



## Newsletter

Spring 2022

### **The President's Corner: Derek C. Briggs**



Time flies. It's hard for me to believe that the 2022 NCME Annual Conference is now just around the corner. After a full day of virtual presentations set for Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup> (mark your calendars if you haven't already), for the first time in three years many of us will be seeing one another in person for the first time as we gather at the Westin Gaslamp Quarter Hotel in San Diego between Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> and Friday April 24<sup>th</sup>. Our program committee chairs (Ben Domingue, Leslie Keng, Brian Leventhal) and training committee chair (Chun Wang) have done a tremendous amount of work in putting this together, please see the program committee update in this newsletter for details.

### **NCME DEI Issues in Assessment Webinars**

We rang in 2022 with what I hope will be the first of an annual event, an Equity in Assessment and Measurement Webinar entitled "Cultural Relevance Versus Construct Relevance: How do we Create Culturally Responsive Assessments?" Since then, we have been building on this with a four-week sequence of DEI-related webinars on February 17, 24 and March 3, 10 (Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 EST). All of these events are free to NCME and non-NCME members alike, and if you missed one, you can find the video recording along with presentation slides and references at a page we have created on the NCME website:

<https://www.ncme.org/meetings/equity-in-assessment>

**NCME  
Member  
Demographics**

We recently asked our management company to provide some descriptive statistics regarding self-identified gender and race/ethnicity of NCME members.

Unfortunately, among our current 1762 NCME members, 56%, did not report information about their gender and 44% did not report racial/ethnic background when joining NCME or renewing their membership. More in this shortly.

Among those who did respond to the question about gender, 55% are female.

Among those who responded to the question about racial/ethnic background:

53% identified as Caucasian,  
17% as Asian or Pacific Islander,  
7% as Hispanic,  
5% as African American.

Just for normative reference, here are [population percentages in the US](#):

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 60.1%  
Hispanic or Latino: 18.5%  
Black or African American alone: 13.4%  
Asian alone: 5.9%

Another thing that stood out to me is that if you breakdown NCME membership by length of time as a member, you can see that our more recent members (0-5 years) tend to be more racially/ethnically diverse than our “older” members (5+ years)

Ethnic Background	<1 Year Total	% responding	1-5 Year Total	% responding	5+ Year Total	% responding
African American	17	9.71%	20	4.28%	12	3.56%
Black International (outside USA)	11	6.29%	1	0.21%	1	0.30%
American Indian or Other American Native	2	1.14%	2	0.43%	2	0.59%
Asian or Pacific Islander	37	21.14%	162	34.69%	95	28.19%
Caucasian	82	46.86%	227	48.61%	212	62.91%
Hispanic	13	7.43%	47	10.06%	11	3.26%
Prefer not to Answer	11	6.29%	1	0.21%	0	0.00%
Other	2	1.14%	7	1.50%	4	1.19%
No Response	146	45.48%	209	30.92%	428	55.95%
Total	321		676		765	

Some thoughts....

The fact that more NCME did not report gender relative to race/ethnicity makes me wonder if we could do better by both explaining why it is important for us to collect this data, and also by asking the gender question in a more inclusive way. One example might be

## 2. Gender: How do you identify?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe, below

Self-describe:

With regard to our race/ethnicity categories, going forward I am recommending that NCME stay consistent with the category names used in the US Census. So instead of African-American and Black International we should use “Black or African American”, instead of Caucasian we should use “White”, and Asian should be a standalone category. Instead “Pacific Islander” should be included in the same category with American Indian, Native Hawaiian or Alaska Native. For details see <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2021/08/measuring-racial-ethnic-diversity-2020-census.html>

Finally, we are going to be doing a better job of foregrounding the importance of providing information on racial/ethnic and gender identify for new and existing NCME members so that we can accurately monitor this particular aspect of diversity, and our progress at enhancing it, in the coming years.

**Taskforce on  
Foundational  
Competencies  
in  
Educational  
Measurement**

After four great meetings, the taskforce is making steady progress on two of the charges I set out for this presidential initiative.

1. To develop and maintain consensus foundational competencies for the field of educational measurement.
2. To propose one or more models for an exemplar curriculum for a graduate program in educational measurement.

During these meetings we have established norms for our interactions, shared visual diagrams of what each of us would characterize as foundational competencies, and shared exemplars of assessment tasks that would elicit evidence of these competencies. None of it has been easy, but so far I have found the discussions downright inspiring, and I'm very appreciative of the role Andrew Ho has played in keeping us engaged, on track and moving forward.

