

NCME

national
council on
measurement
in education

Newsletter

Spring 2021

From the President:

Ye Tong



This is my fourth and last newsletter as the NCME's President. My term is coming to an end, and I will be handing off the torch to the very able hands of Dr. Derek Briggs. As the first and hopefully the last NCME President whose entire term has been virtual, I have found this experience to be more than rewarding (and a bit challenging). I have thoroughly enjoyed working with our dedicated and talented board and our committee chairs to serve our membership.

I want to express my gratitude to our program chairs, Drs. Susan Davis-Becker and Leslie Keng, and our training chair, Dr. Sarah Quesen. They did so much work to put together a wonderful conference program and to set up the virtual conference platform so that our members can have a smooth virtual conference experience. This has meant a lot of waking up at 5:00 a.m. to respond to numerous emails and a lot of late-night burning of oil to coordinate sessions. I am very fortunate to get to work the three of them for the 2021 NCME Annual Meeting.

Social Justice

Social justice has reached more urgent and heightened importance this past year, with overdue attention and national discussions. In response, I released two Presidential Statements related to social justice: [Our Commitment to Equality and Justice](#) and [Our Condemnation of Anti-Asian Violence](#). I have appreciated the overwhelming support and commitment from our members on this very important issue. I also believe that as measurement professionals, we need to continue to support unbiased, equitable, and fair assessments. We have created processes in the past that guard against bias and systematic racism, but there is still much more work that needs to be done. We owe it to society to put our talents together to create culturally responsive, equitable, and fair assessments for all populations.

COVID's Impact on Assessments Webinar Series

As part of my presidential initiatives, Susan Davis-Becker, Ellen Forte, Marianne Perie, and I organized a [webinar series](#) on COVID's impact on assessments. The series included ten webinars in which practitioners and researchers discussed assessment challenges associated with the pandemic and identified the best approaches to address the challenges. Recordings of the webinars can be accessed on the [NCME YouTube Channel](#). We averaged about 300 participants for each webinar and received encouraging feedback. One of the silver linings from the pandemic has been the fact that in the past year NCME has been able to generate a lot more digital content, which is more widely available to our membership. I will continue to work on this initiative when I become the immediate Past President, putting a process in place for our members to come together and collaborate during the year, in addition to our Annual Meeting.

NCME 2021 Conference

The theme of the NCME 2021 Conference is **Bridging Research and Practice**. My own day job is firmly in the design and implementation of real-world assessments, both in the K–12 space and in the licensure/certification space. Because I am a practitioner, my bias lies with the research that can inform the practice of measurement, since practice is where our field can influence and affect people from all walks of life—hence my plea to our field to tighten the link between research and practice. For the 2021 conference, you will see this conference theme throughout the various sessions and presentations.

NCME was able to provide complimentary conference registration to graduate students and early scholars in need due to hardship from the pandemic. We are also soliciting graduate students to help us manage each of the seven “conference channels” (we have seven concurrent sessions each day) and will be providing compensation for their time. If you are a graduate student and are interested in helping, please email [Talley](#), our management firm.

Conducting a virtual conference has its own challenges, but the program chairs, training chair, our management firm, and I are doing our best to organize a conference that will offer a smooth, rich, interactive, and rewarding experience. I encourage you to experience this unique conference with us. Check out our [promotion video](#) about the conference, join one of the “office hours” that the program chairs will be offering in May, and spend rich measurement days with us during our Annual Meeting.

A Few NCME Highlights

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2014 Standards Became Open Source: On March 1, 2021, NCME, along with AERA and APA, jointly issued a [press release](#) announcing that the current edition of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* is now freely available as an online download. This was an

important and symbolic step in our commitment to continued and wider adoption of the best measurement practices.

