough! A million personal issues are more important than your career: family, partner, children, friends, your own health, your pet... you get the idea. Then tack on the tremendous responsibilities of a burgeoning career, and life can feel overwhelming.

It takes an enormous amount of time to design and teach a course! This is especially true for new professors who often teach material out of their area of expertise. If you are also required to advise students and participate on committees, you are left with little time to do research, and likely few resources to support it.

Have no fear. There are solutions. One is to turn to colleagues at your institution and collaborate with them. You might be interested in different areas of study, but you can still collect data together. Another is to turn your classroom into a laboratory and collect data in your classes. A third is to collaborate with your students (see challenge number 4). And a fourth is to seek support from NERA colleagues (see challenge number 2).

Challenge 2: I'm No Longer Connected to Other Researchers and it's Hard to Get My Research "Out There"

If you are not at a large research institution, over the course of your career you will find it increasingly difficult to get your research presented and published. A few years out of grad school you'll find you're no longer invited to participate in symposiums or co-author papers because you no longer regularly rub elbows with the big names in the field. Individuals at research institutions can easily network, but you will not have those same opportunities.

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Message from the Editors

Hello NERA Members!
This issue of the *NERA Researcher* is packed with important information about the 2012 Conference. Our conference program co-chairs, Gil Andrada, Tia Sukin, and Craig Wells, have been working hard to plan enriching pre-conference and in-conference training sessions. You won't want to miss out on the opportunity to attend a free training session at the upcoming annual conference! You will also find a listing of key dates related to the conference and information about conference registration and hotel accommodations. Finally, if you are a graduate student who would like to receive mentoring during the annual conference, be sure to read more about this wonderful opportunity and find out the deadline for applying.

We hope you have a safe and enjoyable summer!

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(Continued from page 1)

At first you might not notice this. Folks with new doctorates leave graduate school and in their first few years of employment continue to collaborate with faculty or supervisors from their graduate school days. But soon those collaborators move on to other graduate students, and when you want to start a new research endeavor you realize you have nobody to collaborate with. This can feel like your research career is over. Don't feel this way! Turn to your colleagues at NERA.

Regional conferences are a wonderful way to get your research "out there" and to network and find others to collaborate with. Most large conferences offer only symposia and poster sessions – leaving the smaller researcher presenting posters for the rest of their career. But NERA has paper sessions where your work can be presented in a session with similar papers. You do not have to "know somebody" to present your work in a paper session. Plus, through these sessions you will be introduced to individuals working in related fields.

Challenge 3: I Don't Have Time to Keep Current with the Field

Nobody does! There are not enough hours in the day to read everything you should read. So do the next best thing. Read what is most relevant to your teaching, research, and writing, and for other areas of interest attend conferences. Being an audience member at conference sessions, especially keynotes and invited sessions, is a wonderful way of keeping current in the field.

Challenge 4: Working With Students

One of the most rewarding and challenging aspects of being a professor is working individually with students on research projects. It is a role that employs your skills as both teacher and researcher. Additionally, you model the collaborative nature of research. There are two ways to work with undergraduate and new graduate students. The first is to involve students in a project of your design, so students work as research assistants. The second is to work with a student who has an idea in an area of research which you have expertise, but needs extensive support to design and complete the project.

Often the outcome of these faculty-student collaborations is not the quality of work you would produce if collaborating with an advanced graduate student or colleague, nonetheless the work might represent an important, albeit small, contribution to the field. NERA is the perfect place to share this type of work. There are even non-traditional sessions, such as those for work-in-progress, roundtables, and poster sessions with a discussant which are ideal for faculty-student collaborations. Another benefit of these collaborations is that they can provide the foundation for you to conduct later work that would make a larger contribution.

Challenge 5: Making Ends Meet

If you are in the world of academia, and in the field of education, it is likely you're paid very little and your employer does not provide adequate funds to support traveling long distances to conferences. This makes a high quality regional conference like NERA especially attractive.

Conclusion

Have you noticed most of my solutions involved NERA? This is because in my own career I have found NERA to be a valuable tool for keeping my research program going. It has provided me with the motivation to pull something together every year, as well as being a source of outlet for my collaborations with students. It has been a place to network, and a place to learn. And it has been a conference that my meager travel funds can afford. I know the challenges of being a little fish in the big ocean of great researchers, and I am happy to talk with you about these challenges. So in October feel free to tap me on the shoulder and share your stories of survival or challenges as a little fish.

Northeastern Educational Research Association 43rd Annual Conference, October 17-19, 2012 Rocky Hill, CT

Hello NERA members! The time to start planning to attend the 2012 NERA conference is approaching. Throughout this issue of the NERA Researcher you will find the information you need to register for the conference, reserve your hotel room, and sign up for a professional development workshop. Read on to learn more about this year's conference program — *A Multidisciplinary Approach to Educational Research*. We have organized invited sessions, panels, and professional development workshops that address the use of applying theories and research techniques from multiple domains in order to address educational issues. After reading about the exciting opportunities we've planned, you'll have more reasons to look forward to the October meeting and additional information to pass along to colleagues that might enjoy the sessions. Let us start by highlighting our two esteemed keynote speakers.

Our opening keynote speaker, Dr. John B. King, Jr. will address NERA members before dinner on Wednesday. Dr. King is the Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York. He comes with an impressive record in leading schools in closing the achievement gap and preparing students to be successful in college. His talk entitled—*Higher Ed and the "Right Now" Role in Ed Reform*—is sure to stir and inspire NERA members. We encourage everyone to plan to attend Dr. King's session as we believe his reform-driven perspective will be thought-provoking and enriching for all.

