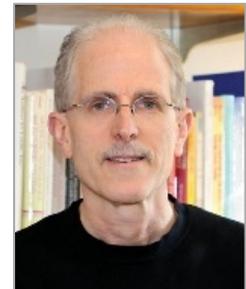


## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Randy Bennett, Educational Testing Service



In the past two President's messages, I described progress on the four directions that I hoped the organization would move toward to help ensure NCME's continued relevance and long-term success. In this quarter's message, I'd like to report on our activities related to one of those directions:

- Influence the national discourse on testing and measurement through policy positions and other appropriate mechanisms that engage a variety of audiences.

To begin to build a presence in the education policy community, NCME held its first policy seminar in Washington, DC, on February 7 in collaboration with the George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD). The speaker was [John B. King](#), former US Secretary of Education and now President and CEO of the Education Trust. Dr. King addressed issues of equity in education and of the role of assessment in promoting and preserving equity. The talk was attended by some 80 people and live-streamed to a few dozen more. [Michael Feuer](#), GSEHD Dean and former director of the National Academies' Board on Testing and Assessment, was the discussant. Because of the seminar's success, the Board voted to hold at least one policy-oriented seminar per year in Washington, DC, going forward.

The King seminar was followed by the Board's winter meeting to which we invited members of the education policy community so that we could better understand current issues and make known NCME's willingness to advise where appropriate. [Lillian Pace](#), Senior Director of National Policy at [Knowledge Works](#), joined the Board for part of its meeting. Knowledge Works is a nonprofit focused on advancing personalized learning. A former Capitol Hill staff member, Ms. Pace recently worked with the US Education Department to create the innovative-assessment-pilot provisions of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), the successor to *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). The innovative assessment pilot allows for up to seven states to try out new approaches to measurement in a subset of their school districts. Knowledge Works' interest in the pilot is in part driven by state education department staffers' claim that the biggest impediment to personalized learning is the existing federally mandated approach to grade-level oriented, standards-based assessment and accountability. Only one state has applied for the ESSA innovative assessment pilot, in part because of the belief that the field's technical standards, as well as those used by the US Education Department for peer review, are oriented towards standardized tests. A role for NCME is to help Knowledge Works, and education agency personnel, understand how the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* can be applied to innovative measures.

[Liz King](#), Senior Policy Analyst and Director of Education Policy at the [Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights](#), also joined the Board meeting. The Leadership Conference is made up of organizations that represent African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, female, and disability rights constituencies. Also a former Capitol Hill staff member, Ms. King described how the school accountability and standards movements established under NCLB worked to advance education for traditionally underserved students. NCLB established the expectation that each school hold virtually all students to the same grade-level standards. Further, for the first time, schools had to disaggregate assessment results by demographic group, revealing the extent to which each school—including high-achieving ones—was successfully serving *all* student groups. Her observations made clear that the commonly heard negative narrative associated with school accountability and standards-based assessment is not the only one. From a civil rights' perspective, the view is quite different, with school accountability and standards-based assessment playing a critical and very positive role.

A last development of note with respect to this direction is that the NCME Board approved for member comment a Position Statement on Test Security, to which Steve Ferrara contributed centrally, along with the members of the Committee on Informing Assessment Policy and Practice led by Judy Koenig. The intention behind such position statements is for us to articulate for ourselves what we stand for. From those statements, we can then craft and disseminate messages specifically tailored for the audiences we wish to influence. Four other statements are in revision or being drafted, including Theory of Action for Testing Programs, Use of College Admissions Tests for Unintended Purposes, English Learners and Accountability, and Classroom Assessment. If approved, it is our intention that the Outreach and Partnership Committee, led by Stephen Benton, take the lead in dissemination efforts.

In other news, the NCME Board has selected Linda Cook and Mary Pitoniak as co-editors for *Educational Measurement, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. *Educational Measurement* has been the bible in our field since the first edition was published by ACE in 1951. Please join me in congratulating Linda and Mary on their selection!

Finally, our annual meeting in New York City is right around the corner. At its conclusion, we will welcome to the NCME Board Vice President Steve Sireci (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), and members Debbie Durrence (Gwinnett County, Georgia, Schools) and Andrew Ho (Harvard University).

I look forward to seeing each of you in New York so I can greet you in my home-town dialect with an enthusiastic, "HowYaDoin!"

All the best,

Randy Bennett  
President

## FROM THE EDITOR

*Megan Welsh, University of California, Davis*

Greetings! I hope that this newsletter helps to get you excited about our annual meeting in New York next month. This issue includes a final message from our president, Randy Bennett, who reports on NCME's efforts to participate in the national discourse on testing policy, and includes lots of details on the annual meeting, provided by program chairs April Zenisky and Charlie DePascale, training program chair Amanda Wolkowitz, as well as details on the Fitness Walk/Run, Sunrise Yoga session, and NCMentoring program. Please also be sure to check out the excellent tips on visiting New York, provided by Martha Moreno and Peter Halpin, and advice for first-time conference attenders from our new student contributor, Susan Rowe.



This issue also includes an introduction to Andrew Maul, a measurement expert we should all get to know, Thanos Patelis' thoughts on the skills involved in career and college readiness to allow for efficient assessment of both capabilities, Ellen Forte's summary of an interview with the Puerto Rico's Secretary of Education on the status the education systems' recovery from the devastating hurricanes from last fall, and an update on moving ITEMS into a web-based instructional module from André Rupp. Michelle Croft also contributes a legal corner section on federal protections for student data and implications for large scale assessment. The newsletter concludes with an acknowledgement of conference sponsors, updates from several committee chairs, and an announcement about the International Testing Commission's annual conference.

This is my first issue as newsletter editor. I look forward to meeting our members and working with you in the years to come. I'm grateful for the generosity already shown by so many people who contributed content to this newsletter, and especially for Heather Buzick who so graciously introduced me to the inner workings of the newsletter and for the newsletter advisory board members.

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## GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER: NAVIGATING THE NCME CONFERENCE AS A GRADUATE STUDENT

*Susan Rowe, University of California, Davis*



As someone who attended their first national conference last year, I know how intimidating conferences can be. It was overwhelming. There was so much to do and too little time to do it in! This column is targeted towards graduate students who will be attending their first conference NCME conference this April. I present here some tips all graduate students can use to make the most of their time and more efficiently navigate the largest meeting in measurement research.

### **Practice, practice, practice... your presentation and elevator speech**

First of all, congratulations to those of you who are presenting! Be sure to make time to practice your presentation, especially if you are co-presenting with fellow authors. It is vital to finish your PowerPoint or handouts before you leave for the conference because you will not have time to do major rewriting. Being well prepared for your presentation, whether it is a paper or poster session, will make presenting less stressful. Also be sure to practice your “elevator speech.” An elevator speech is a quick pitch about your background and research that you can give in the length of an elevator ride (about 25-30 seconds). You will be meeting many people so have this speech well-rehearsed. Introduce yourself, your institution, and give a one or two sentence summary of your research and why it’s significant. Elevator speeches can be tailored to many situations whether it’s introducing yourself to a room, a potential external committee member, or someone you want to collaborate with.

### **Professional development opportunities at NCME**

The NCME conference has great opportunities for professional development. Graduate students may consider joining the NCMEntoring Program, which matches students and recent graduates with experienced measurement professional. Mentees meet with their mentors for an hour in provided meeting spaces and have the opportunity to learn more about their work and to explore possible career paths. More information about participating in the NCMEntoring Program can be found [here](#). I highly recommend students register for a pre-conference training session. There are several full and half day courses available on Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. They offer hands-on experience and training you might otherwise be unable to access at your institution, including new modeling techniques, software packages, and also training targeted directly towards

graduate students, such as how to obtain your dream job and learning about the psychometric work conducted at different testing organizations.

### **Making the most of your time at NCME**

Plan your conference schedule ahead of time, but keep it flexible. The full program for the NCME conference is available ahead of time. Because of this, I highly recommend creating a schedule for the sessions you are interested in. Choose sessions based on topics that match your research interests and what presenters you would like to meet. Categorize the sessions into ones that are the most important and unmissable and which ones can be dropped in favor of other activities such as meetings with a researcher you admire or other sessions you learn about later. Take the opportunity to go to the presentations of those whose work you have read and see how these experienced scholars speak and present their work. Beyond learning more about the presentation topic, focus on how their work is presented. You can use this experience to improve your own research and presentation style. Take a chance and ask a question during the session at the appropriate time, such as a clarifying question or constructive comment. You are there to engage in your discipline and this is the perfect place to practice contributing to the conversation in a meaningful way.

