

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Mark Wilson, University of California, Berkeley, & University of Melbourne*

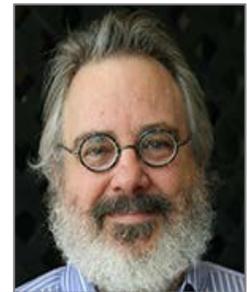
I am delighted, and a bit saddened, to be sending you my fourth President's Message (as it is my last as president). First, I will report briefly about some ongoing matters in NCME and then return for my fourth installment of thoughts on classroom assessment—in this case, I will focus on the role of learning progressions in classroom assessment.

At its February meeting, the NCME Board adopted a process to investigate and take positions relevant to NCME's mission. The process is now available on the NCME website under the "Members Only" section. After receiving member feedback, the Board also adopted an initial position on opt-out; this position is available on the public section of our website. In order to live up to our vision, "To be the recognized authority in measurement in education," it is essential that we make clear what are our positions on crucial issues in educational measurement, subject, of course, to the provision that we can attain sufficient agreement amongst ourselves on those positions. Many thanks to Randy Bennett, our vice president, for leading the effort on this.

During that same meeting, it was announced that a federal judge has found that Public.Resource.Org (Public Resource) infringed upon the copyright of educational and psychological testing standards developed by ourselves and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the American Psychological Association (APA; see further information on the [NCME website](#) or [here](#)). This case has been dragging on for quite a while, and it has been a significant drain on the resources that are usually allocated to revising the *Standards*, so a victory is welcome. As in many legal matters, however, there can be further appeals, so we might not have seen the end of it.

The Task Force for the Classroom Assessment Initiative has issued a call for proposals for sessions and papers at its inaugural conference, September 12-14, 2017, at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. The conference will focus on the confluence of classroom assessment and large-scale psychometrics and related disciplines. The purpose of this conference is to bring together the many voices and perspectives of experts and practitioners of assessment in order to improve student learning. Please check out the information on our website, and come along! Many thanks to the Board members leading this effort, Kristin Huff and Dale Whittington.

In my previous message, I gave details on upcoming events at our annual meeting in San Antonio. Hence, I will not repeat that information here, but I will note a few pieces of extra information beyond what was contained there. Our program chairs, Lydia Liu and Billy Skorupski, have designed a special awards session to appreciate and celebrate our NCME award winners for this year. I will not reveal the names here (come along to the session to find out), but the winners will be introduced and have time for a short statement about themselves and their work. There will be time for socializing after this, and there will be coffee and a cheese and fruit buffet for us all to enjoy! The session will be on Friday, April 28 from 12:25 to 1:55. In the previous message, I mentioned that there would be session honoring Benjamin D. Wright and his legacy. Here are some details: The session will launch a new book commemorating Ben's life and career and will be held on April 29, 2:45 to 4:15. The session will include time for remarks from those present on Ben's remarkable contributions (and his occasional irascibility!). The book will appear in the Springer Series on Measurement and Technology. The organizers are looking forward to seeing everyone there who new Ben and was influenced by him.



## The Role of Learning Progressions in Classroom Assessment

In the previous three president's messages, I have (a) made a case for the importance of classroom assessment as a site for educational measurement research and development and as a principal context in which educational measurement can be a positive influence for educational success, (b) delineated two types of uses of summative assessment—information uses and signification uses, and (c) discussed the relationship between learning progressions and assessments (see the June, September, and December issues of the *NCME Newsletter* if you missed these). In this message, I will focus on the importance of learning progressions for classroom assessment.

Class discussion is a central component of classroom work, as well as classroom assessment. Success for a teacher in orchestrating this depends *initially* on the power of the opening questions or activities to provoke rich discussion but, then, *secondly* on the capacity of the teacher to listen, to interpret the responses, and to steer the discussion in the direction of the goals of the lesson, by summarizing, highlighting contradictions, or asking additional questions. To do this skillfully and productively, one essential ingredient for a teacher is to have in mind an underlying scheme of *progression* in the topic; such a scheme will guide the ways in which students' contributions are summarized and highlighted in the teacher's interventions and the orientation the teacher may provide by further suggestions, summaries, questions, and other activities.

This also applies to the formative role of feedback to individuals in supporting learning. Feedback, which can be verbal or written, should guide the learner, and require from the learner further work to improve on the work already accomplished. And here again a clear road map is required for the teacher: (a) to formulate a task or test so that the responses can provide evidence of learning progress, (b) to formulate helpful comments, tailored to the individual needs of each student, and (c) to give clear guidance on how to improve. This road map needs to give a view of the learning aims and of the steps along the route, or routes, that the student needs to take to get closer to that aim in light of his or her current position. Furthermore (for students of sufficient maturity), full student involvement requires that the students also have a grasp of the point they have reached along that route. The feedback must also give the student a clear aim for improvement, and if each student can locate this aim in a criterion-referenced framework, this can provide both orientation and motivation for improvement. With such an approach, each student will be competing against him- or herself, but may inevitably see him- or herself also in relation to peers and as competing with them.

At the end of any learning episode, there should be review, to check before moving on, perhaps using an end-of-topic test or other forms of assessment. Here there can be a dual purpose. One purpose is reflective, to both develop the learner's overview of the progress made and to check for gaps or misconceptions—overall, to serve as a progress review en route rather than as a terminal assessment. The other purpose is prospective, to look forward to building up a record of achievement, which might be a preparation for, and/or a contribution to, summative assessment.