Standards Management Committee: NCME is currently seeking the next representative for the Standards Management Committee. This committee consists of three members, one member from each of the three organizations (NCME, AERA, and APA) and oversees the development and dissemination of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. The review committee includes the following members: Linda Cook, Ye Tong, Suzanne Lane, Laurie Wise, and Jennifer Randall. We will keep our members updated on our search process.

The New CEJEME Journal: NCME announced the online publication of the [Chinese/English Journal of Educational Measurement and Evaluation \(CEJEME\)](#), edited by Li Cai and Tao Xin. The journal's mission is to facilitate the exchange of advances in scholarship and practice between China and the assessment and evaluation communities in the U.S. and beyond. The CEJEME journal is the first open-source journal for NCME and can be accessed online.

2021 Classroom Assessment Conference: The University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, William & Mary, and George Mason University will be hosting the 2021 Classroom Assessment Conference virtually on October 21 and 22. Mark your calendar and attend the event with your fellow NCME colleagues.

NAGB Nomination: NCME has nominated three NCME members to be considered for the specific seat dedicated to Testing and Measurement Experts on the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB).

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



Lately, I have been thinking more and more about assessment consequences. As assessments come under fire for their role in enabling long-standing social inequities among student subgroups in our educational institutions, it seems like a particularly relevant topic. As measurement professionals, we provide educational and political institutions with information to inform policy and instructional practices. What is often overlooked is how the assessment products we provide influence educational practices.

Early in my career at HumRRO, I was tasked with investigating consequences of Kentucky's testing and accountability system. Kentucky had recently declared its system of school funding unconstitutional and implemented sweeping changes in the way schools were funded. They also created a testing and accountability system aimed at monitoring student achievement and simultaneously promoting educational reform in schools. Kentucky began testing using items requiring students to write lengthy responses. The tests also included items requiring students to work together to accomplish complex tasks and draw conclusions from the results. In addition to summative tests, students were also required to maintain portfolios of their work throughout the year. These assessments were designed to promote instruction that focused on more complex thinking, integrating knowledge rather than learning simple facts, definitions, and algorithms, cooperation among students, and encouraging students and their teachers to monitor educational progress through thoughtful review of work samples over the course of the year.

Kentucky's system was at least partially successful in changing instructional practices in most of its schools. They collected evidence that practices in schools did change, and more importantly, that students in those schools that adopted the intended practices earlier and more completely performed better than those who did not. Students in reform-focused schools scored better overall and gained more from one year to the next. They demonstrated that their assessments were "instructionally sensitive," to borrow a term from Jim Popham. This is a critical evaluation step that has been largely ignored by most educational accountability systems. We provide schools with data, but we often have no clear evidence that the data we provide is directly related to the performance of the educators in the school.

As we (hopefully) move toward systems of assessment and more thoughtful consideration of how assessment information is used, I think it is important to consider what instructional practices we are promoting with our assessments. Do we value isolated unconnected facts and application of simple algorithms, or deeper understanding of content? How do our tests and test items reflect those values? What do we expect "good instruction" to look like? Do our assessments promote the

instructional practices we would hope to see if we observed a classroom? Then we must make sure that students truly benefit from those practices, as reflected on their test scores and in their educational outcomes.

If we put consequences in the forefront of our thinking during the design phase of our assessment and accountability systems, it may be possible to promote more socially responsible practices among educational institutions. This process starts by placing members of traditionally underrepresented subgroups in positions of power during the planning stages for these systems. Then, we need to think critically about the levers available to us based on assessment design, accountability determinations, reporting systems, and educator supports. Can we design testing programs that promote social justice? And if so, how? We also need to contemplate what happens to students who take our assessments. Are the outcomes they experience based on their performance justified by the quality of the data? Are those outcomes beneficial to all students?

