

PEARSON



TEST, MEASUREMENT, & RESEARCH SERVICES

Quarterly Newsletter

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EDITOR'S NOTE

by Jason L. Meyers

WELCOME TO THE SEVENTH EDITION OF THE PEARSON TEST, MEASUREMENT, AND RESEARCH SERVICES (TMRS) NEWSLETTER, A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION AIMED AT PUBLICIZING THE ONGOING RESEARCH EFFORTS OF OUR GROUP TO THOSE BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF OUR PEARSON COMMUNITY.

This issue contains many impressive accomplishments and contributions to the measurement community, and I appreciate you taking the time to share them with me for inclusion in this issue. I would also like to express my appreciation for the valuable insight provided to me by the advisory board members.

In this issue, I am pleased to announce the release of the new A&I website; to provide details on the 2010 Pearson Research Fellowship; and to welcome a familiar face to our Tulsa office. In addition, this issue highlights the research proposals by Pearson staff that were accepted for presentation at the 2010 AERA and NCME conferences, details other staff presentations, and lists TMRS publications during the fourth quarter of 2009. Finally, this edition contains the quarterly award winners and grant award recipients and, as always, concludes with a blog by Dr. Jon Twing.

We aim for widespread dissemination of this newsletter. If you or someone you know would like to be added to our distribution list, or if you require a printed version of the newsletter, please contact me directly. I also welcome questions, comments, and suggestions in a continual effort to improve the newsletter.

Back issues can be downloaded from www.pearsonedmeasurement.com/research/newsletter.htm. We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to hearing from you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A&I Launches New Website!

In the fourth quarter of 2009, Pearson launched the new website for the Assessment & Information group of Pearson: www.PearsonAssessments.com. This new website is now fully functional and includes links to each A&I business group. PearsonAssessments.com is the result of an integration of the eCommerce capabilities and systems for the Clinical Assessment and Educational Assessment products. Enhancements are still being prioritized, but in the near future the plan is to implement additional improvements in eCommerce functionality and provide an enhancement and expanded functionality for the Research & Resources section. In addition, Pearson will roll out the new look and feel for the Canada website, launch an enhanced Search Engine Optimization and utilize social media. Many of our current sites will be redirecting to the new A&I site: www.pearsonedmeasurement.com, www.pearsonassess.com, and www.ed.pearsonassessments.com. The www.pearsonschool.com website is now the home to Curriculum group information.

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NEWSLETTER

ADVISORY BOARD

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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For the TMRS section of the website, work is currently underway to ensure that visitors can browse, sort, and search research papers by title, topics, authors, and date. There will also be background information about TMRS and its staff, as well as a new feature, “Ask a Research Scientist,” to allow people to submit questions to Pearson research staff. If you have any questions or comments about the new site, please direct them to Jennifer Saftich.

PRS Leadership Attend Pan-Pearson Seminar in England

In October, Dr. Jon Twing, Dr. Walter (Denny) Way, and Dr. Paul Nichols attended a Pan-Pearson Standards and Assessment Seminar at the Education Department of Oxford University in Oxford, England. Participants included Pearson Education, Assessment and Information; Pearson Educational Solutions; Pearson Vue; Pearson Language Tests; Pearson Education English Language Teaching; Oxford/PRA; and Edexcel. The objective of the seminar was to bring together experts on assessment and standards from across Pearson to initiate a Pearson assessment community to

- » share information about experience and expertise in standards setting, validity, and reliability;
- » establish common areas of interest; and
- » begin planning for the first Pearson Standards and Assessment Conference in 2010 for a wider Pearson community.

Announcing the 2010 Pearson Research Fellowship

In December, Pearson announced its 2010 Research Fellowship program. The 2010 program will offer an 8-week fellowship for three doctoral students with outstanding psychometric skills who wish to gain experience in educational testing. The fellowship will include hands-on experience in the development and analysis of data for K–12 assessments. Specific activities may include item analysis/key check procedures, test construction, scaling and equating, technical writing, comparability studies, attendance/facilitation of item review committees, and other research projects. Fellows will also have an opportunity to learn about item content development, scoring and processing, and other aspects of educational testing.