The taskforce will be meeting in person for a full day on Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> in San Diego. Following this meeting, we expect to have made enough progress to report out on and seek feedback on initial responses to these two charges. We look forward to this with the broader community in the near future.

**The Taskforce Members**

Terry Ackerman, University of Iowa; University of North Carolina Greensboro, emeritus  
Debbi Bandalos, James Madison University  
Derek Briggs, University of Colorado Boulder  
Howard Everson, SRI International and CUNY  
Andrew Ho, Harvard University  
Sue Lottridge, Cambium  
Matthew Madison, University of Georgia  
Sandip Sinharay, ETS  
Michael Rodriguez, University of Minnesota  
Mike Russell, Boston College  
Alina Von Davier, Duolingo  
Stephanie Wind, University of Alabama

**Thank You**

This will be my last newsletter update as NCME president and I just want to thank everyone for the contributions you make to this vibrant community, whether it comes from serving on a committee, attending a webinar, gathering (finally) in person for our annual conference, or all of the above. It has been an honor to represent you and I hope you'll attend or watch my presidential address on Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup> following the business meeting that will commence at 4:40 PST. The event will be held in the Westin Gaslamp's California Ballroom and will also be streamed live for all those attending the conference remotely.

**From the Editor:**  
**Arthur (Art) Thacker**



February is celebrated as Black History Month in the United States. During this time, educators often put forth extra effort to include events important to Black history and to include Black persons from history in their lesson plans. Black history month, for most schools, extends beyond the social studies classroom. English teachers often try to focus on works by Black authors during February. When I was a science teacher, I made sure to discuss the contributions of Black scientists to the fields I taught. Most of my students were surprised that they'd never heard of Benjamin Banneker or Charles Drew. They were even more surprised that they didn't know about Mae Jemison, who is more contemporary. Many had heard of George Washington Carver, but his great works are often trivialized and many of my students referred to him as the "Peanut Man."

In addition to bringing some much-deserved attention to the contributions of Black scientists, we also had difficult discussions about the exploitation of Black persons to further the goals of science. For example, we discussed the Tuskegee syphilis experiments. I think my students benefitted from frank discussion of the ethical responsibilities of scientists in this historical context. I didn't worry about parents demanding I lose my job for discussing race in my classroom. As a science teacher, I worried more about parents being offended by my teaching evolutionary biology. Admittedly, this was 25 years ago, and things have changed. Climate change is even more controversial in science than evolution these days, but evolution is still a sensitive subject.

In science we look at the world through different lenses. I mentioned evolutionary biology earlier and that is one lens that allows us to make sense of an incredibly complex and diverse living world. There are, of course, other lenses we can use to consider biology. We can study biological structures, biological systems (within a living creature or among creatures forming an ecosystem), threats to biological entities, and many others. As we look at the world through multiple lenses our understanding grows, and with that understanding our ability to communicate with other scientists is enhanced, and with that collaboration our collective capacity for advancement also expands.

There is currently a coordinated effort to obscure one of the lenses that may be applied to social studies. Legislation has been introduced in my home state of Kentucky and in many others to prohibit the teaching of critical race theory in public schools. Critical race theory refers to the historical influence of race on current society and institutions. The theory comes from Harvard professor Derrick Bell and was coined in the 1980s. Some parents and lawmakers have expressed concerns that the teaching of critical race theory could exacerbate racial tensions and may create unnecessary stress for students.

Critical race theory is not mentioned in Kentucky's, or most other states, social studies standards. The legislative bans on teaching critical race theory, however, are often written broadly and may include limits on how teachers can address historical issues related to slavery, segregation, discrimination, and other race-related topics. Social studies teachers are understandably concerned that these laws could limit their ability to effectively teach students and they are concerned that, even if they attempt to follow the rules, they could inadvertently offend parents who overinterpret the bans.

The potential for overinterpretation of what constitutes critical race theory by fringe groups (some of whom are presumably parents) is substantial. Posted lists of books slated for banning by various groups (burning by the more extremist groups) paint a broad swath of what might be considered forbidden in social studies topics (e.g., picture books describing Olympians overcoming racial prejudices to compete, numerous Caldecott and Newberry Medal winners). Educators also report concerns about the consequences of teaching forbidden content, both consequences that impact their employment and more extreme reactions from fringe groups that could include threats of violence.

So, what does all this have to do with measurement? It really depends on your perspective. On the one hand, we are tasked with measuring social studies constructs as they are defined. If standards or areas of inquiry are eliminated from measurement constructs that included them in the past, we can adjust our methods and tools to do the same, redefine the construct, and move on.