Thus, a well thought-out and evidence-based learning progression can (a) provide the essential basis for the setting of a teacher's strategic aims, and for the planning of instruction, (b) serve as a guide for the on-the-fly decisions that have to be taken whilst in the midst of teaching and assessing, and (c) provide the criteria on which the work in formative and summative assessment should be based. Thus, the "vicious triangle" described in Part 1 of this message (see the President's Message in the June 2016 issue of the newsletter) can be replaced by a better approach, where the curriculum is fashioned in terms of a model, grounded in evidence, of the paths through which learning typically proceeds as it aims for the desired targets. That is to say, the curriculum reflects and provides a strong model of progression in learning. This road map may then inform both pedagogy and the assessments (both formative and summative), in that an articulated set of tools can be tailored to stages in progression along the road, so that such tools will help to identify the region along the road where failure gives way to success.

To achieve this, the first issue to be addressed is to reform the interaction between curriculum and assessment, a reform that should be strongly driven by theories of student learning, but also strongly influenced by the observation and interpretation of student growth as represented in the analysis of student responses to classroom assessments. The second issue is to develop and use these road maps or learning progressions, which need to be formulated through professional judgment and the development of sound instructional practices, and confirmed up by data gathered through assessments and the interpretation of student responses.

I will save further discussion and exemplification of these points for the upcoming President's Address at the 2017 NCME Breakfast and Business Meeting—I look forward to seeing you there!

For a detailed example of these steps see:

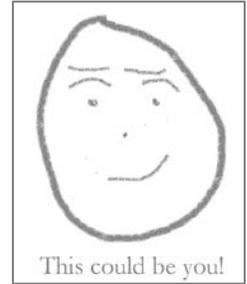
Black, P., Wilson, M., & Yao, S. (2011). Road maps for learning: A guide to the navigation of learning progressions. *Measurement: Interdisciplinary Research and Perspectives*, 9, 71-123.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Heather Buzick, Educational Testing Service

Do you want to meet new people in our organization? Are you looking for opportunities to mentor graduate students? Would you like to bring news and commentary about NCME and educational measurement to our members? Then send in your nomination to become the next NCME newsletter editor. Know someone who would like to serve NCME? Nominate a colleague! See the box at the end of this issue for more details. Questions about the role of newsletter editor? [Email me.](#)



In this issue we have the last message from our president, Mark Wilson. He will continue his discussions on the topic of classroom assessment at the NCME Breakfast and Business Meeting in San Antonio. We also have updates on the annual meeting. This issue introduces our incoming president, Randy Bennett, as the Spotlight member, and our new graduate student corner columnist for this year, Masha Bertling. Check out the legal corner, where Michelle Croft keeps us up to date on federal accountability regulations. We also have a number of committee updates and Edgar Sanchez has offered recommendations for things to do in San Antonio while you are there attending the annual meeting.

Congratulations to Linda Cook, who is this year's Career Contributions to Educational Measurement award winner!

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# GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER: PROFICIENCY VS. GROWTH: WHY DO WE CARE?

Masha Bertling, Harvard Graduate School of Education



After the recent hearing of the newly appointed Secretary of Education, the question of whether we measure student performance with proficiency or growth is more in the spotlight than ever. The direction we, as a broader community of education policy researchers and measurement experts, are going to undertake with the issue will continue to shape education accountability policy for years to come. This direction is going to be very consequential as to which schools we identify as low-performing and in need of intervention.

The federal government requires states to assess public school students on standardized tests aligned to content standards in order to hold schools accountable for student achievement and help policymakers to make data-informed educational decisions. The theory behind such a policy emphasizes the use of an incentive structure that directs educators' effort towards behaviors most productive for ensuring students' success and ultimately reaching the set goal (Acemoglu, Kremer, & Mian, 2008; Figlio & Ladd, 2008). Every such policy however, rests on assumptions that should be met in order to produce desirable outcomes and avoid unintended consequences that harm students' learning (Figlio & Loeb, 2011).

The proficiency metric aims at evaluating students' performance based on whether they have reached a certain benchmark (e.g., a certain score on a standardized exam). This metric originated from NAEP in the 1990s (Rothstein, Jacobsen, & Wilder, 2006) and became used for accountability purposes since the introduction of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act in the early 2000s. Under NCLB, states, schools, and districts were under enormous pressure to move students up to *proficiency* (i.e., raise the percentage of students who were proficient in reading and math to 100%). While doing so, states had a great degree of flexibility in how they assessed student performance and defined proficiency levels. As a consequence of that, a proficient student in state A could be found to be very different from the one in state B (Bandeira de Mello, Blankenship, & McLaughlin, 2009).

The issues with the proficiency metric go beyond those created by an arbitrary threshold that defines proficient. As senator [Franken](#) underscored during the aforementioned hearing, a proficiency approach triggered an array of unintended behaviors with educators narrowing the curriculum (often referred to as *teaching to the test*) and focusing on "bubble-kids," ignoring all of those who lie far above or below the cutoff (Koretz, 2008).

Another factor that can lead to unintended consequences stems from the inability of the proficiency metric to control for schools' inputs to individual learning (Krieg & Storer, 2006; Weiss & May, 2012). What it would mean in practice is that schools with larger proportions of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who start at a lower performance levels will look significantly worse than their more prosperous counterparts despite the potentially real gains in students' learning. Based on the proficiency metric, as much as 60% of schools serving predominantly low-income minority students might fall into the bottom 15% of schools (Chingos & West, 2015). When considering average student performance, one inevitably confounds learning that occurred at schools with knowledge and skills acquired elsewhere (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). That is, no matter how good of a job a school might do in educating students, the proficiency metric might not be able to adequately capture this progress.

