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MWERA 2008 Conference Retrospective

Keynote Addresses
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On the Cover

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The ***Mid-Western Educational Researcher*** is a scholarly journal that publishes research-based articles addressing a full range of educational issues. The journal also publishes literature reviews, theoretical and methodological discussions that make an original contribution to the research literature, and feature columns. There are four issues of the journal published annually.

Manuscripts are accepted from faculty, students, and professionals working in educational or non-educational settings. Membership in the MWERA is not required in order to submit a manuscript for review. The editors encourage the submission of revised papers that have been presented at the annual meetings of the MWERA, AERA, and other professional organizations.

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Reflections on MWERA 2008: The Globalization of the Teacher Education Experience

Doug Feldmann, MWERA Program Chair
Northern Kentucky University

As I take time to reflect on the success of this year's conference, I was most pleased with how many of the conference presentations directly related to the theme of "Globalization." To be certain, there was much discussion about the very meaning of this term, and its relation to educational research—especially from our two keynote speakers and presidential address. This, I believe, set the stage for the rich conversations that we enjoyed over our four days together.

Dr. David Flinders, Professor of Curriculum Studies at Indiana University-Bloomington, launched these discussions with his own interpretation of the meaning of "global" and its impact on the field of teacher education in our Thursday Keynote Address. Dr. Flinders stressed the need for authentic field experiences for teacher candidates—and as an example, pointing in reference to the availability of Chinese students from the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstration to speak to one's classes (as opposed to a simple secondary study of the event). Dr. Flinders' thought-provoking comments led seamlessly into those made at the Luncheon Keynote Address on Friday by Dr. Elaine Jarchow, Dean of the College of Education and Human Services at Northern Kentucky University. Throughout her world travels, Dr. Jarchow has been able to witness multiple examples of cultural approaches to education, and in turn, how students and teachers in the United States can learn from these examples.

Our president, Dr. Craig Mertler of Bowling Green State University, added greatly to this sentiment as well when he discussed the "D-DIDM" approach (short for "Data-Driven Instructional Decision-Making"). This approach involves a practical philosophy for bridging the seemingly-omnipresent gap between research and practice in education. In his remarks, Dr. Mertler implored us, as educators, to have sound reasoning behind our daily actions in the classroom. As with the addresses of Dr. Jarchow and Dr. Flinders, please look within these pages for the text of Dr. Mertler's speech for enjoyment one more time.

A new feature at this year's conference was the integration of our traditional Thursday night Cracker Barrel Social with our roundtable and poster presentations. This permitted the opportunity for greater interaction among the participants, as well as the chance to enjoy some good food and drink while continuing our conversations.

My thanks to all of you in making the conference a success—you all had an important role to play. My warmest regards, and I look forward to seeing you in St. Louis!

Keynote Address

Globalization and Teacher Education

David J. Flinders
Indiana University

As educational researchers and teacher educators, we are often concerned with immediate and practical questions. How can health teachers help youth avoid substance abuse? Should a high school biology teacher show Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, or is that film too political for a science classroom? What sports should be included in a physical education curriculum, and how much time should be devoted to each? While such questions usually arise in the context of local decision-making, they are nonetheless "global" in the sense that substance abuse might well be tied to the poppy fields of Afghanistan; global warming is linked to the increasing use of carbon-based fuels in developing nations; and today's P.E. curriculum is likely shaped by the international sports venues now available to us through the mass media.

The types of connections that transcend national boundaries have given my own field of curriculum studies a global bent, and some of the questions that the field is grappling with will guide this essay. In particular, what implications does globalization have for American schooling? What knowledge, skills, and dispositions will best serve youth in responding to globalization? What opportunities does globalization present, and what pitfalls? These questions will be approached in the context of three related topics: 1. global competition, 2. global citizenship, and 3. global sustainability. I have chosen these topics based on their relevance to education.

Global Competition

From Thomas Jefferson and Horace Mann to Sputnik and *A Nation At Risk*, education has long been viewed as central to the well-being of the United Sates as a democratic nation. In the 1960s and 70s, this recurrent theme became focused on the question of how the United States compared with other developed nations on measures of educational achievement. One of the first efforts to make such comparisons was the First International Mathematics Study, also known as FIMS (Travers, 1979). This study, which sampled 12-year-olds in eleven nations, raised the alarm when the U.S. ranked second to last. Later studies, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) expended the number of countries ranked and the areas tested, but while the U.S. performance has not been quite as dismal as it was on FIMS, the country has remained on the mid to lower end of the rankings (Peterson, 2003).

Throughout the subsequent back-to-basics movement few paused to question how well national rankings predicted a country's global success. Keith Baker (2007) has recently done just that. A former researcher for the U.S. Department of Education, Baker examined the relationships among the FIMS and PISA rankings and national measures of wealth, economic growth, productivity, quality of life, livability, democratic attainments, and creativity. Baker found modest correlations with only three of these variables (wealth, quality of life, and livability), and perhaps surprisingly, the correlations were negative. In short, strong countries are often ranked low in international comparisons of educational achievement and weak countries are often ranked high. Baker (2007) concludes that "we can do more than reject the widely held hypotheses that high test scores lead to national success in the future. We can also hypothesize that high test scores are damaging to nations" (p. 103).

How could high scores be damaging? Causal inferences on this point are difficult to make. However, with the rise of accountability systems in the U.S., a growing body of research has focused on how schools respond to standardized testing (Flinders, 2007). This research points to a narrowing of the curriculum and greater emphasis on teaching to the test (Carnoy, 2003; von Zastrow & Janc, 2004). While these strategies do seem to raise test scores, at least temporarily, the research further suggests that such practices significantly undercut the type of substantive learning that could make a genuine difference in a country's global competitiveness (McNeil, 2004).

Whether the rankings are legitimate or not, the frenzy over global competition also raised a reasonable question of what U.S. schools can learn from schools in high ranking nations. Can we adopt practices that will lead to higher achievement scores? This question meets with two immediate challenges. First, high achievement scores may depend largely on deeply engrained cultural values and traditions that do not easily transfer from one country to another. Second, some educational practices in high ranking nations we might judge to be detrimental regardless of their promise to increase test scores. For example, many East Asian countries are famous for their cram schools, correspondence courses, and home tutors—all paid for by parents who hope to increase their children's junior high, high school, and college entrance examination scores. High scores are believed to secure admission into elite schools. These practices are partly the result of national examination systems and the early tracking of students. In Japan, academic competition has also been linked to high rates of juvenile delinquency, bullying, and teen suicide (Yoneyama and Naito, 2003; Zeng & Le Tendre, 1998).