It's the other hand that is so troublesome. As education measurement professionals, we have a responsibility to help our clients define the academic constructs they wish to measure. We do that by helping them develop test items and blueprints, standards, performance level descriptors, adaptive algorithms, etc. It is important that we have clear definitions of what we intend to measure. When we chip away at important content within a measurement construct, our performance estimates can suffer. Reductionist notions of social studies may focus our measurement constructs on well-established facts, dates, and artifacts. More nuanced interpretations of history, that call for students to interact and debate the impact of history on current society, may be lost. We may lose our ability to estimate how well students can apply their discrete knowledge to conduct their own investigations and effectively support their own conclusions. Validity may be reduced because our supported inferences are less robust.

As measurement professionals we also have a responsibility to ensure that our measures are as unbiased as possible. The elimination of a field of inquiry from social studies potentially obfuscates important historical social interactions impacting people from different racial groups. Would

we have the same argument if we were debating whether to include studying the influence of the Greeks on modern government? Does ignoring, hand-waving, or outright denying the historical influence of race constitute bias? Would we be able to point to a statistic and detect bias of this nature?

I take some solace in the fact that science students continue to learn evolutionary biology. I am hopeful that students will continue to have open discussions about race in their classrooms. As Black History Month ends, I am optimistic that social studies teachers will find ways to work within the laws rather than avoid the topic of race entirely. I also believe that, as a measurement community, we have a responsibility to all students who are evaluated using our assessments to make sure those assessments are as fair and useful as we can make them.

I'm closing with a quote from my favorite author, Alexandre Dumas.



*Alexandre Dumas*

"The custom and fashion of today will be the awkwardness and outrage of tomorrow. So arbitrary are these transient laws."

Alexandre Dumas wrote *The Three Musketeers*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *The Black Tulip*, and a host of other novels and plays. If there other are Black figures from history that I've mentioned and that you don't recognize, I hope you'll take the time to look them up and discover their amazing, but often unsung, contributions.

**NCME Annual Conference  
Program Committee  
Brian C. Leventhal  
Leslie Keng  
Ben Domingue**



We are excited to update the membership about the 2022 NCME Annual Conference. The conference will take place in two modalities. On Saturday, April 9, 2022, we will be hosting virtual sessions through our conference platform, Pathable (available end of march/early April). Then, we will convene in-person at the Westin Gaslamp in beautiful San Diego, CA from April 22 – 24, 2022 to have our first in-person conference since 2019. In addition to the many informative sessions, we will be hosting training sessions virtually from April 8-14, 2022 and in-person in San Diego on April 21, 2022. To make the in-person portion of the conference accessible to a larger audience, we will be streaming two sessions to a virtual audience throughout the entirety of the in-person conference. In the program, these are all sessions listed in California Ballrooms A and B.

We have focused on making this conference safe, accessible, and engaging for our membership. Given these principles, we have a few noteworthy changes this year. First, we will not be having the traditional NCME breakfast, business meeting, and presidential address on Sunday morning. Rather, the business meeting and presidential address will take place on Saturday evening. Following this event, there will be a presidential reception, open to all conference attendees, outside on the Garden Terrace at the Westin Gaslamp with food and beverages. Second, we will use the Pathable platform for both the virtual conference and the in-person conference. For the in-person conference, Pathable will serve as the main conference application (“App”). In this App, attendees will have access to streamed sessions, chat features for discussion, and all resources that presenters provide (e.g., papers, handouts, slides.)

As previously announced in the Call for Proposals, we will be hosting brand-new demonstration presentations. Demonstration sessions have been curated to focus on innovations in software and teaching, offered by a variety of presenters at various career levels, including graduate students. Although research blitzes have been around for two years now, this will be the first time they are used at an in-person event. We are excited about the three in-person research blitz sessions as well as several virtual research blitz sessions during the virtual conference day on April 9. Further, we invite all attendees to check out the four in-person electronic poster board sessions on Saturday, April 23, with one devoted to the wonderful in-progress graduate student research presentations.

Finally, we want to thank the members of the NCME community for their patience and understanding as we plan NCME’s first hybrid conference. Planning and implementing a hybrid



conference in this unpredictable environment has been challenging. We are very thankful to the program chairs and organizers of the past two virtual conferences, who have provided us with a sound infrastructure foundation to work with! To organize this hybrid conference, we have worked with the NCME Board, AERA, the Westin Gaslamp Hotel, and many committee leaders in the NCME community to offer a safe and engaging conference program. We have received countless e-mails with requests for accommodations, questions about conference logistics, and worries about safety. We have heard you and are truly thankful for the input, suggestions, and engagement the membership has shown. Through thoughtful planning and learning as we go, we have strived to offer as much flexibility to our members as possible. To give some context, after release of the initial program in late January, we have accommodated nearly 50 requests, including individual presentations and coordinated sessions, to switch presentation modalities (as of February 11, 2022). We have accommodated these requests while doing our best to curate a thematic conference program, maintaining the high rigor and quality of sessions that NCME attendees expect.