Consequences (whether they are a subtopic under validity or not) are vitally important for us to address as measurement professionals. It is not enough to continue to tell persistently low-performing schools that they are low-performing and then expect them to change based on that information alone. We need to promote positive changes in educational practice. Accountability only works if people can change their measured outcome and know what to do to make things better. Our assessments should reflect educational practices; and the connection between practice and student performance must be investigated and verified. If low performance in schools cannot be addressed by changes in educational practices alone, we must find the other levers that will allow students to be successful. Finally, consequences do not have to be unintended and negative, but intended positive consequences will not happen by accident.

**Committee on Diversity
Issues in Testing (CODIT)
Cristina Anguiano-
Carrasco**



Events sponsored by the Diversity Issues in Testing Committee at the 2021 NCME Annual Conference

The Committee on Diversity Issues in Testing (CODIT) is excited to share a few activities regarding diversity issues we organized for the 2021 Annual conference and to announce available scholarships for doctoral students from underrepresented minoritized groups.

Don't miss out on our special coordinated session: *Involve me and I learn: Applying culturally responsive assessment practices to equitably measure learning of Indigenous students in North America*. In the invited panel session that was held virtually on August 31, 2020

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiUZamOVzjE>), discussion focused on addressing the unique challenges Indigenous K-12 students in North America face within the context of traditional systems of learning and

assessment. In a desire to continue dialogue on this important topic we are pleased to offer a coordinated session focused on showcasing the latest research on culturally-responsive assessment practices for Indigenous students. Traditional forms of assessments are often ineffective and even destructive for Indigenous students (Trumbull & Nelson-Barber, 2019). Culturally-responsive assessment is a promising approach towards fair and equitable assessment but there is a need for more research focused on the Indigenous context and some practical guidance from experts. Therefore, in this session four researchers from the United States and Canada will present their research findings on culturally-responsive assessments that have been proven to be effective in assessing the learning of Indigenous students in a more fair and equitable way. Don't miss out on the latest research from Madhabi Chatterji, Karen Ragoonaden, Kerry Englert, and Pohai Shultz, and the magnificent discussion that will follow lead by our fabulous discussant Mandy Smoker Broaddus. Tune in on **Thursday June 10th from 1 to 2pm EST.**

The committee is also encouraging everyone to attend and participate at the CODIT's featured session *Black Lives Matter in Educational Measurement* where Jennifer Randall, Kristen Huff, Kyndra Middleton, Mya Poe, and Kerrita Mayfield will call for a unified and deliberate commitment to anti-racist assessment and measurement in the midst of a pandemic that is disproportionately impacting Black communities and killing Black Americans. During the session they will reflect on How Black Lives have Mattered in the context of measurement education? - How have Black Lives Mattered in our research, scholarship, teaching, disciplinary discourses, graduate programs, professional organizations, and publications? - How can we, as a discipline, contribute to the political freedom of Black peoples while keeping in mind the current sociopolitical context? Please join us on **Wednesday June 9th from 11:15 to 12:45pm EST.**

Finally, NCME and the CODIT are proud to announce the availability of Scholarships for doctoral students from underrepresented minoritized groups to present papers at the 2021 NCME Annual Meeting. The scholarship will cover the registration fees. Applicants must be NCME members who are presenting authors of a paper accepted for presentation and are African American, Latino/a, and/or Native American. Eligible applicants should fill out and submit the application in the link below:

https://smu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bKP7GZasoJK2p5Y

**Graduate Student
Musings
Jung-Jung Lee**



Hello everyone!

Congratulations on surviving a year of uncertainty and adapting to the new virtual world (like graduate school is not hard enough already). In March 2020, I was going to finish my third year and I was super-thrilled about my first summer internship offer. I created a checklist for my summer internship with items like searching for housing, buying more professional clothes and shoes, deciding on transportation to get there, what to pack, what materials I need to refresh my memory on, and which attractions to explore. My preparation suddenly took a turn when I learned my internship had become remote. I believe many of us probably had similar experiences last year and I want to share my experience preparing myself to work virtually.