Dates

The 8-week fellowship will take place from June 7, 2010 through July 30, 2010.

Locations

One fellowship is available in each of the following cities: Austin, Texas; Iowa City, Iowa; and San Antonio, Texas.

Fellowship Goals

Fellows will have the opportunity to work closely with a team of Pearson research scientists in order to

- 1) gain experience in many of the tasks involved in a K–12 testing contract;
- 2) collaborate on a research paper, abstract, or presentation for national dissemination; and
- 3) better understand ways to collaborate and communicate about educational measurement.

Award

The award includes a \$5,000 stipend. Transportation costs to and from Austin/Iowa City/San Antonio will be provided. Corporate housing will be provided for fellows commuting more than 50 miles.

Qualifications

Fellows should be currently enrolled in a doctoral program in educational measurement, educational statistics, educational psychology, or similar program.

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Application Procedure

Each candidate should submit a curriculum vita, copy of graduate school transcript, two letters of recommendation, and a statement of purpose describing his or her interest in the fellowship. All application materials must be received by March 1, 2010. Fellowship awards will be announced by March 31, 2010. Materials should be submitted to

Paul Nichols, Vice President
Psychometric & Research Services
Assessment & Information
Pearson
2510 N. Dodge Street, P.O. Box 30
Iowa City, IA 52245-9945

Shelley Ragland Joins Tulsa Office

This fall, **Shelley Ragland** became a full-time employee at Pearson, hired as an Associate Research Scientist working in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She had previously worked as an intern in the Austin office. Shelley—and her SpongeBob collection—will be missed in Austin, but PRS staff in Austin congratulate her on her accomplishments and wish her continued success in her new position.

Appointments

Paul Nichols was selected to serve on the Membership Committee of the National Council on Measurement in Education.

Awards

The following individuals were recognized for their outstanding contributions at the quarterly Rewards and Recognition presentation during the November session of Learning at Lunch.

ALL-STAR AWARD RECIPIENTS

Jennifer Beimers

For exceptional leadership on the ADP Algebra II Exam (for August 2009)

Marnie Campbell

For exceptional leadership on Arkansas English Language Arts (for September 2009)

Marv Craver

For exceptional leadership on Arkansas Science test construction (for August 2009)

Melissa Majorins

For exceptional leadership coordinating data reviews for numerous projects: Minnesota Science, New York Technical Reports, and Oklahoma Item Specifications documents (for August 2009)

Tina McCoy

For exceptional leadership on ADP Algebra I and II EOC Exam (for September 2009)

Kimberly Olson

For exceptional leadership on the South Carolina project regarding the legacy item bank (for August 2009)

Mike Tracy

For exceptional leadership on Oklahoma U.S. History EOI (for September 2009)

Eric Weisman

For exceptional leadership on TAKS Reading 9, 10, and 11 English Language Arts, and the new English I End of Course exams (for August 2009)

Melissa Zellers

For exceptional leadership on Mississippi U.S. History and DoDEA (for September 2009)



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TEAM PLAYER AWARD RECIPIENTS

Brian Bass

For outstanding contributions on the Arkansas project in English Language Arts (for September 2009)

Audra Batson

For outstanding contributions taking over as lead for the MTAS project (for September 2009)

Kate Brien

For outstanding contributions on the Arkansas Math test construction (for August 2009)

Serena Cariens

For outstanding contributions on Arkansas, supporting the new TDM (for September 2009)

Sharlotte Carey

For outstanding team contributions on Minnesota by pulling tests during an extreme deadline, under extreme circumstances (for August 2009)

Jennifer Easterday

For outstanding contributions on the Arkansas project by accepting English Language Arts lead role responsibilities temporarily for her team (for August 2009)