Compared to the proficiency metric, some growth measures are much more flexible in disentangling those compounds while considering progress made by students during the school year. The majority of growth metrics used for accountability utilize student growth percentiles (SGP), originally proposed by Betebenner (2011). The SGP metric has a lower correlation with nonschool factors, such as socioeconomic status, than the proficiency metric, and SGPs aggregated at the school level are derived from a more authentic measure of individual student learning than the proficiency one. Chingos and West (2015), for example, showed that only up to 25% of low-income schools with predominantly minority populations would be deemed low-performing under a growth model.

Despite the potential benefits of a growth metric, when the federal government just imposed school accountability, the application of growth measures was not feasible; but these times are long forgone due to annual testing in schools across the nation. With the reauthorization of NCLB in the form of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), which grants states greater flexibility as to how they can measure school performance, growth metrics should unquestionably be preferred to proficiency. Unless as a society we would want to reward schools not based on their contributions to students learning but simply based on the types of students they serve.

The high stakes attached to school-based accountability—schools identified as persistently underperforming might be faced with rigid firing decisions and can be turned into a charter school—should constantly encourage us to think of new ways to define and improve accountability metrics. Bear in mind that growth metrics are not free of flaws and, if poorly designed or misused, might be no better than proficiency metrics. We can never solely rely on one indicator when making consequential policy decisions (i.e., Campbell’s law). The current advances in technology and the amount of big data we are accumulating about educators and students provides a fruitful direction as to how they can be utilized to ensure fairness and serve our student needs in a better way. The question yet remains—will they?

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*Author note:* Masha Bertling, M.S., is a Ph.D. student in education at Harvard University, where she studies education policy and program evaluation. Her primary research aim is to advance psychometric and statistical models to better inform educational policies and practices. She is particularly interested in college readiness and differential access to higher education, as well as ways we can better understand and measure student’s learning and growth. Currently, Masha serves as an advisory board graduate student member at ACT and has been recently elected as a chair of NCME Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC). Previously, she worked as a research assistant in the Research & Development division at Educational Testing Service.

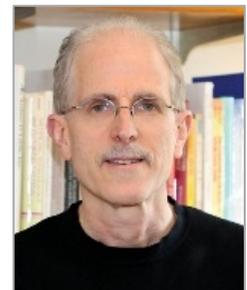
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## SPOTLIGHT ON THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE OUR ORGANIZATION GREAT

Randy Bennett, Educational Testing Service

### How did you get into the field?

As for many people, it was unplanned. I was in a graduate program at Teachers College (TC), Columbia University in special education/educational psychology, and the first course I took focused on administering intelligence tests. That course motivated me to take educational measurement courses. The professors were Robert Thorndike, Elizabeth Hagen, Richard Wolf, and Marvin Sontag. When I began working in the TC Child Study Center doing educational evaluations and then taking the special education assessment courses, it became evident that the students and professors knew a great deal about instructional methods and content, but less about measurement principles. It occurred to me that it might be a good thing to try to connect those two worlds—special education and educational measurement. When it came time to do my dissertation, I searched for fellowship positions and found one offered through a federally funded research institute at ETS, the Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children. As luck would have it, my TC department chair was on the institute’s advisory board and



the adjunct professor teaching my psychology of learning course was an ETS scientist. Both of them knew the institute director. I've been at ETS ever since!

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

The advice I used to give my kids was to find something that capitalized on their strengths, that they loved to do, and for which someone would pay them a living wage. Other than research in educational assessment, I'm not sure what that would be for me. I'd probably have to take more graduate courses to find out!

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

Pay very close attention to what you're good at and like to do. If you really enjoyed doing your dissertation, then a career in research might work very well because what one does as a scientist is very similar to that dissertation experience, though generally more collaborative. Think about what comes easily for you. If writing comes easily, then consider research because you will be doing a lot of writing. If writing is hard but quantitative work is second nature, then you might be more suited to operational psychometrics. If you're a natural collaborator, then you could conceivably go in either direction because you'll more than likely be able to find colleagues who can complement your skills with theirs.

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

One of the wonderful things about being in this field is that it's afforded me many opportunities to travel, which I learned early on that I love to do. As often as possible, I try to take vacation in conjunction with business trips, especially when they involve overseas events. I also like photography, which goes very nicely with travel.

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

If we define innovation as a new method, idea, or product, then what I think will become one of the most important is the advent of process analysis—that is, the evaluation of the paths individuals take to problem solution. Process is sometimes critically important, as in medical diagnosis. A bad process is problematic even if the patient gets better. At other times, process is important only formatively, as in writing. If a student writes a good essay, the process is of little matter (assuming that the essay was the student's work). If the end result is a deficient one, however, knowing something about the process used can lead to helpful intervention. Did the student edit? If so, where and what? Did the student read what he or she wrote? Did there appear to be difficulties in typing? Was the student fluent in his or her composition? My colleagues, Paul Deane and Mo Zhang, have been doing what I think is really significant work on such analysis.

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

I base my decisions primarily on the people presenting and the topic in focus. I know that certain individuals will be very likely to give a thoughtful talk and I know that I'm interested in certain topics. I hope for the intersection of the two! That said, it's also good to spend some time giving people you don't know a chance and learning about topics that are less related to your primary interests.