First, I got to cross out all the travel related things from my checklist such as searching for housing, deciding transportation, and finding places to explore. I was a bit sad because I also saw an internship as an opportunity to explore a new location to maybe live in after I graduate. However, the upside was that I saved on commuting and lunch packing time.

One thing equally important to both virtual and “in person” positions is to know the dress code beforehand. It is probably common that people tend to dress more casually for work when they are at home, but a nice top can be a good way to leave an impression on your professionalism during meetings (usually you do not need nice bottoms since only the top is shown on camera). Also, spending time to dress for work every morning, even if only changing the top, is a good way to let my brain know that it is working time and that helps me to switch to working mode faster!

Another thing to ask before starting a new virtual position is about the computer, specifically about how to access the company’s shared folders. Two common options are connecting with your own computer via a remote desktop setup or using a company computer. If a remote desktop setup is needed, I always ask if it is compatible with both Windows and Mac, or which one is preferred. It is also better to set up the remote desktop in person instead of remotely following instructions because it is more efficient when problems arise during the process. However, I always go with a company computer when possible because remote desktops often take longer to access files and may suffer from connection issues.

Next, let’s talk about meeting virtually. There are a variety of videoconferencing platforms and companies have different preferences. When encountering a new platform, it is important to spend some time to play with the settings such as the camera, microphone, and background before the first meeting. For camera quality, I prefer to use an external webcam that can automatically detect the lighting in the room and it’s easier for me to adjust my position in front of the camera. Microphones should also be tested for sound quality and clarity. A

headphone is always preferred because a computer's build-in mic usually has lower quality, making it easier to pick up surrounding noise when you talk, and harder to hear when other people speak. Background choices can be tricky. The main goal here is not to let the background distract others during the meeting, so a blurred background is my top choice, and a simple virtual background is my second option.

Other important aspects of videoconferencing are when to start a meeting and appropriate manners during the meeting. I usually start the meeting at the exact scheduled time because I am not sure if others have back-to-back meetings and I do not want them to feel the rush when they see the "meeting started" pop-up before the meeting time. However, starting a meeting five minutes early or staying after meetings end can be a good way to social with your coworkers or to catch up on each other's lives because we do not have the luxury of running into each other in hallways anymore. It is also important to remember to mute the microphone when it is not your turn to speak.

Networking in a virtual world can be difficult especially for a new employee. A good place to start is scheduling one-on-one meetings with the team members to get to know more about their expertise. It is always good to prepare a list of questions before the meeting and I usually have questions about how people got their job, company culture, favorite projects, and crazy stories. Finally, virtual social hours, brown bags, and webinars are all good ways to know your coworkers and let others to know you in the virtual world.

Thank you for reading my experiences on navigating through this new virtual world during my internship. I hope you can find some similarities to yours. Good luck!

**Publication
Committee
Susan Davis-
Becker**



Update on Chinese/English Journal of Educational Measurement and Evaluation

In **December 2020**, CEJEME launched its volume 1 with **6** articles, the English and Chinese versions of 3 manuscripts entitled respectively “*De-‘Constructing’ Test Validation*”, “*An Intellectual History of Parametric Item Response Theory Models in the Twentieth Century*”, and “*The Development of Psychological and Educational Measurement in China*”. These articles have been downloaded **1033** times and read by researchers in **53** countries. The readership distribution is shown in the figure below.



The second issue of CEJEME has been published and includes three articles freely available in both English and Chinese.

How Do Educationally At-Risk Men and Women Differ in Their Essay-Writing Processes? Randy E. Bennett, Mo Zhang, and Sandip Sinharay

Application Innovation of Educational Measurement Theory, Method, and Technology in China’s New College Entrance Examination Reform. Zhengyan Liang, Minqiang Zhang, Feifei Huang, Derong Kang, and Lingling Xu

A Latent Class IRT Approach to Defining and Measuring Language Proficiency. Tammy D. Tolar, David J. Francis, Paulina A. Kulesz, and Karla K. Stuebing

Make sure to sign up for future journal updates by entering your email address [HERE](#).