Our second keynote address is planned for Thursday morning. We feel extremely fortunate to be able to give NERA members the opportunity to hear Dr. John Q. Easton speak. As the Director of the Institute of Educational Sciences, Dr. Easton fully understands that the issue of funding for educational research projects is a high-priority and practical concern to researchers. Being able to know how one's research program intersects with pressing current issues and knowing how to be successful in obtaining funding are important professional abilities. Dr. Easton has graciously offered to share his experience, guidance, and advice with us in his keynote address—*Funding Educational Research*.

Keynote Sessions

Dr. John B. King, Jr.
Higher Ed and the "Right Now" Role in Ed Reform

Wednesday Oct. 17th 5:15p.m.

Dr. John Q. Easton
Funding Educational Research

Thursday Oct. 18th 11:00 a.m.

In addition to outstanding keynote speakers, the 2012 program boasts eight free professional development workshops. Our goal is to bring NERA members pre-conference and in-conference training sessions led by experts in a broad range of research methods topics. We believe these free training opportunities will make this NERA another high-value conference.

We have three unique pre-conference workshops planned which run concurrently on Wednesday morning. Laine Bradshaw, an Assistant Professor in the Research, Evaluation, Measurement and Statistics program of the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Georgia accompanied by Daniel Jurich, a graduate student at James Madison University, will be providing a workshop on the advantages and uses for diagnostic classification models. Diane Murphy of the Connecticut State Department of Education's Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation is offering an in-depth workshop discussing all you never knew about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Dr. Luz Bay, an Assistant Vice President at Measured Progress and Dr. Susan Loomis, Assistant Director for Psychometrics for the National Assessment Governing Board, will co-lead a structured demonstration featuring technology enhanced standard setting tools developed by Measured Progress and implemented by NAGB.

If you are interested in participating in a pre-conference workshop, be sure to sign-up for the session when you register for the conference. Space is limited so register early to reserve your spot.

Additional professional development workshops are available on Wednesday afternoon, Thursday morning, and Friday morning. Wednesday afternoon, Irv Seidman, Professor Emeritus for the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, will provide guidance for developing effective interview protocols. Also on Wednesday afternoon, Dr. Gary Phillips, Vice President & Chief Scientist with the American Institutes for Research, will lead a workshop discussing the effects of sampling and equating error on score drift. Thursday morning, Dena Pastor, Associate Professor in the Department of Graduate Psychology & Associate Assessment Specialist in the Center for Assessment and Research Studies at James Madison University will lead an introductory workshop for using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) to explore diverse research questions in education. Concurrently, Felice Billups, Professor for Johnson & Wales University's Department of Education, will lead a workshop discussing methodological approaches to qualitative research. Friday morning, Dr. Bjorn H. Nordtveit, Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, will provide a structured workshop on getting the most out of NVivo for conducting qualitative research.

Pre-Conference and In-Conference Workshops

Pre-Conference Workshops

- *An Introduction to Diagnostic Measurement* with **Laine Bradshaw** and **Daniel Jurich**
- *Computerized Standard Setting* with **Luz Bay** and **Susan Cooper Loomis**
- *FERPA Consent Rules and Other Allowable Uses of Protected Data* with **Diane Murphy**

In-Conference Workshops

- *Introduction to In-Depth Interviewing as a Method of Qualitative Research* with **Irv Seidman**
- *An Introduction to Hierarchical Linear Modeling* with **Dena A. Pastor**
- *Designing and Moderating Focus Groups* with **Felice Billups**
- *Qualitative Software: Introducing NVivo 10* with **Bjorn H. Nordtveit**
- *Addressing Two Commonly Unrecognized Sources of Score Instability in Annual State Assessments* with **Gary Phillips**

Planning for more exciting opportunities is currently in progress so be sure to read September's issue of the *NERA Researcher* and check [NERA's website](#) often to stay informed. In the meantime, please plan to attend and spread the word about the conference. We all play a very important role in making NERA the success it is each year. If you are interested in volunteering to review papers or help NERA in other ways, please email neramembers@gmail.com.

Key Dates for the 2012 Conference:

June 10th Proposals due

June 15th Reviewing of proposals begins

July 14th Proposal reviews due

Early August

Decisions about submitted proposals delivered by email
Notification of session assignment for volunteer chairs and discussants

Mid- to Late-August

2012 Conference Program finalized

September 28th

Last day to reserve a room at the Rocky Hilly Marriott under the specially negotiated NERA room rate

October 1st

Regular registration closes (after this date, additional late registration fee \$15 will apply)
Session chairs contact presenters to coordinate session

October 17th-19th NERA Conference!

Early November

Submit papers to NERA conference proceedings
Deadline for Submissions to Awards Competition

Northeastern Educational Research Association 43rd Annual Conference, October 17-19, 2012

2012 Professional Development Workshops

NERA is committed to facilitating the professional development of its members. In line with this mission, NERA offers members free training workshops as part of the annual meeting program. This year, NERA is sponsoring three pre-conference workshops and five in-conference workshops. Both types of sessions are free to NERA members and provide the same high-quality training on an important methodological issue from experts in the field. Registration is required for pre-conference workshops only. In-conference workshops are open to all conference attendees as space in the session allows. Please browse the 2012 workshop descriptions below and find the sessions that are right for you. We are delighted to be able to provide workshops from such esteemed professionals! Please note: You will have the opportunity to register for the pre-conference workshops when you register for the conference.

Pre-Conference Workshops

An Introduction to Diagnostic Measurement

Instructors: Laine P. Bradshaw, University of Georgia

Daniel Jurich, James Madison University

Schedule: Wednesday Oct. 17th, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Diagnostic classification models (DCMs) are an emerging class of measurement models that hold promise for providing more fine-grained information about students' strengths and weaknesses from a test. In an educational setting, this feedback may be useful for monitoring mastery of multidimensional learning standards. This three-hour workshop will provide an introduction to the theory and practice of diagnostic measurement. The workshop will first provide the rationale for DCMs as practical mechanisms for multidimensional feedback. Then, the specifications of a general diagnostic model, the log-linear cognitive diagnosis model (LCDM), will be explained and illustrated using an empirical data set. The workshop will end with a brief demonstration of how to use Mplus to estimate the LCDM for the example data set.