Connect with other graduate students and professionals. There are many opportunities to connect with others in a structured environment such as through the Graduate Student Social (graduate students only) and the NCME and AERA Division D reception. Even in informal situations such as between sessions, feel to introduce yourself to those around you. Do not forget to bring your business cards with you; exchanging contact information will allow you to reconnect with those you meet after the conference. It is not essential to only connect with new people. Schedule meals, coffees, and beers with colleagues from your own institution. My most positive social experience at NCME/AERA last year was going out to dinner at the end of a long day of conference sessions with other graduate students from my institution. If your advisers or other mentors are attending NCME, consider meeting up with them as well! They may have someone to introduce you to. Also, you may decide to coordinate going to conference sessions with other students and have a discussion about the presentation afterwards.

Lastly, enjoy the sights! New York City is host to all kinds of culture many of us would otherwise never experience. Use exploring the city in the evenings as a palette cleanser to prepare you for the next day of sessions. See a show on Broadway, take a night tour, or visit a museum!

Want to get more advice on attending academic conferences? Consider reading these resources:

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*Author note:* Susan Rowe is a Ph.D. student at the School of Education with a Learning and Mind Sciences emphasis at the University of California, Davis. Her interests focus on the reduction of test bias and improvement of test fairness for English language-learners using psychometric methods such as item response theory and differential item functioning.

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## **SPOTLIGHT ON THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE OUR ORGANIZATION GREAT**

*Andrew Maul, University of California, Santa Barbara*

### **How did you get into the field?**

I've always been fascinated by the natural world, and the methods by which we try to learn about it. From a young age I knew I wanted to be a scientist, philosopher, or some other kind of scholar. Getting paid to think, learn, and engage with the world—what could be better than that?

Over time, my interests coalesced around a particular part of the natural world, one that seemed eminently relevant to the human condition: namely, humanity itself. We're such strange and amazing creatures, and despite millennia of introspection we still seem to be only beginning to understand some of the most critical aspects of our own minds. I studied psychology, sociology, history, anthropology, and both Western and Eastern



philosophical traditions, along with more expressive fields such as literature and music. I wanted (and still want!) to explore every possible angle on understanding the human experience.

But I found myself particularly fascinated by very idea of the formal study of human beings. Only in relatively recent times have we attempted to apply the methods of scientific inquiry—which were largely developed in the context of physics—to the study of the human mind, and it seems to me we still have some pretty fundamental issues to work through regarding how that can and should take place. I think the field of psychometrics serves as a poignant illustration of this: on the one hand, psychometrics is highly formal, rigorous, and in many ways reflects some of the most sophisticated thinking about the study of properties of human beings; on the other hand, the field is still rife with confusion over very foundational issues, including the meaning of its own core terms (e.g., “measurement”, “validity”, “construct”...), and even its very purpose. But from my perspective, this is exactly what makes it an exciting field of study.

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

I suppose that depends on the counterfactual – at what point in this alternate reality did I diverge from my present path? If I had simply chosen to take a different course within academia, I could easily see myself having found a career-fueling passion in philosophy, psychology, or history, or in journalism covering issues of science and society. But back in the day I played bass guitar for a rock band, so perhaps if luck had been different I might have found a career in music... but probably not, because frankly, we kinda sucked.

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

I suppose my first piece of advice would be to read all the wonderful responses that have been given to this question in previous issues of this newsletter, many of which have been helpful to me personally. But beyond that, I think my top piece of advice would be to be willing to question *everything*, and think very broadly and openly about what ignites your passions. Personally, I'd rather see a student ask a really big question and fail to find a fully satisfactory answer than ask a small question and find a clean resolution. But, of course, there's nothing wrong with doing both!

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

I like to spend as much time with my wife as possible. We love to travel, and spend time in nature. To stay physically fit, I enjoy weightlifting, yoga, and running. I love to read, both nonfiction (most recently, *Sapiens* by Yuval Noah Harari) and fiction (most recently, *Mink River* by Brian Doyle). I love listening to music, especially when I'm working out (hard rock and metal!), and when I'm cooking dinner (blues, funk, alternative...).

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

Although this isn't specific to psychometrics, and might not be an “innovation” per se, I think we've recently seen an important shift throughout the social and medical sciences towards paying greater attention to reproducibility and open science—both procedurally, in the sense of sharing data and code, and conceptually, in the sense of valuing transparency and more critical perspectives. I think we're just starting to see this applied to measurement in particular, as we move away from siloed operationalism (illustrated by, for example, the more than 280 different instruments for assessing depression severity that have been developed over the past century, many of which have little conceptual or empirical overlap) towards models of practice that demand more careful and publically-accessible articulation of theories that connect measured properties to observed behaviors, and rigorous testing of these theories via examination of response processes. Accompanying this is, I think, a progressively deeper appreciation for the diversity of ways in which individuals hold and express knowledge and build personal narratives, and how qualitative modes of inquiry (e.g., ethnographies) can inform efforts to build richer and more equitable modes of assessment.

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

I think conferences are both a great way to stay abreast of a field as it develops, and to connect and reconnect with friends and colleagues. They're also a nice time to take stock of where I am in my career, as they force me to ask myself: what do I most want to learn about now (and, relatedly, who do I most want to meet)? If I can answer that question clearly, my priorities for sessions usually fall into place fairly easily.

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

I've had many wonderful mentors and colleagues, but I'll confine myself here to mentioning just four. The first is my graduate advisor, Mark Wilson, who has been an unwavering source of inspiration and support at every stage of my career so far. The second is Denny Borsboom, whose work helped me think more broadly about what kind of scholar I could be, and how I could productively combine my interests in philosophy and research methods. The third is Derek Briggs, whose vigorous and big-hearted mentorship helped me navigate some critical periods in my career. And the fourth is Diana Arya, who I met in graduate school, and has since become not only my wife, but also my closest colleague and intellectual sparring partner. It's been an amazing experience to build both our careers and our lives together.

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# INTEGRATING COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Thanos Patelis, HumRRO



The modest purpose of this brief essay is to offer an idea for integrating popular career and college readiness frameworks. But, in doing so, I found, as highlighted by this integrated model, there is enough uniqueness in the portfolio of skills that the context cannot be ignored. There has been much discussion and work looking at college and career readiness either by bifurcating college and career readiness or by assuming them to be the same. In addition, global statements are being made about readiness without a consideration of the context.

Practically speaking the general goal after high school involves the two general pathways of transitioning to more training and formal education or obtaining a job. Included in the obtaining a job is the option of going into the military. When we speak of post-secondary readiness, we mean whether high school graduates have the knowledge and skills to fully take advantage of one of the two general pathways of pursuing post-secondary education or obtaining a job possibly in pursuit of a career.

The terms of college and career ready have been used interchangeably. While there may be similarities between college and career readiness on certain components, there are differences. There are also different types of readiness. As Conley (2011) suggested the following are different types of readiness along with their definitions:

- Work Ready = meets basic expectations regarding workplace behavior and demeanor.
- Job Ready = possesses specific training necessary to begin an entry-level position.
- Career Ready = possesses key content knowledge and key learning skills and techniques sufficient to begin studies in a career pathway.
- College Ready = is prepared in content knowledge, cognitive strategies, learning skills and techniques, and transition knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in entry-level general education courses.

## Career Readiness

The definition of career readiness has been elaborated to include three major skills areas of core academic skills, employability skills, and technical, job-specific skills related to a specific career pathway (ACTE, 2010). *Academic skills* represent the component that is important for both college and career representing foundational academic knowledge in math, English language arts, and science or technology that includes the application of this fundamental knowledge to authentic situations. *Employability skills* are skills that are critical to workplace success that include critical thinking, adaptability, problem solving, oral and written communications, collaboration and teamwork, creativity, responsibility, professionalism, ethics, and technology use. *Technical Skills* represent job-specific knowledge and skills needed to enter a career. Business and industry leaders have identified the key knowledge and skills across 16 career clusters and 79 more-specific pathways representing what students need to know and be able to do in order to be successful in the specified career area. Some skills can be applied to numerous careers and represent foundational knowledge.

## Career Clusters

Career Clusters contain occupations in the same field of work that require similar skills. Students, parents, and educators can use Career Clusters to help focus education plans towards obtaining the necessary knowledge, competencies, and training for success in a particular career pathway (US Department of Labor<sup>1</sup>):

1. Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
2. Architecture and Construction
3. Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communications
4. Business Management and Administration
5. Education and Training
6. Finance
7. Government and Public Administration
8. Health Science
9. Hospitality and Tourism
10. Human Services
11. Information Technology
12. Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security
13. Manufacturing
14. Marketing, Sales and Service
15. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
16. Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)

## Industry

Industries are broad groups of businesses or organizations with similar activities, products, or services. Occupations are considered part of an industry based on their employment (US Department of Labor<sup>2</sup>):

1. Accommodation and Food Services
2. Administrative and Support Services
3. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
4. Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
5. Construction
6. Educational Services
7. Finance and Insurance
8. Government
9. Health Care and Social Assistance
10. Information
11. Management of Companies and Enterprises
12. Manufacturing
13. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
14. Other Services (Except Public Administration)
15. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
16. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
17. Retail Trade
18. Self-Employed
19. Transportation and Warehousing
20. Utilities
21. Wholesale Trade

Each of these career clusters or industries have specific set of abilities, interests, knowledge, and skills associated with each position and represent various work activities, contexts, work styles and values. To fully represent career readiness, indicators that represent the necessary knowledge and skills to be career ready should reflect the academic, employability, and technical skills for each career.

