

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

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The NERA Researcher

Volume 48, Issue 2

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The President's Message



Katharyn Nottis

Interdisciplinary Partnerships: Multiple Disciplines in Dialogue

As an educational psychologist, I assumed I would be doing collaborative research during my career. But, as I have noted previously, my idea of collaboration was narrow. I did not foresee an ongoing association with researchers in other disciplines and certainly not in engineering!

As I reflect on the collaborative work I have done with researchers in chemistry, seismology, and civil and chemical engineering, I realize that there have been many benefits to my being involved with those outside of education and psychology. My willingness to have an expanded vision of research partnerships has led to new possibilities and expanded my research agenda. Although I personally feel there are advantages to participating in interdisciplinary research, I wondered how some of my research partners in engineering viewed our relationship. This presidential message incorporates our collective views about both the advantages and the challenges of interdisciplinary research, demonstrating the 2010 conference theme of *Building Research Partnerships*.

There are both advantages and challenges when doing research with those outside your own discipline, although it is the benefits that first come to my mind. One advantage is how my own knowledge base has been broadened. I now have a rudimentary understanding of point and plane group symmetry, plate tectonics, and the relationship among heat, temperature, and energy concepts. I am also aware of some of the common misconceptions that students hold in heat transfer and thermodynamics. From this knowledge, new and interesting research questions have emerged: Why do engineering students have difficulty understanding temperature and energy even after instruction? What is the effect of different instructional methodologies on building accurate scientific understanding of these concepts? How can students' conceptual understanding best be evaluated? At a time when some colleagues report a reduction in research productivity, I have found my research expanding. I have also found that I have a broader perspective regarding career opportunities when advising students and talking with colleagues because of my interdisciplinary research partnerships.

One of my research colleagues, Michael Prince, Professor of Chemical Engineering at Bucknell University, noted that he felt there was more than the acquisition of different content knowledge (personal communication, May 5, 2010). Those involved in interdisciplinary research broaden their thinking as they wrestle with multiple perspectives on research problems and the research process. Prince indicated that engineers favor quantitative methods, "practical problems and practical, cost effective solutions," and hard work. He continued, "Few if any faculty in education truly understand engineering, engineering culture, engineering students or the environment in which engineering faculty work." When researchers from both disciplines work together, each has to understand the perspective of the other or "...the unwritten and unspoken assumptions that develop within disciplines and which we all tend to bring to the table when we begin to examine research questions."

The broadening of perspective, while a real strength, does not usually come easily when researchers from different disciplines collaborate. As Prince indicated,

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Message from the Editors

Greetings NERA Members! We hope you enjoy this issue of the *NERA Researcher*. It is filled with a preview of our 41st annual conference. The program co-chairs have worked hard to put together a wonderful program with the theme *Building Research Partnerships*. Inside this issue is a list of selected program highlights as well as information about the Pre-Conference and In-Conference sessions. Begin reading on page 4 to learn more.

Also in this issue is how to apply to work with a NERA mentor at the 2010 conference. The deadline is July 1, 2010. See the article on mentoring by Tom Levine for more information. If you're looking for a chuckle we recommend Barbara Wert's article titled, Phil Archer-Recapitulation of the Recapitulator.

As announced in the March 2010 issue of the *NERA Researcher* this is Jennifer Kobrin's last issue as co-editor. Jennifer was elected to the NERA Board of Directors and will be focusing on her new role. I would like to thank Jennifer for her service. It has been a pleasure working with her. In her place we welcome Christine Harmes as co-editor of the *NERA Researcher*.

We are always looking for volunteers to write book reviews or education related commentary for future issues. And, as always, please don't hesitate to send us your thoughts and suggestions for improving the *NERA Researcher*.

Jennifer and Kevin

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The President's Message*(Continued from page 1)*

"In our own work, we've both been frustrated by our inability to communicate effectively, perceptions that our views are questioned, not valued or misinterpreted." I recall a major debate about numbers with decimals when I collaborated with a chemist. In her view, decimals had no meaning while in the theoretical model I was using, they did. This and other situations have necessitated my taking time to listen to my collaborators and then, oftentimes, explaining research concepts in ways that do not rely on disciplinary jargon and standardized explanations. Ultimately, teaching colleagues in other disciplines about research methods and statistical techniques has broadened my repertoire of instructional strategies and strengthened my teaching. In turn, I have been taught by my partners and my understandings in new content areas have been enriched and expanded.

Beyond knowledge acquisition, an energized research agenda, and an expanded perspective, interdisciplinary partnerships allow researchers to explore questions that are not isolated solely within one field. As Prince indicated, some research by its very nature crosses disciplines, and engineering education is one of those areas. Prince continued, "...conducting educational research [in engineering] requires an extensive knowledge of educational issues, educational theories and research methods with which engineers are generally not familiar...Interdisciplinary research provides opportunities for true expertise that spans the necessary range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary to do quality work."

Interdisciplinary research can also be an effective way to study challenging research questions that need multiple perspectives. Another research partner, Margot Vigeant, Associate Dean of the College of Engineering and Associate Professor in Chemical Engineering at Bucknell University noted the following, "...stronger novel solutions to existing problems arise better from people with a depth of training and experience in one field than from those who have a little knowledge across a variety of fields. So it makes sense to work with a group, with each individual representing deep understanding in a particular area" (personal communication, May 6, 2010).

Educational researchers can strengthen the learning and assessment research in content disciplines while simultaneously enriching their own knowledge base and revitalizing their research agenda. There are exciting opportunities! As Prince indicated, "...my own sense is that all of the truly interesting, cutting edge work occurs at the boundaries of traditional disciplines..." When interdisciplinary opportunities come to you, I hope you will be open to building new research partnerships.

Member News

Dr. Robert K. Gable, Director of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at Johnson & Wales University, recently received the Faculty Appreciation Award for outstanding service, loyalty, and dedication from the Johnson & Wales University Alumni Association. The doctoral program's 196 alumni are part of the JWU 80,000 member Alumni Association with graduates representing 80 countries.

Dr. Maria Martiniello was named the second place winner in the 2010 American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education Outstanding Dissertation Competition.

Nicholas D. Hartlep, a Ph.D. student in urban education and social foundations of education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, was elected Graduate Student Council Chair-Elect for the American Educational Research Association. Mr. Hartlep also recently published a book review in the *Journal of At-Risk Issues* (in-press for spring 2010).