Thank you and we will see you virtually on April 9, 2022 and in San Diego April 22-24, 2022!

#### **Classroom Assessment Committee**

**Alison Bailey & Caroline Wylie**



**Classroom Assessment Committee Conference Pre-session:** K-12 Educator Collaboration Day (Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup> 10am-4pm, Westin San Diego Gaslamp - California Ballroom). CAC will experiment with a classroom assessment “hackathon” with local San Diego teachers. NCME members, please contact Alison Bailey ([abailey@gseis.ucla.edu](mailto:abailey@gseis.ucla.edu)) or Caroline Wylie ([ECWylie@ETS.ORG](mailto:ECWylie@ETS.ORG)) to find out more about this hybrid pre-session if you want to join us!

**Classroom Assessment Committee sponsored session for NAAD at the NCME 2022 Annual Conference** (Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8-9:30am - Westin San Diego Gaslamp - California Ballroom B). This symposium, *Components of a Well-Balanced Assessment System*, was designed in collaboration with NAAD leadership to target the members of the National Association of Assessment Directors. Presenters include past and current CAC committee members (Heidi Andrade, Alison Bailey, Renae Pullen, Caroline Wylie) and Erika Landl. Across the presentations, the presenters will focus on how assessment directors can support classroom assessment that primarily is intended to meet the needs of teachers and students.

**Committee on Diversity Issues in  
Testing (CODIT)**

**Raman Grover**



We are pleased to welcome Dr. Can (Cathy) Shao as the incoming chair, who will be beginning her term in April. We are also delighted to welcome Dr. Tanesia Beverly, Dr. Veronica Mellado De La Cruz and Ms. Merve Sarac (graduate student representative) to our committee!

Ms. Daniela Cardoza, our current graduate student representative, will be leaving our committee. We'd like to thank her for everything she has done to make our committee a successful one. Daniela is currently helping with organizing two social events for graduate students at the NCME conference in collaboration with the NCME Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC), the Membership Committee, and the Outreach Committee. There are plans to hold a networking/mentoring event and a reception for ethnic minority students. Stay tuned for forthcoming details!

Our committee is excited to be collaborating with the AERA Division D Equity and Inclusion committee on an invited panel discussion titled, "Not There Yet: Addressing Differential Educational Outcomes for Marginalized Populations in the Era of COVID-19". We have an excellent panel ready to talk about how the pandemic has created more inequities in educational outcomes for underserved student populations. We are planning to make this an interactive session to encourage audience participation!

Our session is scheduled to take place on:

**Friday April 22, 11:30am to 1:00pm Pacific Time, at the  
Manchester Grand Hyatt, Floor: 2nd Level, Harbor Tower,  
Seaport Ballroom E**

Finally, if you are a PhD student from an underrepresented ethnic minority group (African American, Latinx American, or Native American) and are planning to present at the NCME conference, we encourage you to apply to the NCME Travel Scholarship. We have seven \$1500 scholarships available to presenting authors of a paper accepted for presentation. Deadline to apply is April 1, 2022. For further details please contact the current chair of the Diversity committee, Dr. Raman Grover at [raman.grover@gov.bc.ca](mailto:raman.grover@gov.bc.ca)

**Membership Committee**  
**Erika Landl**



The NCME Membership Committee is working on a variety of initiatives focused on better supporting its members including:

- Preparing for the 7<sup>th</sup> annual NCMENToring program, which aims to support the transition of graduate student members from classrooms to careers. Early professionals (*mentees*) are paired with members (*mentors*) experienced in NCME-related fields: assessment, evaluation, and other aspects of educational measurement. This experience offers mentees the opportunity to explore possible career paths and/or research interests and for mentors to support the development of potential colleagues and contribute to the field. For the first time this year, participants can choose whether they prefer to meet virtually or in-person at the annual meeting. Additional details about the NCMENToring program are available [here](#) on the NCME website. A direct link to the application survey is [here](#).
- Co-organizing a networking event at the upcoming annual meeting with the Diversity and Graduate Student Issues Committees supporting graduate students from minority groups.
- Identifying ways to improve the NCME website so that it is easier to navigate and better supports the need graduate students.
- Re-igniting the NCME Spotlight initiative, which allows members to nominate colleagues and graduate students to be spotlighted on the NCME website. Key your eyes open for the call for new nominations, which will be coming soon.