### **College Readiness**

College readiness has been more broadly defined as comprised of four components representing (a) key content knowledge, (b) key cognitive strategies, (c) key learning skills and techniques, and (d) key transition knowledge and skills (Conley, 2012). *Key cognitive knowledge* represents key terms and terminology, factual information, linking ideas and organizing concepts. *Key cognitive strategies* represent problem formulation, research, interpretation, communication, and precision and accuracy. *Key learning skills and techniques* represent behaviors associated with the ownership of learning involving goal setting, persistence, self-awareness, motivation, help seeking, progress monitoring, and self-efficacy. They also include learning techniques representing time management, test taking skills, note taking skills, memorization/recall, strategic reading, collaborative learning, and technology proficiency. *Key transition knowledge and skills* include post-secondary awareness (aspirations and norms/culture), postsecondary costs (tuition and financial aid), matriculation (eligibility, admissions, and program information), career awareness (requirements and readiness requirements), role and identify (role models), and self-advocacy (resource acquisition and institutional advocacy).

Like career readiness where there are multiple sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed, college readiness, as indicated, also requires multiple sets of knowledge and skills. Even though the four sets of key skills associated with college readiness are comprehensive and cut across many types of colleges and universities, the portfolio of information related to these key skills will vary in the admissions requirements of these colleges and universities. The reason for this variability is that colleges and universities represent different admissions models consistent with their mission and goals and rely on a variety of indicators using in a variety of ways (see Perfetto, 1999; Rigol, 2002).

### **Integrating the Frameworks**

While we can use terms like “generalized” or “specific” skills to characterize college and career readiness, we will be left wanting to define the types of skills. In evaluating the definitions of skills defined by ACTE for career readiness and the definitions of skills defined by Conley (2012) for college readiness, this author finds both an intersection and uniqueness between the two sets of definitions. However, the two sets of frameworks can be integrated to form a unified framework to represent post-secondary readiness. Figure 1 on the next page provides a schematic of this integration with some selected examples of the skills where there is an intersection. This framework could offer a way of thinking about career and college readiness in a more integrated manner rather than as separate constructs or to neglect the unique aspects of each.

As illustrated in Figure 1, there are sets of skills that intersect career and college readiness. In each set of skills, however, there are skills that are unique to career or college readiness. For example, with respects to academic skills, foreign languages may be an important prerequisite for a certain occupation. Or, deeper knowledge in science may be an important prerequisite for a student wanting to major in biology. The degree of intersection between skills for college and career readiness are represented by the space between the sets of skills – a larger space represents more intersection.

So, as we consider studying the skills or developing and using indicators of college and career readiness, we should consider both the unique and overlapping nature of these skills in the particular context of readiness. The implication is we need to

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)

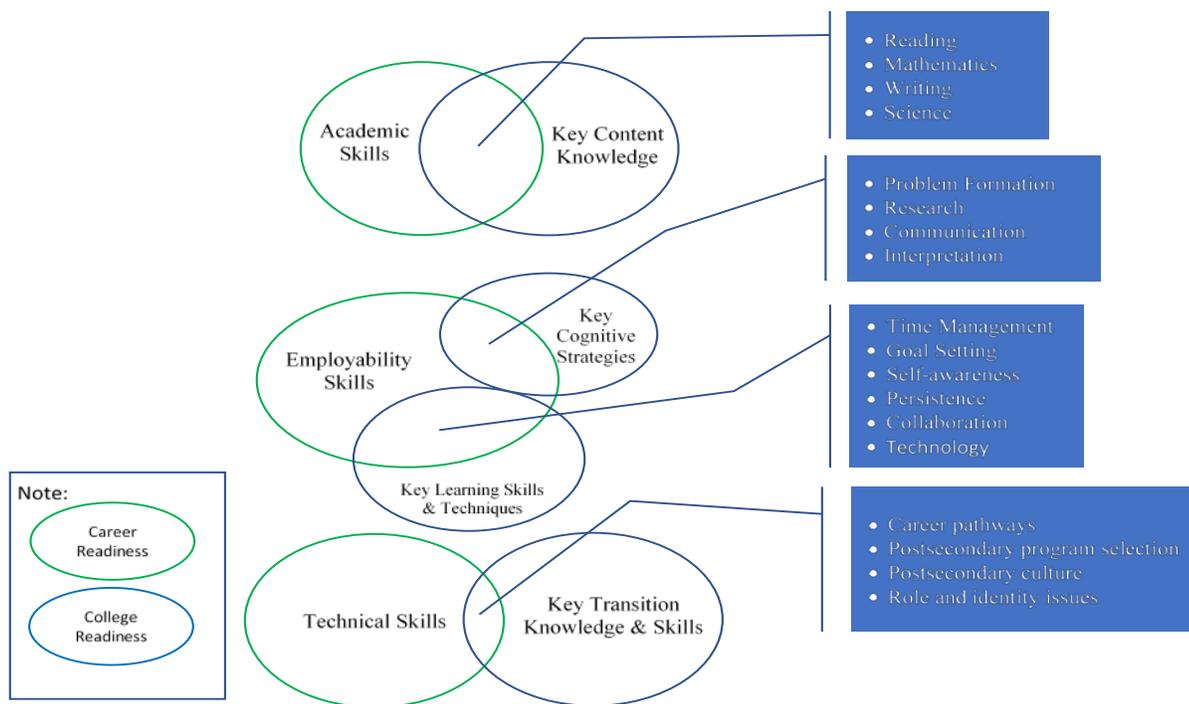


Figure 1. Relationship of Skills Associated with College and Career Readiness

articulate the skills defining readiness for a particular context. So, while there is an overlap and current frameworks can be integrated to work for both college and career readiness, as the focus becomes more specific, it is important to pay attention to the specific knowledge and skills required for each context. Therefore, care should be exercised in applying statements of generalized skills (by focusing on the intersecting areas of the framework) to a specific context.

*Author note:* Thanos Patelis is a Principal Scientist with HumRRO and a Research Scholar at Fordham University Graduate School of Education. The ideas for this essay were initially developed while Thanos was at the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment.

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## THE EFFECT OF THE HURRICANES ON EDUCATION IN PUERTO RICO

Ellen Forte, edCount, LLC

Hurricanes Harvey and the powerful Category 4 Maria devastated Puerto Rico in the fall of 2017. The entire island lost power and other systems necessary for communication, medical care, travel, and water. While Puerto Rico’s infrastructure was challenged to begin with, the storms slammed nearly all residents into a world without basic resources.

Lacking running water and electricity, Puerto Rico’s schools, like nearly all other public buildings in the territory, were closed for business for at least a month after Hurricane Maria hit on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Their recovery since has varied widely. As centrally-located anchor points with physical space and accessible facilities in many communities, some schools served as emergency shelters after the storms until they were able to resume classes. A few schools remain uninhabitable and unusable more than six months after the storms.



What happens to children in such dire circumstances? How do schools expand to address their students' accentuated needs when not a single brick, book, or drinking fountain can be taken for granted? What happens to students' learning? It turns out that these are questions we should have been asking for years; the storms just lifted the veil.

Puerto began the 2017-18 school year with about 1,100 public schools and about 345,000 students. Six months after Maria, almost 90% of the schools have reopened – albeit some are still without power – but the student population is down to about 319,000.

What may come as a surprise to those not familiar with education in Puerto Rico is that this drop in enrollment is actually relatively consistent with typical year-to-year decreases. Public school enrollment in Puerto Rico was about 425,000 in the fall of 2013 and losses of about 25,000 students from one year to the next are standard. It remains to be seen whether enrollment will drop again before the 2018-19 school year. Students generally leave the public schools when their families move to the mainland or when they are enrolled in one of the private schools on the island. This year, several U.S. states noted increases in in-coming student transfers from Puerto Rico. English as a Second Language is a required course for all public school students in Puerto Rico, but many are still likely to need English language support services in their new schools.

As a result of these declining enrollments, the Secretary of Education for Puerto Rico, Julia Keleher, closed 167 schools prior to the start of the current school year. More schools will close for good at the end of this school year, but perhaps no more than would have been shuttered anyway.