Laine P. Bradshaw is an Assistant Professor in the Research, Evaluation, Measurement and Statistics (REMS) program of the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Georgia (UGA). She earned her Ph.D. in the REMS program at UGA in 2011. Dr. Bradshaw's research focuses on advances in diagnostic classification modeling for diagnosing not only student abilities, but also student misconceptions. With a Master's degree in Mathematics Education, her interests also include working on collaborative assessment development projects, such as the NSF-funded grant titled "Diagnosing Teachers' Multiplicative Reasoning."



Daniel Jurich is in his second year in the Assessment and Measurement Doctoral program at James Madison University (JMU). He received his Master's degree in Psychological Sciences from JMU, where his research focused on the effects of cheating on test equating procedures. Daniel's current interests include practical applications of diagnostic classification modeling and techniques for handling missing data. He is also interested in statistical programming and comparing the effectiveness of currently available software programs.



Computerized Standard Setting Workshop

Instructors: Luz Bay, Measured Progress

Susan Cooper Loomis, National Assessment Governing Board

Schedule: Wednesday Oct. 17th, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has long been considered the gold standard for different aspects of large-scale assessment, and this includes standard setting. Recently, NAGB made a breakthrough that substantially advances the field of educational assessment in the area of standard setting. True to its tradition for standard setting innovations, NAGB, with the assistance of Measured Progress, carried-out computerized implementations of the two most popular standard setting methods in K-12 educational assessment – the Bookmark method and the Body of Work (BoW) method. This workshop is a structured demonstration of Computer-Aided Bookmarking (CAB) and Body of Work Technological Integration and Enhancements (BoWTIE). The workshop will begin with an overview of a tradi-

tional NAEP standard-setting process to provide context to the development of CAB and BoWTIE. The structured demonstration will have two stages. The first stage will be a more traditional software demonstration where the presenter will show the software and its features. Emphasis will be on functionalities available to the panelists as they go through the different stages of standard setting. Some administrative functionality will also be shown. The more exciting second stage of the structured demonstration involves mock standard setting using both CAB and BoWTIE. A setup similar to the actual panel room setup will be available for use by workshop participants to experience working with one of the standard setting methods. The session will conclude with ample time to use the software and ask questions.

Luz Bay is currently the Assistant Vice President leading the team at Measured Progress to assist the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) in setting achievement levels for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in Writing for grades 8 and 12 and conducting a judgmental standard setting study on grade 12 academic preparedness in reading and mathematics. For these two projects, Dr. Bay provided vision and guidance in the development of cutting edge technology for computer-based implementation of popular standard setting methods. Prior to this work with the NAEP program, Dr. Bay led the Data Services and Score Reporting department where she oversaw all the work related to data processing, data analysis, report design, and data quality assurance of assessment results, as well as report design and the production of technical reports.



Susan Cooper Loomis is the Board's chief technical expert on all matters related to the design of the methodology of NAEP assessments and setting of achievement levels. She is also responsible for advising the Executive Director on the development and execution of policy matters related to the overall technical integrity of NAEP assessments, and she has taken a lead in the design and implementation of the Governing Board's program of research on 12th Grade NAEP Preparedness. Prior to the Board, Dr. Loomis directed ACT's contracts to set achievement levels for NAEP for about 10 years, and she also conducted research in college choice, student recruitment and retention, and higher education accountability programs. She held research and college faculty appointments in both political science and geography for several years prior to her work with ACT.



FERPA Consent Rules and Other Allowable Uses of Protected Data

Instructor: Diane Murphy, Connecticut State Department of Education

Schedule: Wednesday Oct. 17th, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

The intent of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) was to protect the rights of students and to ensure the privacy and accuracy of education records. The act applies to all institutions that are recipients of federal aid administered by the Secretary of Education. Recent updates to the regulations governing the implementation of FERPA have important implications for researchers who collect and manage confidential data as well as those who wish to use protected data. The process to give and gain access has been regulated more closely with detailed conditions under which data can be shared and used for analyses. Through her position on the USDE General Statistics Task Force, Diane Murphy works closely with the Privacy Technical Assistance Center regarding state's obligations to ensure FERPA compliance. Her workshop will cover recent changes and describe the exceptions to FERPA consent rules and other allowable uses of protected data.

Diane Murphy has been working at the Connecticut State Department of Education for the past 11 years. She is a senior analyst in the Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation and is principally involved in the analysis of Special Education data. Diane is the state's liaison with the US Department of Education (USDE) for Special Education reporting and serves on the USDE General Statistics Task Force as the national representative for special education data reporting and analysis.



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Correction

The March 2012 issue of the *NERA Researcher* included a review of the book entitled "Ethnicity, Race and Education: An Introduction." The author of the review was Antonio L. Ellis, whose name was regrettably omitted in the March issue.

Northeastern Educational Research Association 43rd Annual Conference, October 17-19, 2012

In-Conference Workshops

Addressing Two Commonly Unrecognized Sources of Score Instability in Annual State Assessments

Instructor: Gary Phillips, American Institutes for Research

Schedule: Wednesday, Oct. 17th, 1:30-4:15 p.m.

This workshop will focus on potential causes of the seemingly random fluctuations seen in many annual state test scores — fluctuations that both the state agency personnel and testing vendors often find difficult to explain. Dr. Phillips has identified and investigated the impact of two underlying sources of error that contribute to the instability of these annual scores: 1) Sampling error variance associated with cluster sampling of students (referred to as design effects) rather than true random sampling; and 2) Error variance associated with equating test forms. The impact of these two sources of error is substantial and is propagated throughout the assessment program statistics, eventually being seen in the unexpected instability or “bounce” of state assessment results that he refers to as “score drift.” He will delineate the steps that can be taken within existing testing programs and within the design of new programs to minimize their impact.