Such research prompts the question of what educational reforms will make the U.S. globally competitive. Will teaching to the test help or hinder our global status? Will early tracking, national examinations, and increased academic competition give us a competitive edge? And at what cost? These are fundamental educational questions because they are value-laden. Moreover, they are the type of questions that will reoccur in the remaining sections of this article.

Global Citizenship

While global competition suggests rivalry among countries, global citizenship suggests cooperation around shared interests such as human rights and educational development. At an individual level, global citizenship implies a breadth of knowledge and sophistication. A gobal citizen is one who is able to fully participate in world affairs. Such an individual would need strong communication skills, knowledge of cultural differences, and the ability to function as what Carola Suárez-Orozco (2004) calls a "cultural ambassador." Even this brief list of desirable traits for global citizenship has direct implications for education. For example, can U.S. schools do a better job of teaching their students about other nations, places, and peoples?

One major challenge of teaching world cultures is simply the breadth and complexity of what we seek to know. The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1929/1967) urged two educational commandments: "Do not teach too many subjects," and "What you teach, teach thoroughly" (p. 2). What follows is a concrete example from the social studies to illustrate Whitehead's point. On June 4, 1989 the demonstrations by pro-democracy students in Tiananmen Square ended when China's leaders ordered the military to seize the square and arrest the protesters. Today this event is described in many U.S. world history textbooks. In one high school text published by Prentice Hall (Ellis & Esler, 2003), the topic of Tiananmen Square is proceeded by three pages covering "China during the Cold War," the death of Mao Zedong, and the economic reforms that followed. The Tiananmen demonstrations are described in less than half a page of text as cited below:

> **Tiananmen Square Massacre** By the late 1980s, some Chinese were demanding greater political freedom as well as economic reform. In Beijing and other cities, students, workers, and others supported a democracy movement like those sweeping Eastern Europe. Deng, however, would not talk about political reform.
>
> In May 1989, tens of thousands of demonstrators occupied Tiananmen Square. They raised banners calling for democracy and brought in a huge plaster stature called the Goddess of Democracy and Freedom. When the demonstrators refused to disperse, the government sent in troops and tanks. Thousands of demonstrators were killed or wounded. Many others were arrested and tortured. Some were put to death.
>
> The crackdown showed that China's communist leaders were determined to maintain control. To them, order was more important than political freedom. During the 1990s, efforts to persuade China to end human rights violations had limited effects.

The total description is 143 words long. On the next page, students find color photographs of the demonstrations. They are asked to imagine themselves at the demonstrations "bringing food and supplies to the students in Tiananmen Square." The assignment goes on to ask readers to imagine witnessing the military occupation of the square. Their "Portfolio Assessment" then reads: "After you return home, you record all you have seen in your diary. In your entry, describe what you saw and how you felt about the demonstration."

American educators might praise several aspects of this curriculum. While clearly describing the event from the perspective of Western democracies, the text largely avoids dogma and it does not assume an explicitly judgmental stance. Teachers might also approve that the activity is designed for both cognitive and emotional engagement. Nevertheless, students would not be able to complete this activity at any meaningful level without going significantly beyond the information and points of view provided in the text alone. The text is embryonic. It introduces a topic but does not provide for the forms of deeper study that would allow students to describe what they "saw and felt." Further study might well be important to teachers who hope to use Tiananmen Square as an example of political suppression, courage, human suffering, the tensions between nationalism and individual rights, and how such issues fit within a culturally diverse world. But again, to seek these larger lessons would require more information, more time for discussion, more primary source materials, and more willingness to engage in controversy than might be found in American secondary schools.

At the same time, such study is not without precedence. Before standards-based accountability hijacked so many U.S. high schools, in-depth study of other nations might have been found in Advance Placement or college-prep social studies classrooms. Such a curriculum would comfortably fit with what Mortimer Adler (1982) called the Paideia Proposal. However, as with the case of emulating other country's educational practices and policies, would-be reformers should proceed with caution. The curriculum in this case is often known for being highly academic and elitist. Thus, how do we keep global citizens from becoming just another privileged and exclusive club? Is global citizenship to be granted merely on the basis of academic achievement? Again, as in the case of global competition, global citizenship has led to fundamental educational questions around what we value. In short, what do we seek to change in our schools, and what do we seek to protect? These questions will surface yet again in examining the topic of global sustainability.

Global Sustainability

Eco-justice scholars such as C. A. Bowers (2006) and Nandana Shaiva (2005) argue that the sustainability of our planet is not simply about recycling, carbon credits, ending government subsidies to Big Oil, and developing renewable forms of energy. As important as these efforts are, global sustainability is also about cultural and historical ways of thinking. For example, sustainability is about questioning assumptions, for example, that our personal worth and happiness depend on the faster and broader consumption of material goods. Sustainability is also about limiting the rapid increase in highly monetized relationships—especially relationships between children and adults. Sustainability is not only about conserving natural resources, but also about promoting the forms of government, language, and education through which we maintain a shared interest in the public good. Teachers could approach the cultural dimensions of sustainability through these and many other topics. Below I am able to suggest only brief outlines of three possible areas of study: 1) language, 2) global development, and 3) technology.

C. A. Bowers (1993, 1995) has long insisted that it is a mistake to regard language as simply a tool used to convey ideas from one person to another. That view of language puts out of focus its power to reproduce culturally specific patterns of thought, which it usually does at a taken for granted level of understanding. These patterns are deeply embedded in a wide range of words that function as iconic, root, and generative metaphors. Such metaphoric understandings include the notion of change as progress, the individual as an autonomous thinker, the natural world as a resource or wilderness, and biological organisms as machines.

The ways of thinking embedded in such words as "change," "individual," "nature," and so forth were developed at a time when the limits of the natural environment and the impact of modern nations on the global environment could not have been recognized. Their meanings have been refined by recent industrial and technological trends, but their basic logic was established earlier in the Enlightenment period by Western thinkers such as Nicolaus Copernicus, Rene Descartes, Francis Bacon, and Isaac Newton. These influential writers developed the view that the world was predictable and therefore open to human intervention. Thus, nature could be "tamed" and "used" to benefit our particular species. I am using the Enlightenment templates for nature as just one example of how language prefigures the ways in which we understand ourselves and the world of which we are a part. The point, however, is that teachers could begin educating for global suitability by examining the history and cultural meanings of words that we use in our everyday speech.

Language related to global development could also be examined from the perspective of its cultural and historical meanings. Many educators would like to believe that we have moved beyond the notion that the world is divided into "advanced" nations and those previously called "underdeveloped." Today we know too many Ladakh stories of stable, traditional and sustainable cultures destroyed or nearly destroyed by Western-style economic development. We also seem to be gaining a better understanding of the problems that accompany Thomas Friedmen's (2005, 2008) "flat world." Nevertheless, teachers and teacher educators could be directly implicated in the problems that threaten traditional, sustainable cultures. For example, American and European schools of education often seek to "export" views of teaching and learning that emphasize individualism at the expense of community.