Nick Gefaller

For outstanding contributions on uploading legacy items for South Carolina (for September 2009)

Vicky Harland

For outstanding contributions on the Pearson Nursing Program Solutions

Mary Ivy

For outstanding contributions on setting up TDS for New York Work at Risk and guiding IDS through processes needed to use TDS while handling several other TDS issues for other projects during the absences of her teammates due to vacation and medical leave (for August 2009)

Jennifer Lopez

For outstanding contributions on the Arkansas Math project during item and data reviews (for August 2009)

Paul Malary

For outstanding contributions on the Department of Defense U.S. History (for September 2009)

Eric Moyers

For outstanding contributions on Minnesota Math team by accepting lead role responsibilities temporarily for his team (for August 2009)

Terry Owen

For outstanding team contributions on Minnesota by pulling tests during an extreme deadline, under extreme circumstances (for August 2009)

Sarah Seidl

For outstanding contributions on the Communications Dashboard Initiative (for August 2009)

Kristin Stoeffler

For outstanding contributions on several projects, handling a multitude of tasks and workloads during the absences of team members who were on medical leave and vacation (for August 2009)

Angela Tackett

For outstanding contributions on moving Oklahoma U.S. History items from one bank to another, keeping Oklahoma English passages on track, and accepting responsibilities for several projects during the absences of team members (for August 2009)

Tony Thompson

For outstanding team contributions on Minnesota by pulling tests during an extreme deadline, under extreme circumstances (for August 2009)

PRESENTATIONS

In November, the following proposals by TMRS staff were accepted for presentation at the 2010 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado.

Arce-Ferrer, A. *Investigating Approaches to Estimate an Individual's Strand/Objective Score Profile Reliability: A Monte Carlo Study.*

Bradshaw L., Lin J., Young, M. J., & Chu, K. L. *An Examination of Linguistic Modifications on a Large Scale Assessment.*

Brown, R. S., & Nguyen, T. *Examining the Effect of Title I and Other Federal Programs on ELP Scores of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Students Using Hierarchical Linear Modeling.*

Chien, Y., Shin, C. D., & Way, W. D. *An Alternative to Stocking-Lewis Conditional Item Exposure Control in CAT.*

Fulkerson, D., Nichols, P. D., & Mittelholtz, D. *What Item Writers Think: Towards a Theory of Item Writing Expertise.*

Lin J., Chu, K. L., & Meng, Y. *Distractor Rationale Taxonomy: Diagnostic Assessment of Reading with Ordered Multiple-Choice Items.*

Shin, C. D., & Chien, Y. *The Comparison of the Classification Accuracy of Subscale Score Estimation Methods.*

Tsai, T-H., Shin, C. D., Meyers, J. L., & Wang, H. *Score Comparability of Paper-and-Pencil and Computer Versions of a Licensing Examination.*

In addition, the following proposals by TMRS staff were accepted for presentation at the 2010 National Council on Measurement in Education Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado.

Arce-Ferrer, A. *Derivation of a Reliability Index for an Individual Profile: A Multi-Factor Congeneric Approach with Guttman Error Structures.*

Fan, M., Kirkpatrick, R., Lin, C., Little, I., & Murphy, S. T. *The Impact of Different Anchor Stability Methods on Equating Results and Student Performance.*

Ingrison, J., & Ingrison, S. *A Joint Distribution Model Using Item Response and Response Time.*

Karkee, T. B., Murphy, S. T., Podrabsky, T., & McKinney, N. *Comparisons of Test Characteristic Curves Alignment Criteria of the Anchor Sets and the Total Test for Maintaining Test Scale and Impact on Students' Performance.*

Lin, A., Qing, Y., & Young, M. *Improving the Post-Smoothing of Test Norms with Kernel Smoothing.*

