

The NERA Researcher

The President's Message



Spring is here! As I look through old NERA newsletters, many presidents discussed the joy of the arrival of spring. Although I am very excited about the warmer weather and all the opportunities that come with it, there are tons of other emotions comingled this year. This spring follows what has been a difficult and challenging year for a myriad of reasons. Over the past year, many of us have experienced the passing of close family and friends, have been sick or had family and friends who were sick with COVID-19 or otherwise, lost their jobs, been furloughed, been separated from loved ones, been forced to juggle the work-life balance of caring for children while working from home,

or braved other pandemic-related challenges. We have suffered injustice, faced challenges from natural disasters, and watched numerous unsettling newsworthy events unfold.

However, as spring arrives, I am excited about the potential of hope on the horizon among the current sea of uncertainty. More and more people are getting vaccinated each day, some people are safely able to finally see family and friends that they haven't seen for months or are able to travel in a safe manner, and more signs of the "new normal" are appearing. However, there is still an unprecedented level of uncertainty: How long do COVID-19 vaccines last? Are they resistant to variants? Should my child continue to do school remotely? Are daycares and summer camp safe? Where can I safely travel? When will I return to my office or school in-person? Will there be another COVID-19 surge? What will the summer and fall look like? What will the NERA 2021 conference look like? Although I don't have the answers to these questions, I encourage us to approach the coming months keeping in mind the power of positivity.

Although there have been countless losses in the past year that can never be replaced, I encourage each of you to find and concentrate on the positivity in our current lives. As the saying goes, it's always good to "turn lemons into lemonade." Looking back at the past year, I have had the chance to share invaluable time with my 18-month-old daughter while working from home. I hope you can each find at least one thing you were able to gain from the pandemic.

I think we will also be leaving the past year with a different mindset toward many aspects of life. I recently read an interesting opinion piece listing

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The NERA Researcher

The NERA Researcher is the official newsletter of the Northeastern Educational Research Association.

Message from the Editors

Dear NERA Members,

Happy spring! We hope you and your families and loved ones are safe and well. Plans are well underway for the 52nd Annual NERA Conference. Our co-chairs-- Hank Johnson, Haifa Matos, Liz Spratto, and Jonathan Steinberg--have been busy putting together a great agenda based on this year's conference theme: "Using Data to Solve Education's Challenges." To find out everything you need to know to submit your proposal, you'll find a wealth of information on pages 6-14.

In Steve's president's message you'll find lots of information about the great webinars NERA has created for the coming months. You'll also learn about two new NERA committees: Underrepresented Groups and Membership Advocacy.

It's time to start thinking ahead and planning for the upcoming NERA election. On page 15 check out the call for nominations for 2021.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and if you have any ideas for the NERA Researcher, including ideas for special articles, please contact us at theneraresearcher@neraeducation.org.

We look forward to seeing you at the 52nd Annual NERA Conference, October 13-15.

Stay safe, well, and healthy,
Barbara J. Helms & Kate Nolan
The Editors

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Appointed Positions

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Membership Committee: Underrepresented Groups Chair

Madison Holzman
Curriculum Associates

"24 ways we've changed during the pandemic that I hope never change back" (<https://www.nj.com/coronavirus/2021/04/24-ways-weve-changed-during-the-pandemic-that-i-hope-never-change-back.html?fbclid=IwAR2mqPCxafpivQMZskwUQhytvHIIxFoR3SbZohQYCqXvMkQWQRgQ9iUujH8>), which mentions many changes that we have embraced that I hope we can retain going forward. Although all 24 are important to consider, there are a few that I would like to examine in relation to NERA.

- **Really asking how your friends and family are doing:** When talking to our members, one thing I always hear and deeply value is NERA being a community. Beyond being an educational research association and a yearly conference, our members come back because of the connections made. Throughout the past year, I can think of countless times where members have been sick, been involved in car accidents, lost loved ones, gotten engaged, moved, had children, changed jobs, earned new degrees and gotten promotions, and each time, the NERA family has been there, either with support or congratulatory wishes. These positive relationships are vital, particularly during challenging times and I thank the NERA community for building and fostering these.
- **Appreciating teachers:** Through remote learning, parents have finally had the opportunity to see first-hand the difficult work of teachers and other educational practitioners. This appreciation is overdue. I hope that NERA members in these roles continue to receive the credit they truly deserve.
- **We got better at virtual:** We have all learned more than we ever thought we would want to know about Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meets, Go-To-Meeting, Whova and other online platforms. However, this knowledge allowed NERA to hold a wonderful virtual 2020 conference and is currently being leveraged to host many NERA webinars throughout this year. Thank you to the presenters and those who attended our November, March and April webinars. We have the following webinars planned for the coming months:
 - May 14, 2021 – *Leadership Panel: Managing Your Career* – hosted by the NERA Mentoring Chairs
 - June 2021 – *Qualitative Data, Qualitative Tools, Qualitative Designs: Putting It All Together!* – presented by Felice Billups, Johnson & Wales
 - July 2021 – *Demystifying Peer Review Processes: A How-To Conversation for Proposals and Manuscripts* – hosted by NERA's Doherty Committee
 - August 2021 – *Job Searching* – hosted by the NERA Mentoring Chairs
 - September 28, 2021 – *Habits of Mind* – hosted by NERA's Educator-as-Researcher Awards Committee