Consider submitting your work to CEJEME for publication! CEJEME is a methodological journal in nature, but it will also publish illustrative or review

articles relevant to the practice of educational measurement, system evaluation, as well as policy. CEJEME aims to serve a more applied audience than traditional North America-based journals on psychometrics and educational measurement. CEJEME also aims to provide a forum for intellectual exchange and leadership on a variety of methodological, ethical, and policy issues of broad relevance to the development of educational measurement and evaluation as a discipline in an international and technology-driven context.

**Graduate Student
Issues Committee
(GSIC)**

Maura O’Riordan



Greetings,

We are looking forward to seeing many of you and meeting you at the virtual conference in the coming weeks. Be sure to stop by and visit the Graduate Student Electronic Board session during the conference on Thursday, June 10 (1:00 PM EST).

GSIC has some updates and new initiatives that we are excited to tell you about! Starting later this summer we will be hosting article discussions about selected articles from the newest issue of Educational Measurement. We hope you will join us for some lively discussions, led by faculty/professionals in the field. This is something that we hope to continue along with virtual brown bag sessions. If you have requests or suggestions for articles to discuss or ideas for topics of speakers for the Virtual Brown Bag Series you can contact GSIC via our facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/NCME_Grads/) or email the co-chairs at the addresses below.

Be on the lookout for an email soon with graduate student openings across NCME committees for next year. Serving on a committee is a great way to give back to the NCME community while meeting others in the field. In general, student committee positions last anywhere from 1-3 years depending on the committee guidelines. For more information about NCME committees and to see their descriptions visit: <https://www.ncme.org/about/ncme-committees>

Our virtual brown bags continue to be a big hit! We are posting them on the NCME youtube channel if you didn’t get a chance to attend one and want to check it out. We will be hosting more soon, so keep your eyes out for an announcement.

**Classroom Assessment
Task Force**

**Caroline Wiley and
Alison Bailey**



The Classroom Assessment Task Force is:

- Pleased to announce that the NCME board has approved their move from a task force to a permanent committee and committee membership has increased. See [here](#) for the list of current members.
- Going to hold an informal fireside chat on June 9th at 5:45pm EDT at the Annual Meeting.
- Looking forward to the virtual Classroom Assessment conference, October 21-22. The conference planning committee (representatives from the University of Virginia, George Mason University, William and Mary, and Virginia Commonwealth University) has been hard at work putting together a great program.

**Mission Fund
Committee
Michelle Boyer**



The NCME Mission Fund was established to provide a means for donors to express their tangible support for NCME’s mission to advance the science and practice of measurement in education, and to provide individuals and organizations with financial support for projects, research, and travel that address this mission directly. In 2019, the Mission Fund provided grants for several special initiatives designed to promote a broader understanding of high-quality assessment practices and appropriate test use among diverse groups of assessment stakeholders.

The Committee is also continuing our “Honor a Mentor” fundraising program!

The Honor a Mentor program is an opportunity for NCME members to acknowledge those who have played pivotal roles in our academic and professional development -- while supporting projects designed to promote public engagement in measurement topics, and conference attendance for junior scholars. All contributions made in honor of our mentors will directly support NCME Mission Fund projects.

To see the tributes made in honor of our NCME colleagues, and to share a tribute in honor of your mentor while making a donation of any size, please visit: <https://www.ncme.org/about/honorammentor>.

Most recently, the Mission Fund Committee has been working to define priorities for future sponsored research projects. In light of continuing disparities in the consequences of testing for traditionally marginalized groups, we seek to identify areas for high-impact research in fairness and social justice in assessment. Toward this goal, we are excited to announce that we have begun a collaboration with members of the Diversity Issues and Testing Committee to identify high-impact research needs and opportunities, and are considering options for funding research in these areas.