



# The NERA Researcher

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## The President's Message



I am honored to serve as your 2021 NERA president. You may notice that I have signed all of my e-mails with "Your NERA President." This is purposeful—as I ran for this position with the goal of listening to and working with you all, because as a team, collectively, we can ensure NERA has continued growth and success in the coming years. On that note, I will start this message with a request for any and all of you to reach out with feedback you may have to enrich the organization. NERA is great because of its wonderful community, and your input will help maintain this.

I want to take this opportunity to thank NERA's 2020 President Ross Markle and the NERA 2020 conference co-chairs, Madison Holzman, Andrew Jones, Jonathan Rubright, and Thai Ong, for putting together NERA's first virtual conference in the midst of such a challenging year. Your hard work and dedication have provided a foundation for NERA to build on whether the NERA 2021 conference is virtual or hybrid. Congratulations to all the NERA 2020 award winners, Rebecca Kang McGill-Wilkinson, Briana G. Craig, Catherine O'Callaghan, and Sara Finney, for your well-deserved achievements.

As we begin the new year for NERA, I am excited to welcome Bo Bashkov, Tabitha Bellamy, and Jonathan Rubright to the Board of Directors, Katrina Roohr as Secretary, Matthew Speno as the GSIC chair, and Nina Deng, who will be continuing in her new role as president-elect. I thank you and all of the new committee chairs and those appointed to positions (which can be found on Page 2) for your continued service to NERA. I look forward to working with each of you in the coming year.

I would like to officially announce my 2021 conference co-chairs, Hank Johnson, Haifa Matos, Liz Spratto, and Jonathan Steinberg. They are already doing a terrific job planning for the 2021 NERA conference amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. I am thankful to be working with such a great team and confident that the 2021 conference will be interesting and exciting, regardless of how the conference is held. In case you missed it, our current plan for the 2021 conference was included in my holiday message, which can be found at [https://www.nera-education.org/presidents\\_holiday\\_message.php](https://www.nera-education.org/presidents_holiday_message.php). More details on this can be found on Page 12. Please watch for updates throughout the year as the conference co-chairs and I seek feedback on potential conference formats and sessions, send updates, and announce the Call for Proposals.

As we think about the 2021 conference theme "Using Data to Solve Education's Challenges," it is important to consider how we can use data to

*Continued on page 3*



## The NERA Researcher

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

### Message from the Editors

Dear NERA Members,  
We hope you and your families and loved ones enjoyed a happy and restful holiday season, and continue to stay safe and well. We'd like to extend our thanks—and yours—to our 2020 President Ross Markle and the conference co-chairs: Jonathan, Thai, Madison, and Andrew, for bringing us a fantastic virtual NERA conference. For all of you who joined us, we thank you for your support and participation and for anyone who missed it, check out the highlights on page 7 and the great screenshots of some of the sessions on the website. We want to welcome President Steve Holtzman and his 2021 conference co-chairs, Hank Johnson, Haifa Matos, Liz Spratto, and Jonathan Steinberg. You'll find an overview of the 2021 NERA conference "Using Data to Solve Education's Challenges" on page 12 and over the coming weeks you'll receive emails with additional information about the conference. In Steve's president's message you'll find lots of information about the board's four goals for 2021.

This issue contains highlights from the 2020 conference, including Ross' 2020 presidential address recap, information about the 2020 Doherty and Donlon Memorial Award recipients (you can watch the awards video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/yz91BzDrOU>), some notes from the January board meeting, and lots of interesting member news. You'll also find committee reports along with information about the various committees. Consider joining a committee and becoming active in NERA.

We've also included two articles for your reading pleasure. One by a longtime NERA member, Sharon Cramer, called *Life's a Kaleidoscope—just give it a twist!* Great for folks still feeling locked-down. And for all of you QN/QL researchers an update from Felice Billups at Johnson & Wales, *Mixed-Methods Redux: What's Old is New Again*.

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

## Executive Committee

### President:

**Steven Holtzman**  
*Educational Testing Service*

### Past President:

**Ross Markle**  
*DIA Higher Education Collaborators*

### President-Elect:

**Nina Deng**  
*Kaplan Test Prep*

### Treasurer:

**Tia Fechter**  
*Defense Personnel Assessment Center*

### Secretary:

**Katrina Roohr**  
*Educational Testing Service*

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**Juliette Lyons-Thomas** (2018-2021)  
*Educational Testing Service*

**Marcia Delcourt** (2019-2021)  
*Western Connecticut State University*

**Francis O'Donnell** (2019-2022)  
*National Board of Medical Examiners*

**Bo Bashkov** (2020-2023)  
*IXL Learning*

**Tabitha Bellamy** (2020-2023)  
*NJ Dept of Education*

**Jonathan Rubright** (2020-2022)  
*National Board of Medical Examiners*

**Matthew Speno** (2020-2021)  
*University of New England*

## Appointed Positions

### 2020 Conference Co-Chairs:

**Hank Johnson**  
*New England Institute of Technology*

**Haifa Matos**  
*Educational Research Consultant*

**Elizabeth Spratto**  
*HumRRO*

**Jonathan Steinberg**  
*Educational Testing Service*

**The NERA Researcher Co-Editors:**  
**Barbara Helms**  
*Independent Consultant*

**Kate Nolan**  
*Curriculum Associates*

**NERA Webmaster:**  
**Jerusha Henderik**  
*National Board of Medical Examiners*

**NERA Conference Proceedings Co-Editor for Digital Commons**  
*Position Open*

**Mentoring Program Co-Chairs:**  
**Sarah Ferguson**  
*Rowan University*

**Bethany Fishbein**  
*Boston College*

**Kerry Cotter**  
*New Meridian Corporation*

### STANDING COMMITTEES

**Communications Chair:**  
**Mina Lee**  
*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

**Membership Chair:**  
**Rory Lazowski**  
*College Board*

**Nominations Chair:**  
**Ross Markle**  
*DIA Higher Education Collaborators*

**Graduate Student Issues Chair:**  
**Matthew Speno**  
*University of New England*

### AWARDS COMMITTEES

**Educator-As-Researcher Chair:**  
**Salika Lawrence**  
*The College of New Jersey*

**Thomas Donlon Mentoring Award Chair:**  
**Frank Daniello**  
*Lesley University*

**Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award Chair:**  
**April Zenisky**  
*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

**Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Chair:**  
**Rochelle Michel**  
*Curriculum Associates*

### AD HOC COMMITTEES

**Infrastructure Chair:**  
**Beth Perkins**  
*James Madison University*

**Conference Ambassadors Chair:**  
**Pamela Kaliski**  
*American Board of Internal Medicine*

**Site Selection Chair:**  
**Nina Deng**  
*Kaplan Test Prep*

**Strategic Planning Chair:**  
**Ross Markle**  
*DIA Higher Education Collaborators*

**Membership Subcommittee Chair:**  
**Madison Holzman**  
*Curriculum Associates*

explore any tasks we encounter at work and in our everyday lives. This includes using both quantitative and qualitative data to make well-informed data-driven decisions. In this spirit, in order to drive toward NERA's goals for this year, the Board of Directors started their term with an onboarding survey with both closed and open-ended questions to explore what NERA does well and where NERA can improve. The survey results were very informative and presented at the January 2021 board meeting. These findings helped pinpoint four overarching goals for NERA to concentrate on for the 2021 year:

**Planning the 2021 Conference Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic:** As discussed earlier in this message, the conference co-chairs will build upon the success of the 2020 conference to deliver a wonderful event, regardless of whether it is virtual or hybrid.