Ultimately, regardless of whether the 2021 NERA conference is virtual or hybrid, this experience will help make the conference a success. On that note, the NERA 2021 conference co-chairs are collecting data from multiple surveys about members' preferences and other considerations regarding the format of the conference, tracking data from public health updates, and collecting qualitative data about travel restrictions and travel budgets at NERA members institutions. Additionally, Hank Johnson, along with our NERA interns, visited the conference hotel in April to explore the procedures that have been instituted to run a conference under the current climate. A careful consideration of these factors

Member News

Charles DePascale (Center for Assessment) the New England Educational Research Organization (NEERO) honored Charlie for his many contributions to the organization by establishing in 2020 the Charlie DePascale Scholarship for Graduate Students. The scholarship awards to two graduate students, identified as individuals who are enrolled in a graduate program seeking an advanced degree, who actively attended the Annual Meeting. To see a video of the announcement, go to: <https://youtu.be/pgF5W0bJ8uI>. Charlie served NERA on the Board of Directors (2011-2014) and President (2016). Congratulations Charlie. We at NERA appreciate all you've contributed and your great support and efforts on behalf of NERA.

Please consider submitting your professional accomplishments to The NERA Researcher for recognition! Submissions may be sent to theneraresearcher@nera-education.org.

will lead to an informal decision in early June as to whether the NERA 2021 conference will be hybrid or fully virtual. More information on the NERA 2021 conference can be found on page 5.

- **Collectivism and volunteerism:** Everything NERA does is a result of the never-ending volunteerism of our members. The service of our board of directors, conference co-chairs, appointed positions, committee chairs, committee members and interns has been invaluable and I am thankful for everyone's help this year, particularly when we are all trying to balance an unprecedented amount of responsibilities and challenges. In this spirit, I want to highlight four NERA volunteers, who have gone beyond their roles to make significant contributions to NERA over the past few months:
 - **Hank Johnson**, NERA 2021 Conference Co-Chair, organized a fruitful relationship between NERA and the New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) where NEIT has provided four interns for 2021 to support and help the conference team and help with NERA's social media presence. In addition, a public health student is helping with conference planning amidst the pandemic and a graphic design student will assist with NERA's imaging. Of course, Hank's negotiation expertise has been priceless with negotiating with the conference hotel and potential conference platform vendors.
 - **Heather Harris**, NERA social media coordinator, served as a mentor for a Winter 2021 NERA intern, creating a set of resources to guide her learning while helping NERA create new social media procedures to improve marketing and cross-pollination. This work will be helpful for future NERA interns this year and has paved a path for NERA's increased social media presence.
 - **Jerusha Henderrek**, NERA webmaster, worked with Vieth, our infrastructure management company, to create new easily-accessible links on our NERA homepage for members to renew their membership and for prospective members to join our mailing list. These improvements will be extremely helpful in making the membership renewal process cleaner and aid our NERA outreach efforts.
 - **Jonathan Steinberg**, NERA 2021 Conference Co-Chair, served as a mentor for a Winter 2021 NERA intern and is serving as mentor for a Spring 2021 NERA intern. With the help of his first intern, Jonathan created a new set of NERA content strands for the NERA Call for Proposals, with informative descriptions for each content strand. These help align the NERA keywords previously used with the 2021 conference theme and the interests of current and prospective NERA members.

Finally, in reaction to the numerous events of racial injustice, NERA condemns all discrimination and violence and will further commit to efforts of social justice. In this spirit, the 2021 conference co-chairs have added a content strand to their Call for Proposals dedicated to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. More information on this and the other content strands can be found on page 7. Additionally, the NERA Board of Directors is reviewing proposals for two new NERA committees during the May Board meeting, the Membership Committee: Underrepresented Groups, and the Membership Advocacy Committee. It is critical for NERA to carry out the proposed missions of these committees. During the May Board Meeting, the Board of Directors will also be reviewing proposed changes to the NERA mission, in light of these efforts.

I wish each of you a wonderful spring and summer and hope you can all use the power of positivity to guide your lives and remain hopeful through these unprecedented times. Please feel free to reach out to me at sholtzman@ets.org at any point, with questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing you all at our forthcoming NERA webinars and at the 2021 NERA conference.

Steven Holtzman, Your NERA President

NERA Conference Overview and Welcome October 13-15, 2021 Trumbull Marriott Shelton, Trumbull, CT or Virtual

Dear NERA Members,

We are looking forward to meeting with you all in October and delivering the 52nd Annual NERA Conference. This year's conference theme is "*Using Data to Solve Education's Challenges*". As co-chairs, we have been working diligently under the guidance of our NERA President, Steve Holtzman, to ensure this year's conference is better than ever! Or at the very least, on par with all of the great conferences that have preceded us. We are excited to offer you meaningful educational research, along with opportunities to engage in stimulating dialogue with colleagues through conference sessions and social networking/entertainment events.