Drs. Carol Barry, Jeanne Horst, and Ross Markle from James Madison University defended their dissertations on April 8, 2010. Dr. Barry is now working as an Assistant Research Scientist at the College Board, Dr. Horst is an Assistant Professor at Eastern Mennonite University, and Dr. Markle is

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Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

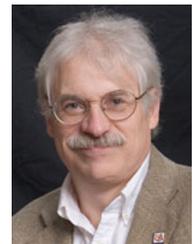
Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

Join us for the 2010 NERA Conference! We are preparing an exciting program loaded with high quality workshops (offered free as part of your registration) and sessions representing all facets of the research community.

Selected Program Highlights

Keynote Speaker:

We are so excited to have Dr. Burke Johnson, Professor at the University of South Alabama as Keynote Speaker. Dr. Johnson is the author with Larry Christensen of *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. The title of his keynote speech will be: *Can the Philosophy and Practice of Mixed Methodology Help Us Construct a More Inclusive "Education Science"?*



In this presentation, Dr. Johnson will provide an overview of the current state of the field in mixed methodology and discuss how it might mediate the longstanding qualitative-quantitative schism in education. He will trace the intellectual history out of which mixed research emerged, and he will briefly discuss its current philosophies and approaches to practice. He will carefully explain how researchers can reconcile some of the epistemological differences between "pure" qualitative and quantitative research and distinguish a new set of philosophical underpinnings for mixed research. He also will address why mixed methods research fits well with interdisciplinary and practice-oriented fields such as many areas in educational research. Then Dr. Johnson will present the tenets for an "inclusive education science" and dialogue with the audience about the strengths and weaknesses of these tenets to learn how they might be improved.

Pre-Conference Workshops:

Survey Design and Development by Katherine McCormick
NVivo 8 Fundamentals - All Day Training - by Kelly Godfrey

In-Conference Workshops:

Mixed Methods Design and Analysis with Validity by Burke Johnson
Structural Equation Modeling by Sara Finney
Collaboration by Jan Stivers and Sharon Cramer

Invited Panels:

Collaboration and Teaming by Valerie Jackson, Linda Catelli, Patricia Ann Marcellino, Yaoying Xu and Elizabeth Mauch
Tenure Survival Skills by Darlene Perner, David Moss, Thomas Levine and Craig Wells

Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC)-Sponsored Sessions:

Finishing School and Getting a Job
Measurement Issues in Practice

Proposals can be sent now, but are due by **June 1, 2010**. Please send your proposals by email to neramembers@gmail.com. Include the proposal cover sheet, summary, and description in separate text documents as indicated in the proposal submission directions online – www.nera-education.org.

We look forward to seeing you at NERA 2010!

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Pre-Conference Workshop October 20, 2010

We are pleased to offer two pre-conference training sessions! Pre-conference session A runs from 10:00 am to 12:45 pm and pre-conference session B runs from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm on Wednesday, October 20. These are great opportunities to learn in-depth about a topic taught by experts in the field — **at no charge!** Pre-registration is required. Pre-conference Session B will be limited to 15 participants and is a full-day workshop.

Pre-Conference Session A

Title: Survey Design and Development

Presenter: Katherine McCormick, University of Kentucky

The purpose of the training session is to provide attendees with an overview of survey design.



Dr. Katherine McCormick is an Associate Professor in Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education and holds the James W. and Diane V. Stuckert Service-Learning Professor in the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling. Dr. McCormick was recently appointed by Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear to the Kentucky Early Childhood Development Authority. Her research with other colleagues at UK includes a three-year research and evaluation project of the Kentucky primary program and a seven-year federally funded project to study transition for young children with disabilities and their families across the early childhood years. Her work with the Endowment includes work on campus to encourage more faculty to use service-learning in their coursework and to promote the inclusion of service-learning and engagement into UK promotion and tenure policy. Most recently, she has focused her efforts on international service-learning in Ecuador.

Pre-Conference Session B

Title: NVivo 8 Fundamentals

Presenter: Dr. Kelly Godfrey, The College Board

This session is a training for QSR International's NVivo software, a powerful qualitative data analysis tool that allows users to simultaneously code audio, video, picture, and text within one interface. Participants will receive hands-on training in data preparation, importing, coding, conducting queries, and demonstrating and sharing findings using NVivo. A laptop and pre-installed version of NVivo 8 (free trial or full version) is required.

Dr. Kelly Godfrey is an Associate Research Scientist at the College Board. She received her doctoral degree from the Educational Research Methodology department at UNC Greensboro, and has been a trainer for QSR's qualitative analysis software for over 6 years. Her research focuses primarily in psychometrics, including IRT and test equating, and program evaluation, including



mixed methods and responsive evaluation approaches.

SAVE THE DATES!!!

June 1, 2010

Proposals Due

June 15, 2010

Proposals to Reviewers

July 15, 2010

Completed Reviews Due

August 15, 2010

Notification of Proposal Acceptance

September 1, 2010

Conference Schedule Disseminated

October 1, 2010

Special Hotel Rates End

October 20-22, 2010

NERA's 41st Conference

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

In-Conference Workshops October 21-22, 2010

We are pleased to offer three in-conference training sessions! These sessions will run on Thursday and Friday at various times during the conference. These are great opportunities to get an introduction to a topic taught by experts in the field **at no charge!** Pre-registration is not required.

In-Conference Session A

Title: Mixed Method Design and Analysis with Validity

Presenter: Dr. Burke Johnson, University of South Alabama

This workshop will cover some of the nuts and bolts of mixed methods research. Current thinking on the following topics in mixed research will be briefly examined: appropriate research questions, sampling methods, typologies of mixed research designs, and data collection and analysis strategies. Special attention, throughout the workshop, will be given to “legitimizing” mixed methods studies using the nine Onwuegbuzie and Johnson validity criteria. Exemplary studies will be addressed as models of practice. Participants’ insights and questions will be discussed as time permits, and sources for additional information will be provided. Dr. Johnson also will provide a copy of his *Primer of Mixed Methodology*, so bring your jump drive to receive a copy.