Secretary Keleher noted in an interview for this article that the challenges now facing the public school system have indeed been heightened since Maria. However, most schools did not suffer from significant infrastructure damage or losses of books and computers as one might imagine; they were already lacking such resources before the storms. There wasn't much to lose. Adequate school facilities have always been problematic and the least sufficient of these had already been closed before September of 2017. More were already planned to follow. Enough teachers remain in Puerto Rico to serve the entire student population, but where these teachers live does not align well with the schools where they are now needed. The problems we've seen as storm-related are actually consistent with long-established trends.

Convening students and teachers in the buildings we call schools may be the most salient aspect of education and the storm-related disruptions to the daily going-to-school routine in Puerto Rico has gotten widespread attention. Secretary Keleher cites much longer-term deficits in the education system and hopes to leverage the recovery efforts to drive broader changes. For the most part, she says, what you'll see in every classroom you walk into is a very traditional instructional model with relatively scripted lessons and students sitting in rows and columns doing worksheets. She envisions a shift to a project-based learning model that engages students in their own environments. "We also want to promote entrepreneurialism and must make learning practical", she notes. "This will require shifting instructional targets from lower-level objectives to the complex, real problems our students and our communities are facing."

Implementing a more collaborative, inquiry-based model will require significant professional development for Puerto Rico's educators and Secretary Keleher is working on strategic partnerships she sees as necessary to making such major shifts across the island. Any approach must be supportive of the personal hardships that many teachers still face in the wake of the storms and must be something teachers can embrace. But, Keleher is not looking for or making excuses. The Puerto Rico Department of Education considered requesting a waiver the U.S. Department of Education for annual testing this year, but decided against it. "We need more data, not less," says Keleher. She is considering options for adding additional assessments to support monitoring of students' progress throughout the school year and welcomes creative solutions from those on the island and from the mainland.

As recovery continues across the island, students, their families, and their teachers will eventually settle into their new normal routines. Perhaps the devastation will result in stronger infrastructure for schools and other institutions. Given the perspective of the leadership in Puerto Rico, that may include a leap frog to a far more progressive approach to preparing students for the demands that lie ahead.

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# TAKING ITEMS INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

André A. Rupp, Educational Testing Service



The *Instructional Topics in Educational Measurement Series* (ITEMS) has existed since the late 1980s and had been designed as a mechanism for making educational and psychological assessment topics accessible to audiences who seek applied or semi-technical introductions to key measurement topics. Audiences have included beginning graduate students in various degree programs, applied professionals working in industry, and, predominantly in earlier parts of the series, K-12 classroom teachers; all currently available resources can be found on the [NCME website](#).

In recent years there has been a desire on the part of NCME to bring the ITEMS series into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by transforming it from a predominantly print publication with the occasional supplementary digital resource into a full-fledged digital learning portal that can serve self-paced professional development needs while connecting learners with one another more efficiently – an ITEMS Academy if you will. Modules in this reimagined space would now be conceived of as digital “packages” of integrated resources that include voice-narrated content, short instructional videos, sample code and data sets, worked data-analysis examples, comprehensive exercise sets, and written didactic articles similar to the PDF documents that are on the current NCME website. In other words, something like this:

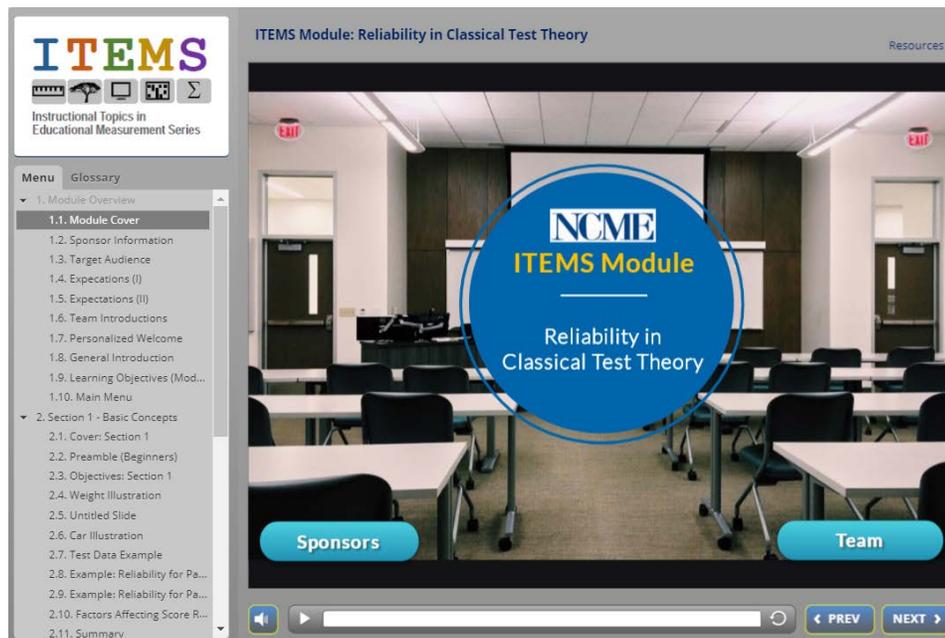


Figure 1. Example ITEMS Module Portal

In this short newsletter entry I describe the results of a member survey that we used to guide our thinking and ongoing development efforts as well as two sample modules that will be released shortly.

## ITEMS Survey

In order to learn more about the characteristics of ITEMS that are seen as desirable and lacking as well as how members are currently using ITEMS, among other things, we conducted an online survey during the spring of 2017. The survey was accessible advertised through the NCME membership list and included via a hyperlink on the NCME website. In the following, I describe the key findings from this survey and how they connect with ongoing efforts to build out the educational portal.

## Survey Respondents

A total of exactly 300 respondents replied to the survey with approximately 24% working in academia, 59% working in industry, 5% being retired, and 12% being students at different levels; about 84% of respondents either have or are working on a Ph.D. degree and almost 95% have been NCME members during the last five years at some point.

## Instructional Usage

Around two-thirds of the respondents noted that they had ever downloaded or read at least one ITEMS module while around one-third had never downloaded or read any; some respondents also noted that this survey was the first time that they had heard about ITEMS. Among those who had either downloaded or used ITEMS modules, 210 (89%) noted that they used them for professional development, 93 (40%) noted that they used them in classrooms or training sessions, 70 (30%) noted that they shared them with colleagues, and 28 (12%) described other uses; the other uses sometimes reflected the question selections. The didactic value of the included exercises was decidedly mixed with 119 (48%) respondents noting that they never used them, 121 (48%) respondents noting that they used them sometimes, and only 10 (4%) of respondents noting that they always used them. Amongst the 121 respondents who used them sometimes, 70 (58%) thought they were somewhat useful, 47 (39%) thought they were highly useful, and 4 (3%) thought they were not useful.

## Content Coverage

Respondents were asked which of the modules they had downloaded and were able to select multiple modules; the 5 most popular modules were:

- Linking and equating: CTT methods (module 6;  $n = 122 / 46\%$ )
- Linking and equating: IRT methods (module 10;  $n = 102 / 38\%$ )
- Comparison of CTT and IRT (module 16;  $n = 98 / 37\%$ )
- Reliability (module 8;  $n = 92 / 35\%$ )
- Methods for DIF detection (module 19;  $n = 92 / 35\%$ )

These numbers are in general alignment with download statistics that we have from the NCME website even though there are a few notable exceptions. For instance, the 2007 module on structural equation modeling has been downloaded most frequently but was not amongst the most popular downloads in the survey, probably reflecting the differential usage of the framework within and outside of educational measurement. A total of 148 (49%) of respondents provided a suggestion when they were asked which one single module they would recommend commissioning. There was notable diversity in the requested topics with the 5 most commonly requested themes being classroom assessment (10), validity (9), equating and linking (6), score reporting (6), and various diagnostic measurement models (5).

## Supplementary Materials

We also asked about the kinds of novel resources that respondents would find most helpful in reimagined ITEMS modules with the results shown in Table 1. The most commonly requested resources are worked exemplars with sample code and data sets, hyperlinks to other online resources, updated information on older modules, and short videos on the core module content or content beyond it. Twenty-two respondents provided a response to the open-ended question about other suggestions with many responses actually mirroring the most commonly requested module components from Table 1. Webinars and workshops have a somewhat more mixed perceived utility while Q&A sessions and interviews with authors are overall viewed as least important. In a separate questions, we asked how likely it is that respondents would either attend or view recordings of one-hour webinars if we offered them. Responses were mixed to both questions with 72 (28 %) and 119 (47 %) respondents saying that they would be very likely and likely to attend webinars, respectively, but 112 (44 %) and 101 (40 %) respondents saying that they would be very likely and likely to view recordings of such webinars, respectively. Across both questions it became clear that having more comprehensive materials available online at any time is generally preferred over having some materials available only through attendance of either a training session or a webinar, consistent with current trends in digitally-centered learning.