**Increasing Outreach, Membership, and Diversity:** These three pieces are paramount to NERA's success. I have worked closely with all NERA committees to ensure that we focus on these this year. This will include: the Membership Committee coordinating outreach to potential new members, the GSIC reaching out to a wider population of graduate (and possibly undergraduate) students, the Educator-as-Researcher Awards Committee reaching out to educators, a new ad-hoc committee reaching out to diverse populations that NERA has not reached in the past, and the Communications Committee expanding our social media outreach. The conference co-chairs will work together with all of these committees to ensure these efforts foster increased proposal submissions and attendance for the 2021 conference. Additionally, NERA members will be reaching out to other organizations with overlapping concentrations, such as NCME, NEERO, NEAIR, EERS, and ACTER, to build partnerships, help support each other's membership, and assist in cross-promotion efforts.

**Yearlong Activities:** NERA will continue to strive to hold additional activities to benefit its members throughout the year. Our webinar coordinator, Alia Ammar, hosted our first webinar of the year in November, "Boston University COVID-19 Modeling: Insight on the Relative Impact of Interventions for Re-Opening a Large University in an Urban Environment," with a great turnout. The Mentoring Program is working on expanding opportunities outside of the conference, and many other committees plan to host more webinars throughout 2021.

**Cultivating NERA Leadership:** To ensure that the NERA community remains strong for the future, we must continue to cultivate NERA leadership. In this spirit, during the January 2021 board meeting, the Board of Directors discussed methods to ensure they remain visible to NERA committees and members. NERA leadership will be working on updating the NERA Handbook so that information about all committees and roles is publicly available and so that members have the information they need at their fingertips to succeed as they take on new roles. Additionally, we are working to ensure all NERA members are encouraged to join committees and have opportunities to seek leadership roles, thus continuing to build the NERA leadership pipeline. On this note, please review the list of NERA committees on Page 2 (and the descriptions of the various committees posted at [https://www.nera-education.org/committee\\_descriptions.php](https://www.nera-education.org/committee_descriptions.php)). Reach out to me or committee chairs if you are interested in joining any of the committees. Your help would be appreciated.

I am excited to work with the NERA community in these important initiatives in the coming year. Please feel free to reach out to me at [sholtzman@ets.org](mailto:sholtzman@ets.org) at any point. I look forward to seeing you all at our forthcoming NERA webinars and the 2021 NERA conference.

Steven Holtzman, Your NERA President

## Member News

**Marcia A.B. Delcourt, MA, Ph.D.** (Western Connecticut State University) is the University of Connecticut 2020 NEAG School of Education Outstanding Higher Education Professional. (<https://education.uconn.edu/marcy-delcourt-outstanding-higher-education-professional>). Marcia has been the coordinator of the Ed.D. program in instructional leadership at WCSU for the past 15 years, where she teaches courses in leadership, measurement, research, cognition, and curriculum and instruction. Her program has become a model for similar programs in the US, Canada, and India. A professor in the education and educational psychology department for the past two decades at WCSU, She has also held a part-time professorship at McGill University in Montreal since 2005. As the author of more than 70 publications, she has presented at national and international conferences, secured several million dollars in research grants, and been awarded commendations from WCSU, numerous national and regional educational research associations, and other entities. Marcia is the recipient of the 2017 Thomas F. Donlon Award for Outstanding Mentoring and the past Donlon award committee chair.

**David Moss, Ph.D.** (University of Connecticut NEAG School of Education) is recognized for his groundbreaking work expanding the NEAG School of Education study abroad programs across the globe. David has spent the past 20 years coordinating UConn's longstanding London study abroad program in education and the past six years actively expanding the program to South Africa, Costa Rica, Peru, Australia, and most recently, Iceland. While each program has its unique attributes based on the host country's context, the London programs acted as a well-researcher and successful model from which to consider all other programs. For a detailed discussion of David's program, go to <https://education.uconn.edu/2020/10/28/expanding-global-ed-intercultural-learning-at-the-nea-school/>. David is a NERA past president and recipient of the 2011 Leo D. Doherty Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service to NERA.

See more Member News on Page 4. Please consider submitting your professional accomplishments to The NERA Researcher for recognition! Submissions may be sent to [theneraresearcher@nera-education.org](mailto:theneraresearcher@nera-education.org).

## Member News cont'd

**Nancy DeJarnette, Ed.D.** (University of Bridgeport), was recently named the Director of the School of Education at the University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT. Her team continues to work tirelessly to develop passionate future educators!

**Dr. Andrew K. Ha** (Retired from SUNY Potsdam, NY) has had his poem titled "The Second Cradle" chosen to be featured in the ANTHOLOGY OF 2021 (BEST POETS OF 2020): Quarantine Edition. This year's collection reflects sources of inspiration from both American and international poets across the world.

**Paul Zachos, Ph.D.** (Association for the Cooperative Advancement of Science and Education), in collaboration with **Jason Brechko**, Middle School Science Teacher, Glens Fall, NY, has been delivering workshops in NGSS assessment and evaluation to the New York State Master Science Teacher Program of New York. The workshops feature an action research method called the Reliability Round. Participants learn to use a method of calculating the reliability of educational measures practical for classroom assessment. Reliability rounds produce information useful for enhancing the design, implementation, and reporting of assessments and evaluating and improving curriculum and instruction. ([paz@acase.org](mailto:paz@acase.org) | [www.acase.org](http://www.acase.org))