Dr. R. Burke Johnson is professor at the University of South Alabama. Dr. Johnson is the author with Larry Christensen of *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. Dr. Johnson received his doctorate from the Research, Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics Program at the University of Georgia. Dr. Johnson has two master’s degrees in psychology and sociology. His research interests are in mixed methods research, evaluation, and research methodology.



In-Conference Session B

Title: An Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling

Presenter: Sara Finney, James Madison University

The purpose of the training session is to provide attendees with a general overview of structural equation modeling (SEM) by introducing path analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and full structural equation modeling. We will start with path analysis, which models relationships among measured variables, then move to CFA, which is simply an extension of exploratory factor analysis, and finish with full structural models involving latent variables, which essentially merges path analysis and CFA. The advantage of the latter is that theories may be tested by estimating relationships between the underlying constructs of interest, rather than estimating relationships between observed variables that are contaminated by measurement error. Links will be made between these techniques and other more familiar techniques such as multiple regression and exploratory factor analysis. For each SEM technique, the following steps in the analysis process will be explained: model specification, model identification, model-data fit evaluation, and parameter estimate interpretation. This 1.5 hour workshop requires no prior experience with SEM.

Dr. Sara Finney 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, where she teaches courses in structural equation modeling and multivariate statistics. In addition to serving as a faculty member for the Assessment and Measurement Ph.D. program, Dr. Finney coordinates the Quantitative Psychology Concentration within the Psychological Sciences M.A. program at JMU. Much of her research involves the application of structural equation modeling techniques to assess the functioning of self-report measures.



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In-Conference Session C

Title: Collaboration for Scholarship Results: Guidelines for Maximizing Outcomes, Enjoyment and Learning

Presenters: Jan Stivers, Marist College, and Sharon Cramer, Buffalo State College

This interactive workshop will enable participants to gain new insights about how they work with others throughout the writing process. The presenters, who have collaborated long distance on two joint articles and a research project resulting in a book, have also served as informal resources to each other on independent projects. This session will enable participants to develop new skills and enthusiasm for transforming the solitary scholarship experience into one that (when shared) can include candor and celebration.



Dr. Jan Stivers is Professor of Special Education at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where she has team-taught classes and led college-wide collaborative efforts (for example by co-chairing the Middle States Self Study). Jan also serves as a consultant to school districts implementing inclusive education, with a focus on collaboration and co-teaching. As a researcher and writer, she has worked alone and in collaboration with others, most recently with Sharon Cramer on *A Teacher's Guide to Change: Understanding, Navigating and Leading the Process* (Corwin Press, 2009). Jan will use examples from

teaching, research and service to illustrate the challenges and rewards of collaboration and to offer suggestions for enhancing collaborative skills.



Dr. Sharon F. Cramer is a SUNY Distinguished Service Professor at Buffalo State College, where she has been a member of the faculty since 1985. Her experiences creating collaborative environments in academic settings include chairing the Exceptional Education Department and the College Senate at Buffalo State, as well as serving in leadership roles in state and national professional organizations (including NERA). In 2003, she received the Burton Blatt Humanitarian Award from the Division of Developmental Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children, and in 2008, the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service from NERA. She and her copresenter, Jan Stivers, recently collaborated on *A Teacher's Guide to Change: Understanding, Navigating and Leading the Process* (Corwin Press, 2009). Her publications also include *A Special Educator's Guide to Collaboration* (Corwin Press, 2006). Dr. Cramer has given over 100 presentations and keynotes in 20 states and Canada. She completed her Ph.D. at New York University, earned an M.A.T. from Harvard University and a B. A. from Tufts University. She has been listed in Who's Who in America and Who's Who in American Education since 2006.

Building Research Partnerships - Membership

The theme of this year's conference is *Building Research Partnerships*. This doesn't just happen overnight, it requires laying a foundation and then building, one brick at a time, one step at a time, and sometimes one mistake at a time, until we complete the process. It requires collaboration that often bonds us, not only to our topic, but also to our collaborative partners. It forces us to look at both the materials and the procedure required, not only for the research but also for functioning as a partnership or team. What better way to achieve this type of collaboration than to achieve it one relationship at a time. In our everyday walks, we meet and connect with many educational researchers both in the higher education and assessment realms, to complete research, to commiserate on ideas about research, and even to research the research. So why not go one step further and invite one fellow researcher to attend and collaborate with you at NERA this year. Last year, 357 individuals registered for the conference of the 366 individuals listed as NERA members. Let's double those numbers! It's easy - Reach out to someone, past or present, whose face you have not seen at NERA in a while and invite them to come to this year's dynamic program. Make our slogan for this year's membership - "Each one, Reach One, Bring One".

See you at NERA!

-Barbara Wert, Membership Committee Chair

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Invited Panel on Collaboration and Teaming

The panel will discuss the process of collaboration from different lenses and how the transportable features, research and goals of collaborative relationships can facilitate educational change and reform. A total of five panelists, including a school principal, three research faculty members, and one dean of a college of education, will present their experiences about trans-disciplinary collaboration. The panel will discuss:

- The importance, rewards, and challenges of collaborative research among researchers with different approaches to research methodology, pedagogical and philosophical beliefs, and cultural backgrounds;
- Strategies for conducting collaborative research projects including data collection, data interpretation, and dissemination; and
- Collaboration between education and the sciences.



Ms. Valerie F. Jackson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hampton University, a Master of Arts degree from Adelphi University, a Master of Library Science degree from Queens College and a School District Administrator's Degree from Brooklyn College. Mrs. Jackson has served as an Assistant Principal, Library Media Specialist, elementary school teacher and computer teacher. She was fortunate to be the recipient of the Bill and Melinda Gates Scholarship for her studies in Library Science. Her school has participated in a long-term collaboration with a local college.

Dr. Linda A. Catelli is a Professor of Education at Dowling College and an Associate Professor Emerita at Queens College of the City University of New York. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hunter College, a Master of Arts degree and an Doctoral degree in education from Teachers College, Columbia University. She is the founder of partnership Project SCOPE I & II and is a recognized pioneer in school-college collaboration. She co-edited *Commitment to Excellence: Transforming Teaching and Teacher Education in Inner-City and Urban Settings* and recently co-authored a book entitled *Analyzing Effective Teaching Performance*.