Meyers, J. L., Turhan, A., & Fitzpatrick, S. J. *Performance of Ability Estimation Methods for Writing Assessments under Conditions of Multidimensionality.*

Miles, J. A., & Beimers, J. *The Modified Briefing Book Standard Setting Method: Using Validity Data as a Basis for Setting Cut Scores.*

Shin, C. D., & Chien, Y. *An Exploration of Methods for Evaluation of Individual and School Progress at the Subscale Level.*

Tong, Y., & Kolen, M. *IRT Proficiency Estimators and Their Impact.*

Way, W. D. *Update on the Revisions to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.*

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PRESENTATIONS

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Pearson TMRS staff also delivered numerous presentations during the fourth quarter of 2009.

Luis Perea gave a presentation titled *Teachers' Voices in the Development of Test Specifications* at the TextESOL II Fall Conference held at UT San Antonio in October.

At the NCTI Technology Innovators' Conference in Washington, D.C., **Bob Dolan** presented on the design and implementation of accessible, innovative computer-based testing interfaces. The presentation, which included live demos, focused on Pearson's Universal Design for Computer-based Testing Guidelines as well as the AA-MAS ("2%") assessment Pearson has been developing for the Virginia Department of Education, who co-presented with Dr. Dolan.

Bob Dolan was invited to present in November on research concerning individualization of educational materials at a workshop hosted by Vulcan Corporation in Seattle. Vulcan's Project Halo (projecthalo.com) has been conducting research and development on knowledge-based science textbooks and is exploring applications to education.

Walter (Denny) Way presented a talk titled *The Helpful Psychometrician in an Era of Formative Reform* at the Edward F. Reidy, Jr. Interactive Lecture Series (RILS) in October in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Paul Nichols provided expert input on formative assessment systems at the Race to the Top Assessment Program Expert and Public Input meeting in Atlanta in November. A week earlier, Bob Dolan provided brief public testimony in Boston on the importance of using universal design to help ensure accessibility and usability of innovative items.

PUBLICATIONS

Arce-Ferrer, A., & Martinez, E. (2009). Studying the equivalence of computer-delivered and paper-based administrations of the Raven Standard Progressive Matrices Test. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 69*(5), 855--867.

Fuhrken, C., & Roser, N. (2009). Exploring high-stakes tests as a genre. In B. Moss, & D. Lapp (Eds.), *Teaching New Literacies in Grades K--3: Resources for 21st-Century Classrooms*. New York: Guilford.

Fuhrken, C., & Roser, N. (2009). Exploring high-stakes tests as a genre. In B. Moss, & D. Lapp (Eds.), *Teaching New Literacies in Grades 4--6: Resources for 21st-Century Classrooms*. New York, NY: Guilford.

Fuhrken, C., & Roser, N. (in press). Nurturing readers in an age of testing. *English in Texas*. Austin, TX: Texas Council of Teachers of English.

Myford, C.M., & Wolfe, E.W. (2009). Monitoring rater performance over time: A framework for detecting differential accuracy and differential scale category sse. *Journal of Educational Measurement, 46*, 371--389.

Pituch, K. A., Murphy, D. L., & Tate, R. L. (2010). Three-level models for indirect effects in school- and class-randomized experiments in education. *Journal of Experimental Education, 78*, 60--95.

Ragland, S. (2009) The use of separate answer sheets. *Pearson Research Bulletin*. http://pearsonassessments.com/NR/rdonlyres/6B07A425-2A54-4C17-9179-EFEECAF28BC7/o/Bulletin8_SeparateAnswerSheets.pdf

Wang, H., & Shin, C. D. (2009) Computer-based & paper-pencil test comparability. *Pearson Research Bulletin*. http://pearsonassessments.com/NR/rdonlyres/93727FC9-96D3-4EA5-B807-5153-EF17C431/o/Bulletin_9.pdf

Way, W. D., Dolan, R. P., & Nichols, P. (2009). Psychometric challenges and opportunities in implementing formative assessment. In H. L. Andrade & G.J. Cizek (Eds.), *Handbook of Formative Assessment*. New York: Routledge.