Schools of education may also be implicated in unsustainable images of development by promoting overly accepting and largely uncritical views of technology. While many of the past problems of global development have been due to the introduction of inappropriate technologies in indigenous communities, those communities may seem distant to American youth. However, technology also shapes the lives of these same young people in direct and immediate ways. Some of these effects would seem to offer important educational opportunities. With access to the internet, for example, today's youth have ready information about our own ecological footprints and about how ecological problems often transcend national boundaries. Still other uses of technology may undermine sustainability. Especially in the absence of critical views, educators may risk sending the message that technology alone will save the planet from our environmental destructiveness. Again with respect to the cultural dimensions of sustainability, one could further ask whether the rise of digital technology has contributed to the sense of entitlement and self-interest that Annette Lareau (2003) found in her study of middle-class American children. On yet another front, one could explore how recent technological developments have strengthened democratic institutions and how technologies have weakened them. Would domestic spying in the war on terror be an issue without the technological ability to monitor large numbers of international phone conversations?

The point is not about being pro-technology or anti-technology. It is about the type of fundamental educational questions that I have previously raised. What cultural meanings embedded in language help or hinder global sustainability? How can we avoid conceptions of global development that threaten entire ways of life? How do we want to use technology, and to what ends? What are the unintended consequences of technological applications?

Conclusions

This article has introduced three broad concepts that link globalization with classroom teaching. Global competition raises the dangers of adopting educational practices that may lift up test scores but undermine the very forms of learning that are most needed in a globalized world. Global citizenship presents the challenge of teaching about the world in ways that are neither superficial nor exclusionary. Global sustainability prompts teachers to examine our language, notions of global development, and uses of technology to seek ways of strengthening the public good. All of these challenges and opportunities underscore that the virtues and vices of globalization are not self-evident. On the contrary, globalization should renew our commitment to the traditions of scholarship that give confidence to our abilities and willingness to grapple with basic educational questions.

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Keynote Address

The Global Teacher Educator: A Peripatetic with Purpose

Elaine Jarchow
Northern Kentucky University

A peripatetic is one who journeys hither and thither. Many of us can claim that title, I am sure, by just describing a domestic day. In the context of our MWERA conference theme, the globalization of the teacher education experience, I mean that a peripatetic is one who journeys hither and thither internationally and, by adding "with purpose," I mean a teacher educator whose international journeys have distinct, education related objectives.

Since my first international journey 43 years ago, I have been privileged to visit 54 countries in some capacity—as a tourist, as a consultant, as an employed permanent resident, and as a conference presenter. Today I would like to share some of my purposeful journeys and then offer you three global paths you might consider—for your students, for your teaching, and for yourself.

When I am asked why I took the international path, I am reminded of Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* (1945). In the play, Amanda, the mother, is not very likable. She explains her husband's long absence to her friends by saying that he worked for the telephone company and fell in love with long distance. Many of my international colleagues share that love of long distance and can't always pinpoint why they have it; they just know they can't resist the allure of far away places.

When I was 14, I responded to an advertisement where I could send in quarters and I would receive one international pen pal per quarter. I could designate the age and gender of my new friend. Of course, I asked for 16 year old males. I must say that the correspondence with the Moroccan stone cutter and the sailor from Marseilles went no where. What I did not know was that my name was in a database and could be sent to others. One day I received a letter from Germany—from Aggy Linkhorst. Her letter contained a photo of a beatnik and the opening line, "I think all American girls are naïve and stupid." She had hoped for a pen pal from England and got me and did not want to waste her German mark. Our correspondence flourished; we both became English teachers; we both married; and we continue to be friends to this day.

It should not surprise you that my first international journey at age 21, armed with my Ohio University teaching degree, was to Germany to spend the summer with Aggy before beginning my high school English teaching career. I thought as young women in our early 20s that we would journey to Rome, Paris, and London. Was I mistaken! Aggy informed me that Americans love to travel to many cities, take a bunch of photos, and say that they know Europe. She told me that we would learn more about the part of Germany that lies within 50 miles of her home. She was so right! I came to know the history of that region well and was able to assist on an archeological dig at a former Roman encampment, harvest vegetables from her garden, and become friends with a number of Germans.

I had my share of tourist opportunities and more visits with Aggy. I earned both my master's and Ph.D. at Kent State University and had numerous opportunities to interact with international students and scholars. My first university position at Iowa State University, however, gave me my first insights into purposeful meanderings. I joined various grant writing teams and learned that, if successful, one could travel to other countries, do meaningful work, and receive funds to bring international participants to one's home campus for a variety of purposes. These grants of which I speak provided me with the opportunities to:

- bring 30 Honduran educators to the U.S.;
- bring 30 Bolivian educators to the U.S.;
- bring 30 Guatemalan educators to the U.S.;
- bring 30 South African educators to the U.S.;
- consult on education matters in numerous countries; and
- place over 100 U.S. student teachers in various countries.

I moved from Iowa State University to New Mexico State University in 1986 and enjoyed a whole new world of living in a tri cultural state (Caucasian, Latino, Native American) just 60 miles from the Mexican border. I developed a faculty exchange agreement with Hamilton Teachers College (now the University of Waikato) in Hamilton, New Zealand, as well as a site for international student teacher exchanges. After celebrating the success of the exchange with returning faculty and students, I decided that I should exchange myself. My family—my husband and then 9 year old daughter—lived for a semester in Hamilton, New Zealand. After my experience, I wrote an article published in *The Phi Delta Kappan* (1992) describing 10 ideas worth stealing from New Zealand. I think you will find these of interest.

1. *Morning tea*. Everything stops for 15 to 30 minutes at 10 a.m. in the primary, intermediate, secondary, and tertiary schools. Teachers, principals, and professors sit in circles, drink tea or coffee, eat biscuits (cookies), and converse.

Period. No one dashes off to make copies or phone calls. Children play and eat snacks. Relaxation and conversation play an important role in school life.

2. *The lie-flat manifold duplicate book*. University supervisors carry orange books when they observe a lesson. They write their comments about the lesson on a sheet of paper, which is backed by carbon copy. Immediately after the lesson, the teacher being observed receives the *original* set of notes during a post-lesson conference. The supervisor retains the carbon copy to help with the writing of narrative reports. This process strengthens the trust between teachers and supervisors because the latter are not seen as hiding information.

3. *School uniforms*. Children in public intermediate and secondary schools and in private primary schools wear uniforms to school. These uniforms lend a sense of seriousness to the enterprise of schooling. Rich and poor children look alike and express strong feelings of school spirit. Adults openly discuss those behaviors that would "disgrace the school uniform."