Dr. Patricia Ann Marcellino is an Associate Professor at Adelphi University on Long Island, New York, where she teaches in the Educational Leadership and Technology program. Dr. Marcellino's sole and co-authored articles and book chapters have appeared in the *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation (IJELP)*, *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management (JBAM)*, *Journal of Educational Administration (JEA)*, *Journal of Scholarship & Practice* and *National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) Yearbook*.

Her work appears in the *Sage Encyclopedia of Educational Administration* (2006).

Dr. Yaoying Xu is an Associate Professor in Early Childhood Special Education at Virginia Commonwealth University. Her research interests involve culturally and linguistically appropriate learning contexts for children with diverse backgrounds, and empowering culturally diverse families of young children with disabilities. She has published over 30 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters.



Dr. Elizabeth Mauch received a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Lehigh University. In 1999, Dr. Mauch joined the faculty of Bloomsburg University in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania where she has taught the mathematics content course for elementary and special education majors. She has done extensive research on the topic of retaining students in mathematics, both at the K-12 level and college level. In 2009, Dr. Mauch was named Interim Dean in the College of Education at Bloomsburg University.

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Invited Panel on Tenure Survival Skills

The invited panel will discuss what really goes on behind the scenes in the tenure process. Issues of quality versus quantity in publications, the importance of institutional service, what it means to be a member of a faculty, evaluating your teaching, and other timely topics will be addressed. Practical suggestions will be offered by these faculty members including strategies that have helped them survive and thrive in the tenure process. Additionally, tenure requirements from various universities will be compared and contrasted.



Dr. Darlene Perner is a Professor and Special Education Coordinator in the Department of Exceptionality Programs, College of Education, at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests focus on inclusive education, collaboration, peer supports and state alternate assessments. She has authored several books, articles, chapters in books, and guest editorials. She has been a consultant for several international organizations.

Dr. David M. Moss is an Associate Professor in the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut. His research interests are in the areas of international education, education reform, and environmental education. Dr. Moss has authored over 60 articles, book chapters, and reviews on such topics as student understanding of the nature of science, interdisciplinary education, and teacher education.



Dr. Thomas H. Levine is a sixth-year Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut. His research explores how engagement in collaborative professional communities facilitates opportunities for learning. Along with Dr. Elizabeth Howard, he is currently organizing a faculty learning community among sixteen teacher educators at the University of Connecticut to improve teacher preparation for linguistic diversity.



Dr. Craig S. Wells is an Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the Research and Evaluation Methods Program and also serves as Associate Director in the Center for Educational Assessment. Dr. Wells' research interests include the study of non-parametric item response models, detection of differential item functioning or item bias, and assessment of IRT model fit. He also has a keen interest in the philosophy of science and its applications.



(Member News, continued from page 3)

now the Director of Co-Curricular Assessment and Research at Northern Kentucky University.

Allison Brown, Anna Zilberberg, and James Koepfler from James Madison University successfully defended their theses this past April. Anna and James accepted admission into JMU's Assessment and Measurement Program PhD program, and Allison accepted admission into George Washington University's I/O Psychology PhD program. Allison was also selected as a summer intern in test development and research at the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence.

James Madison University faculty received numerous honors this spring from the Department of Graduate Psychology at JMU. Dr. Donna Sundre was awarded the Distinguished Service Award, Dr. Dena Pastor was awarded the Distinguished Teaching Award, and Dr. Robin Anderson was awarded the Outstanding Junior Faculty Award.

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Registering for NERA's conference is quick and convenient:

- Go to NERA's website, <http://www.nera-education.org/>.
- Choose "Annual Conference." You'll find one link that will bring you directly to the membership and conference registration form and another link that will bring you to the Marriott Hotel's reservations page and the special conference rates.
- Pay for your conference registration and membership using PayPal, a very secure portal for online financial transactions. The NERA website also provides a link for downloading a registration and membership form, which you can print and mail along with a check if you prefer to register for the conference in this way. Note that the conference registration is **free** for graduate students, but graduate students must still register for the conference and **MUST** pay the \$15 annual membership dues.
- Reserve your room and meals for the conference by using the link for the Marriott Hotel.

Reserving Your Room at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill:

Conference attendees may reserve a double or triple and split the regular cost, or may reserve a single room.

The Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill is offering us

- Single occupancy rooms at \$204.45 per night plus tax,
- Double occupancy rooms at \$283.44 per night plus tax, and
- Triple occupancy rooms at \$362.43 per night plus tax.

A room reserved for Wednesday night includes Wednesday dinner and Thursday breakfast and lunch; a room reserved for Thursday night includes Thursday dinner and Friday breakfast and lunch. To receive any of these special rates, reservations must be made by **Friday, October 1, 2010** either through NERA's webpage or by calling 1-800-228-9290 and mentioning NERA. A special rate of \$123 plus tax is available for Tuesday night for both single and double rooms. This rate does **not** include any meals.

The Conference Quad Rate for Graduate Students will continue to be offered along with free conference registration:

NERA continues to be an affordable choice for students. The Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill is offering a special Graduate Student quad rate of \$ 441.42, which includes meals and accommodations for four students per night, and thus comes to about \$110.36 per student per night. This special rate is available for students **ONLY**. The graduate students are responsible for finding their roommates. One student will have to use a credit card to reserve the room for the quad. Remember, each graduate student must also register for the conference individually. Conference registration requires a separate online form available through the NERA website. Graduate students pay only \$15 for their annual membership dues, and pay **no registration fee** for the conference.

Proposals for the conference can be sent now, but are due by **June 1, 2010**. Please send your proposals by email to neramembers@gmail.com. Include the proposal cover sheet, summary, and description in separate text documents as indicated in the proposal submission directions online – www.nera-education.org.

We look forward to seeing you at NERA 2010!

Call for Nominations for the 2010 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 ERANYNS, 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 credited 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 2010 NERA Board and the Awards Committee (and recipients of the Doherty Award) encourage creative thinking in seeking the 2010 Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award recipient. So start thinking about someone you know in NERA who exemplifies the qualities of Leo Doherty and watch for more information on the NERA website (www.nera-education.org). If you have any questions in the meantime, please send them to Gavrielle Levine, Chair of the Doherty Award Committee, at glevine@liu.edu.

2010 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Competition

In 1990, NERA renamed its distinguished paper award to honor Lorne H. Woollatt, a distinguished New York State educator and an active member of NERA. The award, now known as the Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award, is presented annually to a NERA member whose paper is deemed exemplary by the Award Committee.