Throughout all of our planning, the health and safety of our members remain our top priority. We thank you for your patience as we continue to monitor and track public health updates and members' feasibility, funding and willingness to travel. Based on this information, a data-driven decision on whether the 2021 conference will be virtual or hybrid will be announced by early June. Regardless of the decision, all members will have the option to present and/or attend virtually if desired.

Below are some of the exciting speakers and featured sessions for this year's conference:

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Wednesday, October 13—Sarah Cohodes, Associate Professor of Economics and Education, *Teachers College, Columbia University*

Thursday, October 14—Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, CEO, *Data Quality Campaign*

INVITED PANEL:

Thursday, October 14—Perspectives on Incorporating Institutional Data into P-20 Infrastructure, Research, and Policy

- **Moderator:** Heather Kelly, *University of Delaware*
- **Panelists:**
 - Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, CEO, *Data Quality Campaign*;
 - Lynn Letukas, Senior Director, Global Academic Programs and Certifications, *SAS*;
 - Kate Akers, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Advanced Data Analytics Shared Services, *Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education*

INVITED SYMPOSIUM:

Date TBD—Developing Intercultural and Global Competencies for Teachers through Global Education

- **Chair:** David M. Moss, *University of Connecticut*
- **Discussant:** Jon Simmons, *University of Connecticut*
- **Presenters:**
 - Laura Baecher, *Hunter College*
 - Helen Marx, *Southern Connecticut State University*

FEATURED WORKSHOPS (Dates TBD):

- Culturally Responsive Data Literacy: A Necessary Skill Set for Educators' Professional Learning Trajectory ([Ellen Mandinach](#), *WestEd*)
- Allyship ([Aronté Bennett](#), *Villanova University*)
- Creating a Strong Personal Brand for Your Services ([Christine Stevens](#), *New England Institute of Technology*; [Heather Harris](#), *Independent Consultant*)
- R Basics and Data Visualization ([Monica Erbacher](#), [James Smith](#), and [Sergio Castro](#), *University of Arizona*)

Additional conference information will be available on the [NERA website](#) as soon as the details are confirmed. Please check back with us to stay informed of this year's conference offerings.

Lastly, we would like to thank the 2020 NERA conference co-chairs, Madison Holzman, Andrew Jones, Thai Ong, and Jonathan Rubright, and past President Ross Markle for delivering a successful 2020 conference amidst the chaos and uncertainty that they faced last year. All of their hard work has helped us tremendously in thinking about options for this year. Thank you also to those who responded to the conference evaluation survey and the conference participation opinion survey. Your feedback is critical to our planning efforts. We look forward to seeing you (one way or another!) in October!

Hank Johnson, Haifa Matos, Liz Spratto, and Jonathan Steinberg
2021 NERA Conference Co-Chairs
Nera.cochairs@gmail.com

BUROS

CENTER FOR TESTING

Call for Proposals

52nd Annual NERA Conference - October 13–15, 2021

Trumbull Marriott Shelton, Trumbull, CT OR Virtual

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all presenters will be allowed to present virtually OR in person (if we go hybrid). We hope this allows everyone interested to submit proposals.

As a regional affiliate of the American Educational Research Association, NERA invites proposals for our annual conference spanning all areas of educational research. We welcome proposals from new and experienced researchers and will consider both completed and in-progress research.

Below you will find the conference theme and general requirements for NERA proposals as well as specific guidelines corresponding to the four session formats. More information about the conference, including [FAQs](#) about NERA proposals can be found on page 12 or by visiting www.nera-education.org.

Conference Theme: “Using Data to Solve Education’s Challenges”

Every form of educational activity in this age generates valuable data readily available at our fingertips. Whether quantitative, qualitative, or anything in between, these data possesses inherent power and potential to improve teaching and learning, inform important instructional decisions, and to ultimately drive student success and substantive societal change.

Technological advances have given birth to vast quantities of user interaction data as supplements to the more familiar test scores and survey measures. A new frontier of innovative possibilities in data utilization now exists. Successfully harnessing the deep data footprints now accessible to more people than ever before can create endless and invaluable opportunities for exploration by a collective and collaborative research community such as ours. Through effective design and collection, insightful analysis, and thoughtful interpretation of all this new information, researchers and the school community can truly partner to face and solve education’s challenges.

When considering your proposal submission, there are nine broad content strands to choose from, demonstrating the broad application of the conference theme in the field of educational research. These are meant to be general descriptions of the topics that may fit into the specific content strands. Although we *STRONGLY* encourage session proposals related to one or more of the areas expressed in the conference theme, this is not a requirement for submissions. The section below outlines each content strand in more detail.



1. Solving Educational Policy Challenges (EP)

The 2020 NERA conference featured a coordinated session discussing stakeholder responses to challenges posed by the pandemic. As these have persisted into 2021, social culture has been impacted by how the digital divide, the ability to re-open schools, assessment of student learning and accountability, and the inherent impact on students, teachers, administrators, and parents cut across geographic and demographic lines. Submissions are encouraged regarding current research into ongoing and future challenges on these topics and how existing or needed data collections might inform education policy.