Gary Phillips is Vice President and Chief Scientist for American Institutes for Research (AIR), where he provides senior-level guidance on statistical and psychometric procedures used throughout AIR. Dr. Phillips has a doctorate degree from the University of Kentucky and is internationally known for his expertise in large-scale assessments and complex surveys. He has published or presented over 200 papers, taught dozens of advanced graduate level statistics courses, and presented hundreds of workshops on advanced statistical and psychometric topics. He has presented at many national press conferences, conducted press interviews, and Congressional hearings. His main research interest is, on the one hand, the use of advanced statistical analyses to address difficult research questions and, on the other hand, providing clear communication to policy makers in order to help them make better evidence-based decisions.



Introduction to In-Depth Interviewing as a Method of Qualitative Research

Instructor: Irv Seidman, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Schedule: Wednesday, Oct. 17th, 1:30-4:15 p.m.

This workshop is a hands-on introduction to in-depth interviewing as a means of doing qualitative research. The workshop will integrate presentation, discussion, and practice interviewing. We will focus on basic assumptions of a phenomenological approach to interviewing, interviewing technique, and through discussion of the practice of interviewing, issues inherent in qualitative research.

Irv Seidman is Professor Emeritus, School of Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst and the author of *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, 3rd Edition, Teachers College Press.



An Introduction to Hierarchical Linear Modeling

Instructor: Dena Pastor, James Madison University

Schedule: Thursday Oct. 18th, 8:15 – 11:00 a.m.

This workshop is intended for participants who have heard about Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM), but are unsure about what HLM is or when it should be used. In this brief workshop, participants will learn what is meant by “nested data” and why such a data structure typically results in dependent observations, thus violating the assumption of independent observations underlying many statistical analyses. Participants will also learn about the consequences of violating this assumption and the role the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) plays in capturing whether this assumption has been violated. Traditional approaches for handling the assumption violation will be reviewed and compared

with HLM. To illustrate how HLM is not just an analytical tool to accommodate data when the independent observations assumption has been violated, a wide range of HLM models will be presented exploring several diverse research questions in education.

Dena A. Pastor has a dual appointment at James Madison University (JMU) as an Associate Professor in the Department of Graduate Psychology and as an Associate Assessment Specialist in the Center for Assessment and Research Studies. She received her doctoral degree in quantitative methods from the University of Texas in Austin in 2001 and has been teaching courses in measurement and statistics at JMU for ten years. Her research typically involves the application of latent variable modeling to the study of college student learning and development.



Designing and Moderating Focus Groups

Instructor: Felice D. Billups, Johnson and Wales University

Schedule: Thursday Oct. 18th, 8:15 – 11:00 a.m.

Focus groups are structured, facilitated group interviews that capitalize on a group's synergy and interactions to generate attitudes, opinions and detailed feedback. Designed as a qualitative research strategy, focus group research can be used as an emergent, exploratory approach or as a supplementary approach in a mixed methods design. This workshop is designed for beginning focus group researchers to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct focus groups for dissertation and educational research. A brief overview of focus group purposes and designs, along with techniques for identifying participants and developing the moderator's guide, will comprise the first half of the workshop; an interactive focus group simulation will comprise the second part of the workshop, allowing participants the opportunity to observe a focus group interview 'in action'. The benefits and the challenges of focus group research will be included as part of the workshop's discussion.

Felice D. Billups is a Professor at Johnson & Wales University's Educational Leadership Doctoral Program and teaches courses in Research Methods for Higher Education Leaders and Organizational Theory & Behavior in Higher Education. She also teaches workshops which focus on qualitative research designs and qualitative data analysis strategies. Billups' professional expertise includes higher education administration, institutional planning and research, and institutional accreditation and assessment. Her prior administrative posts include Director of Research & Planning, VP for Institutional Advancement, and Director of Student Information Systems for Rhode Island School of Design. She is an educational consultant specializing in institutional research, strategic planning, and accreditation/self-study for colleges and non-profit organizations, and a New England Association of Schools & Colleges Accreditation Team Chair/Evaluator. Billups' academic research has focused on collegiate culture, organizational theory and behavior, student satisfaction and retention.



Qualitative Software: Introducing NVivo 10

Instructor: Bjorn H. Nordtveit, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Schedule: Friday, Oct. 19th, 10:30-12:00 a.m.

This hands-on workshop is intended as a basic introduction to NVivo 10 and will give you the background to start coding and analyzing qualitative data. The workshop will introduce NVivo's workspace and show how to create and organize a project; how to import and classify documents; and how to create memos and annotations. Further, you will create nodes, code some data, and generate basic reports. To prepare for the workshop, please download a trial version of NVivo 10 from QSR International to your laptop (note that the trial period is limited to 30 days). Bring your laptop with a working version of NVivo installed, together with a sample of your data (three different documents, which can be interviews, articles in PDF format, or other documents you would like to analyze). During the workshop, you will create your own project in NVivo and work with your data.

Bjorn H. Nordtveit is currently serving as an Associate Professor in International Development Education at the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. After more than ten years of work with UNESCO and the World Bank, he received his Ph.D. in International Education Policy from the University of Maryland in 2005, after which he was employed as a Research Assistant Professor at the University of Hong Kong. In this role, he conducted research on aid effectiveness and child protection in a number of Asian and African countries, including recently in Cambodia, China, DRC, Egypt and Guinea. Mainly conducting qualitative research, Bjorn used NVivo 2 to code and analyze data for his Ph.D., and more recently, NVivo 8 and 9 for discourse analysis and work on child labor in Africa.