4. *Collegial planning and grading of college assignments*. Preservice teachers write three to four "serious" assignments about education for each class in which they are enrolled. These assignments are formulated and graded by groups of instructors who carefully outline the criteria for success. For example, one must respond to the statement, "Identify several philosophical ideas that will underpin the facilitation of learning in your classroom," by analyzing a minimum of three philosophical ideas.

Although a normal grade distribution is not the rule, instructors have agreed that A's are reserved for truly *excellent* work, and D's and F's are appropriate descriptions of performance of some would-be teachers. Many papers are read by more than one grader. Sometimes, outside graders (public school teachers) are hired to help with grading.

5. *Apologies, please*. Those who cannot attend meetings always send apologies in writing or by phone. Meetings begin with a reading of these apologies. A meeting is seen as an important event, and the apologies contain the serious reasons why individuals would choose to miss such a vital event in educational planning.

6. *Setting objectives and educating the whole child*. Teachers in New Zealand write sensible objectives in a form such as this: "The purpose of these lessons is to help pupils move toward understanding such-and-such ideas and attaining such-and-such skills." Establishing a level of performance is not seen as an end in itself.

Children in primary grades spend lots of time learning to swim, getting their teeth cleaned, playing flutes, running in cross-country meets, engaging in art work, *and* concentrating on math, reading, writing, and spelling. Teachers and parents work together to plan the school curriculum. A few concerns that are lacking—but scarcely missed—are those dealing with keeping up with Japan or meeting some artificial standards in basic skills or discussing whether time devoted to art, music, and physical education could be better spent.

7. *"Portable" primary architecture*. Most primary schools are composed of a main building and a number of complementary portable buildings. As enrollments shift, so do the buildings—simply and efficiently. Children enjoy the sense of access to the outdoors that portables allow, and teachers can more easily use the school grounds to involve the children in lessons. Nervous, easily intimidated parents need only walk through one door to find their child's teacher.

8. *The* marae *interview*. The Maoris, the indigenous people of New Zealand, make up about 12% of the population. To interview applicants *individually* for admission to teacher education or for a teaching position would be foreign to their culture. Instead, a *marae* interview is offered to all persons who wish to have one. Candidates come to the *marae* (sacred meeting place) with many members of their families who will speak on their behalf. The same questions and criteria that apply to individual interviews are applied to *marae* interviews. Minority candidates for teacher education could find this procedure particularly valuable.

9. *Single-sex schools*. Public secondary students may choose to attend a single-sex school. Most young women believe that a single-sex school is academically best for them. Those who choose coeducational schools believe that the social life is better in a mixed setting. Knowing that a choice is available to all provides for a dynamic and flexible system.

10. *Bungee jumping, jet boating, and black-water rafting*. Thrill seekers in New Zealand can find several exciting diversions. A person can attach a bungee cord to his or her ankles, jump off a 200-foot bridge, and stop just short of plunging headfirst into a river. Daredevils can ride a 12-passenger speedboat down a narrow river canyon at 75 miles an hour. Finally one can sit in an inner tube and drift down underground rivers to exciting jumps over six-foot waterfalls. Perhaps we need to add some risk taking to our own curriculum planning and value sharing and support of new instructional ideas over teaching to the test.

Another New Mexico experience involved the journey (with three of my NMSU colleagues) of a group of teacher educators from several universities to study Japanese culture. The U.S. Japan Foundation funded this experience. The purpose of the study was to infuse global learnings into teacher education, using Japan as a case study. I must say that the three weeks that our group spent in Japan were truly life changing. We experienced two home stays, took classes in flower arranging, tea service, and calligraphy, attended a sumo wrestling match and a baseball game, spent a night at a Buddhist monastery, sloshed around the fish market, and met with some marvelous people. By the way, I still follow sumo wrestling.

I moved from New Mexico to the bright lights of Las Vegas in 1991. Three experiences stand out. We were able to join a project with the United Kingdom and Poland. This European Foundation funded project allowed us to implement a successful discovery learning project in Poland. A Fulbright Hays Group Projects Abroad grant enabled us to take ten University of Nevada Las Vegas faculty to Singapore with the purpose of infusing multicultural education principles into our curriculum using Singapore as a case study. Finally, a 1993 month long consulting opportunity for the U.S. Agency for International Development helped me to develop a plan to improve elementary education in Ghana.

In 1994, I left Las Vegas for the deanship at Texas Tech University. I was fortunate to become involved with the Texas International Education Consortium. TIEC had just finished building a university in Morocco and was asked to build a college in Saudi Arabia. I was asked to do some consulting in Saudi Arabia. This event led to my serving for two years as academic dean of Dar Al Hekma in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and then for four years as Dean of the College of Education at Zayed University in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates.

My six years in the Arab World taught me many things about Arabs, Islam, and myself. I well remember on 9/11 when many of my Arab colleagues came to ask me whether my family was okay, and I remember on the morning when the U.S. bombed Baghdad seeking out my Iraqi colleagues to ask about their families. Similar to my ten ideas worth stealing from New Zealand, I listed ten items worth stealing from the Arab World and some questions for us to answer, and I would like to share these with you.

1. *Memorization*. Asking American students to memorize for the sake of memorizing is out, but in the Arab World memorizing the *Koran* is a highly prized activity where annual competitions include sought after prestigious awards. Because students have a flair for memorizing, they are able to learn the English vocabulary necessary to become strong second language learners. What place does memorization have in today's curriculum?

2. *The Desire to Improve*. Our Zayed University Center for Professional Development of U.A.E. Educators flourished because practicing educators have a strong willingness to improve their pedagogy. They attend late afternoon and evening sessions even though these may require meeting a bus in the dusty desert and riding several hours to the training site. They often use their own money to buy school supplies and to decorate their classrooms. Recent teacher education graduates really do believe that they can change their country's schools for the better. How invested in their practice are our teachers?

3. *Focus on Community*. Robert Putnam's book *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of the American Community* (2000) describes America's declining social capital. It could never have been written about Arab society. Family and tribal ties are very strong. For many the work day stops at 2:30 p.m. to allow for a family gathering over a meal. Students move from class to class and from class to cafeteria in small "families" of friends or relatives. Rarely does a female student come to meet a professor alone; she is usually accompanied by others. Women in particular have strong support communities. How might our curriculum help students to return to a sense of community?

4. *Welcoming the Dignitary*. Arab hospitality is well known, and it manifests itself in schools when visitors arrive. Even the humblest of schools literally rolls out the red carpet, welcomes the special guest with songs, food, and gifts, and stages well rehearsed performances. How do our schools in this era of school violence manifest a welcoming environment?