2. Innovations in Quantitative Research Methods & Resources (QMR)

The ongoing expansion of the data science and AI movements, increases in computing power and programmer skills, and local, state, and federal data dashboards, repositories, and both analysis and visualization tools contribute greatly to enabling researchers to investigate a variety of issues related to education and educational measurement. Submissions are encouraged regarding applications of established analytic and psychometric methods (e.g., predictive modeling, quasi-experimental designs), programs (e.g., R, Mplus), databases (e.g., IPEDS, NCES surveys), and innovative approaches (e.g., data mining, machine learning, use of Python, use of AERA-ICPSR PEERS database).



3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The recent surge in advocacy for social justice reform presents an opportunity to educate ourselves in how we recognize, value, and respect differences in people and learners on many levels. This could be based on personal characteristics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, age, religion, language, immigration status, disability, sexual orientation), geographic characteristics (e.g., states, regions), economic characteristics (e.g., household income), or institutional characteristics (e.g., R1, HBCU), among others. Submissions around applying best practices particularly in test design and analysis, but more broadly in educational research, related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in this social context, including emerging data repositories related to civil rights and other relevant issues are encouraged.



4. Higher Education (HE)

Higher education has been transformed because of the pandemic and emerging questions related to the value of and access to a postsecondary experience. This has been reflected recently along social lines in the reconceptualization of campus life, along economic lines in how institutions may be struggling to stay afloat, and along instructional lines through distance learning. More prominently, there has been substantive change with the massive increase in colleges and universities adopting test optional policies and how this may affect the demographic profile of future incoming classes of undergraduate and graduate students. Proposals dealing with data related to general student and institutional research in higher education, particularly concerning issues related to the pandemic are encouraged.



5. Global Education (GE)

Even in the face of a pandemic, the global economy continues to rely on incorporating new insights about culture, communication, and citizenship in order to evolve. For all students, this allows for opening doors to explore perspectives and ideas on a world scale in preparation for adult life and the workforce. College students best exemplify this by spending time studying abroad and immersing themselves in all that life in a different country can offer academically and personally. Additionally, educational researchers have many well-established data tools at their disposal to understand education on a global scale. As part of this new area of focus for NERA, submissions are encouraged depicting evaluations of study abroad or global education programs or insights from large-scale survey programs such as PISA, PIAAC, and TIMSS.



6. Alternative Research Methods (ARM)

Education research methodologies are far from being limited to those that are purely quantitative in nature and/or emphasize educational measurement. Historically, the broader research community has welcomed and benefited from the contributions of those representing the qualitative, mixed methods, and evaluation disciplines. More recently, there has been further expansion to include scholars from those in cognitive science, neuroscience, industrial and organizational psychology, and economics. All of these perspectives together allow for the production of quality research regardless of the number of subjects being studied. We encouraged submissions focusing on nuanced methods for analyzing data and educational research issues.



7. P-12 Educators as Researchers (EAR)

Educators offer a great deal to the research community through their work, especially when currently facing challenges, requiring flexibility and creativity to provide students with the best possible educational experience and opportunities for classroom learning, whether in-person, hybrid, or virtual. On behalf of the Educator-as-Researcher Committee, this is an invitation for teacher researchers, practitioners, community members, school administrators, and education researchers to submit proposals on research projects that address issues such as equity and inclusion, culturally responsive teaching, deeper learning and rigor for all students, multi-tier systems for student support, social and emotional learning, instructional leadership, and inside- and outside-of-school learning.



8. Developing the Education and Educational Research Workforce (ERW)

At a time when data is so rich and related job prospects are thriving, people more than ever are engaged with acquiring statistics and data science skills to help attain their future educational and professional goals in the contexts of education and educational research. This requires strong consideration in particular from high schools and the higher education community to provide appropriate development pathways for students across the age spectrum to pursue these types of interests. Submissions highlighting both existing and emerging programs and initiatives aimed to grow the pipeline of educational research professionals that incorporate any or all of data science, educational measurement, educational assessment, educational leadership, and educational policy are encouraged.



9. Miscellaneous (MSC)

While hopefully this year's theme greatly appeals to you, NERA has an honored tradition of welcoming submissions to the annual conference that may not necessarily relate to the primary topic, but are relevant to the field and to those attending the conference. Please be assured that submissions on miscellaneous topics will be evaluated according to the same benchmarks as all those under the other strands so that these viewpoints can hopefully also be shared with the NERA conference community.

Submission Requirements

- Complete information for author(s) including affiliation(s)
- Descriptive title (maximum: 15 words)
- Three content strands
- Description of paper to appear in conference program (maximum: 50 words)
- Proposal, NOT including tables, figures, and references (maximum: 1,000 words)
- Your proposal should include study purpose, theoretical framework, methodology, research questions, results, conclusions, and educational implications

Warning: Proposals with more than 1,000 words will not be accepted.

Submission Format

The proposal submission form will be online and accessible on the NERA website in early May 2021. At the time of submission, authors will be required to select from a list of content strands to categorize their proposal.

Submission Review Process

- Proposals must be submitted electronically by **Monday, June 7th, 2021 at 11:59 pm EDT**.
- 2 to 3 NERA volunteers will conduct blind reviews of each proposal.
- Each proposal will be judged according to the following criteria: educational or scholarly significance, perspective or theoretical framework, appropriateness of methodology, clarity of expression, and appeal to NERA membership.
- Proposal decisions will be emailed to first authors in mid-August. Details about session dates and times will follow after the program has been finalized.
- **It is critical to meet the June 7th deadline** to allow us time to have reviewers review each proposal, inform authors of proposal decisions, and finalize the program.