**Kristen Huff, Ph.D.** (Curriculum Associates) participated in a webinar sponsored by the NASBE titled: Acceleration vs. Remediation: Research-Driven Strategies to Address Learning Loss. The other presenters were Dr. David Steiner, Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, and Dr. Matthew A. Kraft, Brown University. In its year-end stimulus package, Congress provided public schools more than \$54 billion in pandemic relief and emphasized using the funds to address student learning loss. Given anticipated state and local budget shortfalls and increased student needs after months of remote learning, it is imperative that the interventions that education leaders invest in to boost students' academic skills be research-driven. The full webinar recording, can be found at [https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/Lk9xn\\_3817MLtmJAdgEwjSd\\_RIOtMNFYjX8BrS1A9rCsbCNIQOhVIPy8pz4-vuUfROTGyFOqolvp6TW.EG7UvHwuzMs2VAyy?mc\\_cid=9e2e4bc2c2&mc\\_eid=dc8f715a3a](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/Lk9xn_3817MLtmJAdgEwjSd_RIOtMNFYjX8BrS1A9rCsbCNIQOhVIPy8pz4-vuUfROTGyFOqolvp6TW.EG7UvHwuzMs2VAyy?mc_cid=9e2e4bc2c2&mc_eid=dc8f715a3a)



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## Recap of the 2020 Presidential Address

Ross Markle

Reflecting upon previous editions of *the Researcher*, I'm struck by the realization that most Past Presidents actually wrote a speech—a linear, formal address to the audience. My presentation style has always been less structured, and while that's benefitted me in many ways, I'm now remiss that I don't have several pages of text that I can copy-and-paste for your enjoyment in this edition of *the Researcher*. Nevertheless, I will effort to synthesize the important notes from my Presidential Address in October. One benefit of the virtual conference format is that the address was recorded, and if you're extremely keen on hearing my actual remarks, you can do so.

The hardest part of writing my address was determining the tone and direction of the talk. I've seen previous addresses generally take one of three forms. The "dissertative" address, as I call it, summarizing a President's body of work and their contributions to the field. "Philosophical" addresses, on the other hand, looking at broader issues or themes in educational research that the President deemed important. Others take a more personal, "autobiographical" route, sharing personal tales or experiences from their life and career.

Of course, I chose a somewhat different route. As I don't consider myself a true "expert" in the esteemed ranks of some NERA members (e.g., Steve Sireci, Kristen Huff, Kurt Geisinger), I instead elected to embrace my position of novelty in the research field, posing what I think are important questions that we as a field have not yet addressed (or at least haven't addressed very well). Thus, I titled my talk, *Where do we go from here?*

There was one preamble issue that I did not delve into deeply: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. I am not an expert in this area. Certainly, as a cisgender, heterosexual white male, I am constantly making an effort to understand many aspects of this issue in education and the world in general. However, it was important for me to say at the outset that this is the biggest issue we face in educational research, though perhaps one that is addressed with both direct inquiry and interventions, as well as reconsidering all aspects of our work and the systems with which we engage. By this, I mean that our current education system was built by and for a certain group of people. One could say that it works quite well, just not for everyone. Thus, what I call "direct" efforts to improve equity, diversity, and inclusion seek to make that system better, but we also need to drastically reconsider that system to make it one that is inherently more inclusive and equitable.

The next area I addressed was the issue of teaching vs. learning. There is a notable movement in higher education to improve community colleges under the auspices of "Guided Pathways." Pathways works to improve many of the systems (e.g., advising, program structure, developmental education) that have long been points of attrition for student success. Compare this to efforts around "college readiness," which seek to help students develop the skills to navigate college more successfully. To me, this represents a contrast in paradigms where the "teaching" perspective considers the systemic actions while holding the student constant, and the "learning" paradigm focuses on the students' actions while holding the system as a constant. Examining the interaction between these two—essentially researching which setting for which students—is not a strength of our current educational research practice. I posed the question, "How do we simultaneously consider the student and the context to take the best course of action?"

Next, I inquired about the transition from research to practice. Pointing to findings of class size, the length and structure of the school year and school day, and the factors that relate to student success in college admissions, noting that there are *many* areas where we, as researchers, have soundly identified what works, but practitioners still lag behind. Simply put: why? Why are there so many areas where our findings have yet to change the systems we study? I argued that perhaps processes of change should be included in our research questions. Not only must we understand what works in our studies, but what is most effective in being adopted. Beyond just questions of resources

*Continued on next page*

and scalability, should we also consider how factors such as labor unions, political agendas, or adherence to standard operating procedures might limit the intervention's effectiveness? Once again, there are few, if any, paradigms to guide us as researchers in this domain.

For those of you who know me well, you wouldn't be surprised that I included a discussion of noncognitive skills but perhaps shocked that I waited until the end of my talk to do so. More broadly, however, I questioned our ability to transcend the "3 R's" approach to education. For everything we know about the value of social-emotional learning interventions or the predictive efficacy of noncognitive factors in college success, we still struggle to develop ways to assess, intervene, and even define the more complex aspects of education.

Ultimately, I concluded the address by noting that education is a foundational pillar of our society, but it's also a tool. It has been used to foster great human development, and to oppress, marginalize, and uphold some of the worst aspects of human nature. As researchers, we are the knowledge generators, experts, and evaluators of education. If our societies are to improve, education must play a key role. How can we not be at the forefront of that change? However, to do so will require us to take revolutionary—not evolutionary—approaches to our work, and consider how we and our research interact with our varying constituencies. In other words, I questioned some of our foundational assumptions, noted the vital importance of our ability to address those questions, but provided little in the way of guidance. This may seem devious, but isn't answering questions and solving challenges what we, as researchers, are meant to do?

# BUROS

CENTER FOR TESTING

## 2020 Virtual Conference Highlights

Madison Holzman, Andrew Jones, Thai Ong, & Jonathan Rubright  
2020 NERA Conference Co-Chairs

It is hard to believe over three months have passed since NERA 2020! We first want to say, "Thank you!" to all of you who attended, presented, and participated in the planning and execution of NERA on October 14-16, 2020.

Together, we took on many unknowns this year, and your support facilitated a successful conference. As an organization, NERA worked within a revised submission process and took on a new conference platform--virtual. We got creative with Happy Hours and meet-and-greets, Zoom-chatted with old friends and colleagues, met new ones and met the pets and children of NERA.

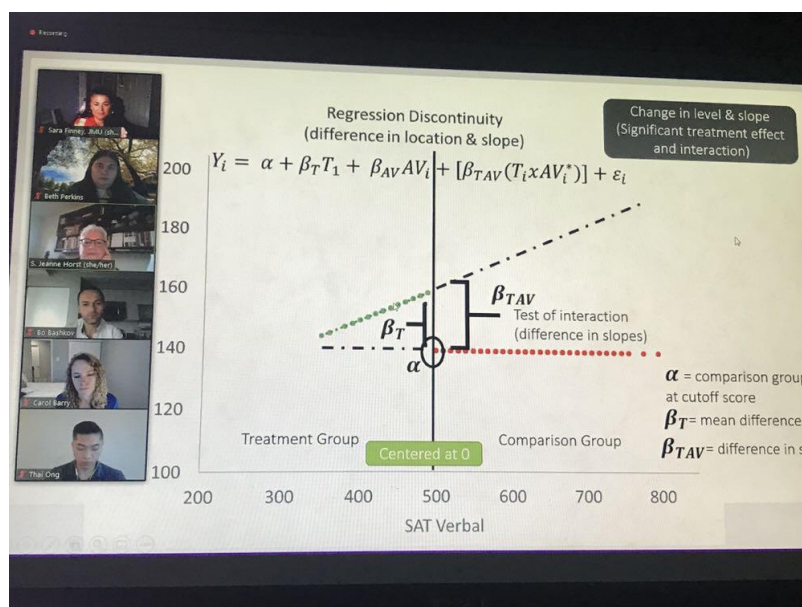
Nearly 200 people attended NERA 2020. With our virtual platform and support of the Membership Committee's outreach efforts, we were able to expand this year's membership base beyond the Northeast region, as well as close neighbors who usually cannot attend the conference in person. If you were a NERA "newbie," hopefully, we can continue to engage with you at NERA 2021 and beyond.