5. *Student Self Confidence*. Female students happily seem to accept the notion that they will be asked to speak at large assemblies, graduation, and presentations. They often serve as the Mistress of Ceremonies for complex events and never express a fear of public speaking; they enjoy the opportunity to stand before sheikhs and distinguished guests and to sincerely express themselves about various events. What learning outcomes help our students to become self confident?

6. *Can Do Attitude*. No education project is so large that it cannot be conceptualized over the weekend and implemented a short time later. One week before the Zayed University Capstone Festival, where senior students showcase their projects, a five minute professional film was requested as an event-opener. No one even asked if it could be done. One weekend before a meeting with an Emirati Crown Prince, a concept paper on the education of talented and gifted youth was requested and, of course, completed. Perhaps this can-do attitude in the U.A.E. is pervasive because the country became a modern, cosmopolitan center in just 30 years. Does our curriculum inspire students to plan for far reaching goals?

7. *Put Your Best Foot Forward*. When one visits a school, the classes often appear to be rehearsed. The importance of showcasing the best, of being on one's best behavior is truly important. Virtually all developing-country expatriate workers in the Arab World can't wait to provide good service. Perhaps this is because their families at home rely on their income. After 9/11 a group of university drivers, most of whom came from India, were asked if they were fearful of driving Americans. "We will defend them with our lives, if necessary," they replied. Will service learning play a role in transforming our schools?

8. *Acceptable Behavior*. There are Arab standards of culturally acceptable behavior (e.g. dress, separation of the sexes) which may not appeal to Westerners, but these standards exist and guide child-rearing practices. For example, in the U.A.E., it's rude to tell someone to turn off his cell phone, and it is acceptable to help someone write a paper. If a parent needs a child to provide comfort at home, the child must sometimes forego opportunities, such as study abroad. What place do shared values have in our curriculum?

9. *The Majilis*. Sheikhs greet people in a meeting room called a majilis and they can be approached by those with less status. Everyone has a voice and this sense of equality prevails in the mosque where rich and poor stand side by side in prayer. Are there safe places in our classrooms where students can come at any point to talk to a peer or a teacher?

10. *It's Just Our Way!* In the Arab World (as is true in many places) there are, of course, daily frustrations for Westerners. When we share our cultural frustrations (e.g. a perceived lack of punctuality) with our Arab colleagues, the simple explanation, "It's just our way" often follows. Does our curriculum help our students to develop a global perspective?

Since coming to Northern Kentucky University from the United Arab Emirates, I've been able to begin another international student project and send over 30 student teachers overseas. I've received a U.S. Department of State Middle East Initiative Partnership to teach English through service learning in the U.A.E. and Oman. Fortunately, I've been able to send many of our faculty on international assignments.

My international experiences have been rewarding, exciting, and challenging, and I would wish the same for you as you extend your global education expertise. I mentioned that I would suggest three paths for you—for your students, for your teaching, and for yourself. For your students, I would recommend that you advocate for an international student teaching program on your campus and that you urge students to take advantage of full or half semester opportunities. Students always return saying this was the best experience of their lives. You should also encourage students to undertake short and long term education abroad experiences. Spring break Mexico service learning experiences, for example, offer your students an opportunity to adopt a rural school, to do some teaching, and to add resources to local libraries. You could also use the internet to link your students to overseas classrooms.

In your teaching, be sure to invite international students to your classrooms to share insights on education in their countries. You could be committed to infusing global competencies into your course. Here are some examples of such competencies:

1. *Knowledge*.

- Knowledge of world geography, conditions, issues, and events.
- Awareness of the complexity and inter-dependency of world issues and events.
- Understanding of historical forces that have shaped the current world system.
- Knowledge of one's own culture and history.
- Knowledge of effective communication, including knowledge of a foreign language, intercultural communication concepts, and international professional etiquette.
- Understanding of the diversity of values, beliefs, ideas, and world views.

2. *Attitudes (or Affective Characteristics)*.

- Openness to learning and a positive orientation to new opportunities, ideas, and ways of thinking.
- Acknowledgement of ambiguity and unfamiliarity.
- Sensitivity and respect for personal and cultural differences.
- Empathy or the ability to see multiple perspectives.
- Self-awareness and self-esteem about one's own identity and culture.

3. *Skills*.

- Technical skills to enhance students' ability to learn about the world (for example, research skills).
- Critical and comparative thinking skills, including the ability to think creatively and integrate knowledge, rather than accepting knowledge in a noncritical way.
- Intercultural communication skills to interact with people from other cultures.
- Coping and resiliency skills in unfamiliar and challenging situations (Green, M. F. & Olsen, C., 2003).

As you ask students to do literature surveys and to read articles and to undertake research projects, be sure to include cross national studies. You might also consider doing cross national studies as you meet international colleagues.

For yourself, I would recommend that you write grants which will allow you and your colleagues to undertake projects in other countries and to invite international scholars and students to your campus. You could volunteer to teach an education abroad course. In addition to the full semester course, you could teach during an intersession, a break, or summer. For example, you could take students to London and Dublin to explore schools in the U.K. You could also present at international conferences.

I am currently serving as Interim Dean of International Education as our university seeks a permanent dean to head the unit. I plan to step down from deaning this June, but not to stop my peripatetic life. This January, I will direct a U.S. Department of State International Research and Exchanges Board grant. Sixteen outstanding secondary teachers from developing countries will come to NKU for the entire semester to develop expertise in their subject areas, enhance their teaching skills and increase their knowledge about the Unites States. Their academic program will provide coursework and intensive training in teaching methodologies, curriculum writing, teaching strategies for their home environment, educational leadership, as well as the use of computers for Internet and word processing as tools for teaching.

I will spend part of February in Oman, finishing the Middle East Partnership Initiative by helping our Omani colleagues to write grants and publish articles. I have applied to Semester at Sea for fall 2009 for my sabbatical and hope to serve as a faculty member on one of the round the world voyages. When I return from my sabbatical, I will teach the freshman seminar as a global perspectives course.

Beyond that, who knows? In 1869 in *Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain wrote, "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one's little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."

As I conclude these musings, I am reminded of the play *Sunset Boulevard* with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber (1996). In one of his songs, the great director Cecil B. DeMille and the aging movie star Norma Desmond sing a song about the movies and their role in the movies. The line, "We gave the world new ways to dream," is, of course, about the movies. I think we can borrow it this afternoon, and say that peripatetic purposeful global teacher educators can give international colleagues, domestic students, and themselves new ways to dream.