Session-Specific Guidelines – 2021 NERA Conference

When submitting your proposal, you will be asked to indicate which of the following session formats you prefer for your research. We encourage everyone to select more than one possible option, as selecting multiple options increases your likelihood of acceptance. Regardless of the session you choose, your paper will be subjected to rigorous peer review by NERA volunteers. As each format provides a medium for contributing your research to the field, all session formats are equally important. We hope to maintain a variety of sessions this year to maximize the educational experience for NERA conference attendees.

1. Individual Presentations

- a. **Individual Paper:** Proposals should describe completed or nearly completed research to be presented in 10–15 minutes. Sessions will be organized so that 3–5 individual presentations will be grouped according to similar research areas. In most paper sessions, a discussant will be assigned to read the set of papers in advance and present a 10–15 minute synthesis, critique, or analysis of the set of papers to spur discussion.
- b. **Roundtable:** Roundtable sessions allow maximum interaction among presenters and attendees, putting greater emphasis on the discussion. Each table will have 3–5 researchers with accepted papers organized around shared interests. Each session will have a designated chair knowledgeable in the research area to facilitate interaction and participation. When appropriate, a discussant will be assigned to a roundtable session as well.
- c. **Individual Poster:** Poster proposals should describe a research project, either completed or nearly completed, that lends itself to a visual display and would benefit from informal individualized discussion and feedback. Similar to the individual paper presentations, each poster will have a discussant. Specific directions for the size of the poster will be posted on the NERA Conference website and are available in the [FAQs in the next section](#).

2. Theme-Based Paper Session/Symposium

Proposals for this format should describe a set of 3–5 presentations organized around a common theme. The chair and discussant for this session format must be identified in the proposal. The format and procedure for these sessions are identical to the *Individual Paper Presentation* sessions.

Call for conference volunteers and reviewers!

NERA is a volunteer-based organization. If you want to be a part of what keeps it going, volunteer to be part of a committee or to help the conference as a chair, discussant, and/or proposal reviewer here: <https://www.viethconsulting.com/members/form.php?orgcode=NERA&fid=4035945>.

If you have any questions, please contact the conference chairs at NERA.CoChairs@gmail.com.



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Call for Proposals Frequently Asked Questions

When will a decision be made about the final format of the conference? The conference team is closely monitoring updates to public health and safety guidelines. A final decision on the format of the conference (hybrid or virtual) is expected in early June. If the decision is made to hold the conference in a hybrid format, we deeply respect individual preferences regarding travel and comfort level regarding attendance. Your submission to the conference matters greatly to the conference team, the broader NERA community, and to the educational research field. We will work closely with you to allow your work to be presented virtually, either through a live web conference or static (pre-recorded) presentation.

Does my research project have to be complete to be accepted to NERA? Not necessarily. In-progress or nearly completed research will be considered for the conference, but the researcher should show the potential of the work being ready for presentation by the date of the conference. We strongly encourage individuals to submit their in-progress work as Roundtable presentations. This format facilitates greater discussion between participants and the audience, allowing you to receive input and feedback that could inform your research or help to overcome potential hurdles.

How are the content areas used? These terms are used in several ways. Specifically, they will be used to match the proposal to the appropriate reviewers, to place the proposal in the session where fits best, and to assign an appropriate discussant to the session. Please select the content area that is the best match for your proposal as your first choice and two additional content areas as next-best options.

How do the content areas differ from keywords used in previous years? The content areas were developed by combining one or more keywords into a more general theme. This table provides an illustration.

Content Area	Keyword(s)
Solving Educational Policy Challenges	Accountability; Policy in Education, School Reform, and Politics
Innovations in Quantitative Research Methods & Resources	Psychometrics; Educational Measurement; Quantitative Methods & Statistical Theory
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Social Context in Education; Diverse Learners; Test Design & Development; Use & Interpretation of Results
Higher Education	Postsecondary Education
Global Education	None – New Area for 2021
Alternative Research Methods	Qualitative & Mixed Methods; Program Evaluation; Cognitive Science; Noncognitive/Behavioral Skills; Research Methodology
P-12 Educators as Researchers	Computer & Educational Technology; Educational Leadership; Curriculum & Instruction; Early Childhood Education; Teaching & Teacher Education; Education & Psychology; Career & Technical Education
Developing the Education and Educational Research Workforce	Personnel Evaluation; The Professions; Graduate Student Issues
Miscellaneous	None

What is the review process like? Reviewers are NERA member volunteers, who have self-identified as being willing to review proposals on the particular content area(s). The conference co-chairs make final decisions on acceptance and format, based on both the reviews and availability in the conference program.

When will my research paper need to be ready? Discussants must be able to review research papers before the session in order to prepare properly for discussion. You will be asked to email your completed research paper to the discussant no later than **October 1, 2021**.