Table 1  
*Proposed Components for Reimagined ITEMS Modules*

Module Component	Not very		Somewhat		Very		Total
Sample data sets with codes and annotated solutions	6 %	16	20 %	49	74 %	182	247
Hyperlinks to other educational resources on the same topic	3 %	8	30 %	72	67 %	159	239
Brief addendum incorporating changes in the field since publication	11 %	26	37 %	89	52 %	126	241
10-minute videos on parts of the module content	15 %	36	33 %	79	52 %	123	238
10-minute videos on content that goes beyond the module	17 %	40	34 %	81	49 %	115	236
Webinars on the module content	17 %	40	43 %	102	41 %	97	239
Webinars on content that goes beyond the module	17 %	40	43 %	102	40 %	95	237
Workshop at annual meeting on a recent module	23 %	55	45 %	107	32 %	76	238
Virtual ask-the-author Q&A session	35 %	82	50 %	115	15 %	35	232
Video interviews with module authors	46 %	107	41 %	94	13 %	30	231

*Note.* Sorted by relative endorsement.

### Additional Audiences

We also asked which critical audience respondents believed we were missing with ITEMS modules and 105 (35%) respondents provided a reply. Overwhelmingly, teachers were identified as a key audience by about a third of the respondents with policy-makers, test administrators, and various other applied users following closely behind. In general, there was a strong consensus that ITEMS modules should reach more non-technical audiences and several respondents noted how some modules had become too technical and specialized.

### **Implications for Next Phase of ITEMS**

#### Web Space Redesign

The reimagining of the ITEMS series into a digital educational portal is a multi-step process and involves considerations around the design of the website and an associated learning management system, the strategic development of content within a curriculum, the strategic planning of outreach activities into communities of practice, and so forth. The great news is that NCME has partnered up with a company called *HigherLogic* to reconceive the digital presence of NCME, which will include various technical features that facilitate the above processes notably. In terms of ITEMS, this partnership opens up long-term possibilities for considering the development of a full-fledged ITEMS Academy within a mature learning management system that can include a variety of community-oriented incentives for developing and accessing content.

#### Sample Modules

In the near term, we have worked with two development teams to create two sample digital modules to illustrate our vision for the future. We chose the topic of reliability as a starting point and are close to finishing one module on “Reliability in Classical Test Theory” (Developers: Charlie Lewis & Michael Chajewski), which builds on the 1991 module by Traub and Rowley, as well as one module on “Scale Reliability in Structural Equation Modeling” (Developers: Gregory Hancock & Ji An). Figure 1 shows a few additional screenshots to provide you with an early “sneak peek” of what these modules will look like.

We chose reliability for a variety of reasons including (a) it is a core concept in educational measurement, (b) often receives quite a diverse and distributed treatment across graduate courses, (c) a module on the topic existed but is dated in certain ways, (d) a variety of information is available online but not necessarily organized in a coherent manner, and (e) core information about reliability can be communicated at a variety of different technical levels to different audiences.

We expect these modules to be ready in time for the conference and are planning to make them accessible to current NCME members as well as non-members from the broader community. During this process, we will collect ongoing feedback from users about these modules to learn how we can further improve our offerings in this space. In addition, we will use these modules as communication tools to approach partners around the world for contributing like content.

	1	...	K/2	$X_i$	(K/2)+1	...	K	$X_i$	$X_i - X_k$	$X$
1	0		1	32	0		0	29	+3	61
...										
n	1		1	46	0		1	51	-6	97

$$\rho_{XX'} = 1 - \frac{\sigma_{(X_i - X_k)}^2}{\sigma_X^2}$$

Figure 1. Sample screenshots of new ITEMS module on reliability.

In this sense, if you are interested in partnering with NCME on the development of the ITEMS Academy please do not hesitate to contact me via email ([arupp@ets.org](mailto:arupp@ets.org)) or phone (609-252-8545) – we would love to hear from you!

## LEGAL CORNER: POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF STUDENT DATA PRIVACY LEGISLATION ON ASSESSMENT

Michelle Croft, ACT

On January 30, the House Education and Workforce Committee held a [hearing](#) to discuss how to balance protections for student data while allowing for evidence-based policymaking. The hearing was step towards updating the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).



Despite such activity, efforts to update federal student data privacy law have so far [come up short](#). Instead, most of the movement on this front has been at the state level, after concerns about the security of student data in online state and district repositories of educational technology companies such as [inBloom](#). The response from states was to enact legislation to better monitor third-party collection, storage, and sharing of student data.

According to the [Data Quality Campaign](#), since 2013 “49 states have introduced 503 bills, and 41 states have passed 94 new laws expressly addressing the privacy and security of education data.” Because the laws were largely written to limit educational technology companies, and were not specifically written for assessment providers, they may have a number of negative impacts—whether intended or not—on ways data are used when collected via state- or district-administered testing. I address five of these below.

## Research

Most of the bills were constructed similarly to California’s Student Online Personal Information Protection Act (SOPIPA), which broadly applies to websites, applications, and online services that focus on K–12 services. SOPIPA prohibits 1) using data for targeted advertising, 2) creating K–12 student profiles for anything other than K–12 school purposes, and 3) selling student information. But SOPIPA also limits the sharing or use of student data for research purposes to only research projects required by state or federal law, or that are allowed by state or federal law and are under the direction of a school, school district, or state department of education. Following the lead of SOPIPA, other state legislation often includes similar restrictions on using data for research, which effectively limit the ability of independent scholars or organizations to conduct education- or assessment-related research.

## Test Administration and Scoring

States have generally moved towards the use of Pre-ID barcodes where the state sends the assessment provider a file with student information prior to testing. These barcodes reduce errors when attributing a student to a test record. One state, however, enacted a [bill](#) that (except in districts that have a data sharing agreement with the assessment provider) restricts the state’s ability to collect students’ personally identifiable information (PII) for assessment such that, on its own, the information collected cannot be used to identify the student. While the law does allow the assessment provider to receive a student’s PII directly from the local district when the student’s parent has consented to its release, if a contract with the district is not available then students supply their identification information themselves, on test day. The statute illustrates the potential of highly restrictive data privacy law to complicate the essential functions of test administration and scoring.

## Data Use and Validity Evidence

Data privacy bills often expressly limit the uses of data. Typically, the limitations do not effect achievement testing. (For example, the SOPIPA bill allows for the use of data for “improving services” to students and other [bills](#) exempt certain types of assessment data collections.) Further, many state contracts limit data use. There are, however, some instances where legislative language may unintentionally interfere with data use.

For instance, [multiple bills](#) would have prohibited the use of education data for predictive modeling. For assessments that are developed in part to predict future performance, such as the ACT test or the SAT, this prohibition would be problematic for collecting validity evidence to support the prediction claim.

## Test Security

Some of the data privacy bills limit the collection of [biometric information](#) such as fingerprints or handwriting, which are sometimes used to ensure the security of test materials by enabling administrators to determine that the person taking a test is in fact the one who registered to take it.

## Assessment of Student Nonacademic Factors

There has been a growing interest in assessing socio-emotional aspects related to education, typically by means of student surveys. Some of the data privacy [legislation](#) would curtail the ability to collect this type of information without parental consent.

\* \* \*

Student data are a valuable tool, and states are making advances to properly protect it through legislation. In cases where such legislation may interfere with research, test administration and scoring, data use, test security, or assessment of non-academic factors, assessment providers must be able to clearly explain the rationale for certain data practices, for example the advantages in efficiency and accuracy for using Pre-ID barcodes. The new laws also are an opportunity for assessment providers, states, and districts to evaluate existing practices such as determining who should reasonably have access to student data, which elements of that data are essential, and which are optional depending on the specific use for which the data are intended.

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## HERE AND THERE AND BACK AGAIN: #NCME18 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

*April Zenisky, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and  
Charlie DePascale, Center for Assessment (NCIEA)*

We gather next month in New York City to discuss, debate, confer, and converse about educational measurement; with a special focus on making educational measurement a stronger force for positive impact on teaching



and learning. The program begins on Saturday morning with a session that asks, “Are We Entering a New Era for Educational Assessment?” and continues through Monday afternoon with 124 sessions that address all aspects of that question. In keeping with the conference theme, the program offers opportunities to reflect on our past, share our current work, and prepare for a future full of new measurement opportunities and challenges.

Each day of the conference features an invited session addressing *Measurement Problems – A Look Back to Look Ahead*. As Howard Wainer stated in his 1993 JEM article, *Measurement Problems*, “the developments of tomorrow have their genesis in the problems of today. Thus any attempt to look forward is well begun with an examination of unsettled questions” (p. 1). On Saturday, a panel of NCME past presidents examines the current status of the 16 original problems Wainer identified in 1993. On Sunday and Monday, panels representing the breadth of our field discuss current and future challenges, both technical and conceptual.