Any paper reviewed and accepted by the Program Committee and presented at the 2010 NERA Annual Conference may be submitted for competition. Only one paper can be selected, so the Committee is looking for an outstanding paper. We encourage submissions from those who received high marks or positive feedback from the Program Committee reviewers, your session's discussant, or others. The winning paper will automatically be accepted for the 2011 AERA Annual Meeting as part of a session sponsored by the AERA/SIG: Con-

sortium of State and Regional Educational Research Associations (SRERA). The award also includes a monetary stipend to help defray the recipient's travel expenses to AERA.

If you wish to enter your paper into the competition, please email two copies of your paper to the 2010 Committee Chair, Julie Rosenthal <rosenthalj@wpunj.edu> no later than October 30, 2010. Please send one BLIND copy of your paper and one copy with your name and the following information: affiliation, address, email address and phone number.

Please note that the paper is to be based on your NERA presentation and should not include information that differs substantially from that which you actually presented at the NERA conference. Papers in the Research-in-Progress sessions are not appropriate for submission. In addition, papers should be limited to no more than a total of 20 double-spaced pages (not including Tables/Figures or References).

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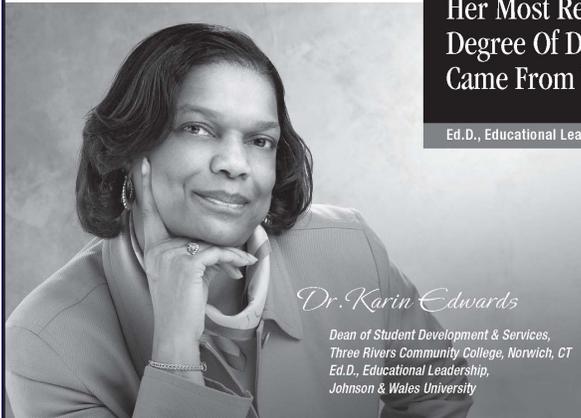
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Call for Proposals Teacher-as-Researcher Award for the 41st Annual Conference

The Teacher-as-Researcher award, established by NERA in 1993 to promote educational research and to encourage the development of research among junior researchers, focuses on recognizing teachers for outstanding efforts to conduct action research in their classrooms and to use the outcomes to improve teaching and learning. Action research can be defined as “a systematic and orderly way for teachers to observe their practice or to explore a problem and a possible course of action. Action research is also a type of inquiry that is preplanned, organized, and can be shared with others” (Johnson, 2009, p.1).

The Teacher-As-Researcher Award is one way NERA can help practicing teachers to become aware of and value the research elements of their daily work and to encourage teachers to assess the impact of teaching strategies and procedures, reflect on the outcomes, and change and reform practice based on the results of their study. Eleven practicing teachers have been recognized for their outstanding contributions and received the award since its inception.

Any NERA member can contribute to the reform of professional practice by seeking out and recommending a teacher whose work is familiar to you and who you believe is worthy of recognition as the NERA 2010 Teacher-as-Researcher awardee. Classroom teachers are invited to apply directly for this award or be nominated by NERA members, school counselors, school administrators, faculty mentors, or others familiar with the teacher’s work. The nominated teacher can be doing research for his/her teaching and/or for a Master’s program.

Please disseminate this information and application for the award* to colleagues in your institutions and to relevant professional organizations. The 2010 awardee will be invited to speak about the research project at a special session at **NERA’s 41st Annual Conference** and will be presented with the award at that time. The award includes a plaque, NERA membership, \$150 toward travel expenses, and two full-days of meals and lodging at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, NERA’s conference site. The runners up to the winner of the award will be invited to present their research at a regularly scheduled paper session or poster session.

If you have any questions about the award, please contact:

Dr. Susan Eichenholtz, Chairperson
Adelphi University
Ruth S. Ammon School of Education
130 Harvey Hall South Street
Garden City, New York 11530
Email: eichenho@adelphi.edu Phone: 516 877-4393 Fax: 516 877-4097

*For application information please go to the NERA website at
<http://www.nera-education.org/awards/award-nominations.php>

Johnson, A. (2009). *What Every Teacher Should Know About Action Research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Phil Archer - Recapitulation on the Recapitulator

When you hear the name Phil Archer, what comes to mind? When you Google Phil Archer, who do you find? The radio actor, the golfer, the Mobile web pro, Channel 2 member, Maltese Falcon character, dentist, economist, and oh so much mo (more),

Our Phil is noted for making us smile,
His recapitulations tend to beguile,

He came to NERA in 1969, When his professors told him, the place was sublime. They hooked him on research and researchers too, From that time forward, no others would do.

Since that time, Phil Archer, has himself become a sort of icon for NERA. He has been President (1986), a member of the Nominations Committee (1987-89) (chair - 1987), and co-editor of the newsletter (1996 - 1999 with Theresa Rooney) (2000 - 2002 with Darlene Perner). However, he is most notably remembered for his "Quips & Quotes" recapitulations that have ended each conference for the last half of our NERA history of 40 years. With a dry humor, humble demeanor, and a similarity of voice reticent of Garrison Keillor from Lake Wobegon, Phil completes each conference with quips that keep us smiling until the next year, when we hope that he will name us in the NERA Recapitulations. Here are just a few:

Mary Horan: We, independent thinkers, have to stick together.

Rolando Santiago (treasurer at the time): NERA is a nonprofit organization. That was never by choice, we seem to stay that way.

Ralph Zalma: If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done.

Sharon Cramer: When asked if she had a reason for being habitually late to Board meetings, "Sure," she said, "It makes them seem shorter."

Jim Flemming: I am starting a new literacy campaign here at NERA. Our slogan is going to be, "Just spell NO."

Theresa Rooney: Phil Archer is on vacation. Requests for his return should be made to the new co-editors.

Kurt Geisinger: I know that most NERA members have drunk at the Fountain of Knowledge and that is fine. The problem is those members who do not know when to stop.

Cheryl Gowie: While a graduate student at SUNY Albany, I learned that a day without sunshine was night.

Steve Sireci: I started out with nothing and I still have most of it.

Liora Schmelkin: We recently had a fire at Hofstra's football dorm that destroyed twenty books. The real tragedy was that fifteen of them had not even been colored in yet.