Will a projector and laptop be available in my session? If the conference is in a hybrid format, institutional sponsors will be supplying LCD projectors for each in-person session. The Chair of the session will arrange to have a laptop present, and will also facilitate file transfers to the laptop via email before the session. Presenters are expected to cooperate with Chair requests. Those presenting virtually will do so using a dedicated Zoom link provided to session Chairs. Individuals preferring a static (pre-recorded) session should plan to submit their recorded videos on **October 1, 2021, but no later than October 6, 2021**.

What if NERA accepts my presentation, but I am unable to attend the conference in person? Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all presenters will be allowed to present virtually OR in person (if we go hybrid). Thus, we hope this allows everyone to submit proposals who is interested. Submitting to NERA is a sign that you intend to attend the conference if your presentation is accepted whether virtually or in-person. If we are able to hold an in-person conference, the decision to present in-person or remotely is completely up to you. Of course, possible sudden changes in public health and safety guidelines may not allow for an in-person conference. In this case, if you had previously planned to attend and present in-person, information will be sent to you about moving your planned in-person presentation online. If something prevents you from being able to present, and co-authors or colleagues cannot present in your place, please withdraw your presentation before the session by contacting the conference team as soon as possible so another researcher can have the opportunity to present.

What size should my poster be? If the conference is in a hybrid format and you intend to present in-person, easels with foam display boards will be available for poster presentations. Poster size should be no larger than 36 inches x 48 inches. The display should be easily readable and clear from a distance of *at least three feet* from the board. The title, author, and affiliation should be in a 36-point font or larger. The rest of your lettering should be in at least a 28-point font. Be sure to include diagrams, figures, photos, bulleted text, or other visuals that describe your research. Presenters should also prepare four PowerPoint slides (maximum) which will be shared electronically prior to the poster session to give attendees a short preview/overview of each study. More information regarding posters, including virtual options for accepted presenters, will be posted on the NERA website once the final format of the conference is determined.

You have several session options for submitting proposals. Are any considered more rigorous than others? No. All formats are peer-reviewed methods for disseminating your research. The rigor of the peer review process is the same for all proposals submitted to the conference. Peer review allows NERA to maintain an appropriate quality level for the experience of those presenting their research, as well as those receiving the research.

What are the submission parameters for theme-based paper sessions/symposia? Those presenting proposals for theme-based paper sessions or symposia are required to submit only one proposal for all papers in the session, within a maximum of 1,000 words. The submission should include a description of how the papers are related to each other, as well as a short description of each of the papers that are included in the session. Lastly, proposers can indicate within the submission that they are submitting a theme-based paper session/symposium.

What is the role of the Chair? The role of the Chair is to facilitate the organization of the presentation session. Duties may include collecting the papers, communicating with authors, managing audio/visual equipment, and ensuring the timeliness of the session. In some cases, the Chair will assist in facilitating discussion among the audience members and authors.

What is the role of the Discussant? Discussants are responsible for drawing from their expertise to comment on papers and presentations. The goal is to provide professional and constructive criticism and raise issues for broader consideration that connect to the works.

How do Roundtable sessions work? Roundtable sessions offer the most opportunity for interactions among presenters and participants. Three to five researchers with similar interests are assigned to a table, along with a moderator with some expertise in the topic area. Individual researchers do not make a formal presentation as in a paper session but may provide a brief overview of their work and specific issues that they would like to discuss. Much of the time during a roundtable session should be devoted to discussion among the assigned researchers and the other participants.

Where will I find information about the conference registration fees? Registration fees will be posted on the NERA website during the latter half of spring once a decision on the final conference format is reached. There are three cost brackets: Professional, Retirees, and Students. Late fees are instituted after October 1, 2021. All registrants must also be NERA members. More information about membership and dues can be found on the NERA website (www.nera-education.org).

If the conference is hybrid (in-person and virtual), is there a special room rate at the conference hotel? Yes, each year NERA negotiates a special room rate at the conference hotel for members. Room rates and information on how to register will be posted on the NERA website sometime after a decision is reached on a final conference format. Due to the potential hybrid format, there will be fewer rooms available at the negotiated room rate this year. More information about registering for both the conference and a hotel room will be available on the NERA website (www.nera-education.org).

If the conference is hybrid, are meals included with registration? Yes, NERA is pleased to provide meals with conference registration regardless of whether or not members stay at the conference hotel. Meals will be provided in accordance with public health and safety guidelines at that time. Please reach out to the NERA co-chairs about any dietary concerns or restrictions you may have at NERA.CoChairs@gmail.com.

How will I submit my NERA proposal? An online submission system will be available soon with a deadline for submission of **Monday, June 7, 2021 at 11:59 PM EDT**. You may contact the conference co-chairs with further questions at NERA.CoChairs@gmail.com.

The Graduate Lounge

Matthew Speno, GSIC Chair, University of New England

Go figure, it's May 2021. One cannot deny that the past year+ has been an exercise of survival in what I have been calling the "upside down"—yes, I am a big fan of the show *Stranger Things*! I recommend the soundtrack; you will not be disappointed! Nonetheless, the impacts of COVID-19 are "winding down" and our lives will begin to return to some sort of normalcy. I find this interesting in that so many things we take for granted on a daily basis became irrelevant when lockdowns, quarantining, mitigation sequences, and the such became the status-quo. I say, **LET'S GET RELEVANT, RELEVANT**—yes, this is a nod to Olivia Newton-John. Go ahead, sing it loudly—I double dog dare you!