Finally, a "Thank you!" to our sponsors. Our sponsors pledged support for NERA without hesitation in a time of uncertainty. With this support, we were able to identify and use a conference platform that met our virtual needs. With this platform, we seamlessly integrated the agenda and virtual meetings. Most importantly, the entire organization found ways to engage: 11 members organized meetups, 283 exchanged messages on the community message board, 6 shared jobs, and 56 photos were shared during the conference.

Reflecting on NERA 2020, one thing is certain: NERA is an organization of incredible individuals and organizations. It was an honor to serve NERA as the 2020 conference co-chairs, and while we worked hard to coordinate NERA 2020, our roles were made easier because of each of you. We believe we had a great conference, and hope you agree. As we look forward to NERA 2021, we undoubtedly face many uncertainties. We hope you will continue to support NERA and the 2021 conference co-chairs as they navigate this upcoming conference season. We look forward to reconnecting with you in October!

Warmly,

NERA 2020 Conference Co-Chairs  
Madison Holzman, Andrew Jones,  
Thai Ong, & Jonathan Rubright



## **The Graduate Lounge**

Matthew Speno, *University of New England*

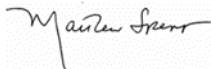
During my first NERA conference in 2018, I was fortunate to attend the GSIC social, where I met other graduate students; we shared the good, bad, and ugly of our doctoral journeys. Finding the GSIC has not only provided me with practical information and resources, but I have developed some lasting relationships with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. NERA is often spoken of as a family of sorts, and this is exactly how I think of the GSIC. As a committee devoted to cultivating a practical and relevant introduction to NERA, my experience with GSIC colleagues continues to provide me with the support and humor it takes to earn a doctorate.

Our conference last year in the "time of the upside-down" that Covid-19 thrust us into provided attendees with the opportunity to attend sessions and workshops in a virtual environment that was collegial yet intimate. This past October, the GSIC sessions were well attended and provided information and resources that graduate students need to develop a successful career post-dissertation. The sessions enlisted discussion from panelists on topics such as navigating the career interview process and using a coaching model for career development.

As we move towards the 2021 conference, the GSIC will be collaborating with other NERA committees and colleagues in the field to develop accessible and relevant Webinars and workshops. It is important to note that these Webinars and the up-coming 2021 conference sessions continue to provide graduate students the opportunity to become involved with NERA and also to use the experience(s) to develop strong doctoral support networks.

I am pleased to announce a GSIC webinar is planned for the end of February [time/day TBD]. Although the particulars are still being considered, the content will continue our conversation on how the coaching model can help graduate students earn their doctorate and plan for their future careers. The GSIC is keen to honor our mission to support NERA graduate student members' involvement and professional development and reach out to new graduate students to increase the diversity of institutions represented. If you have any questions about GSIC, would like to be involved, or have ideas for future workshops or sessions, please reach out to me at [neragraduatestudents@gmail.com](mailto:neragraduatestudents@gmail.com).

Best,





## The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service

Dr. Sara Finney, James Madison University



The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award is presented to a longstanding NERA member who "has generously given of self to NERA, to advance its mission and to enable it to thrive." The award, instituted by the NERA Board of Directors in 1981, honors the memory of Leo Doherty. He was instrumental in NERA's development and growth as a professional association for educational research. Leo's leadership qualities, both ethical and compassionate, encouraged others to pursue and achieve their goals. The 2020 *Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service* was awarded to **Dr. Sara Finney**, Professor for the Assessment & Measurement Ph.D. program and Associate Director for the Center for Assessment and Research Studies

at James Madison University. Her nomination letter correctly states, "Sara's service to NERA over the years has enabled the organization to thrive in a meaningful way, and she is an example of an ethical, compassionate, and inspiring leader."

Evidence of Sara's commitment and service to NERA has been her orchestrating and mentoring dozens of faculty and students through NERA each year since the mid-2000s. After attending and participating in NERA the first time, Sara increased the attendance of many graduate students and JMU faculty members each year for the last 12 years. Her spirit of service to NERA and support for graduate students were first evidenced in those early years by her driving over 400 miles each way to attend the conference, usually giving rides to her colleagues and graduate students. Later, JMU administrators seeing the popularity and value of NERA sparked by Sara's efforts, provided a bus to transport faculty and graduate students to the conference. Through Sara's commitment to bring students to NERA, countless connections were made that have since evolved into career opportunities and various research collaborations at organizations such as the College Board, ETS, and Curriculum Associates.

In addition to being a key player in the initial connection between JMU and NERA, Sara herself has served NERA in many ways, generously given her time, expertise, mentoring, and support to NERA. She regularly serves as discussant on paper sessions at the annual conference. Sara has been a presenter and co-presenter for NERA workshops several times and a member of two invited panels in addition to co-authoring more than 25 papers with her students since 2007. She received the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring in 2011 and served on the Board of Directors for NERA from 2008 to 2011. As a board member, Sara passionately supported the value of NERA and advocated for the quality of the NERA conference for the membership.

A video tribute highlighting Dr. Finney's contributions to NERA can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INO1ojHgatE>.

## **Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring** Dr. Catherine O’Callaghan, Western Connecticut State University

The Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award was established to recognize Tom Donlon's valued contributions to NERA and his mentorship to colleagues. This award, established in 2000, is presented annually to NERA members who demonstrate distinction as mentors. Past awardees have all shown deep commitment and passion for supporting colleagues and students in careers as educational researchers upholding the values established by Tom Donlon.



This year's award recipient is Dr. Catherine (Katie) O’Callaghan from Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, Connecticut. Dr. O’Callaghan has demonstrated outstanding mentorship as a Professor of Education and Chair of the Education and Education Psychology Department. The award committee learned of her distinguished mentorship through a nomination letter accompanied by three letters of support.