Northeastern Educational Research Association 43rd Annual Conference, October 17-19, 2012

Conference Registration

Registering for the Conference

Registration for the conference will occur online again this year. Registration includes:

- Free professional development workshops
- Opportunity to hear two wonderful keynote speakers
- Graduate students can receive free mentoring, space permitting
- GSIC sponsored events
- Evening entertainment

Fees

The registration fees for this year's conference are presented below. These fees are slightly higher than last year's registration costs due to continued upgrades in the conference administration process. Even with these increases, NERA remains a very affordable local conference that provides an outstanding value to its attendees.

Regular registration rates for the 2012 conference^a

- Professional members - \$85.00
- Student members - \$30.00
- Retired members - \$20.00
- Special Session (Friday Morning)^b - \$25.00

Late registration (onsite or online after October 1st)

- Professional members - \$100.00
- Student members - \$30.00
- Retired members - \$20.00
- Special Session (Friday Morning)^b - \$25.00

^a To receive the regular registration rates, you *must* register by October 1st.

^b The Special Session rate is for individuals only attending the Special Session for District and State Consumers of Educational Research. This registration fee is not subject to the late registration fee.

Hotel Accommodations

Reserving Your Room at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill

NERA has negotiated affordable room rates for conference attendees. To receive these special conference rates, reservations must be made by Friday, September 28, 2012 either through NERA's webpage or by calling 1-800-228-9290 and mentioning NERA.

Rates

As with previous years, each night's stay at the hotel during the conference includes three full meals. Specifically, each NERA hotel guest receives dinner on the night of their stay and breakfast and lunch on the following day. That means if you reserve a hotel room for Wednesday and Thursday night all of your meals will be covered from Wednesday dinner to Friday Lunch.

Conference stay (Wed. Oct 17th and Thurs. Oct 18th)

- Single occupancy room: \$220 per night plus tax
- Double occupancy room: \$325 per night plus tax (\$162.50 per person includes meals)
- Triple occupancy room: \$430 per night plus tax (\$143.30 per person includes meals)

Pre-conference stay (Tues. Oct 16th)

NERA attendees can stay at the hotel the night before the conference for a reduced rate as well. The Tuesday night special rate is \$129.00 per room. Note: This does not include any meals, so the rate is the same for all occupancy levels.

Graduate student “Quad room”

NERA continues to be an affordable choice for students. The Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill is offering a special Graduate Student quad rate of \$535, which includes meals and accommodations for four students per night, and comes to about \$134 per student per night. This special rate is available for students **ONLY**. Graduate students are responsible for finding their roommates. One student will have to use a credit card to reserve the room for the quad. Each graduate student must also register for the conference individually. (Conference registration requires a separate online form available through the [NERA website](#).)

We look forward to seeing you at NERA 2012!

Call for Nominations for the 2012 Recipient of the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award

Annually, one of the NERA Board of Director's major delights is to award the **Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service**. This is given to a member of long standing who has generously given of self to NERA, to advance its mission and to enable it to thrive. As you will read below, the original statement, which was a preface to the nomination statement about the Award's first recipient, Lorne Woollatt, highlights the intention of the award.

In 1981, just prior to our annual convocation, NERA lost a long-time member and supporter, Leo Doherty. He was one of the earlier members of ERANYIS, was instrumental in its rejuvenation and growth, and was a guiding and steadying hand behind its expansion to NERA as the 300-member regional association it is today.

In addition to his association with NERA, Leo exhibited professional managerial leadership in his relationships with his staff and superiors. He was well-informed, provoked growth in his staff and associates, promoted qualified personnel, provided service to others needing his expertise, and translated the policy of his superiors into operations and products.

Leo was an ethical person. He personally demonstrated how staff should work honestly; he dealt fairly and equitably with his contacts; and he credits those who implemented activities with the achievement results. He was also humane. He encouraged people to commit themselves to goals that were personally meaningful to them, and he defended the individual's right to form appropriate relationships.

In his memory, NERA's Board of Directors, in response to members' requests, voted unanimously to institute the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award. The 2012 NERA Board and the Awards Committee (and recipients of the Doherty Award) encourage creative thinking in seeking the 2012 Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award recipient. Please nominate someone you know in NERA who exemplifies the qualities of Leo Doherty. **Nominations are due by July 1st.** Send nominations and any questions you may have to Darlene Perner, Chair of the Doherty Award Committee at dperner@bloomu.edu. Also please check the NERA website (www.nera-education.org) for information on the NERA Awards.

The Graduate Lounge

The Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC) would like to congratulate **Jessica Marini** from Teachers College, Columbia University and her co-authors for winning the 2011 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award. The paper abstract appears below and a copy of the full paper will be available on the NERA website. The GSIC would also like to recognize the two runners up: **Bozhidar Bashkov** of James Madison University and **Minji Lee** of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The GSIC would also like to take the time to thank our more than 20 raters who volunteered their time and expertise to select our winner; their names will be featured on the GSIC page of the NERA website.

After last year's conference, papers were submitted for consideration by 14 graduate students representing 10 different institutions. We encourage all graduate students to submit their papers for this year's 2012 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award. The deadline for submission will be within one week of the end of the 2012 NERA Conference. Start preparing your papers now!

2011 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award Winner

Title: Examining the Linearity of the PSAT/NMSQT-FYGPA Relationship Using Hierarchical Linear Models

Author: Jessica P. Marini, Teachers College, Columbia University

Co-Authors: Krista D. Mattern & Emily J. Shaw, The College Board

Abstract: This study employs a hierarchical linear model (HLM) approach to explore the linearity of the relationship between Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) scores and first-year college GPA (FYGPA) and expand on previous related research. Similar to previous research, this relationship was explored over the entire PSAT/NMSQT score scale range (60 to 240), known as the Selection Index, as well as the upper end of the score scale (≥ 200) where initial screening decisions are made for scholarship programs conducted by National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The results of the current study showed, as in prior studies, that the PSAT/NMSQT-FYGPA relationship appears to be linear with only slight deviations from linearity for the full score scale. Also, the HLM results indicated a linear relationship for the subset of students with a PSAT/NMSQT score of 200 or higher, meaning that even among very high scoring students, the PSAT/NMSQT score scale differentiates between students in terms of academic success measured by FYGPA. The findings from this study support the use of the PSAT/NMSQT as a screening tool in the process of selecting Merit Scholarship recipients.