**Who has been a significant influence in your professional life?**

Sam Messick would have to be among the most significant influences. If you asked him a question, you got an education in reasoning because he would often run through his thought process with you. He worked from first principles, taking your question—or a problem that was on his mind—backing up to the applicable principle(s), and reasoning forward to the problem at hand.

Fritz (Norman) Frederiksen was also influential. He was interested in using assessment to model good teaching and learning practice, a theme in my work on CBAL (Cognitively Based Assessment of, for, and as Learning) that was inherited from him.

Both Sam and Fritz thought of educational achievement in construct terms, rather than simply as content or content standards. They saw cognitive-domain theories as critical for advancing the assessment of achievement—that is, theories describing the knowledge, processes, strategies, and habits of mind that compose a domain, how those components worked together to facilitate successful performance, and how they might be best ordered for purposes of instruction. That idea was another bequest I've tried to honor in my own work.

# LEGAL CORNER: THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT: ACCOUNTABILITY REGULATIONS REVISITED

Michelle Croft, ACT



This issue’s Legal Corner is a follow-up from my last column regarding regulations and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

As of this writing, the assessment regulations are still intact. The accountability regulations, on the other hand, were [paused](#) by the Trump administration, and the House of Representatives then [voted](#) under the Congressional Review Act to rescind them. A Senate resolution concurring with the House is [anticipated](#) to pass the Senate and be signed by the President. Further, to comply with the Congressional Review Act, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) would require Congressional approval to promulgate new regulations that are substantially similar to those rescinded.

In my last column, I highlighted that rescinding any of the regulations would potentially create confusion within the states. Now that this appears likely, I will go into greater detail on some of the areas implicated.

## Timeline for Implementation

Under [ESSA](#), states were to begin identifying schools for targeted support and improvement in the 2017–2018 school year, but the final regulations delayed this until the 2018–2019 school year. Further, states were required to submit their accountability plans in April and September. [More than half](#) of the states have so far published draft plans based on the regulations.

In a “Dear Colleague” [letter](#) on February 10, 2017, new Education Secretary Betsy DeVos stated that USED would keep those submission dates but did not state whether the timeline for identifying schools for support will still be delayed. The letter also stated that USED would change the submission template that states have been using for stakeholder outreach so that it only requires information that is “absolutely necessary” and has promised to share the new template with states by March 13. The letter further indicated that it may allow for states (or groups of states) to create their own templates. This might be problematic in that it may make it difficult for [peer reviewers](#) to review the state plans in a consistent manner.

## Sample Size for Reporting

ESSA requires that a state set a minimum number of students to be used for reporting purposes by collaborating with stakeholders to set that number and provide information about how it was set. The final regulation [added](#) that a state would need to provide justification if it sets the number higher than 30 (to avoid a problem from the prior No Child Left Behind Act, which permitted states to establish [large sample sizes](#) that in some cases could [mask](#) low student performance).

## Single Summative School Indicator

Before release of the final regulations, there was [debate](#) over whether [data dashboards](#) could be used instead of a single summative score. The regulations specified that [the latter](#) would be required. If the regulations are rescinded, states may thus have the flexibility to implement the dashboard model. But as I stated in the last column, this flexibility could create delays and added costs as states that had originally wanted dashboards and still want to pursue them now must devote additional staff time and resources to developing them.

## Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

Advocates for students with disabilities are also concerned about rescinding the regulations, noting that the regulations had aimed to ensure that these students are included in [graduation rates](#). [Some disability advocates](#) are concerned that rescinding the regulations would remove language addressing the need to reduce “bullying, harassment, and the use of aversives (e.g., seclusion and restraint).”

## Transparency

Finally, the [Brookings Institution](#) highlights that the lack of regulations could lead to less transparency in the development of state plans and the introduction of ad hoc policy that may (or may not) include stakeholder involvement.

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## LINDA L. COOK: RECIPIENT OF THE 2017 NCME AWARD FOR CAREER CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATIONAL MEASUREMENT

*Committee for the NCME Award for Career Contributions to Educational Measurement*

Congratulations to Linda Cook, who has been awarded the 2017 NCME Award for Career Contributions to Educational Measurement. The award honors outstanding scholars whose publications and professional activities over a career have had a widespread positive impact on the field of educational measurement. Dr. Cook will be recognized at the 2017 NCME Annual Meeting at a featured session that consists of an award ceremony followed by her presentation titled *Testing Individuals with Disabilities: What Constitutes Fairness?* She will also be honored at the 2017 NCME Annual Breakfast and Business Meeting.

Linda Cook is retired from Educational Testing Service, where she worked for 32 years. While employed by ETS, she was an executive director of the admissions and guidance area, vice president of assessment, and director of the Center for Validity Research. Her primary research interests are the fairness and accessibility of assessments for examinees with disabilities and linking academic assessments. Linda made several major contributions to assessment practices. She had a significant impact on equating methodology. Her research includes understanding and solving real-life statistical issues including measuring and controlling scale drift, the viability of equating methods using different sampling approaches, and factors affecting item-parameter estimates. More recently she has devoted substantial effort to ensuring fairness of assessment practices for all individuals. Linda spearheaded a large body of psychometric research examining the comparability of tests taken with different testing accommodations. She served as NCME president in 2012 and was instrumental in the creation of the Mission Fund.



## ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

Lydia Liu, Educational Testing Service, and Billy Skorupski, Kansas University



### Proposal Review and Acceptance

We received a good number of individual and coordinated session proposals for the 2017 annual meeting, including 461 individual proposals and 66 coordinated sessions. Altogether 19 review panels were organized to review the individual proposals, and 26 panels were formed to review the coordinated sessions. This resulted in 246 proposals accepted as individual presentations, 112 proposals accepted as electronic board sessions, and 51 proposals accepted as coordinated sessions.