Dr. O’Callaghan shows unwavering support for her doctoral candidates. One graduate of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program, who reflected on her dissertation as a daunting experience, commented, “Dr. O’Callaghan was my sounding board. She listened closely and asked me probing questions.” She further explained how Dr. O’Callaghan provided invaluable emotional support during a time when she struggled to balance her personal life as a full-time elementary school principal and parent of two young children with the challenging demands of carrying out educational research. Recognizing the conundrum facing this candidate, Dr. O’Callaghan gave words of encouragement: “It wasn’t a sprint, it was a marathon.” These words provided tremendous emotional support for this young educational scholar. Dr. O’Callaghan goes above and beyond to give her mentees the intellectual guidance, professional advice, and emotional support to ensure they thrive as learners, educators, and researchers.

Dr. O’Callaghan’s deep commitment to her mentees continues past their graduation. Another doctoral graduate explained how multiple years after graduating, Dr. O’Callaghan was still her guide, helping her find employment. Her unwavering support assisted this graduate with acquiring a literacy teaching position that aligned with her professional expertise. It also allowed this graduate to give back to the urban community that helped shape her as a young girl. Dr. O’Callaghan’s continued commitment to her mentees’ professional success post-graduation exemplifies her stellar mentorship and genuine commitment to their well-being.

Dr. Catherine O’Callaghan exemplifies the type of mentor that the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award is intended to recognize. Her leadership and guidance has a long-lasting impact on her mentees.

## **Call for Nominations for the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring**

The Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring was established in 2000 in recognition of Tom's long and valued contributions to NERA, particularly as a mentor to so many colleagues. Since then, the award has been presented annually to NERA members who have demonstrated distinction as mentors of colleagues by guiding them and helping them find productive paths toward developing their careers as educational researchers.

The practice of mentoring in education has been going on for centuries, and most of us can name a person who helped us move our careers along by being more than just a friend or colleague. That person may have been an advisor in developing your research agenda or perhaps brought you to NERA for the first time after suggesting that you might be ready for a conference presentation.

Nominations are again being sought for this annual award. Nominees must be NERA members and may be nominated by any member(s) of NERA to whom they served as mentors. If you would like to see a member of NERA who was your mentor be recognized for his/her contributions to your success, send your nomination to **Dr. Frank Daniello** via email at [fdaniell@lesley.edu](mailto:fdaniell@lesley.edu) by **June 30, 2021**. In addition to the nomination letter, all nominations must be accompanied by 3 to 5 letters of support indicating the ways in which the nominee distinguished her/himself as a mentor. The award will be presented at the 2021 NERA conference. Please contact Frank if you have any questions about the Donlon Award or the nomination process.



## 2021 NERA Conference Announcement

October 13-15, 2021

Trumbull, Connecticut and/or Virtual\*

Dear NERA Members,

First and foremost, we hope that everyone enjoyed a wonderful holiday season and we wish you good health and happiness in 2021 and beyond! While the world looks a little different today than it did this time last year, we're hopeful that recent medical advancements will allow us to be able to gather with our esteemed NERA colleagues and friends sometime soon!

We would love to say that our next in-person meeting will be at the 2021 conference in Trumbull, but truth be told, we're not 100% sure that will be the case. However, we are working diligently to plan a great conference and have developed contingency plans for a virtual or hybrid conference model to be as flexible as possible during these uncertain times. One thing you can count on, regardless of the venue or platform, is that we will be putting on an event that meets NERA's mission of encouraging and promoting educational research through our annual conference.

That said, we're excited to announce the 2021 NERA conference theme, *"Using Data to Solve Education's Challenges,"* highlighting the power of all the different data types available to educators and researchers collaborating to ultimately drive student success and substantive societal change.

Please keep an eye out for our Call for Proposals in April, through which we hope you will submit papers, coordinated symposia, and/or workshops that are relevant to this year's conference theme and content tracks (more information coming soon!).

### Sneak Peek at the Conference Program

**Keynote:** Sarah Cohodes, Associate Professor of Economics and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University (Wednesday 10/13)

**Keynote:** Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, President and CEO of Data Quality Campaign (Thursday, 10/14)

**Invited Panel:** Perspectives on Incorporating Institutional Data into P-20 Infrastructure, Research, and Policy

**Moderator:** Heather Kelly, Director of Institutional Research, University of Delaware

**Panelists:**

Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, President and CEO of Data Quality Campaign

Lynn Letukas, Director, Global Academic Programs and Certifications, SAS

Kate Akers, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Advanced Data Analytics Shared Services, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

**Invited Symposium:** Developing Intercultural and Global Competencies for Teachers through Global Education

**Original concept:** David Moss, University of Connecticut NEAG School of Education and Past NERA President

**Chair:** Jonathan Simmons, Doctoral Student, University of Connecticut NEAG School of Education

*Continued on next page*

(\*Subject to COVID-19-related changes. The final determination will be made by the end of May)

**Workshops:**

Culturally Responsive Data Literacy: A Necessary Skill Set for Educators' Professional Learning Trajectory (Ellen Mandinach, Senior Research Scientist, WestEd)

Tips for Allyship in the Workplace (Aronté Bennett, Associate Professor of Marketing and Associate Department Chair of the Marketing & Business Law Department, Villanova University School of Business)

As we make a final decision on whether the conference will be virtual or hybrid, we will be carefully tracking all public health updates. The health and safety of our current and prospective members are our first priority. We will also survey NERA membership in early spring (and likely follow up before our final decision) to ascertain preferences and other considerations regarding the conference, such as the feasibility of travel in the fall and associated budgets.

We look forward to "seeing" you all in October!

Your NERA 2021 Conference Co-Chairs,  
Hank Johnson, Haifa Matos, Liz Spratto, and Jonathan Steinberg



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## A Note from the NERA Treasurer

Tia Fechter



Hello. I'm your NERA Treasurer, Tia Fechter. It has been an honor to serve you in this capacity since I started my term in 2019. My term of service ends at the close of this year (2021). Shadowing me this year is Andrew Jones, who will serve as your Treasurer for the 2022-2024 term.

NERA is currently in a solid financial position. You will recall that our membership voted in October 2019 to increase annual membership rates to \$50 for professional members and \$25 for student and retired members to account for NERA's increasing operational costs. These increases were sufficient to balance our operating costs in 2020. In fact, due to the nature of COVID-19's impact on the 2020 NERA conference, we offered virtual attendance as part of membership fees

made possible by our highly valued institutional members. Please reach out to someone you know at one or more of these organizations to thank them for their continued support for NERA.

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At the January 2021 Board of Directors (BOD) meeting, the 2020 Treasurer's Report was approved. The highlights are

- ⇒ NERA has 220 current members
- ⇒ NERA stayed within our 2020 projected budget
- ⇒ NERA BOD approved the proposed budget for 2021

I wish my NERA family a healthy and restorative 2021.