Within the Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC), we have a solid foundation to provide relevant resources for our student membership! While the academic journey has sustained its relevancy during the *Upside Down*, opportunities after degree conferment have become, in my humble opinion, a bit muddled with relevancy in limbo.

To address the concept of relevancy, the 52nd Annual NERA Conference, be it virtual or in-person, will provide opportunities for graduates to learn the skills to cultivate sustainability for their lives post-dissertation. The GSIC will again be sponsoring two sessions, that will be appropriate to the needs of our graduate student members as they nurture their present and post dissertation selves. Stay tuned!

GSIC Call for Proposals for the 2021 NERA Conference

GSIC encourages all graduate students to submit both completed and in-progress research to the 2021 NERA Conference, from October 13–15, 2021 at the Trumbull Marriott Shelton in Trumbull, CT. The online proposal submission system is open and will be available at through **Monday, June 7, 2021 at 11:59 PM EDT** at nera-education.org/annual_conference.php.

NERA is an exceptionally supportive environment for graduate students, which helps to reduce the stress of presenting at conferences. When presenting at NERA, you will receive positive feedback and constructive criticism on your papers from respected professionals in the field. Presenting takes practice, and because of NERA's supportive attitude towards graduate students, it is a great place to present your work!

GSIC Call for New Members

Serving on the GSIC is a great way to get involved with NERA and build relationships with other graduate students. Responsibilities include collaborating with students from various institutions to plan GSIC sponsored conference sessions, and the GSIC student social. New members are selected each year after the NERA Conference.

While you are here, please make the time to fill out this very short Google Form which will provide the GSIC with important data in one of the sessions being planned:

<https://forms.gle/NV13GykrjNJrrJ58>

Call for Nominations

Ross Markle, Past President, DIA Higher Education Collaborators

In the immortal words of Kristen Huff, "NERA is you!" Our organization simply cannot run without the time and effort contributed by so many wonderful people. One of the major cogs in the NERA machine is the Board of Directors, which includes several positions determined by our annual election.

In order to form a representative ballot of capable individuals, we need your input. We are seeking nominations for the following open elected positions:

- **NERA President** (3-year term as President-Elect, President, and Past-President)
- **NERA Board Members** (3-year term)

We have many great members who can be NERA's next leaders, but we need nominations from you to put together the slate for the 2021 election. Please send your nominations for President and Board Members to Ross Markle at ross@diahighered.com by **June 30, 2021**. Note that all nominees must be current members of NERA. Please consider nominating yourself or a colleague for one of these important positions!



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**Call for Nominations for the
Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award
for Distinguished Mentoring**
Frank Daniello, Chair, Lesley University

The Thomas F. Donlon Memorial 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 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.

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 mentor. If you would like to see a member of NERA who was your mentor be recognized for his/her/their contributions to your success, send your nomination to **Dr. Frank Daniello** via email at fdaniell@lesley.edu by **June 30, 2021**. 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 her/himself as a mentor. Up to five separate letters of support can be sent for each nominee. The award will be presented at the 2021 NERA conference. Please contact Frank if you have any questions about the Donlon Award or the nomination process.

**Call for Nominations for the
Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for
Outstanding Leadership and Service to NERA**
April Zenisky, Chair, University of Massachusetts Amherst

The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award is given to a longstanding NERA member who exemplifies the qualities that Leo Doherty brought to NERA members, his colleagues, and students throughout his career. The award, instituted by the NERA Board of Directors in 1981, honors the memory of Leo Doherty. He was instrumental in the development and growth of NERA as a professional association for educational research. His leadership qualities, which were both ethical and humane, encouraged others to pursue and achieve their goals. Thus, this award is presented to NERA members who have exhibited outstanding leadership and service to our organization. Nomination letters should be sent as an email attachment to April Zenisky at azenisky@umass.edu no later than June 30, 2020.

Nomination letters should explicitly name the nominee and offer a concise and compelling case for the candidate in terms of their leadership and service to NERA.

For information, please check out https://www.nera-education.org/leo_d_doherty_memorial_award.php or e-mail April at azenisky@umass.edu.



Educator-As-Researcher Award Application 52nd Annual Conference, October 13–15, 2021

Salika Lawrence, Chair, The College of New Jersey

Name of Applicant: _____

Affiliation of Applicant: _____

Position of Applicant: _____

Mailing Address of Applicant: _____

(after June 1, 2021) Phone _____ E-mail: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Attach the following information regarding your submission using these guidelines:

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 the Research (maximum of 1,000 words) a. The 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 the Study to Educators (Describe how the results contribute to improved educational practice or professional knowledge of educators in your field; maximum 100 words)
5. Send the application cover sheet and narrative as a Word document to: Dr. Salika Lawrence, chair, Educator-as-Researcher Award Committee (lawrencs@tcnj.edu) **no later than June 30, 2021.**

Name of Nominating Person (if other than the applicant): _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Affiliation and Position of Nominating Person: (Please Print): _____

Signature of Nominating Person: _____ Date: _____

Update from the NERA Mentoring Program

Co-Chairs Bethany Fishbein, Boston College, Kerry Cotter, Boston College, & Sarah Ferguson, Rowan University

The NERA Mentoring Program strives to facilitate meaningful connections for NERA participants through two key approaches: 1) conference-based connections, and 2) year-round virtual events/discussions.