Below is a list of the invited and special sessions featured on each day of the program. We ask each of you to add to this list by using the hashtag #NCME18. Prior to, during, and even after the conference use #NCME18 to spread the word on your own conference highlights. Let everyone know about your own work. Ask for recommendations on sessions related to a particular topic of interest. Share your thoughts on ideas presented at the conference.

This is your conference. Make the most of it!

### **Saturday, April 14**

- *Measurement Problems 1* – NCME past presidents examine the current status of Wainer’s original list of 16 Measurement Problems
- *The Past, Present, and Future of Curriculum-Based Measurement* – an invited session providing an overview and history of CBM, a review of 30+ years of research and a discussion of future directions and challenges.
- *History of Measurement – Part II* – it takes two sessions to present the highly-anticipated sequel to *History of Measurement – Part I* presented as a training session at the 2017 conference. What happened after 1950 – find out how the story ends.
- *Insight and Action: Diverse Perspectives on Critical Fairness Issues in Testing* – an invited session selected by the Committee on Diversity Issues in Testing
- *Creating the Capacity to Increase Understanding of What Works in Schools, How It’s Measured and Why It Works* – an invited session sponsored by the National Association of Assessment Directors

### **Sunday, April 15**

- Address by NCME President Randy Bennett
- NCME Awards Session – featuring presentations by the 2018 winners of NCME Awards
- *The Positive Impact of Assessment* – an invited session addressing ways in which assessment has had a positive impact on teaching and learning and ways in which it can be a stronger force for positive impact.
- *Measurement Problems 2* – panelists discuss current and future challenges in educational measurement

### **Monday, April 16**

- *Measurement Problems 3* – panelists discuss current and future challenges in educational measurement
- *New Developments in the Assessment Practice at the National Center for Assessment (Saudi Arabia)* – an invited session offering an international perspective on advances in assessment
- *Testing in the Professions: Credentialing Policies and Practice* – an NCME Book Series session featuring authors from the Davis-Becker and Buckendahl (eds.) 2017 publication of the same name
- *Challenges, Issues and Opportunities in Using Response Process Data in Improving Measurement* – an interactive NCME Book Series session based on the Erickson and Pellegrino (eds.) 2017 publication *Validation of Score Meaning for the Next Generation of Assessments: The Use of Response Processes*
- *We Can Do This: Communicating Information from Educational Assessments* – panelists address one of the most vexing and longstanding challenges in educational measurement

### **References**

Wainer, H. (1993). Measurement problems. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 30(1), 1-21.

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# NCME 2018 TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

Amanda Wolkowitz, *Alpine Testing Solutions*

The Training and Professional Development Committee is looking forward to another set of exciting pre-conference training sessions. There are 24 sessions being held this year! The sessions will be held at the New York Hilton Midtown and the Westin Times Square on Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup> and at the Westin Times Square on Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. Admission to the training sessions is limited to those that have registered for the session. Advance registration is required and can be done as part of the conference registration process through the AERA website.



There will be three training sessions offered in-person as well as virtually this year! The sessions are:

- *Federal Education Policy as a Driver of Assessment Design (1965 to pretest)*  
Daniel Lewis and Wesley Bruce on Thursday, April 12, from 8-12 PM EDT.
- *Effective Item Writing for Valid Measurement*  
Anthony Albano and Michael Rodriguez on Thursday, April 12, from 1-5 PM EDT.
- *Applying Test Score Equating Methods Using R*  
Marie Wiberg and Jorge González on Friday, April 13, from 8-12 PM EDT.  
BOOK: Gonzalez, J. & Wiberg, M. (2017). *Applying Test Equating Methods Using R*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

If you are interested in attending one of these sessions virtually, please register for the meeting on the AERA/NCME registration website. Be sure to register for the “virtual” version of the session. Closer to the conference, we will send out information on how to connect to the meeting as a virtual participant.

Details of the 24 sessions are listed below. This is a great opportunity to learn from others in the field and to take advantage of an excellent professional development opportunity!

## THURSDAY ALL DAY (8 AM -5 PM)

- *Cognitive diagnosis modeling: A general framework approach and its implementation in R*  
Jimmy de la Torre, and Wenchao Ma
- *Measuring hard-to-measure (noncognitive) skills: Social, emotional, self-management, and beyond*  
Patrick Kyllonen, Jiyun Zu, and Jonas Bertling
- *Techniques and software for Q-matrix estimation and modeling learning in cognitive diagnosis*  
Jeffrey Douglas, Steven Culpepper, Hua-Hua Chang, Georgios Fellouris, Shiyu Wang, Yinghan Chen, Sam Ye, James Balamuta, and Susu Zhang
- *Using Shiny to create custom psychometric solutions*  
Joshua Goodman, John Willse, Reina Chau, Andrew Dallas, and Fen Fan

## THURSDAY MORNING (8 AM -12 PM)

- *Computerized multistage adaptive testing: Theory and applications*  
Duanli Yan, Alina von Davier, and Chris Han  
  
BOOK: Yan, D., von Davier, A. A., & Lewis, C. (2014). *Computerized Multistage Testing: Theory and Applications*. Boca Raton, FL: Taylor & Francis Group.
- *Federal Education Policy as a Driver of Assessment Design (1965 to present)*  
Daniel Lewis and Wesley Bruce  
  
NOTE: Also offered virtually
- *Moving from paper to online assessments: Psychometric, content, and classroom considerations*  
Susan McNally and Ye Tong

#### **THURSDAY AFTERNOON (1 PM -5 PM)**

- *An overview of operational psychometric work in real world*  
Hyeonjoo Oh, JongPil Kim, Laura Kramer, Jinghua Liu, and Ye Tong
- *Collaborative solution design for educational measurement challenges: Not a spectator sport*  
Chad Buckendahl and Ellen Forte
- *Effective Item Writing for Valid Measurement*  
Anthony Albano and Michael Rodriguez

NOTE: Also offered virtually

- *Practical applications of vertical articulation in standard setting*  
Michael Bunch

#### **FRIDAY ALL DAY (8 AM -5 PM)**

- *Bayesian networks in educational assessment*  
Duanli Yan, Diego Zapata, Russell Almond, and Roy Levy  
  
BOOK: Almond, R. G., Mislevy, R. J., Steinberg, L. S., Yan, D., Williamson, D. M. (2015). *Bayesian Networks in Educational Assessment*. New York: Springer.
- *LNIRT: Joint modeling of responses (accuracy) and response times (speed)*  
Jean-Paul Fox and Konrad Klotzke
- *Shadow-test approach to adaptive testing*  
Wim van der Linden and Michelle Barrett
- *Test equating methods and practices*  
Michael Kolen, Robert Brennan, and Ye Tong

BOOK: Kolen, M.J., & Brennan, R.L. (2014). *Test equating, scaling, and linking. Methods and practices* (Third Edition). Springer: New York.

#### **FRIDAY MORNING (8 AM -12 PM)**

- *A Visual Introduction to Computerized Adaptive Testing*  
Yuehwei Chien and Chingwei Shin
- *Applying Test Score Equating Methods Using R*  
Marie Wiberg and Jorge González

BOOK: González, J. & Wiberg, M. (2017). *Applying Test Equating Methods Using R*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

NOTE: Also offered virtually

- *Diagnostic Classification Models Part I: Fundamentals*  
Laine Bradshaw and Matthew Madison  
  
NOTE: Part II is offered as a separate session in the afternoon.
- *The Stanford Education Data Archive: Using big data to study academic performance*  
Sean Reardon, Andrew Ho, Benjamin Shear, and Erin Fahle

#### **FRIDAY AFTERNOON (1 PM -5 PM)**

- *Analyzing NAEP Data Using Plausible Values and Marginal Estimation with AM*  
Young Yee Kim and Emmanuel Sikali
- *Bayesian analysis of response style IRT models using SAS PROC MCMC*  
Clement Stone and Brian Leventhal

- *Diagnostic Classification Models Part II: Advanced Applications*

Laine Bradshaw and Matthew Madison

NOTE: Part II is offered as a separate session in the afternoon.

- *Evidenced-centered design and computational psychometrics solution for game/simulation-based assessments*  
Jiangang Hao, Robert Mislevy, Alina von Davier, Pak Wong, and Kristen DiCerbo
- *Landing your dream job for graduate students*  
Debra Harris and Xin Li

Thank you, in advance, to all our presenters. For all members, we hope to see you at the sessions!