The acceptance rate was 78% for individual proposals and 77% for coordinated sessions.

### The Plenary Session on Classroom Assessment

We will feature one plenary session at the 2017 conference, **Classroom Assessment: Promises, Perils, and Next Steps for Moving Forward**, a session to be chaired by Jim McMillan, *Professor in the Department of Foundations of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University*. The session will be held on **Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:35 AM**. The purpose of this session is to provide a forum for perspectives, ideas, and discussion about how key research findings in student learning and motivation, in the context of ubiquitous large-scale assessment, can be used by the educational measurement community to promote high quality classroom assessment. While research on classroom assessment has recently accelerated, there remains a need for educational measurement specialists to incorporate what is known from research and theory on learning and motivation, as well as recent developments in large-scale testing that have significant impacts on classroom assessment, to advance teachers' assessment practices that improve as well as document student learning.

See the following for the presenters and their respective presentation titles.

- Dr. Lorrie Shepard. Connecting Formative Assessment Practices to Learning Theory
- Dr. Susan Brookhart. The Role of Feedback in Assessment
- Dr. Heidi Andrade. Self-regulated Learning and Classroom Assessment
- Dr. Steven Wise. The Role of Student Effort in Assessment
- Dr. Mark Wilson. On the Relationship Between Large-Scale Assessment and Classroom Assessment

The presenters will make brief remarks and engage the audience in discussion and feedback.

### Two Award Celebration Sessions

The celebration for the Career Award winner, Dr. Linda Cook, will be held on **Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:35 AM**. Linda will deliver a presentation titled **Testing Individuals with Disabilities: What Constitutes Fairness?** The fair and valid assessment of individuals with disabilities can be challenging and requires creative approaches and careful planning to carry out adequately. Characteristics of individuals with disabilities, if not taken into consideration, could give rise to construct-irrelevant variance in test scores that could disadvantage the individual test taker. In this presentation, Linda will establish an historical perspective on standardized testing and the education and testing of individuals with disabilities. After establishing a perspective on fair assessment for these test takers, she will provide a state-of-the-art summary of how to design and develop these assessments. She will conclude with a discussion of the importance of, and methods for, gathering evidence of the fairness and validity of assessments given to individuals with disabilities. Barbara Plake will serve as her discussant and Mary Pitoniak will moderate the session, introduce Linda and Barbara, and facilitate audience discussion.

There will also be a **Special Celebration for all the award winners on Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 12:25 PM**. Come along and find out who won! Won-Chan Lee, who is the Board member who has been guiding all the NCME Awards committees, will chair this session, and each award winner will deliver a brief presentation on a topic relevant to their award. A reception will be held at the end of the celebration, and light refreshments will be provided. Please join us in celebrating the accomplishments of our colleagues and friends!

# TRAINING SESSIONS AT THE 2017 NCME ANNUAL MEETING

*Sun-Joo Cho, Vanderbilt University*



The NCME Training and Professional Development Committee is excited about the preconference training sessions that will be held at the Marriott Rivercenter in San Antonio, TX, on Wednesday, April 26, and Thursday, April 27. There will be 23 sessions on a variety of topics. The 23 sessions were chosen by the committee from 26 proposed and invited sessions. Successful proposals were ones in which the committee determined that the topic is important to measurement theory or practice, that the presenters were qualified, and that the topic was desired by past sessions' attendees.

There will be 4 full-day sessions and 8 half-day sessions on April 26 and 5 full-day sessions and 6 half-day sessions on April 27. You can find detailed information about the [training sessions on the NCME website](#). Here is the list of the session titles and presenters:

## **April 26**

### Full-Day Sessions

Bayesian Networks in Educational Assessment by Duanli Yan, Russell G. Almond, Roy Levy, and Diego Zapata-Rivera

Shadow-Test Approach to Adaptive Testing by Wim J. van der Linden and Michelle D. Barrett

Cognitive Diagnostic Modeling: A General Framework Approach and Its Implementation in R by Jimmy de la Torre and Wenchao Ma

Conceptual Frameworks for Aligning Items to ALDs to Enhance Validity Arguments by Christina Schneider and Steve Ferrara

### Half-Day Sessions

Vertical Scaling Methodologies, Applications, and Research by Ye Tong and Michael J. Kolen

Rubrics for Classroom Assessment: Perils of Practice and How to Avoid Them by Heidi Andrade

An Introduction to Linking and Equating in R by Anthony Albano and Jonathan Weeks

The History of Educational Measurement in America: Origins to 1950 by Michael B Bunch, Michael Beck, Brian Clauser, and Michelle Croft

Landing Your Dream Job for Graduate Students by Deborah J Harris and Xin Li

Data Rich, Information Poor: Navigating Data Use in a Balanced Assessment System by Caroline Wylie and Christine Lyon

An Introduction to R for Quantitative Methods by Brian Habing and Jessalyn Smith

Analyzing NAEP Data Using Plausible Values and Marginal Estimation with AM by Emmanuel Sikali and Young Yee Kim

## **April 27**

### Full-Day Sessions

Bayesian Estimation of Item Response Theory Model Parameters Using OpenBUGS and Stan by Hong Jiao, Yong Luo, and Kaiwen Man

Diagnostic Classification Models: Theory, Methods, and Applications by Laine Bradshaw and Matthew J. Madison