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2008 MWERA Presidential Address

A Systematic Approach to Transforming the Art *of Teaching Into the* Science *of Teaching: Developing a D-DIDM Mindset*

Craig A. Mertler
Bowling Green State University

Abstract

Data-driven instructional decision making *(or D-DIDM) is a "process by which educators examine [data] in order to identify student strengths and deficiencies" (Mertler, 2007). My view of the process of D-DIDM merges three critical educational practices: classroom-based (or site-based) action research, assessment of student learning, and reflective practice. Each of these practices are discussed individually, followed by an examination of the union of the three into a comprehensive approach to D-DIDM. The roles and responsibilities of researchers and practitioners in this process is also integrated throughout the discussion. My address is intended to motivate educators at all levels to seriously and conscientiously consider integrating D-DIDM into their classroom practice.*

mind·set or **mind-set** (mndst) *n*

- A fixed mental attitude or disposition that predetermines a person's responses to and interpretations of situations.
- An inclination or a habit.

Introduction

In this address, I plan to discuss some things that I am very passionate about; some things I think are very important for professional educators—and education, in general—and hopefully give you some food for thought as you go forward in practicing in your specific chosen field. Specifically what I want to do initially is to "dissect" the notion of data-driven instructional decision making by first discussing "instructional decision making," then talking about the data-driven aspect. I'm also going to incorporate a discussion of merging these concepts as a single broad educational process and argue for the inclusion of three critical components in that process. I think I'm correct in assuming that we are all familiar with these critical components, but that we've not really looked at these concepts as integral parts of a single process. This is one of the key aspects that I hope you take away from my talk this morning. Finally, I am going to try to integrate discussions of the roles and responsibilities of both researchers and practitioners in these educational processes.

Instructional Decision Making: The *Art* of Teaching

Let's begin by taking a look at ***instructional decision making***. My working definition for this term is the notion that all educators are constantly making decisions about educational programs, curriculum, instructional styles, and instructional materials. You name it…we make decisions about it. Hopefully, the reason that we are making those decisions has its basis in our continuing effort to maximize student learning. Let's face it…that's why we're in this business. In the past—and, probably, the not so distant past—a lot of instructional decision making was based on "gut instinct." It was based on that feeling or that sense that, as educators, we know what works with students; we know what doesn't work with students. Let me put that in a more specific context. We know what works with *our* students and we know what doesn't work with *our* students. The fact that we are talking about the students that we teach or of whom we are in charge is really a key feature of what I want to focus on. The problem with relying on gut instinct as the basis for instructional decisions is that it is not a very systematic process. Teachers, or educators in general, often try different instructional approaches. Sometimes they work, but most of the time they do not. Therefore, what we end up with is a sort of "trial-and-error" process that often results in a good deal of frustration. I am sure that you can recall examples from your own teaching. We have sketched ideas out on paper and they looked great. However, when we ultimately try them with our students, our ideas have failed miserably. Please note that I said that our "ideas failed," not that we failed. The reason that I say that is because we have to remember that we still learned something through our trial-and-error process. We have learned what *not* to do, what did *not* work. It is crucial to remember that this is still beneficial to the teaching and learning process.

Simply put, what I am referring to with this practice of "gut instinct decision making" is the *art* of teaching. Now,

(*Presidential Address* continued on page 17.)

Mid-Western Educational Research Association

32nd Annual Meeting
Call For Proposals
Proposal Deadline: *May 1, 2009*

October 14-17, 2009
Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri

Gordon Brooks, Program Chair
mwera@ohio.edu

The 2009 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (MWERA) will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, with an exciting program of invited speakers, workshops, and peer-reviewed papers presented in a variety of session formats. The 2009 program will center upon this year's theme: ***The Synthesis of Educational Research and Practice***, and will feature dynamic speakers of interest to both researchers and practitioners. Teachers, administrators, and other school personnel are especially invited to come and share their school-based research and experiences at the 2009 MWERA conference.

We will be meeting at the Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel in St. Louis. The hotel offers charming guest rooms, excellent meeting facilities, wireless Internet access, airport transportation, and a state of the art fitness center. Nestled in the popular Westport Plaza, the Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel is located among an international assortment of more than twenty fine restaurants, lively night spots, and unique specialty shops. Downtown St. Louis is only minutes away and is home to theaters, concert halls, great restaurants, shopping, tourist attractions, and fun nightlife!

If you are looking for a place to sit down and chat with colleagues from schools and universities about your ideas and perspectives, the Mid-Western Educational Research Association provides that opportunity with its supportive and collaborative environment. Both new and veteran educational researchers, practitioners, and students from across North America return annually to MWERA to renew acquaintances, make new contacts, and engage in exciting conversation in a collegial atmosphere.

Come and be a part of MWERA in 2009!

General Information

The 2009 MWERA Annual Meeting will be held **Wednesday, October 14 through Saturday, October 17** at the Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel in St. Louis. This year's theme is ***The Synthesis of Educational Research and Practice***, which addresses the convergence of research and practice that has resulted in new paradigms for each. These new paradigms can be seen in action research, assessment, and data-driven decision making that have become integral parts of informed practice rather than peripheral activities; in universities that no longer just serve their communities, but rather have become partners with their communities; in the mixed methods used in research and evaluation; and in the adaptation of knowledge and theory from other fields.

Attendance at the Annual Meeting

The 2009 Conference Program will consist primarily of presentations selected through a blind peer-review process. In addition, there will be invited speakers and symposia; panel discussions; special sessions for graduate students, new faculty, and new members; as well as a luncheon and other social events open to all attendees.

All sessions listed in the Conference Program will be open to anyone who has registered for the Annual Meeting; however, enrollment may be limited for some workshop sessions and business meetings are intended for members. Tickets for the Friday luncheon and speaker are available to all pre-registrants *but ticket availability is not guaranteed for late or on-site registrants*.

Membership and Conference Registration materials for the October 2009 Annual Meeting will be published in the Summer 2009 *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, are available on the MWERA website, and can be obtained by contacting the Program Chair.

Ways to Participate

Any education professional may **submit a proposal** for the MWERA 2009 Annual Meeting, whether or not that person is currently a member of MWERA. However, before the Annual Meeting, ***all presenters MUST be members in good standing*** with MWERA (that is, non-members must join MWERA as soon as they are notified that their proposal was accepted). To promote broader participation in the program, no one person should appear as a presenter on more than three proposals.

Division Chairs are also seeking MWERA members to serve as **proposal reviewers**, **Session Chairs**, and **Session Discussants**. Please contact a Division Chair or the Program Chair if you are willing to serve. Finally, you can participate simply by **attending the conference** and **encouraging** colleagues and students to participate in any way (share this *Call for Proposals* with others). All forms of participation are necessary to ensure a successful Annual Meeting!