Rich Schwab: I have learned that as a college administrator, some days I'm the pigeon and some days I'm the statue. If I'm going to succeed, I need to be able to tell the difference between the two.

2009:

Barbara Helms (as past treasurer): There are three kinds of people in the world, those who understand math and those who don't.

Brian Preston: A cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, what is my empty desk a sign of?

Nancy Ellis: Ellis Island for the Ellis Islanders.

Bob McMorris: I base my fashion on what doesn't itch.
Mary Horan: Are you sure Joan of Arc wasn't Noah's wife?

Doug Penfield (during his presidency): There they go. I must go after them for I am their leader.

Phil Archer: I tried doing stand up comedy, but everyone just laughed at me.

Dianne Zager: I didn't say it was your fault. I said I was going to blame you.

Lynn Shelley Sireci: On a positive note, I can definitely tell you that Steve is not two-faced. If he were, he certainly wouldn't be using the one he is using.

Vincent Sireci: My father tried to convince me it was a bigger honor to be listed as second author, but my mother made him put me first.

Jerry Cline (spoken at the end of his presentation): I am now going to say something important.

Darlene Perner: Theresa Rooney told me it's easy to co-edit the *Researcher* with Phil Archer, all you have to do is 90% of the work and give him 90% of the credit.

Scott Brown: UCONN has decided not to give any more letters to basketball players until they learn how to spell.

Judy Robb: Many of my students are studying DNA and already almost half of them know how to spell it.

And finally, from Phil himself: "Educational Research, it's not as boring as it sounds."

Thanks, Phil, for keeping us on our toes for the past twenty years - I hope you will continue to provide quips and quotes for the next twenty.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Yingling Wert,
proud NERA member since 1996.



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The Graduate Lounge

Megan France

The Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC) would like to congratulate Allison Brown from James Madison University and her co-authors for winning the 2009 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award. Allison presented this paper at NERA last October. The paper abstract appears below.

The GSIC would like to thank all of the graduate students who participated in this competition. There were nine total submissions and all papers were of high quality. Also a special thanks Katrina Crotts, Elizabeth Stone, and April Zenisky for volunteering their time to rate the papers.

Title: Modeling Motivation Over the Course of a Testing Period: A Mixture Modeling Approach

Authors: Allison R. Brown, Carol L. Barry, S. Jeanne Horst, Sara J. Finney, and Jason P. Kopp (*James Madison University*)

Abstract: This study was conducted to explore the existence of “types” of test-takers in a low-stakes testing context. Mixture modeling results supported three distinct classes or types of test-takers characterized by different patterns of test-taking motivation over the course of five tests. Classes 1 and 2 had varying levels of motivation whereas Class 3 had a steady level of motivation across the

five tests. Additionally, examination of the relationships between class membership and external variables suggested that the classes could be differentiated by achievement goals, personality, and ability. Expectancy-value theory is used to aid in the interpretation of the results. Implications of these results and directions for future research are discussed with an emphasis on how these results impact assessment practice as the push for educational accountability continues to grow.

The GSIC is pleased to welcome an additional graduate student to our team: Melissa Smythe from SUNY Buffalo. We are excited for Melissa to join our team and help make NERA a positive experience for graduate students.

Melissa Smythe (mksmythe@gmail.com) is a student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy (Social Foundations of Education) at SUNY Buffalo. Currently, she is working on her dissertation that explores the ways in which at-risk students in an alternative high school construct and narrate their identities. She teaches undergraduate computer fundamentals courses at Buffalo State College and in a past life, was a high school biology teacher for six years.



Internet Bullying Project

Stacey L. Kite

School administrators' awareness and development of preventive plans for bullying in schools has become more important in light of the currently increasing discussion of bullying in the national news. For example, the Massachusetts District Attorney recently indicated that the South Hadley, MA ninth grader, Phoebe Prince, suffered a nearly three-month campaign of assaultive behavior and threats of physical harm prior to committing suicide. Currently, nine students are facing criminal charges. In Connecticut, a 2008 law requires schools to report incidences and develop plans to prevent bullying behaviors. The key to these efforts is assessment of what students know about the risks of bullying and what behaviors they are cur-

rently victims of or tend to engage in themselves.

Given the serious issue of bullying, Stacey L. Kite and Robert K. Gable from Johnson & Wales University are continuing their survey research project previously presented at NERA regarding the assessment of middle and high school students' behaviors and knowledge of appropriate use of the Internet and social networking sites, especially behaviors that may lead to cyberbullying or contact with potential Internet predators.

In their current work, they have invited all Rhode Island school districts to administer the *Survey of Knowledge of Internet Risk and Internet Behavior* to all middle and high school students. Later this summer, school-level reports will be returned to the participating districts for educational programming efforts with teachers, students, and parents.

Invitation for you—or your advisee—to work with a NERA mentor at our 2010 Conference

By 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 two years, at our annual conference, we have added a formal arrangement for mentoring graduate students that compliments the informal contacts and conversations available at our gathering.

If you are a graduate student—in any form—who might be interested in having a half-hour conversation with a NERA mentor about your work, please keep reading. Below, you will find short biographies of NERA mentors who have volunteered to read work by three mentees, to meet with them individually on Wednesday afternoon of our annual conference, and in some cases, to hold a group conversation with all of their mentees on Thursday afternoon.

What is expected of NERA Mentees and Mentors.

- 1) Four weeks before our conference—right around the time of notification—four mentees will send their mentor and the other three members of their mentor group up to 20 pages (double spaced, normal font size) of their own work in progress. What they send could comprise a dissertation chapter, a portion of a dissertation proposal, a journal manuscript, a grant application, or any similar artifact of research.
- 2) Any mentee, by participating, agrees to read the three submissions from the three other mentees in advance of the conference.
- 3) A NERA mentee will spend 30 minutes in individual meetings 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 neramembers@gmail.com by 9 p.m., July 1, 2010. Please include, in the text of the email itself:

- 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 mentor—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 member 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 contribute to a mentoring roundtable.

Where we have more requests for mentoring than one of our mentors can handle, 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. Our apologies in advance if, this year, we are unable to match all who are interested with a mentor.