## Website Resources

Jerusha Henderek, Webmaster  
*National Board of Medical Examiners*

The NERA website ([www.nera-education.org](http://www.nera-education.org)) has many resources for your use. Although much of the information on our website is published in *The NERA Researcher*, please see below for direct links to specific pages you may want to visit to keep up-to-date:

- the most recent [message from the president](#)
- the latest updates concerning [conference planning](#)
- information on [NERA leadership](#) and current [GSIC members](#)
- current and historical issues of [The NERA Researcher](#)
- updates on recent and upcoming [webinars](#)
- summaries of [awards](#) and how to nominate candidates
- updates from the [Mentoring Program](#)
- [downloadable forms](#) (e.g., NERA Handbook, Communication Request Form)

Be sure to stay connected to NERA and the latest news by visiting our website throughout the year. Don't forget to submit your [member news](#) (we update this page with each newsletter release three times a year).



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## Infrastructure Committee Report

Beth Perkins, *James Madison University*

Happy New Year, NERA members! It was great to connect with many of you at the virtual conference. As we look forward to our next conference, I would like to share some updates from the Infrastructure Committee.

To our extended team, we welcome Alia Ammar, the NERA Webinar Coordinator, and Jonathan Steinberg, who transitioned from chair of the Infrastructure Committee to our 2021 conference co-chair liaison. I would also like to thank Kelly Rewley, Siyu Wan, Paulius Satkus, Jerusha Henderek, and Tia Fechter as existing committee members who continue their roles. As a team, we look forward to working on projects that will benefit NERA.

The Infrastructure Committee will be working to optimize the member experience in the Vieth system. We aim to identify features that will improve functionality to improve current processes. We will also work on documentation for Whova and Zoom (for facilitators and participants), building off the 2020 conference co-chairs' documentation.

Please feel free to reach out to the Infrastructure Committee if we can assist you in your NERA work. We are always happy to help where needed. I wish you all well and look forward to connecting throughout the coming year.

Beth Perkins  
Chair, Infrastructure Committee



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## **Conference Ambassadors Update**

Pamela Kaliski, *American Board of Internal Medicine*

The NERA Conference Ambassadors Committee's charge is to welcome new and returning members to the annual NERA conference each year. We strive to achieve this by providing an open environment that encourages connecting with colleagues across the NERA membership in attendance while also sharing our own NERA experiences with meeting attendees. I am honored to begin my term as Chair of the NERA Conference Ambassadors Committee this year and want to give a huge shout out to past-Chair Sarah Ferguson for all she has done the past several years chairing this committee. I'd also like to welcome back Carol Barry and Kate Nolan as returning members of the Conference Ambassadors Committee and welcome several new members—Whitney Coggeshall, Charles Ogundimu, Thai Ong, and Aubry Thelkeld.

At the virtual Fall 2020 NERA conference, the Ambassadors Committee hosted a virtual new member coffee/breakfast. The committee was delighted with the turnout and greatly enjoyed the conversations and introductions between the new and current members. For the NERA 2021 annual conference, we are working closely with the conference team and Membership Committee to arrange a similar opportunity to meet and greet. We will communicate our plans with NERA membership in advance of the conference to be available and prepared to support any members during the conference.

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

Pamela Kaliski  
Chair, NERA Ambassadors Committee



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*If you are having a bit of cabin-fever, spend a few minutes with Sharon Cramer, a long-time NERA member. Sharon is SUNY Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus, Parliamentarian, Emerita, SUNY University Faculty Senate, Buffalo State College. She has been a NERA member since 1990 and president 2003-04.*

## **Life's a kaleidoscope—Just give it a twist**

By Sharon F. Cramer

Published in the *Buffalo News*, January 15, 2021

Kaleidoscopes—on the outside, uninteresting, but a few twists transform the view of the inside. After receiving one as a gift when in high school, I remained appreciative of them. And they are the perfect metaphor for escaping COVID captivity.

Beginning simply, I considered chairs in my house. On January 1, instead of going to my usual one, I tried sitting in one I never used. A whole new view! Last week, I shifted my wall art. Instead of seeing a bridge, I now gaze on a mirrored image of fruit and flowers. I've even moved around to eat at different chairs in my dining room, my own "Mad Hatter's Tea Party." One day, I'm facing a scene in Venice: I remember being with my father on a colorful autumn day, at an Art Fair, when I bought it. On another day, I am facing the photograph of a dramatic sunrise taken by my husband. Even though both of them died over a decade ago, dining from different chairs brought back forgotten memories of each. With little effort, I give a twist to the kaleidoscope of my interior space and see it anew.

Searching out safe ways to travel tests me, as travel had been a delight. I miss the anticipation of discovery, as well as the thrill of investigation once I'd arrived. One of my favorite places, Hillwood, in the D.C. area, was a home previously owned by Marjorie Merriweather Post, the heiress to the General Foods fortune. Although I'd visited it twice in person, I knew there was much more to see. When I learned there was virtual access to its extensive collection for free, I went to [www.hillwoodmuseum.org](http://www.hillwoodmuseum.org) and turned my kaleidoscope once again. I was safely transported, and viewed amazing portraits, clothing, centuries-old treasures of fabric, metals, glass. What jewelry she had acquired! What clothing she wore! I happily poked around on the website.

Then, I discovered Hillwood's docent-led virtual tours. I purchased tickets, and invited my sister and a friend to join me. When the time came, we all clicked on the provided link, and "entered" the house. We were welcomed into Marjorie's world by a lively, well-informed docent, given close-ups of the many unique gems she acquired through her world travels. After the tour was over, the three of us shared a phone call, to marvel over what we'd seen. My kaleidoscope turned, offering us escape together. Next up: A scavenger hunt at a museum site, with Zoom sharing of our discoveries.

Another exploration, closer to home, is joining Explore Buffalo's [www.explorebuffalo.org](http://www.explorebuffalo.org) offering of a virtual "Sacred Spaces Series." In January, 2021, we have armchair tours (in real time or via recorded offerings), visiting four extraordinary local churches. We are welcomed, and see the buildings past and present, inside and out, from high and low, while also learning Buffalo's history. Instead of staying completely house-bound, I am getting out.

I'm twisting my kaleidoscope. Indoors, I change the photograph on my computer each day, bringing color into our monochrome month. My out-of-doors walking pursuits have evolved. By varying routes and times of day, and adding new places, my discoveries continue. Recently, tree bark started fascinating me – prompted by a Science Museum Camera Club challenge to use our cell phone cameras in new ways. Wearing COVID-neglected clothes and jewelry, trying ignored recipes, my commitment to living my kaleidoscope has helped me "change it up" and start 2021 with variety and enthusiasm.