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PUBLICATIONS

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Wells, C., Baldwin, S., Hambleton, R., Sireci, S., Karatonis, A., & Jirka, S. (2009). Evaluating score equity assessment for state NAEP. *Applied Measurement in Education*, 22 (4), 394-408.

Wolfe, E. W., Matthews, S., & Vickers, D. A. (2009). Comparison of training & scoring in distributed & regional contexts—Reading. *Pearson Research Report*. http://www.pearsonassessments.com/NR/rdonlyres/F9E82DBA-5FCB-48E8-ACCB-763F3AB653BB/o/DSS_Reading_Report_072009.pdf

Wolfe, E. W., Matthews, S., & Vickers, D. A. (2009). Comparison of training & scoring in distributed & regional contexts—Writing. *Pearson Research Report*. http://www.pearsonassessments.com/NR/rdonlyres/290C67BA-Bo91-4F92-AF85-98E3B58EAEF4/o/DSS_Writing_Report_072009.pdf

GRANT AWARDS

BUILDING AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESEARCH / EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Principal Investigator: Dr. Erin Dolan at Virginia Tech

Co-Principal Investigator: Dr. Edward W. Wolfe (subcontracted to Virginia Tech)

Funded by: the National Institutes of Health

Responsibilities: Conduct evaluation of a project facilitating collaboration between university research scientists and high school science students

Grant amount: \$232,465

TRUESCORES

Each issue of the *Pearson Test, Measurement, and Research Services (TMRS) Quarterly Newsletter* includes a recent entry from the *TrueScores* blog written by Jon Twing. For more information on TrueScores, please visit www.truescores.com.

The Academic Debate about Formative Assessments

by Jon S. Twing, Executive Vice President, TMRS

There are some things in educational measurement that are not debated. Foremost, the purpose of instruction is to improve learning. The purpose of assessment is to improve instruction, which in turn improves learning. In other words, it's all about the learning—debate over.

Some researchers (myself included) have become sloppy with our language, labeling assessments “for learning” to be formative and assessments “of learning” to be summative. So, under this lax jargon, a multiple-choice quiz used by the teacher in the classroom at the end of instruction for the purpose of tailoring additional instruction would be deemed “formative.” If you follow the rhetoric from national “experts,” technical advisory committees, or other learned people, then I have just offended many!

Currently, there is much discussion regarding formative assessments and the need to balance the multitude of assessments that might be used during a school year. A good place to start might be with the paper by Perie, et. al. (2006) posted to the CCSSO SCASS website. You and I might not agree with the classifications or the terminology, but the classification scheme used by these authors helps to contextualize the debate quite well and may even allow you to make up your own mind.

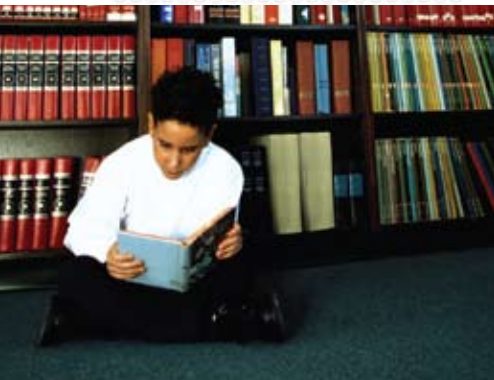
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TRUESCORES

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What does, however, put peanut butter into my cognitive gears is all the arguments and wasted effort I hear regarding what exactly does or does not constitute a “real” formative assessment. I even heard one nationally recognized measurement expert comment that, by definition, no assessment constructed by anyone other than a teacher can be called a formative assessment. I try to remind myself (and others) that at the end of the day only one thing matters: What have you done to improve learning? I doubt that arguing about definitions of formative, benchmark, or interim assessments helps with this.



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