Scott Brown, Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Connecticut

Over the course of his career, Dr. Brown has conducted research—and supported Ph.D. students' research—regarding cognition and instruction, learning in problem-based environments, instructional design, assessment and evaluation. He has experience with using—and advising others in the use of—both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. He has been awarded over \$9M in federal, state and private grants and currently directs the GlobalEd II project. Based on his experiences as an author and journal editor, he can also help graduate students preparing journal manuscripts in areas beyond his own research interests.

Craig S. Wells, Associate Professor, Research and Evaluation Methods, University of Massachusetts

Dr. Wells has expertise in statistical methods, structural equation modeling, generalizability theory, hierarchical linear models, and item response theory. His research interests include the study of non-parametric item response models, detection of differential item functioning or item bias, and assessment of model fit. He also has a keen interest in the philosophy of science and its applications. Dr. Wells 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 and power analyses.

Tom Schram, Associate Professor and Director of Teacher Education, University of New Hampshire

Three fields of interest define Tom Schram's work: (1) qualitative research methodologies: how to conceptualize field-based qualitative research, fieldwork methods, and data analysis; (2) anthropology and education: ethnographic research and culture theories; and (3) teacher education: school-university collaboration and teacher preparation. His research foci have included the life history and socialization of an experienced elementary school teacher; patterns of adaptation among Laotian adolescents in a rural New England community; cultural therapy and educational reform in northeastern Brazil; and how novice researchers conceptualize and design qualitative inquiries. He looks forward to mentoring NERA graduate students who are planning, engaged in, or sharing the results of qualitative research.

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

The Thomas F. Donlan 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 (or members) 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 Rochelle Goldberg Kaplan, William Paterson University, at kaplanr@wpunj.edu by August 1, 2010.** All nominations must be accompanied by documentation indicating the ways in which the nominee distinguished him/herself as a mentor. The award will be presented at the annual NERA conference. Please contact Dr. Kaplan if you have any questions about the Donlan Award or the nomination process.

**Northeastern Educational Research Association
Summary of January 15 & 16, 2010 Board Meeting Minutes
Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill, CT
Submitted by Barbara Yingling Wert, NERA Secretary**

In attendance: Katharyn Nottis, Samantha Feinman, April Zenisky, Sara Finney, Liz Stone, Angela Pang, Jennifer Kobrin, Ali Brown, Thanos Patelis, and Barbara Wert. Barbara Helms, Helen Marx, Maureen Ewing, Dolores Burton, and Peter Swerdzewski attended via conference call. Gary Nottis attended as a guest to assist with technical support.

The meeting began at 11:30 am.

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes: The Board meeting was convened on January 15, 2010 by President, Katharyn Nottis with a welcome and condolences to our members who have recently lost loved ones. The minutes from the October 21 & 23, 2009 Board meetings were approved.

2. Treasurer's Report: Barbara Helms distributed her report, sharing information on the conference. Attendance at the annual 2009 NERA conference increased by 14% over the 2008 conference, with over 300 individuals in attendance. In addition, the cost of publishing the *NERA Researcher* was noted to have been reduced from approximately \$900 to \$337 due to electronic requests for the *Researcher*. A second savings was recouped by using Survey Monkey rather than paper for our election process.

3. 2009 Conference Highlights Report: Liz Stone, Maureen Ewing, & Peter Swerdzewski reported a successful 2009 conference. The pre-conference sessions included 31 attendees who, along with the over 300 conference attendees reported a positive experience. Although the rooms were rather cold, the sessions were lively and well received. (We have been told by the hotel that the temperature issue has been resolved and by the feel of the rooms during our January retreat, I would say the temperature issue has been resolved). More volunteers will be needed to "person" the conference registration desk next year. Suggestions from your evaluations are all being considered. Technology seemed to be the biggest concern and different layouts/plans for the poster session are being considered. Overall reviews and suggestions from participants were positive.

4. Digital Commons Report: Helen Marx and Tom Levine reported that thirty six papers were submitted for publication on the Digital Commons this year which is a slight increase from the approximate 30 papers submitted in 2008.

5. 2010 Conference Preview: Dolores Burton, Angela

Pang, & Thanos Patelis - Conference Co-Chairs for 2010 reported on the progress for the upcoming conference. The theme for the 2010 conference is: *BUILDING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS*; Keynote speakers are still being contacted and participants for panels are being finalized. A preliminary conference budget was discussed and will be revised shortly.

6. Mentoring Program at Conferences: The mentoring program has grown from one applicant the first year to 10 the second year. The Board voted to continue the program and is recruiting mentors for the coming year. The Board will review and evaluate the program this year.

7. Committee/Task Force Reports:

a. District/State Task Force Report: Thanos Patelis reported that the District/State Task Force had a successful session during the Friday special event hosted exclusively by and for members of the Task Force where growth models were discussed. In attendance were approximately 50 persons representing State Departments of Education, Higher Education faculty, and representatives from the Center for Assessment from the Univ. of Conn, graduate school. Members from UConn handled registration and are hosting a web centre for papers from the session. CEUs were offered and all in all the special session (mini conference) was a huge success. Due to the success of the session, the task force has been upgraded to an Ad Hoc committee on the NERA Board. It is hoped that this special session will become its own mini-conference and will also prompt attendees to participate in NERA and the NERA 2010 conference. In addition, it is hoped that a spring session will be added to the fall event with possibly a webinar format to reach a wider audience.

b. Membership Committee Report: Liz Stone reported on needs for this committee, which include appointing a new chairperson and maintaining a graduate student representative; finding ways to retain and gain new members; and creating a listing of members who did not attend the Fall conference so that they may be contacted to encourage their participation. Ideas for activities to welcome new members at the conference were discussed. A motion to provide a regular budget of \$600 to support activities for the committee was approved.

c. GSIC Report: Allison Brown reported on the development and use of an online survey to graduate students following the conference to determine interest and opinions in graduate student events and the overall conference approval. Only nine of the 108 graduate student attendees responded. According to respondees the graduate social was successful and will be continued. Graduate students reported that they were unaware that special tables were provided at lunch so that they could network

with other graduate students. Also, many did not attend meals (if they were not staying over) as they were too expensive. These comments have led to consideration of some sort of special package or specially priced meal tickets for graduate students to offset the high cost of food. Also, a flyer or poster at the registration table featuring graduate student events was suggested. A best paper award has been established and a winner of the award is currently being considered. All in all, conference sessions targeting graduate students were well received. There is still a need for two more graduate students on the GSIC.

d. NERA Researcher Report: Jennifer Kobrin reported on a discussion to expand the roles of the co-editors for the *NERA Researcher*. A possible third editor may be needed for the additional tasks set for the editors, which include posting of institutional advertisements. The editors are still checking on costs and alternatives to the PDQ Company who currently prints our paper copy of the *Researcher*. Although the electronic version is a huge success, we still have members who like the mailed copy of the *NERA Researcher*.

e. Awards Committee Reports:

Leo Daugherty Award - The current committee has two members. There is a need for one more person.