## **Mentoring Program Update**

Bethany Fishbein, Kerry Cotter, & Sarah Ferguson

First, the NERA Mentoring Program co-chairs would like to thank Tanesia Beverly and Katrina Roohr for their dedicated service as co-chairs over the past year. We greatly appreciate your support as we transition into this committee's leadership this year!

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

Since 2012, the conference-based Mentoring Program has matched pairs of volunteer mentors and mentees through a focused, hand-selected match-making process. Each year, the Mentoring Program co-chairs collect information from members who volunteer to be mentors or want to be mentored and match mentor-mentee pairs based on research interests, career goals, or areas of desired growth. Pairs are encouraged to communicate before the annual NERA conference and meet during the conference. Mentoring Program participants benefit from receiving a structured and informed match, having dedicated time during the conference to meet, and the opportunity to make new connections outside of their existing social networks.

This year, we are excited to offer NERA members new opportunities to connect for mentorship outside of the annual conference, including panel discussions and webinars on key topics for students and early career members. The co-chairs will send information soon about how to participate in these opportunities, and later in the year about the conference-based Mentoring Program.

Please feel free to reach out to the co-chairs at [mentoring@nera-education.org](mailto:mentoring@nera-education.org) if you have any questions or suggestions for improving the Mentoring Program. We are looking forward to working with the NERA membership over the coming year!

## Winter 2021 Board Meeting Update

Hi NERA Members! The NERA Executive Committee and Board of Directors met virtually on January 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> for our Winter Board Meeting. It was a change of scenery from our usual trip to Trumbull, CT, but we still enjoyed catching up and discussing all things NERA.

Our NERA President, Steven Holtzman, started the meeting off with introductions and discussions around how we first learned about NERA. For most of the NERA Leadership, we learned about NERA from our graduate school professors and advisors. Still, some of us also learned about NERA through our professional networks and even an undergraduate professor. This introduction sparked some initial discussion about ways for us to expand our membership.

We then continued the discussion about targeted goals for 2021. These goals include:

- Planning the 2021 conference during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Increasing membership, outreach, and diversity
- Creating more yearlong activities through webinars, mentoring, and networking opportunities
- Cultivating NERA leadership by increasing the Board's visibility to committees and members, working on the leadership pipeline, and updating the NERA handbook
- Fostering innovative thinking to generate revolutionary approaches to the way the organization and conference are run

The discussion then shifted to leadership and committee reports. Here are some highlights from the various updates:

- "Teacher-as-researcher" awards committee has been renamed to "educator-as-researcher" to broaden the scope to whom this award would apply within PreK-12.
- Committees are looking to find ways to increase social media presence and keep NERA members more engaged in various discussions throughout the year.
- Committees are working together to create more yearlong activities through webinars, workshops, and supporting mentoring relationships. Keep an eye out for these exciting opportunities to engage with the NERA community!
- Some of the committees are looking for new members—if interested, please reach out to committee chairs.
- 2020 virtual conference was an overall success.
- 2021 conference planning is fully underway! The highest priority continues to be the health and safety of NERA members. Full decisions about whether the conference will be hybrid or virtual are still in discussion.

Continue to check the NERA Researcher and website for specific updates from each of the committees. We look forward to "seeing" some of you in our virtual activities throughout this year!



## Educator-as-Researcher Award Application

52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference, October 2021

The Educator-as-Researcher Award (formerly the Teacher-as-Research Award) is presented annually to an educator who has conducted a self-initiated classroom research project or applied research findings to inform their teaching. Candidates may nominate themselves or be nominated by a NERA member or other professional who knows about their research. The award recipient will be invited to attend the NERA conference to present the research to a NERA audience and receive the award.

The nominee must be a PK-12 educator who conducted a school-related research project with their students, faculty, or constituents to improve educational practices. The project must be conceptualized, developed, and implemented as part of the nominee's context and practice and have had at least one trial and evaluation cycle. The project should also be related to a clearly defined theoretical focus and represent an innovation that has led to a concrete change in practice. The research, conducted during the past two years, can be part of a thesis or dissertation if the educator has primary responsibility for developing and implementing the project. Research topics may vary but should have some importance in the nominee's branch of education. The theory underlying the research and methods of instruction or implementation, data collection, and analysis should be well-articulated and documented by the nominee.

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- ◆ Attach information regarding your submission using the following four guidelines provided:
- ◆ Descriptive Title of the Research
- ◆ Abstract (Please summarize the research project in no more than 250 words including its purpose, procedure, and outcomes)
- ◆ Description of the Research (maximum of 1000 words) a. The rationale for conducting the study, b. description of project methods including participants, site, and procedures, c. report and analysis of research findings, d. discussion of the impact of the research on teachers' practices that occurred or will occur as a result of the project, e. bibliography of relevant references related to the research, and f. any other information seen as relevant by the nominee.
- ◆ Significance of the Study to Educators (Describe how the results contribute to improved educational practice or professional knowledge of educators in your field; maximum 100 words)

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

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation and Position of Nominating Person: (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Nominating Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **MIXED METHODS REDUX: WHAT'S OLD IS NEW AGAIN**

**Felice D. Billups  
Johnson & Wales University**

As the mixed methods approach gained popularity in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) noted that “mixed methods designs include one quantitative and one qualitative method, where neither type of method is inherently linked to any particular paradigm” (p. 256). Several decades later, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) updated that definition, asserting “mixed methods is a type of research design in which QN and QL are used across a study” (p. 8-9). Definitions continued to evolve and reflect changing practices and philosophies. By 2018, Creswell and Plano Clark synthesized past perspectives into a new definition: “Mixed methods research combines methods, research design, and philosophy ... to direct a study, where QN and QL data are collected, analyzed, and integrated during analysis, ensuring that the overall strength of a study is greater than any single paradigm approach” (2018, p. 5). These contingent definitions speak to the tremendous evolution of the mixed methods approach.

By the mid-2000s, a proliferation of mixed methods research designs flooded the field after many years of relative obscurity and limited applications (Bazeley, 2018; Creamer, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Poth, 2018; Tashakkori, Johnson, & Teddlie, 2020). As many as fifteen research designs surfaced, reflecting new and inventive approaches (Creamer, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters, 2019; Tashakkori, Johnson, & Teddlie, 2020). Many notable mixed methods scholars advocated for some, or all, of these designs. But, once researchers began to employ these strategies, it was apparent that most of them were either redundant or impractical ... or both. Hence, the list has now decreased to three or four core designs, supplemented by a small cluster of advanced applications. A new vision for mixed methods research has also emerged with this migration.