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills Assessment: Design, Development, Scoring, and Reporting by Patrick C. Kyllonen and Jonas Bertling

An Introduction to Hierarchical Rater Models for the Analysis of Ratings by Jodi M Casabianca, Brian Junker, and Ricardo Nieto

A Framework and Platform for the Development of Assessment Literacy by Damian Betebenner, Charles Depascale, Luciana Conchado, Amy Sharpe, and Kelli Ryan

#### Half-Day Sessions

Evidenced-Centered Design and Computational Psychometrics Solution for Game-/Simulation-Based Assessments by Jiangang Hao, Alina von Davier, Kristen DiCerbo, and Robert Mislevy

Moving from Paper to Online Assessment: Psychometric, Content, and Classroom Considerations by Mary Veazey and Ye Tong

Computerized Multistage Adaptive Testing: Theory and Applications by Duanli Yan, Alina von Davier, and Kyung Han

Evaluating Alignment of Computer Adaptive Assessments by Katerina Schenke and Deborah La Torre

Using Visual Displays to Inform Assessment Development and Validation by Brett P Foley

A Visual Introduction to Computerized Adaptive Testing by Yuehmei Chien

Registration for the training sessions is required, and it can be done through the AERA website. Early registration for the training sessions is strongly encouraged. Onsite registration will be possible if space is still available.

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## **AERA WORKSHOP: USING THE AERA/APA/NCME STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

*Linda Cook, Educational Testing Service*  
*Michael Kane, Educational Testing Service*  
*Wayne Camara, ACT*



The purpose of this course is to help educational researchers improve the quality of their research through application of the newly published *Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests* (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014). The course content will focus on the 2014 *Standards* with a specific emphasis on the reliability, validity, and fairness standards. The content of the course will also include selected materials that will be reviewed by course participants and used to demonstrate how the *Standards* can be applied and used to improve the fairness, validity, and reliability of the materials. At the end of the mini-course, participants should be; familiar with the content of the 2014 *Standards* and understand, and be able to apply to their work, the *Standards* included in the fairness, reliability, and validity chapters.

The instructors for the course will be Linda Cook, past president of NCME, Michael Kane, Messick chair at ETS and Wayne Camara, senior vice president of ACT Research. Michael and Linda were both members of the team that authored the most recent revision of the *Standards* and Wayne Camara was chair of the management team for the revision of the *Standards*.

The format of the course will be part lecture and part hands-on opportunities for students to apply the concepts presented in the lecture.

The target course participants are educational researchers including advanced graduate students, early career scholars, senior educational researchers, and practitioners who are interested in improving their understanding and knowledge of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*.

The course will take place on Friday, April 28 from 1-5 PM. You can register for the course through the [AERA website](#).

## References

American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). *Standards for educational and psychological testing*. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

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## THE SECOND ANNUAL NCMENTORING PROGRAM

Kyndra Middleton, Howard University



We're excited to announce the second annual NCMENTORING opportunity!

The NCMENTORING Program aims to support the transition of graduate student members and recent graduate members from their graduate programs to professional careers. Early professionals are paired with members experienced in fields related to NCME's focus on assessment, evaluation, and other aspects of educational measurement. This experience will offer the opportunity for mentees to explore possible career paths and ask questions from an experienced NCME member and for mentors to support the development of potential colleagues and contribute to the field.

Last year more than 100 NCME members participated in the inaugural NCMENTORING event. Feedback from participants was very positive. Don't miss out on this free membership benefit!

**Mentors:** If you are interested in promoting the success of future scientists in the field and meet the criteria below, answer a [brief survey](#) to help us pair you with a mentee.

- You are an NCME member who will be attending the NCME conference in April 2017.
- You have at least 2 years of postgraduate work experience in a measurement field.
- You will contact your assigned mentee to schedule a meeting lasting at least an hour during the annual meeting.

**Mentees:** If you would like the opportunity to meet with experienced professionals in your field, and you meet the criteria below, answer a [brief survey](#) to help us pair you with a mentor.

- You are an NCME member who will be attending the NCME conference in April 2017.
- You are currently enrolled in an accredited Ph.D. or master's program in a measurement-related field OR you've graduated from such a program within the past 3 years.

NCME will reserve meeting space for mentor/mentee pairs to meet at the conference. Take advantage of the convenience of meeting at the prearranged place and time, or meet up at a time and place of your choosing. Sign up early to take advantage of this professional development opportunity! The application deadline is March 27, 2017.

For more information, contact Kyndra V. Middleton ([kyndra.middleton@howard.edu](mailto:kyndra.middleton@howard.edu)). This opportunity is organized by the NCME Membership Committee and sponsored by the NCME Board of Directors.

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## STANDARDS AND TEST USE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Cindy M. Walker, Duquesne University

The Standards and Test Use Committee (STUC) has been busy the past several months working on moving the assessment literacy initiative forward. We are currently in the process of finalizing edits to the one module that the Board decided to fund. This module focuses on classroom assessment. Jesse Freeman, of Milk Crate Productions, produced the video using a storyboard submitted by Chad Gotch, Susan Brookhart, and Brian French. We hope to have the video launched on our website by the time we meet in April.



Our next step will be to evaluate assessment literacy videos produced by others that are already posted on the Internet. In doing so, we will pay careful attention to materials that we feel are needed but are nonexistent. To this end, we have developed a rubric that we will use to evaluate existing materials. This rubric was vetted by the committee, as well as the Board, and has four criteria: (a) Quality of Content, (b) Quality of Presentation, (c) Accessibility and Diversity, and (d) Alignment to our Mission. We will be piloting the use of this rubric prior to our next meeting, to evaluate its usability.