Questions about proposals, the electronic submission process, or the meeting in general should be directed to the Program Chair:

Gordon P. Brooks
MWERA—2009 Program Chair
College of Education, Ohio University
Athens, OH 45701
Phone: 740-593-0880
Fax: 740-593-0477
Email: ***mwera@ohio.edu***

Guidelines for Submitting a Proposal

While it is desirable for proposals to address the theme of the Annual Meeting, it is not required. Proposals **MUST be submitted electronically** over the Internet, using the submission process available through the Meeting website (proposals may **NOT** be mailed or emailed to the Program Chair or to Division Chairs). Specific instructions for submission can be found at the MWERA website:

http://www.mwera.org

Deadline for Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted no later than **midnight EST on May 1, 2009**. Submissions will then be forwarded to Division Chairs, who will coordinate a number of volunteers in a system of blind review of proposals (i.e., proposals should be submitted without author identification).

Criteria for Proposal Review

Appropriate criteria, depending on the format and type of scholarly work being presented, have been developed and are used for the blind review process. These criteria include: (a) topic (originality, choice of problem, importance); (b) relevance of the topic to the Division and to MWERA membership; (c) contribution to research and education; (d) framework (theoretical/conceptual/practical rationale, literature review, grounding); (e) analyses and interpretations (significance, implications, relationship of conclusions to findings, generalizability, or usefulness); and (f) overall written proposal quality (clarity of writing, logic, and organization).

Papers presented at MWERA are expected to present **original scholarship** conducted by the author(s) that has not previously been presented at any other meeting or published in any journal. Further, it is a violation of MWERA policy to promote commercially available products or services (except as exhibits) that go beyond the limits of appropriate scholarly or scientific communication. Individuals who wish to display educationally-related products or services should contact the Program Chair.

Expectations of Presenters

All persons, including graduate students, presenting at the 2009 Annual Meeting are expected to be **members in good standing** and ***to register for the full meeting***.

Presenters whose papers have been accepted to a session with a Session Chair and/or Session Discussant are ***expected to submit*** a completed version of their conference paper to both the Session Chair and Session Discussant ***no later than September 13, 2009***. Papers not made available to the Session Chair and Session Discussant may be dropped from the program. Presenters must also provide complete copies of their papers to attendees at their sessions (some form of handout is expected in most session formats).

LCD projectors and screens will be provided by MWERA in presentation rooms. Presenters needing additional computer or audio-visual equipment must make their own arrangements for such equipment (rental from the hotel may be possible at the presenter's own expense).

MWERA reserves the right to reproduce and distribute summaries and abstracts of all accepted proposals, including making such works available in a printed Program Abstract, through the MWERA website, and in press releases promoting the Annual Meeting and the organization. *As a condition of acceptance, all authors of papers accepted to the 2009 Annual Meeting explicitly grant MWERA the right to reproduce their work's summary and/or abstract in these ways*. Such limited distribution does not preclude any subsequent publication of the work by the author(s).

Authors of accepted proposals assume the ethical and professional responsibility to appear at the Annual Meeting and to participate in their presentation or assigned session. When circumstances preclude the author(s) from doing so, it is the responsibility of the author(s) to arrange a suitable substitute and to notify the Program Chair in advance, or as soon as possible.

Content Required for Proposals

Abstract

The abstract should be 100-150 words. The abstracts of accepted papers will be published in the *MWERA 2009 Annual Meeting Abstracts* book, and may be available on the MWERA website. Use clear, precise language, which can be understood by readers outside your discipline.

Summary

Summaries for **Paper** and **Poster** proposals should explicitly address as many of the following as appropriate, preferably in this order: (a) objectives, goals, or purposes; (b) perspectives and/or theoretical framework; (c) methods and/or techniques (data source, instruments, procedures); (d) results and conclusions; and (e) educational and/or scientific importance of the work.

Summaries for **Symposium, Workshop, Alternative Session, and Best Practices Forum** proposals should explicitly address as many of the following as appropriate, preferably in this order: (a) descriptive title; (b) objectives, goals, and purposes; (c) importance of the topic, issue, or problem; (d) explanation of the basic format or structure of the session, with a brief rationale for the format; (e) listing of the presenter(s), by number not name for blind review (e.g., "Presenter 1"), with an explanation of each person's relevant background and role in the session; and (f) anticipated audience and kind of audience involvement. Limited program space may be available for these types of sessions.

Important Dates

Proposal Submission Deadline	**May 1, 2009**
Notification of Acceptance	July 20, 2009
Hotel Reservations	September 13, 2009
Join MWERA	September 13, 2009
Annual Meeting Registration	September 13, 2009
Papers to Session Chairs/Discussants	September 13, 2009
MWERA 2009 Annual Meeting	October 14-17, 2009

Session Descriptors for Proposals

Please be certain to use the approved MWERA descriptors in completing your proposal. These descriptors are located on the "Annual Meeting Information" tab of the MWERA website (*http://www.mwera.org/information.html*) and as part of the submission process.

Session Format Descriptions

Paper Presentation

Paper sessions are intended to allow presenters the opportunity to make short, relatively formal presentations in which they summarize their papers to an audience. Three to five individual papers dealing with related topics are grouped into a single session running 1 hour 20 minutes. Each paper presentation is allowed approximately 15 minutes (depending on the number of presentations in a given session) to present the highlights of the paper. A Session Discussant is also allowed approximately 10-15 minutes, following all papers, for comments, synthesis, and/or constructive feedback. A Session Chair moderates the entire session. Presenters are expected to provide complete copies of their papers to all interested audience members.

Poster

Poster sessions are intended to provide opportunities for interested individuals to participate in a dialogue with both the presenter(s) and other interested individuals. Presenters are provided an area in which to display a small, table-top Poster, ancillary handouts, or other table-top A/V materials. Interested individuals are free to move into and out of these poster presentations as they wish. Presenters are expected to make available complete copies of the paper on which the poster was focused.

Symposium

A symposium is intended to provide an opportunity for examination of specific problems or topics from a variety of perspectives. Symposium organizers are expected to identify the topic or issue, identify and ensure the participation of individual speakers who will participate in the session, prepare any necessary materials for the symposium, and facilitate the session. It is suggested, though not required, that the speakers or symposium organizer will provide interested individuals with one (or more) papers relevant to, reflective of, or drawn from the symposium.

Workshop

Workshops are intended to provide an extended period of time during which the workshop leader helps participants develop or improve their ability to perform some process (e.g., how to provide clinical supervision, using the latest features of the Internet, or conduct an advanced statistical analysis). Organizers may request from 1½ to 3 hours, and are responsible for providing all necessary materials for participants. Most workshops are scheduled for Wednesday afternoon, although others may be scheduled throughout the conference.