### **The Current View of Mixed Methods**

The contemporary view is that all mixed methods designs, whatever they may have been called in the past few years, now conform to a finite group of core designs (Bazeley, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Palinkas, Mendon, & Hamilton, 2019; Tashakkori et al., 2020 ). These core designs are commonly designated as 1) convergent/concurrent, 2) sequential explanatory, 3) sequential exploratory, and 4) hybrid or iterative (Bazeley, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Palinkas et al., 2019; Tashakkori et al., 2020 ). In spite of the long list of complex or advanced applications that overlay these core designs, most prominent scholars agree on these core designs as the foundation for all mixed methods research.

Numerous researchers support a longer list of advanced or complex applications (Bazeley, 2018; Clark, 2019; Creamer, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters, 2019; Hitchcock & Onwuegbuzie, 2020; Palinkas et al., 2019; Poth, 2018; Tashakkori et al., 2020). These applications comprise the intersection of the core designs with *designs within designs*, a *combination of designs*, or the *overlay of a theoretical framework*. After synthesizing the views of key scholars, these applications comprise: 1) embedded/nested, 2) transformative/participatory/social justice, 3) triangulation, 4) mixed-methods experimental/intervention, 5) mixed-methods case study, and 6) mixed-methods evaluation design. These designations are not intended to be comprehensive and, in fact, appear to be in flux, as new scholarship suggests occasional enhancements.

*Continued on next page*



Additionally, these advanced applications mirror many of the prior designations we have come to know in the last decade. The multiphase, mixed models, multilevel, or multimethod designs of the past seem to be less evident in the current literature; however, many researchers still value these designs (Billups, 2015). For instance, the multiphase design of recent years was defined as a longitudinal research project combining connecting segments of qualitative and quantitative studies. Today, multiphase studies represent the hybrid or iterative approach, dropping the longitudinal project reference, with different timing and weighting of the qualitative and quantitative phases. There are other examples of how design names and approaches have changed. Overall, the question remains: Where do the old designs fit in with the new set of core and complex designs? In an attempt to capture the movement of the past decade, I offer the table below:

### Mixed Methods Designs: A 2020 Update

#### CORE DESIGNS

Research Design	Definition
Convergent	Implement QN and QL strands concurrently or independently to compare results
Sequential Explanatory	Implement QN, then QL strands in sequence, using QL data to explain, elaborate, or confirm initial QN results
Sequential Exploratory	Implement QL, then QN strands in sequence, using QN data to generalize/test or confirm initial QL results
Hybrid or Iterative*	Implement a combination of features from 2 or more core designs in 3 or more strands at multiple stages of the study in phases or varying sequences/timing

**\*Note:** All hybrid/iterative designs now incorporate the features of multiphase, multilevel, multimethod, and mixed model designs, employing a combination of QN and QL strands and supported by various sampling and data collection strategies.

*Continued on next page*

## ADVANCED or COMPLEX APPLICATIONS OF CORE DESIGNS

Research Design	Definition
Embedded/nested	Implement a secondary method within a dominant research design that depends on the primary method for justification
Triangulation	Implement 3 or more data collection strategies across strands to corroborate/confirm findings across phases, using four types of triangulation approaches: methods, data, analyst, theory
Transformative/Participatory/ Social Justice	Implement social justice theory as a lens for framing the philosophy, design, data collection, and interpretation of the study and its findings
MM Experimental/Intervention	Implement a QN experimental design, followed by a QL strand to enrich QN results, using sequential/concurrent phases
MM Case Study	Implement a QL case study design, employing QL and QN data collection, in sequential/concurrent phases
MM Evaluation	Implement program evaluation core components to a QL and QN sequence of strands to enrich study findings

(Bazeley, 2018; Billups, 2015; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Hitchcock & Onwuegbuzie, 2020; Palinkas et al., 2019; Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016; Poth, 2018; Tashakkori et al., 2020)

### A Future View of Mixed Methods

A new vision of mixed methods research seems to be unfolding, as noted above. Is the current approach to mixing data collection methods now morphing into an approach that is increasingly about mixing research designs? The answer to this question may indicate mixed methods research's future direction.

A cursory review of the current literature suggests that we are talking less about mixing data via collection strategies (e.g., survey research, interviews, focus groups, use of ex post facto data) and more about combining holistic research designs from the quantitative and qualitative paradigms. When Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) describe their mixed-methods experimental design, they advocate for a quasi-experimental design paired with a qualitative descriptive design, protecting each approach's integrity and wholeness. When Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) suggests a social justice mixed methods project, they pair a qualitative instrumental single-site case study design with a quantitative correlational design; the case remains true to the qualitative foundations but is supplemented by a correlational study within the

*Continued on next page*

case. These projects take the mixing of data one step further, moving the entire project into the realm of truly mixing research questions, instrument development, data collection procedures, and analysis. Further, if you consider how paradigm shifts occur, consider that the *naturalistic inquiry* label was prominent (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) for many years before the vernacular settled on the broader term of *qualitative research*. In the same way, today's mixed-methods *may* evolve into the mixed models or mixed designs nomenclature of tomorrow.

If you think this is what already occurs in a mixed-methods study, take a closer look. To date, researchers have increasingly employed paradigm-based research designs rather than referencing an assortment of data collection strategies. This trend towards combining research designs into a project seems to be intensifying, with greater acceptance across the research community; a quick glance of recent peer-reviewed publications verifies this shift.

### Conclusion

When Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) originally claimed that the mixed methods paradigm represented the third methodological movement, they also declared that the field was in its fifth moment, a period of refinement and reflection. During that moment, the field realized an explosion of new mixed-methods designs and frameworks. Yet, one could argue we are now on the precipice of the 6th moment, as the one-dimensional mixed methods perspective of the mid-20th century has evolved into the early 21st century's multi-dimensional perspective. Like most movements that are birthed, develop, and then mature, we find ourselves at the midpoint of the continuum. The extremes have given way to consolidated and moderate practices. In some ways, we are nearly back where we started; is it true that what's old is new again?

Indeed, the field seems to be heading towards further consolidation and refinement. The number of design types seems to be decreasing; at the very least, the design designations are more exclusive and easier to distinguish from other designations. The decision about which mixed methods design to use for a study is now a more user-friendly enterprise. Some designs have evaporated, fallen from favor (mono strand or monomethod), or assimilated into new categories (multiphase, multilevel, multimethod, mixed models), but these assimilations seem reasonable.

The mixed-methods paradigm is associated with pragmatism, a view of research that calls for what works best, rather than whatever works (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Hitchcock, & Onwuegbuzie, 2020). When applied to mixed-methods research, pragmatism encourages a researcher to use all the methods that best address a research problem and combine those methods in such a way that the study's findings are maximized (Hitchcock, & Onwuegbuzie, 2020). This approach is ideal for educational research, a field where problem-solving and the practical application of knowledge form the basis for all inquiry. Thus, the extensive and well-informed use of mixed methods designs in educational research, employing a newly revised set of mixed methods design options, will benefit students, researchers, practitioners, and leaders in their quest for meaningful answers to complex challenges.

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