We are very excited to host our first webinar, *Leadership Panel: Managing Your Career*, on May 14, 12:00–1:30 pm ET. The webinar is targeted to graduate students and early- and mid-career professionals interested in advancing their career in education. Our two distinguished panelists will speak candidly about their work, mentoring, and leadership experiences, with a focus on how they have continued to work toward their career goals while excelling in their various positions.

Panelists



Dana Kelly, *Director of Development and Reporting for the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, Boston College*



Lissette Colon-Collins, *Assistant Superintendent, Yonkers Public Schools*

[Click here to register](#)

We are also beginning to prepare for the conference-based Mentoring Program where we match pairs of volunteer mentors and mentees through a focused, hand-selected match-making process. Please look for our survey later this summer to sign up as a mentor or mentee for the NERA 2021 Annual Conference.

Should you have any questions or suggestions for improving the Mentoring Program, please feel free to reach out to the co-chairs at mentoring@nera-education.org.



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Membership Committee Update

Rory Lazowski, Chair, College Board

Please join me in welcoming two new members to the Membership Committee! Aubry Threlkheld joins us from Endicott College in Beverly, MA. Aubry serves as the Associate Dean of Education in the School of Education at Endicott. Michael Wolter comes to us from Goodwin University where he serves as the Program Director for the Management and Leadership program in the school of Business/Technology and Advanced Manufacturing.

Kathryn Thompson, Ph.D. student at James Madison University, is continuing to serve on the Membership Committee for a second year. I'd like to formally thank Aubry, Michael, and Kathryn for their commitment to the Membership Committee and NERA at-large.

This year, our primary focus has been identifying new members to increase membership in NERA. Toward this end, we have been engaged in a few initiatives. First, we completed the remaining list of prospective contacts (this was started last year) from various colleges of education spanning states from Maine to Washington DC. Aubry has a number of contacts at schools in New Hampshire and he has been reaching out to those as well.

Given the potential of a virtual conference, the committee has also been expanding outreach beyond the northeast region. A list of contacts for graduate measurement programs across the country was also included in the list of prospective contacts. Another wider outreach effort involved sending the annual NERA Conference Call for Proposals to divisional listservs across AERA.

On a more personal note closer to home, I have noticed that College Board, once with a strong presence at NERA, has dropped off in recent years. I hope to rectify this. I've reached out internally to the managers of both the psychometrics and research departments here at College Board to spread the word about NERA membership and the annual conference.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Spring season!



NERA Conference Ambassadors Update

Pamela Kaliski, Chair, ABIM

Greetings NERA members, and happy spring! We hope you have seen the NERA Spring 2021 Call for Proposals, and that you are planning on attending the 2021 conference (either in a virtual capacity or perhaps in person if the hybrid conference approach occurs). As a reminder, the charge of the NERA Conference Ambassadors Committee is to welcome new and returning members to the annual NERA conference. We strive to achieve this, in collaboration with the NERA Membership Committee, by providing an open environment that encourages connecting with colleagues across the NERA membership in attendance, while also sharing our own NERA experiences with meeting attendees.

This year, we look forward to connecting with you at the NERA conference. We will be meeting in late Spring/early summer to brainstorm the best ways for us to do so. Last year, the virtual new member coffee/breakfast was a huge success, and in previous years we have hosted new member happy hours at the hotel. Please be on the lookout for an update from us prior to the conference announcing our plans.

As always, we welcome any ideas or feedback from NERA members; please feel free to contact us if you have any thoughts or questions for us. We are looking forward to seeing you at the 2021 NERA conference!



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Communications Committee Update

Mina Lee, Chair, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Spring is here! I hope you are enjoying the warm breeze and budding flowers. Below are some updates from the Communications Committee.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank each member of the committee, especially our email coordinator Dukjae Lee (UMass Amherst), social media coordinator Heather Harris (independent consultant), and Webmaster Jerusha Henderik (NBME) for their dedicated work for NERA.

Social Media

In 2020-2021, with our new president Steven Holtzman, we have been putting more efforts promoting our social media so that they provide up-to-date information about NERA to a wider audience, hopefully to more future NERA members. Please befriend or join NERA's social media. If you *like* NERA's postings, your friends also can see informative news from us, including NERA conference, newsletter, webinars, and career opportunities.



@NERAconference



@NERAconference



@nera_conference



NERA - Northeastern Educational Research Association

NERA is now sharing news with other educational associations, such as EERS (Eastern Evaluation Research Society). We hope this change will benefit NERA members and will boost participation in the field of educational research.

Communication Request Update

All official NERA business that needs to be disseminated to the membership needs to follow NERA's Communication Committee guidelines, as documented in the NERA Handbook. That is, this updated [Communications Request Form](#) must be submitted to mina.mh.lee@gmail.com at least two business days prior to the requestor's target date for dissemination to ensure sufficient time for the request to be reviewed/approved and information to be sent out to members or posted on social media. Also, when making a request, please ensure you provide the content for email/social media to guarantee prompt review.



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