## A VISITOR'S GUIDE FOR NCME 2018

*Martha Moreno and Peter Halpin, New York University*

This year's conference is located in the heart of Times Square. You'll be right in the middle of the theatre district if you want to catch a play or musical. Famous restaurants in this area include the Hard Rock Café, Keen Steak House, and, if you are looking for something really fancy, The View Restaurant offers high-end dining with an amazing view of the Manhattan skyline. The Top of the Rock and the Empire State Building also offer great views without the dining requirement (but for a fee). Note that for the Empire State Building, there are many approved sidewalk vendors who are available to sell tour tickets. Also keep in mind Korea-town (between Broadway and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, and 31<sup>st</sup> to 33rd St) for great dining experiences close by.



Times Square can start to feel quite overwhelming (and expensive!) after a while, so we highly recommend seeing more of the city. Manhattan is very pedestrian friendly, so walking is always an option. Taxi's and car service (Uber and Lyft) are aplenty, but especially during rush hour, there can be long waits (< 10 minutes) for pick up and lots of sitting in traffic. The subway is another great option for getting around—it's a great NYC experience, doesn't get stuck in traffic, and is relatively cheap. Get yourself a MetroCard at Time Sq-42 St. station and use the [subway map](#) or an [MTA app](#) to find your way around. Note that Google Maps also has accurate subway info. There is also Citibike, a pay-per-ride bicycle service. But, you should feel pretty confident about your cycling skills before venturing into Manhattan traffic!

Heading north from Times Square, a visit to Central Park and the Museum district is a great and inexpensive way to see some of the best NYC has to offer. If you want to take in a lot of museums (e.g., the MET, Guggenheim, MoMa, Natural History, etc.), you might want to consider a [City Pass](#). If you are a student, check the venue website for student discounts. There are lots of street food vendors in the museum district, but note that the choices for restaurants and cafes in uptown can be a bit limited; make sure to check your Google Maps for nearby options well in advance of getting hungry.

You won't find a lot of NY locals around Times Square or the museums. If you want to experience the city like a local, the secret is to get into the neighborhoods. Hell's Kitchen is just a few blocks west of Times Square, with lots of inexpensive local bars and restaurants to be found around there. Heading south from Times Square, we can highly recommend the Village (East, Greenwich, and West), which is between 14<sup>th</sup> St. and Houston St. Almost every block between between 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and the West Side Highway has somewhere fun and unique to eat, drink, and be merry. Bleecker St is particularly popular with students, and has a lot of great comedy venues (like the Comedy Cellar) and classic music venues (like the Blue Note). Heading further south we have SoHo, the fashion district (great for sample sales), and the Lower East Side, which together offer some of the densest storefront in the nation, for all your NYC boutique shopping desires. Keep heading south into China Town, and the business and financial districts.

It is also quick and easy to get to Brooklyn, which can provide a reprieve from the hussle and bussle of Manhattan. From Times Square, you can take the downtown-bound N, Q or R trains at Times Sq-42 St Subway Station to Union Square, and then take the Brooklyn-bound L train. Probably the most popular neighborhood in Brooklyn is Williamsburg, which just off Bedford Avenue station, the first stop Brooklyn stop on the Brooklyn-bound L line. Walking around the neighborhood you can find a lot of amazing restaurants, really nice rooftops with great views of Manhattan, parks, art galleries, etc.

For food and drinks near Bedford station, El Almacen is the place to go if you want great steak at good prices, the steak and eggs or the huevos rancheros are amazing. Reunion is a small Israeli coffee shop that serves brunch during the day, everything in the menu is delicious and they have space outdoors if the weather is nice. Rabbithole and Juliette are the kind of places that are always packed but it's worth waiting for a table. Rabbithole has a patio in the back and Juliette roof has a really nice view of Williamsburg. If you are looking for something different, Llama Inn has Peruvian inspired food, they have dinner and brunch.

Not only Manhattan has great pizza--Brooklyn has some of the best offers also. If you are craving NYC pizza, definitely go to Roberta's in Bushwick, right off Morgan Av. Station of the L train, it is a really nice and relaxed space to enjoy pizza and beer. The White and Green or the Bee Sting are two of their most famous. There is also the Brooklyn location of the very famous Joe's Pizza, which is right in Bedford Avenue and Grimaldi in the DUMBO area, though the lines there are crazy.

The William Vale Hotel rooftop bar is called Westlight, and is located in the 22nd floor of the hotel. If you are looking for one of the most amazing views of Mahattan from Brooklyn, this is the place to find it. The bar has good cocktails and they serve small plates, the hamburger is really good. Another nice hotel with a cool bar to at the top to enjoy the view is the Wythe hotel. The Blue Room at the Whythe Hotel is another cocktail bar that comes to mind for great views of the Manhattan sky line.

Another nice way to get to Brooklyn is by walking over the Brooklyn Bridge. From Time Sq-42 St Subway Station, take the N, Q or R trains downtown-bound to Broadway-Lafayette, and transfer to downtown bound 6 train. The last stop on the 6 is City Hall, from which you can walk over the bridge. It can be quite crowded, but provides great views of both boroughs and is a nice way to spend some time on a warm afternoon. This takes you into Brooklyn Heights /DUMBO neighborhood, which has almost as much to offer as Williamsburg for interesting dining and drinking.

If you are willing to venture farther into Brooklyn, Prospect Park is known as Brooklyn's last forest, with its own lake and a lot of recreational activities. The Brooklyn Museum is one of the oldest and largest museums in the United States (they have the David Bowie exhibition until July 15, which is highly recommended.) The graffiti tour in Bushwick is an alternative to locking up in a museum, if you are a fan of street art. Here is a nice [guide](#) of the murals you can see and where exactly to find them.

We are sure you will have a great time in NYC. In case it's helpful, we'll just leave you with some final advice on what to do (and not to do):

1. Make reservations / get tickets a head of time whenever you can. NYC is a busy place and many events sell out ahead of time. Many restaurants will not be able to seat you on a walk-in basis, so it's always good to make a reservation online for lunch or dinner. Also, many places won't seat you until your entire party has arrived, so be prepared to have drink at the bar if someone shows up late.
2. Exit taxis and cars on the curbside. Expect cyclists and other vehicle on the street side.
3. Don't be afraid to ask for directions or other help. New Yorkers often get a bad rap for being rude. But, in our experience, most people are willing to help out, as long as you don't keep them waiting too long!
4. Never take the G-train to get through Brooklyn! Notoriously late and poorly scheduled, you can spend far too much time waiting for this line. Call a car or take a taxi instead, it's well worth the extra cost.
5. Have fun, and please share your experiences and recommendation with your colleagues using the NCME twitter feed (#NCME2018).

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## NCME FITNESS YOGA CORNER

*Kristen Huff and Brian Patterson, Curriculum Associates*

Yoga means union. One interpretation of this meaning is that through yoga, we are creating synergy between our minds and our bodies. This harmony has many physical and psychological benefits. Why don't you see for yourself at NCME Sunrise Yoga? Saturday, April 14th 6:30am - 7:30am, at the NCME Headquarters hotel: The Westin New York at Times Square - Majestic 1 (5th Floor). You'll need to register in advance (through AERA



registration website). For \$10, you'll receive a delightful hour of yoga instruction to start the conference off with serenity and positive vibes. (And a free yoga mat!) Hope to see you there.

Here is the link to [register](#). You must first register for the conference, and then click on the NCME tab to register for yoga.

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## NCME FITNESS WALK/RUN CORNER

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

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 Monday, April 16, 2018 (5:45 – 7 AM), and the course will start just over half a mile away from the NCME headquarters hotel (Westin Times Square) at the Hudson River Park (Pier 84).



We are holding a Design-the-Shirt competition again this year, and we received two stellar submissions. The winning design will be revealed on the shirts at the conference!

Last, but not least, with the close of the 2018 Winter Olympics on our heels, we know you are looking for an opportunity to win gold and let out your competitive spirit. You are in luck because the Team Participation Competition is back again this year and is just what you have been waiting for! So encourage your colleagues to register for this event as well.

See you bright and early Monday morning, April 16, for an invigorating start to the day with fellow NCME colleagues!

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## THE THIRD ANNUAL NCMENTORING PROGRAM

*Sonya Powers, ACT and, Leslie Keng, Center for Assessment (NCIEA)*

We're excited to announce the third annual NCMentoring program!

Launched during the 2016 annual meeting, 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 (*mentees*) are paired with members experienced in fields related to NCME's focus on assessment, evaluation, and other aspects of educational measurement (*mentors*). 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.



Over 100 NCME members participated in the NCMentoring program in each of the first two years (2016 and 2017). 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](#).

- You are an NCME member who will be attending the NCME conference in April 2018.
- You have at least two years of post-graduate 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 2018.
- You are currently enrolled in an accredited Ph.D. or master’s program in a measurement-related field OR you have graduated from such a program within the past two years.