In other news, the GSIC is in the midst of planning events for the 2012 NERA Conference. The GSIC will host the annual Graduate Student Social along with two in-conference sessions:

Obtaining and Maintaining a Career in Educational Research

In this invited panel, leaders in the field of educational research from a variety of contexts will provide useful advice on gaining employment and developing a career in different education-related disciplines. Topics discussed will include interviewing, CV's, promotions, and general advice. An audience question-and-answer session will follow.

Using Simulation in Everyday Research

The GSIC is honored to host this exciting session on simulation practices in everyday research. Invited panelists will discuss how they use simulation techniques in everyday research, best practices for conducting simulation and keeping simulations realistic, useful programs for simulating data, and simulation skills every graduate student should have upon finishing graduate school. This session will feature presentations followed by the opportunity for graduate students to ask questions. Ultimately, the goal of this session is to provide graduate students with the opportunity to learn more about a useful research skill to use in their future research.

Whitney Zimmerman, The Pennsylvania State University
neragraduatestudents@gmail.com

Invitation to work with a NERA Mentor at our 2012 Conference

Christine Clayton, Pace University
 Brian R. Evans, Pace University
 Tom Levine, University of Connecticut

NERA continues to be a place where regional educational researchers learn from each other, and where researchers-in-training find opportunities and resources to compliment those at their home institutions. During the past several years, at our annual conference, we have created a forum for mentoring graduate students that compliments the informal contacts and conversations available at our gathering.

If you are a graduate student who might be interested in having a half-hour conversation with a NERA mentor about your work, please keep reading. If you advise graduate students and think they might benefit from extra mentoring, please keep reading as well. Below, you will find short biographies of NERA Mentors who have volunteered to read work by three mentees and to meet with them at our annual conference.

What is expected of NERA Mentees and Mentors:

- 1) We will inform mentees about whether we were able to pair them to a mentor in August.
- 2) Four weeks before our conference, individual mentees will send their mentor up to 20 pages (double spaced, 12 point font size) of their own work in progress. They could send a dissertation chapter, a portion of a dissertation proposal, a journal manuscript, a grant application, or any similar artifact of research.
- 3) A NERA mentee will spend 30 minutes in an individual meeting with a NERA Mentor. NERA Mentors will come ready to offer whatever suggestions, constructive criticism, or questions they think might help a graduate student given the current stage of their work and ongoing growth.
- 4) We'll ask all involved to make suggestions re: the format as we decide whether to continue it and how we might support and improve this program.

How to apply: Graduate students interested in participating should send an email titled "NERA Mentoring application" to cclayton@pace.edu by 9 p.m., August 1, 2012. Please include in the text of the email itself the following information:

- Your name, position/role, and home institution or organization, [i.e., Joe Jones, Ph.D. candidate (Multicultural Education), University of Delaware.]
- The topic of your research, described in a phrase or sentence.
- The name of the mentee—from the group below—whom you think would be the best fit for your work. We occasionally seek out additional mentors if we know of an experienced scholar and NERA mentor who would be a particularly good match for a graduate student.
- A 150 to 300-word introduction of yourself, your research and/or methodological interests, and the work-in-progress you would like to send to a mentor four weeks before our conference. Please include something about the feedback you might request from your mentor.

Where we have more requests for mentoring than one of our mentors can accommodate, we will choose randomly from those requests we judge to be a very good match for our mentors, and then will choose randomly from those mentees whose work we judge to be a reasonably good match. Please accept our apologies in advance if we are unable to match all who are interested in working with a mentor.

Mentors:

Tom Schram, Associate Professor and Director of Teacher Education, University of New Hampshire
 Dr. Schram is a qualitative research methodologist who has conducted ethnographic and case study

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

research in school and community settings in the U.S. and Brazil. Over the past 22 years he has taught doctoral-level courses on qualitative research design, ethnography, and advanced fieldwork methods; served on dozens of doctoral dissertation committees; and authored a book on conceptualizing and proposing qualitative research. He enjoys opportunities to work with students on any phase of their qualitative research projects including the formation of questions and research design to analysis, interpretation, and write-up.

Lisa Keller, Associate Professor, Research and Evaluation Methods Program, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Dr. Keller has expertise in multivariate statistical methods, generalizability theory, and item response theory. Her research interests include evaluating equating designs, especially in the presence of parameter drift, modeling of student growth, and teacher effectiveness. Dr. Keller would be happy to help students with posing a good research question, designing a study to answer that question, data analysis, and writing and presenting results.

Jennifer Randall, Assistant Professor, Research and Evaluation Methods Program, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Dr. Randall's research interests primarily reflect the measurement issues and concerns she encountered as a classroom teacher, which include the grading practices/philosophies of teachers, the validity and practicality of test accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners, and rater accuracy. Jennifer is also particularly interested in applications of the Rasch Model as well as scale/instrument development. Dr. Randall would be happy to help students using quantitative methods with any aspect of their work from the initial design and proposal of studies through the process of conducting and reporting results.