We look forward to speaking with you about these and other initiatives at the NCME booth during the annual meeting!

**Standards and Test Use Committee**  
**Jeffrey Steedle**



In November and December 2021, the Standards and Test Use Committee organized a review of the draft ITC/ATP *Guidelines for Technology-Based Assessments*. Twenty one NCME members and six committee members participated in the initial review. A public review and comment period is planned later in spring 2022. Currently, the committee is implementing recommended updates to the *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement* (NCME Ad Hoc Committee on the Development of a Code of Ethics, 1995).

## **2022 NCME Training Committee**

**Chun Wang**



The NCME Training Committee accepted 24 training workshops. Twelve will be given virtually between 4/8 to 4/14 and the remaining 12 will be given in person on 4/21 in Westin. Due to the space constraints in the Westin in compliance with social distancing, only 9 parallel training sessions could be held. Hence, quite a few volunteers opted for virtual training, and the committee was highly grateful for their flexibility and cooperation!

## **Website Committee**

**Erin Banjanovic**



The Website Committee has been working to update site content and add new content to the site. We have added new pages to highlight the work of a few SIGMIEs and committees and would like to expand these pages to include other SIGMIEs and committees in the future. We have also worked to create new pages for the classroom assessment conference, the annual meeting, equity in assessment resources, and to update many other pages, including the internship and fellowship page.

However, much of the work the committee has been focusing on in the past year has occurred behind the scenes. We have been reviewing the site for outdated content, working to clean up the backend of the website, and have installed a google analytics tracker to allow better website traffic monitoring. Additionally, we are investigating a possible reorganization of the current website with the goal of streamlining content and making it easier to find. We are also considering ways to improve the site search functionality.

## Certification and Licensure

### SIGIMIE

Andrew Jones



The Certification and Licensure SIGIMIE is sponsoring one session at the conference on 4/9 titled Challenges/Opportunities for Analytical Methods in Item Banking, Bank Evaluation, and Forecasting. We also held a webinar on 1/21 titled Keeping SMEs Engaged in the Era of COVID and will be holding another one on 3/3 titled Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Assessment Practices (Certification and Licensure Assessments). The SIGIMIE will also be hosting a happy hour at the conference with exact times and locations TBD.

Finally, we are seeking volunteers to serve as members of the Certification and Licensure SIGIMIE leadership.

## Large-Scale Assessments

### SIGIMIE

Dubravka Svetina Valdivia



Our Large-scale Assessments group continues to engage in conversations about large-scale assessments (we meet monthly - our next meeting will be Friday, March 11th 0-11am EST <https://iu.zoom.us/j/8240718141>).

Over the last few months, we have been gearing up for the 2022 NCME annual meeting by having a series of “Conversations with...” scholars that align with the topic of our organized session at 2022 NCME (see information below). These events included November’s event with Dr. Elda Garcia and February’s event with Dr. Jennifer Randall (check out recording of February’s event on NCME/our community site).

We plan to have one more discussion with Dr. Jack Buckley on March 11 at 1pm EST on his recent article *A reset for assessment: Toward a less burdensome accountability system* (see details and zoom link on NCME/our community site).

Lastly, we invite all of you to join us for our organized session at the 2022 NCME annual meeting, titled *Broken Systems of Assessment: Addressing Fairness and Equity Challenges in Special Populations* featuring Drs. Greg Cizek, Elda Garcia, Melissa Gholson, and Pōhai Kūkea Shultz (Saturday, April 23, 9:50 to 11:20am, Westin San Diego Gaslamp, Del Mar).



**Diagnostic Measurement  
SIGIMIE**

**Co-chairs: Matthew Madison, Yu  
Bao, Qianqian Pan**



We are excited for our SIG's first in-person annual meeting. Our coordinated session, "Diagnostic Measurement in Action", is scheduled for Sunday, April 24, 2:50 to 4:20 pm. The session presents a selection of unique research studies applying diagnostic measurement methodologies. Stay on the lookout for announcements regarding 1) a pre-NCME graduate student virtual meeting (with prizes and incentives) and 2) updates to the diagnostic measurement research database. Also, before the annual meeting, we will send a full schedule of sessions with research related to diagnostic measurement. As always, tell your colleagues to join our SIGMIE and let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions for SIGMIE content or member engagement.