NCME will reserve meeting space for mentor/mentee pairs to meet at the conference. We encourage you to take advantage of the convenience of meeting at NCME sponsored meeting rooms which will include light snacks and drinks. Sign up early to take advantage of this professional development opportunity! The application deadline is March 23, 2018.

For more information, contact Joshua Goodman ([joshuag@nccpa.net](mailto:joshuag@nccpa.net)) or Qing Xie ([qing.xie@act.org](mailto:qing.xie@act.org)). This opportunity is organized by the NCME Membership Committee and sponsored by the NCME Board of Directors.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP

*Mark Wilson, University of California, Berkeley*

To date 17 companies and institutions have promised to support our annual conference, and several others are still deciding as we go to press. So, thank you to those 17:

ACT, Inc.  
 Alpine Testing Solutions  
 American Institute of CPA  
 American Institutes for Research  
 Buros Center for Testing  
 College Board  
 Curriculum Associates  
 Educational Testing Service  
 Graduate Management Admission Council

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt  
 Law School Admission Council  
 Measured Progress Inc.  
 National Board of Medical Examiners  
 National Center for the Improvement of Educational  
 Assessment, Inc.  
 Northwest Evaluation Association  
 Pearson Educational Measurement  
 Renaissance Learning, Inc.



## NCME DIGITAL PRESENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

*Alina von Davier, ACT, Joni Lakin, Auburn University, and Matthew Gaertner, WestEd*

NCME established the Digital Presence Committee in 2017 to coordinate and expand NCME’s activities in online communities, including social media and the NCME website. The Digital Presence Committee is composed of two subcommittees – the Social Media Committee and the Website Committee:



### Connect with NCME on Social Media during the Annual Meeting

NCME joined the social media world last year with opportunities to connect on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. Please join us by clicking on the graphics below. You can follow us on Twitter at @ncme38.



This year's annual meeting hashtag is #NCME18. Be sure to tag your posts during the Annual Meeting. For the third year in a row, we will be running a Social Media Contest! Winners will be selected each day of the conference from posts tagging NCME. Win great NCME swag and recent NCME publications.

#### **NCME Website Committee: Mission and Coming Soon**

The NCME Website Committee has a two-part mission. First, we keep in touch with all of NCME's committee chairs to keep website's content current and to advertise major events (such as the annual meeting or one of our special fall conferences). Second, our committee is making plans to launch a fully redesigned NCME.org in 2018 – a forum where NCME members can easily submit proposals for our annual meeting or special fall conference, interact with communities of measurement experts, watch recorded sessions from our conferences, access our top-tier journals, and complete online learning modules.

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## **NCME MISSION FUND COMMITTEE UPDATE**



**Chad Buckendahl**



**Ellen Forte**



**Deborah Harris**



**Canda Mueller**



**Cathy Wendler (chair)**



**John Willse**



**Michelle Boyer (student rep)**

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 which advance NCME's mission in the science and practice of measurement in education. So as you finalize your presentation and pack your bags, why not add one more thing to your "to do" list: **Contribute to the NCME Mission Fund!**

There are three categories of activities that your donation will help support:

- **Support for graduate students, early career faculty, and early career practitioners in the measurement field.** Funding for activities that expand educational and professional opportunities for newer NCME members, both students and active members.
- **Responding to public perceptions of measurement and testing.** Funding for special initiatives outside of existing NCME activities designed to promote a broader understanding of high quality assessment practices and appropriate test use among diverse groups of assessment stakeholders.

- **Co-Sponsorship among NCME committees or with external agencies or organizations.** Funding that involves members of two or more NCME committees or an NCME committee and an external agency or organization in support of activities larger than any single committee's charge.

Remember that you can contribute online at any time by going to [the NCME website](#). Use the "Donate" button on the NCME homepage, logon with your member information, select the NCME Mission Fund, and type in the amount you are donating. No amount is too small – or too large!!

**Thank you in advance for your generous donation.** Through the years our organization has made important contributions to education and measurement. And with your help we will continue to make important contributions.

The NCME Mission Fund Committee

Cathy Wendler (Chair), [cwendler@ets.org](mailto:cwendler@ets.org)  
 Chad Buckendahl (Chair Elect), [cbuckendahl@acsventures.com](mailto:cbuckendahl@acsventures.com)  
 Michelle Boyer (Student Member), [mlboyer@umass.edu](mailto:mlboyer@umass.edu)  
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 John Willse, [jtwillse@uncg.edu](mailto:jtwillse@uncg.edu)

## NCME COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY ISSUES IN TESTING: SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS AND OUR INVITED SESSION

*Lietta Scott, Arizona Department of Education*

This spring we launched a program to increase representation from underrepresented minorities in NCME. We also are very excited about the symposium we invited for this year's meeting.

### NCME Pipeline Scholarship Program

We and the NCME Board of Directors have secured funding for travel scholarships for graduate student presenters who are members of underrepresented minority groups (African American, Latino/a, or Native American). The funding for 5 students, who will *receive \$2000 each*, will defer travel costs to help students attend and present their papers at the 2018 NCME Annual Meeting in New York City. Applications were available on the NCME website starting in mid-January. All applicants were notified of their award status at the end of February. As part of their applications, these students promised to submit a report on their activities during the conference and a detailed accounting of how they used the funds. The Committee will submit these documents to the Board for their consideration of the effectiveness, and possible continuation and/or expansion, of the program for next year. We are very pleased to have been able to provide this opportunity to these students to attend this year's conference.



### NCME CoDIT Invited Session

We are pleased to be able to offer "*Insight and Action: Diverse Perspective on Critical Fairness Issues in Testing*" as our invited session this spring. This session, is based on information previously presented at a meeting held by the Buros Center in October 2017. The session chair (Dr. Jessica Jonson), will be joined by Dr. Guillermo Solano-Flores (educational measurement), Dr. Samuel Ortiz (school psychology), Dr. Lisa Suzuki (counseling), and Dr. Harold Goldstein (industrial/organizational psychology), and Dr. Linda Cook will be the discussant. They will discuss detailed perspectives about fairness in testing, thematically organized around the following topics: methodological issues in measurement of bias, barriers in the opportunity to show true standing on a construct, and threats to validity of score interpretations for intended uses. We hope to see you at what promises to be a very enlightening session.

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## NCME ARCHIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

*Gerald Melican, Independent Psychometric Consultant*



The Archive Committee has added two new members to fill out the complement.

Dr. Dubravka Svetina who is an Assistant Professor of Inquiry Methodology at Indiana University- Bloomington and Sandra Botha who is a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst have both joined the Archive Committee. They join Linda Cook, Annie Davidson, Neil Dorans, Jerry Melican, and Qing Yi.

The duties of the Archive Committee include developing and implementing a policy and plan for the NCME Archive emphasizing electronic materials. Physical artifacts and documents will also be maintained. The committee will be working with the Website Digital Presence, and Social Media Committees to ensure a coordinated effort to provide all relevant materials to the membership and, where appropriate, a wider venue in an easily accessible manner. NCME's recorded history provides students and professionals access to organizational information and context for developments in educational measurement over time.



**Dubravka Svetina**



**Sandra Botha**

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## NCME ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to the newly-elected NCME board members: Stephen Sireci, elected as the next Vice President of NCME, Debbie Durrence, elected as the LEA Board Member, and Andrew Ho, elected as the Board Member at Large. To learn more about them, click on their hyperlinked names below.



[Stephen G. Sireci](#)



[Debbie Durrence](#)



[Andrew Ho](#)



Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to announce that the 11th Conference of The International Test Commission (ITC) 2018 will be organized Monday, **July 2-5** in Montreal, Québec, Canada. This year's Meeting Theme: "**On The Beat of Testing**" is inspired from the Jazz festival held at the same time in Montreal.

**1) Notifications for paper acceptance have been sent to authors**

**2) Registration for ITC 2018 is now OPEN:**

**Deadline:**

-Early Bird Registration: **April 15, 2018**

-Late registration: **April 16-July 1, 2018**

**3) Call for submissions for BEST STUDENT PAPER AWARD:**

The Conference Chair of the 11th International Test Commission (ITC) Conference is pleased to announce **two** Best Student Paper Awards for the biennial conference.

Deadline for submissions: **15 April, 2018**

**4) For further information about the conference, please follow us at:**

- [Website](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)

We hope to welcome you in Montreal for the ITC 2018.

*Nathalie Loye  
Chair of the Organizing Committee*

*Newsletter Advisory Board*

**HEATHER BUZICK**, Educational Testing Service

**MICHELLE CROFT**, ACT

**WILLIAM DARDICK**, George Washington University

**SUSAN DAVIS-BECKER**, ACS Ventures

**JOHN DENBLEYKER**, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

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**MARIA ELENA OLIVERI**, Educational Testing Service

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