Communications Committee Report

The 2012 NERA Communications Committee has been busy working on various activities to promote and encourage NERA communications. Some updates include:

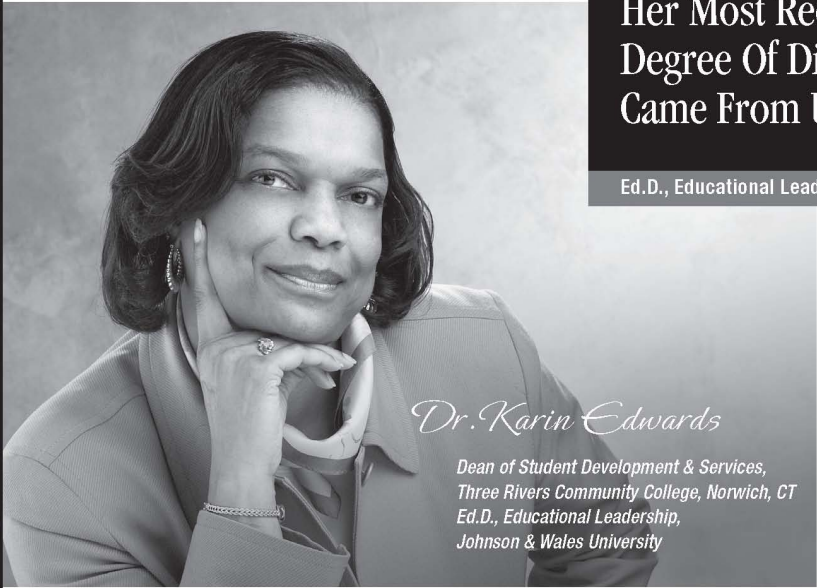
- (1) The full version of the NERA Editorial Guide is available on the [NERA website](#).
- (2) The NERA Branding Guide, which will present new vectorized versions of the NERA logo and the NERA pillars and help streamline all branding for the organization, is in the preliminary stage of development and should be ready by the 2012 conference.
- (3) A second edition of the NERA Editorial Guide that will focus on guidelines for making good PowerPoint presentations is also in the preliminary stage of development and should be ready by the 2012 conference.
- (4) The committee has been asked to serve as interim liaison with the NERA website company and will be coordinating website updates, at least until the 2012 conference.
- (5) The committee has been exploring new innovative ways to encourage increased usage of the NERA social networking websites and members should look forward to seeing these in action shortly. One way the Communications Committee hopes to increase usage of our Facebook and LinkedIn pages is to feature some of your accomplishments on these pages for NERA members to read more about. If you have recently completed a research study or published an article, we invite you to submit a short description of your work and a link (if available) to Marisa Cohen at marisatcohen@gmail.com for inclusion on the sites.

Steven Holtzman
Chair, Communications Committee

Call for Nominations for the Annual Teacher-as-Researcher Award

We still have room for nominations for this important award for teachers who are engaged in classroom research in order to improve their own practices and enhance their students' learning. If you know of any such teachers, please encourage them to apply or nominate them for this award. Particularly at a time when K-12 teachers are being so unjustly criticized for not being effective, it is important that NERA show its support for teachers who clearly demonstrate their ability to engage in high quality professional activities that support their students' learning through self-reflective educational research. The call for nominations and an application form are included in this newsletter. Note that the application deadline has been extended to June 30th. If you have any questions about this award, please contact me at kaplanr@wpunj.edu.

Rochelle Kaplan
Chair TAR Award Committee



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ANNOUNCEMENT

TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER AWARD **sponsored by the**

Northeastern Educational Research Association

The Teacher-as-Researcher Award is presented annually by the Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) to a preschool-grade12 teacher who has conducted a self-initiated classroom research project or applied research findings to inform his or her own teaching. The project must be conceptualized, developed, and implemented as part of the nominee's own teaching practices and have had at least one cycle of tryout and evaluation. The project should also be related to a clearly defined theoretical focus and represent an innovation that has led to some real change in practice.

Classroom teachers are invited to apply directly for this award or be nominated by NERA members, school administrators, faculty mentors, or others familiar with the teacher's research. All applications should be submitted no later than **June 30, 2012**.

The 2012 awardee will be invited to speak about the research project at a session at the annual NERA meeting in October and be presented with the award at that time. The award includes a plaque, NERA membership for one year, and \$150 stipend that can be used however the recipient wishes.

For an application form or other inquiries about the award, contact:

Dr. Rochelle Goldberg Kaplan, TAR Award Committee Chair
Department of Educational Leadership and Professional Studies
1600 Valley Road
William Paterson University
Wayne, NJ 07470
e-mail: kaplanr@wpunj.edu

**NORTHEASTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (NERA)
TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER AWARD APPLICATION
43rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE, October 2012
Hartford Marriott, Rocky Hill, CT**

Name of Applicant: _____

Affiliation of Applicant: _____

Position of Applicant: _____

Mailing Address of Applicant: _____
(after June 1, 2012)

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Attach the following information using the guidelines provided:

1. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF THE RESEARCH
2. ABSTRACT: Please summarize the research project in **no more than 250 words** including its purpose, procedure, and outcomes
3. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH: (**maximum of 1000 words**)
 - a. Rationale for conducting the study
 - b. Description of project methods including participants, site and procedures
 - c. Report and analysis of research findings
 - d. Discussion of the impact of the research on teacher's practices that occurred or will occur as a result of the project
 - e. Bibliography of relevant references related to the research
 - f. Any other information seen as relevant by the nominee
4. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY TO EDUCATORS: Describe how the results contribute to improved educational practice or professional knowledge of educators in your field (**maximum 100 words**).

Name of Nominating Person (if other than applicant) _____

Phone Number _____ Email: _____

Affiliation and Position of Nominating Person: (Please Print)

Signature of Nominating Person: _____ Date: _____

Send the application coversheet and narrative as a Word document to:

Dr. Rochelle Goldberg Kaplan, kaplanr@wpunj.edu, no later than June 30, 2012.