Donlon Award- This year there were two nominations for the award. Discussion ensued about how to encourage more nominees possibly by linking this award to the mentoring award.

Teacher As Researcher (TAR) Award - There is still a need for two more persons to serve on this committee. This committee is looking at ways to expand advertisement for the award as no one was nominated this past year.

Lorne Woolatt Distinguished Paper Award - A great big thank you was extended to Craig Wells for his dedication and service to this committee as he retires his post as chairperson.

*A discussion on how to recognize individuals for their dedication to these committees in particular and other committees in general ensued. There is a need to recognize individuals and a need to provide a mechanism for honoring or at least recognizing them for their service (on the Board as well). The idea of possibly recognizing them in the *Researcher* and in the conference program was discussed.

f. Fundraising Committee Report: Sara Finney and Katharyn Nottis reported that thank you letters are currently being sent out to institutional memberships. They hope to have more institutional memberships for the

coming conference. The Board gives our deepest appreciation to those who contributed in past years.

g. Nominations Committee - A discussion about the nominations procedure clarified the current process. First, the nominations committee puts forth names, then members are assigned by the President, after she contacts the persons of interest to see if they wish to participate on that particular committee. After that contact, names are confirmed, the liaison for the particular committee informs the committee, and the chair of each committee personally contacts the new member(s). After discussion of the process, the chart of committees and members from our Past President was reviewed and updated.

h. Communication Committee Report: The responsibilities of the Communications Committee currently include the *Researcher*, the website, and the conference proceedings. This committee replaces the Technology Committee. It is deemed important for the Communications committee to have a charge which should be listed in the Handbook. The committee will begin the process of outlining their goals for the Board.

i. Site Selection Committee Report: Thanos Patelis reported that the committee will begin talking to our current hotel representatives this year while researching other locations throughout the summer.

j. Governance Committee Report: Kristen has begun the process of updating the Handbook.

8. New Business

Action Items for the Board have been stated so that members can think about these for future meetings.

a. Additional benefits to members. Ideas such as a ListServe for in-depth and frequent communication and an online journal were discussed. The Board was challenged to think of other ideas for the next meeting.

b. Ways to include more members in committee activities.

c. A brief discussion about holding a reception for NERA members who attend the AERA convention considered whether to hold or not hold a reception this year. The groups unanimously voted not to provide a separate reception but to make our presence known at some of the other (many) receptions already set for the conference.

The two-day retreat adjourned at 11:39 AM on Saturday, January 16th.

Academic Integration of Doctoral Students: Applying Tinto's Model

Felice D. Billups
Associate Professor, Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership
Johnson & Wales University

Doctoral students comprise a unique population with special needs and concerns. While considerable research has investigated graduate student satisfaction and retention (Brandes, 2006; Golde, 1998; Tinto, 1987), much of the research views graduate students as extensions of undergraduates in terms of their motivations and needs.

Tinto's Academic Integration Theory

Tinto's (1987) academic integration theory has been used by researchers as the platform by which to examine the relationship between student satisfaction and institutional integration. Originally intended to frame the undergraduate experience, Tinto measured student satisfaction across six transformative dimensions, ranging from growth and development to self-actualization. Other researchers (Elliot, 2003; Golde, 1998) support Tinto's model by stressing the relationship between student satisfaction and the extent to which an institution supports students during their educational tenure.

Graduate students, and doctoral students in particular, exhibit significantly different characteristics and needs compared with their undergraduate counterparts (Ladik, 2005; Polson, 2003). Applying Tinto's model to doctoral students allows for a new perspective on how this population can be better supported. Viewing the six dimensions through the lens of the doctoral student experience suggests that institutions must utilize different strategies to enhance their educational experience.

The dimensions, modified for the doctoral student population, include:

Educational experience: The extent to which doctoral student expectations are met relative to course content, rigor, quality, and challenge; many doctoral students require a greater emphasis on the development of specialized research skills, and peer-to-peer learning in the classroom.

Development of skills & knowledge: The extent to which students are able to learn, to think critically, develop problem-solving skills, synthesize material and analyze information;

Faculty contact: The extent to which students are satisfied with academic advising, accessibility of faculty, and the quality of their interactions with faculty; doctoral students, in particular, are highly dependent on a close working relationship with faculty (Weidman & Stein, 2003).

Personal and social growth: The extent to which personal and/or social growth is experienced and developed by the student; doctoral students are not interested in the same types of social and personal programs that undergraduates seek. While support services may seem incidental to the graduate student experience, a thoughtful and intentional program may affect student satisfaction, persistence, and a greater sense of connectedness with the institution (Pook, 2004).

Sense of community: The extent to which students feel a sense of belonging and being welcomed by the institution, both broadly and within their individual disciplines. In addition to personal relationships, students may form a relationship with the institution's organizational identity and culture (Bhattacharya, Rao, & Glynn, 1995); Caple (1995) and Lovitts (2001) suggest that the graduate student's need for community stems from the isolation of their educational experience, i.e., their specialization within an academic discipline and the solitude inherent in conducting dissertation research.

Overall commitment to and satisfaction with institution: The extent to which students feel they have selected the right institution for their aspirations, and the sense that they would select the institution again, given the chance; several researchers (Brandes, 2006; Golde, 1998; Lawson & Fuehrer, 2001) offer perspectives on the doctoral student's assimilation to their campus culture, highlighted by their peripheral role in the campus community. Strengthening their sense of belonging will likewise strengthen the doctoral student's commitment to their institution, thereby strengthening their overall satisfaction.

Researchers confirm that doctoral students become socialized differently than other graduate or undergraduate students and seek different levels of engagement with faculty, peers, and their institutions. Applying Tinto's (1987) model of integration further confirms the need to re-conceive the nature of student support services for doctoral students.

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