We have also formally modified our membership to ensure that the NCME representative to the Joint Committee on Standards in Educational Evaluation is a permanent member of STUC. This committee is a coalition of major professional associations in the United States and Canada in 1975 to promote the quality of evaluation. Dr. Cathy Taylor is the current NCME representative to this committee. Other members include representatives of the American Psychological Association, the American Evaluation Association, and the American Educational Research Association. This committee was recently contacted to help promote the new classroom assessment standards. Hence, their work is very much aligned with the work of the STUC.

As we near the time of our annual meeting, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Neil Kingston has agreed to chair this committee upon my departure at the end of this year. I know he will do great things to help keep our initiatives moving forward!

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## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE: LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!

Leslie Keng, Center for Assessment

“Slow change may pull us apart  
When the light gets into your heart, baby

Don't you, forget about me  
Don't, don't, don't, don't  
Don't you, forget about me”

*(Don't You, Simple Minds)*



Shortly before graduation during my senior year in college, I remember a career counselor giving us advice about what to expect in the “real world.” One statement she made is that the days of being a “lifer” at one and only one company for an entire career are no longer. In fact, she said we should expect to make on average about 10 job changes in our careers. Had I known better back then, I probably would asked her for some empirical evidence or research to back up that claim. However, about 20 years into my career, I am just about on par with that statistic. (And as a measurement professional, I have no problem with being “just a statistic”!)

Indeed, with all the changes that have occurred in our field (and in our lives), a lot of members have probably changed jobs and addresses recently. Most of us probably remembered to update our LinkedIn profile, post an announcement on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outlets, and notify the postal services to forward our mail to the new address. But did you remember to update your contact information with NCME?

So, this is a friendly reminder to *keep your contact information for NCME up-to-date*. If you recently renewed your membership, you should have been prompted to review and update this information. However, you can also do this any time by going to the [NCME web site](#), logging into your account, and navigating to “Members Only–My Account/Profile.”

With the 2017 annual meeting for NCME only a few weeks away, you do not want to miss out on any communications about the exciting sessions and member-only events that will be taking place. In other words, we don't, don't, don't, don't, don't want to forget about you. See you down in San Antonio, Texas!

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## NCME MISSION FUND COMMITTEE UPDATE



**Chad Buckendahl**



**Linda Hargrove (past chair)**



**Deborah Harris**



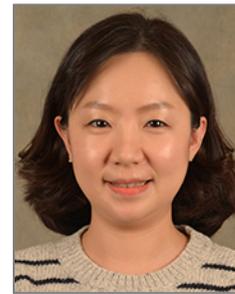
**Suzanne Lane**



**Cathy Wendler (chair)**



**John Willse**



**Seonhong Pak**

As you prepare for the upcoming NCME annual meeting in April, it is a good time to remember the *Mission Fund*. The fund committee is working closely with the NCME Board to align our work in support of various NCME initiatives. As the fund committee moves ahead, we are focused on ensuring that educators and others have opportunities that advance NCME's mission in the science and practice of measurement in education.

As the charitable giving arm for NCME, activities sponsored by the Fund can only happen with **YOUR** support. There will be opportunities to donate to the Fund during the meeting, but why not consider supporting the Fund *before* you finalize your presentation, pack your bags, and head off to San Antonio?

Let's honor those colleagues who have shaped our professional and personal lives. Let's remember those colleagues who are no longer with us but who have made important contributions to the field. What a better way to acknowledge them than by making a donation in their name to carry on those activities that can inform and support educators, students, teachers, and professionals?

To contribute

- Go to <http://www.ncme.org/>. Use the "donate" link found at the top right of the NCME homepage, log on with your member information, select the NCME Mission Fund, and type in the amount you are donating. Then print and complete the form below indicating in whose memory/honor you are contributing and fax it to NCME at 215-564-2175 or mail it to NCME, 100 N. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19103 USA.
- Or contribute by check or credit card by printing and completing the form below. Fax the form to NCME at 215-564-2175 or mail the form with your check to NCME, 100 N. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19103 USA.

Thank you in advance for your donation. Hope to see you in San Antonio!

## NCME Mission Fund Donation Form

**Yes, I wish to contribute to the NCME Mission Fund in honor/memory of a colleague.**

I understand that my donation is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

My gift will be used to support NCME Mission Fund activities.

**My donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_**  
**is in honor of \_\_\_\_\_**

Please keep my gift anonymous.

**I have contributed online at <http://www.ncme.org/>**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province/Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal/Country code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (include area code and country code if outside USA): \_\_\_\_\_

**I am contributing by check or credit card.**

Check (made payable to NCME in USD)

VISA

Master Card

AMEX

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV#: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature for Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province/Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal/Country code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (include area code and country code if outside USA): \_\_\_\_\_

**Print and return completed form to NCME**  
**By Mail: 100 N. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 USA or by FAX: 1-215-564-2175**

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## NCME FITNESS WALK/RUN CORNER

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

The annual NCME meeting is fast approaching, and the details for the NCME Fitness 2.5k Walk/5k Run are all falling into place! We are excited to announce that the walk/run will be Sunday, April 30, 2017 (5:45–7 AM), and the course starts just across the street from the NCME headquarters hotel, San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter.



We are holding a Design-the-Shirt competition again this year. The submission deadline has passed. Voting will open up in mid-March, so look out for a call to vote to select the winning design!