Member News

Susan Rogers and the students of the Psychology Club at SUNY Sullivan recently hosted the 6th Annual Mid-Hudson Psychology Research Conference in Loch Sheldrake, NY. The conference theme of "*The Psychology of Sustainability*" was a huge success, and both undergraduate and graduate student presenters from colleges in the region presented their work. Dr. Renee Bator presented the keynote address on applying educational and social psychology to pro-environmental behavior change on college campuses. This student-centered conference highlights the mentoring and research occurring in higher educational settings in the Mid-Hudson valley region of New York state. Individuals from seven area colleges attended, as well as members of the community, and the conference was co-hosted by the students of Psi Chi (the international honor society in psychology) at SUNY New Paltz, and sponsored in part by Psi Chi, the Walmart Foundation, and the Student Government Association at SUNY Sullivan. For more information see: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/midhudsonpsyconf/>

Tony Fruzzetti was promoted to Full Professor in the Marketing department at Johnson & Wales University, Providence, RI.

Nicholas Daniel Hartlep will be an Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations at Illinois State University in 2012. The position is a tenure track position. Hartlep is currently an Advanced Opportunity Program Fellow at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. He is the Past-Chair of the Graduate Student Council of the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

Katharyn Nottis and engineering colleagues Margot Vigeant and Michael Prince, all from Bucknell University, have been selected as the recipients of the 2012 William H. Corcoran Award. This award, administered through the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) and sponsored by the

Eastman Chemical Corporation, is presented each year to the authors of the most outstanding article published in the journal *Chemical Engineering Education*. Their paper is entitled "Development of Concept Questions and Inquiry Based Activities in Thermodynamics and Heat Transfer: An Example for Equilibrium vs. Steady-State."

Robert Gable, Director of the Alan Shawn Feinstein Graduate School's Center for Research and Evaluation, at Johnson & Wales University received honors as co-author with Cheryl Beck from the University of Connecticut for two recent journal articles. The first article contained an invited data analysis for postpartum depression survey data gathered by Carol Sakala of the Childbirth Connection in NY and Eugene Declercq from Boston University from a national survey of 1,573 mothers participating in a federally funded "Listening to Mothers" project. This article, entitled "Postpartum Depressive Symptomatology: Results from a Two-Stage US National Survey," was published in October 2011 in the Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health, 56(5), 427-435. The article recently received the 2012 Best Original Research Award from the American College of Nurse-Midwives. The presentation of the award certificate and honorarium will be at the ACNM Annual Meeting & Exposition in Long Beach, CA in October.

The second article by Beck and Gable, entitled "Secondary Traumatic Stress in Labor and Delivery Nurses: A Mixed Methods Study," analyzed quantitative and qualitative data from a national sample of 464 labor and delivery room nurses. This in press article in the Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing was invited by the International Marcé Society Biennial Congress to be presented at their October meeting in Paris as part of a symposium entitled "Contribution of Nurse Researchers to Advancing the Science of Perinatal Mental Health."

Pamela Kaliski was promoted to Associate Psychometrician at the College Board. Pamela began her career at the College Board in 2008 and completed her Ph.D. in Assessment and Measurement in 2009 at James Madison University.

Conference Announcement

Conference Announcement: Teach Your Children Well: A Conference to Honor Ron Hambleton. November 9-10, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. Registration and call for posters now open. See www.umass.edu/ronference for more information.

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Call for Nominations for the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring

The Thomas F. Donlon Award for Distinguished Mentoring was established in 2000 in recognition of Tom's long and valued contributions to NERA, particularly as a mentor to so many colleagues. Since then the award has been presented annually to other NERA members who have demonstrated distinction as mentors of colleagues by guiding them and helping them find productive paths toward developing their careers as educational researchers.

The practice of mentoring in education has been going on for centuries and most of us can name a person who helped us move our careers along by being more than just a friend or colleague. That person may have been an advisor in developing your research agenda or perhaps brought you to NERA for the first time after suggesting that you might be ready for a conference presentation.

At this time nominations are again being sought for this annual award. Nominees must be NERA members and may be nominated by any member(s) of NERA to whom they served as mentors. If you would like to see a member of NERA who was your mentor be recognized for his/her contributions to your success, send your nomination to **Stephen G. Sireci via email at sireci@acad.umass.edu by July 1, 2012**. In addition to the nomination letter, all nominations must be accompanied by *at least three letters of support* indicating the ways in which the nominee distinguished him/herself as a mentor. Up to five separate letters of support can be sent for each nominee. The award will be presented at the annual 2012 NERA conference. Please contact Steve if you have any questions about the Donlon Award or the nomination process.

A Special Thank You to Infinite Blue!

In 2006, NERA went through a number of changes – updating the look of its website, and moving the conference out of Ellenville. With the assistance of Barbara Helms we found Jaime Bernard, owner of *Infinite Blue Creative*. Working with Barbara, *Infinite Blue* developed “logos” for NERA– the “columns and books” are still our website's background. On September 13, 2007 we went live with this totally newly designed website and the reaction from members was incredible. They loved the logo, and the new features like being able to register online, renew membership online, and make payments online. Over the years, *Infinite Blue Creative* maintained the website, and Jamie scoured the *NERA Researcher* each quarter to make sure members were getting the most up-to-date information. Jamie has always been available to make a snap update when something changed at the last minute. NERA extends a special thank you to Jamie and *Infinite Blue* for great service and helping us move into the new millennium.

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Founded in 1947, the Council is best known for administering the Law School Admission Test (LSAT®), with over 150,000 tests administered annually at testing centers worldwide. LSAC also processes academic credentials for an average of 85,000 law school applicants annually, provides essential software and information for admission offices and applicants, conducts educational conferences for law school professionals and prelaw advisors, sponsors and publishes research, funds diversity and other outreach grant programs, and publishes LSAT preparation books and law school guides, among many other services.

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