Last, but not least, we are continuing with the Team Participation Competition, so encourage your colleagues to register for this event as well. You may just be able to break The University of Iowa and Pacific Metrics' winning streaks!

See you bright and early Sunday morning, April 30, for a great start to your day with fellow NCME colleagues!

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## FUN THINGS TO DO IN SAN ANTONIO

*Edgar Sanchez, ACT*

### Welcome to San Antonio and Welcome to the Lone Star State!

I am very excited to share a little bit of our host city with you. While I now call Iowa home, my heart is still in Texas. In fact, San Antonio is an annual trip for my family every Christmas. In this brief overview, I want to share a little bit of San Antonio history and city highlights.



### San Antonio History

San Antonio has a long rich history that spans the thousands of years Native American tribes called this area home, to the Spanish expeditions of 1691 and 1709, through the actual founding of the city in 1718 with the establishment of Mission San Antonio de Valero and beyond. These missions would later be repurposed for military operations including what has come to be known as The Alamo. San Antonio was the site of several historical battles including the siege of Bexar in 1835 and the famous Battle of the Alamo in 1836. There is so much more we could delve into about the history of this city, but this gives you a taste of what history buffs can look forward to in San Antonio.

### Places to Visit

To kick things off, I would recommend visiting one of the many historical sites in San Antonio. First and foremost, no trip to San Antonio would be complete without a visit to The Alamo. For those that want to see additional historic missions, you can also visit Mission San Jose and the San Antonio Mission National Historic Park, which includes four missions; Concepción, San José, San Juan Capistrano, and Espada.

On the footsteps of the San Antonio Marriot Rivercenter, you will find the Riverwalk. At the Riverwalk you will find a wide array of things to do and see. This area is full of restaurants of all different cuisines with a great cultural flair. While you're on the Riverwalk, you should consider taking a narrated boat tour of the downtown Riverwalk. This is a very economical and fun way to see the Riverwalk!

If you are looking to do some shopping, you're in luck as the San Antonio Marriot Rivercenter is attached to the Shops at Rivercenter mall. This mall has an eclectic collection of over 100 stores including a comedy club, an IMAX theater, and even a store called Primarily Purple that specializes in purple merchandise!

If you would like a little taste of Mexico, try to visit Market Square (El Mercado). This three-block open-air plaza is a celebration of Mexican culture. The many specialty shops here are well worth visiting.

For those who enjoy theme parks, San Antonio is home to both Six Flags Fiesta Texas and SeaWorld San Antonio. Either or both of these parks are always a guaranteed fun time! If you do have the time to get away for a bit, I have to mention a longtime favorite of mine, Natural Bridge Caverns. The cavern tours are an excellent escape.

## **Places to Eat**

There is no shortage of great restaurants in downtown San Antonio. On the Riverwalk itself, you have a plethora of cuisines to choose from and most with outside seating to allow you to enjoy your meal with a view of the crowds, the Riverwalk, and the boat tours.

If you are looking for some great Mexican food, I recommend taking the short trip to El Mercado and visiting either Mi Tierra Café & Bakery (open 24 hours) or La Margarita Restaurant. Both have wonderful food but do get quite busy at times. La Margarita takes reservations, and I'd recommend doing so.

Being that we are talking about Texas, I have to close this out with some Texas BBQ and steak ideas. In the downtown area, you can visit County Line Barbeque or one of the great steakhouse options like Fogo de Chão, Texas Land and Cattle, or Bohanan's Prime Steak and Seafood. If you do venture out of downtown, try to visit Rudy's Barbeque (be sure to ask for samples!), Smoke Shack, or the Big Bibb for some great BBQ.

I look forward to seeing everyone in San Antonio!

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### **Corrections:**

After the initial distribution of this issue of the newsletter, two errors in the Spotlight column were corrected as follows. The original column had the Institute for the Study of Handicapped Children, while the name is Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children. In the following sentence, the word "is" was left out: "At other times, process is important only formatively, as in writing."

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: EDITOR, NCME NEWSLETTER

The NCME Publications Committee is soliciting nominations for editor of the *NCME Newsletter*. The editor appointment is for the three-year term beginning January 2018 through December 2020 (Volumes 26-28).

The *Newsletter* (quarterly) publishes announcements and brief descriptions of current activities of interest to the membership, including significant publications, upcoming meetings, and NCME Board and committee activities. The *Newsletter* also provides NCME members with timely information about current events in measurement practice and research.

Major responsibilities of the editor:

- Appoint *Newsletter* Advisory Board members.
- Select and mentor a graduate student columnist each year.
- Plan content for each issue, including regular columns and feature articles.
- Solicit, collect, review, and edit content for the *Newsletter*. This includes but is not limited to evaluating submissions for timeliness, accuracy, interest level, and importance to the NCME membership.
- Format the *Newsletter* for electronic publication.
- Communicate with the President, the Board, and committee chairs to identify and summarize newsworthy association activities.

Nominations should explain how the individual is qualified to perform the duties of the NCME *Newsletter* editor and include the candidate's curriculum vitae. Self-nominations are welcome. Please send nominations to Rose McCallin, Chair, Publications Committee ([rose.mccallin@state.co.us](mailto:rose.mccallin@state.co.us)).

The Publications Committee will screen nominations and offer a slate to the president and NCME Board of Directors, which will make the appointment in late spring/early summer 2017. The appointed individual will transition into his or her role as editor during summer and fall of 2017.

**The deadline for nominations is April 10, 2017.**

### *Newsletter Advisory Board*

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