Alternative Session

The form, topics, and format of alternative sessions are limited only by the imagination and creativity of the organizer. These options are intended to afford the most effective method or approach to disseminating scholarly work of a variety of types. Proposals for alternative sessions must include a brief rationale for the alternative being proposed and will be evaluated on their appropriateness to the topic and audience, their ability to meet the limitations of time, space, and expense for MWERA, and the basic quality or value of the topic. The organizer of alternative sessions is responsible for all major participants or speakers, developing and providing any necessary materials, and chairing the session.

Best Practices Forum

The "Best Practices" sessions provide opportunities for individuals or groups to present "best" or "promising" practices impacting both K-12 and higher education. These sessions highlight unique and innovative programs that have demonstrated promise for improving and enhancing educational practice. Presenters will be grouped by similar topics to facilitate discussion among the groups and audience. Presenters are expected to make available complete copies of the paper on which the "Best Practices" session focused.

Division Chair Contact Information

A - Administration, Organization, & Leadership

This division is concerned with research, theory, development, and the improvement of practice in the organization and administration of education. *Division Chair:* **Judy Zimmerman**, Bowling Green State University, 511 Education Building, Bowling Green, OH 43403, ***judithz@bgsu.edu***

B - Curriculum Studies

This division is concerned with curriculum and instructional practice, theory, and research. *Division Chair:* **Tasha Almond-Reiser**, University of South Dakota, 414 E. Clark Street, Delzell 210, Vermillion, SD 57069, ***Tasha.Reiser@usd.edu***

C - Learning & Instruction

This division is concerned with theory and research on human abilities, learning styles, individual differences, problem solving, and other cognitive factors. *Division Chair:* **Ellen Sigler**, Indiana University Kokomo, 2300 South Washington, Kokomo, IN 46904-9003, ***elsigler@iuk.edu***

D - Measurement & Research Methodology

This division is concerned with measurement, statistical methods, as well as both quantitative and qualitative research methods, as applied to educational research. *Division Chair:* **Mark Earley**, Bowling Green State University, 554 Education Building, Bowling Green, OH 43403-0246, ***earleym@bgsu.edu***

E - Counseling & Human Development

This division is concerned with the understanding of human development, special education, and the application and improvement of counseling theories, techniques, and training strategies. *Division Chair:* **Angeline Stuckey**, Northern Illinois University, Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations, 2465 Alpha Court West, DeKalb, IL 60115, ***astuckey@niu.edu***

F - History & Historiography

This division is concerned with the findings and methodologies of historical research in education. *Division Chair:* **Nathan Myers**, Ashland University, 401 College Ave, 228 Schar Ed. Bldg, Ashland, OH 44805, ***nmyers@ashland.edu***

G - Social Context of Education

This division is concerned with theory, practice, and research on social, moral, affective, and motivational characteristics and development, especially multicultural perspectives. *Division Chair:* **James McCluskey**, Head of Radio & Television, Wilberforce University, Wilberforce, OH, ***jmccluskey@wilberforce.edu***

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This division is concerned with research and evaluation to improve school practice, including program planning and implementation. *Division Chair:* **Bridget Stuckey-Danner**, Olive Harvey College, Dept. of Natural Sciences (Biology), 10001 S. Woodlawn, Chicago, IL 60628, ***bstuckey@ccc.edu***

I - Education in the Professions

This division is concerned with educational practice, research, and evaluation in the professions (e.g., medicine, nursing, public health, business, law, and engineering). *Division Chair:* **Laura Dreuth Zeman**, Southern Illinois University, School of Social Work, Mail Code 4329, Carbondale, IL 62901, ***dreuth@siu.edu***

J - Postsecondary Education

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K - Teaching & Teacher Education

This division is concerned with theory, practice, and research related to teaching at all levels and in-service and pre-service teacher education, including field experience supervision and mentoring. *Division Chair:* **Brandelyn Tosolt**, Northern Kentucky University, 42 Gregory Lane, Fort Thomas, KY, 41075, ***tosoltb1@nku.edu***

L – Educational Policy & Politics

This division is concerned with educational policy as well as political, legal, and fiscal matters related to education. *Division Chair:* **Jeff Abbott**, Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne, 2101 E. Coliseum Blvd, Neff Hall 250K, Fort Wayne, IN, ***abbottj@ipfw.edu***

(*Presidential Address* continued from page 12.)

I firmly believe that teaching, at any and all levels, is an art form. There are some skills that just cannot be taught; there are some skills that cannot be learned. I am sure that if you think back, you can recall a teacher that you have had so much respect for because that teacher just "got" you, helped you, reached you. When you walked into that teachers' classroom or out of that classroom on a given day, you were inspired. You were taught something that you did not know before and that was a great feeling, wasn't it? Now, try to recall a teacher who might be located at the opposite end of that spectrum. All of us have had teachers who we knew just did not get it. They were not that "artist" in their respective classrooms. As students, we could sense that. But remember *how* we are sensing that. It is sort of that gut feeling; we just know it when we see it.

Now, rest assured, I do not ever mean to take anything away from teachers who possess that art of teaching because it is a very important and integral part of the educational process. In contrast, what I want to do is to take "teaching as an art form" a little bit further than that and suggest some things that hopefully build and extend this notion of good classroom teaching. When it comes to the art of teaching, I believe that both researchers and practitioners have responsibilities. I believe that researchers have responsibilities for suggesting alternatives for educators to examine and consider trying as part of their trial-and-error process. The reason that I think that this is an important responsibility for researchers is because oftentimes, as researchers, we know were to find these resources; sometimes practicing educators may not know all of the resource capability and availability that we might. I think as researchers, we have a responsibility to work with educators and to suggest various ideas and alternatives, hopefully based on existing research. Of course, whenever we do this and suggest that educators use these alternatives in their particular settings, we immediately have issues of generalizability, along with a host of other potential implementation problems. Simply because an idea worked in the setting in which we read about it obviously does not mean that it is going to work in our setting. Unfortunately, this is not a perfect blending of the responsibilities of researchers and the task at hand (i.e., helping educators to be more effective).

I think that practitioners also have similar responsibilities, in that they need to consider research-based alternatives, and to be willing to try them in their settings. Eventually, educators still must engage in the trial-and-error process, and this continues to be a frustrating part of the process. However, I think that both researchers and practitioners have to be willing to examine resources that they may not have examined in the past. For example, if there is a great Web site that you go to for ideas, that is great, but you do not want to limit yourself to just that one Web site. You want to expand your options and look at other resources. I think that both researchers and practitioners have a responsibility to do these things and to do them *collaboratively* (I will revisit this notion of collaboration later…).

Data-Driven: The *Science* of Teaching

Let's shift to the other component of "data-driven instructional decision making" (i.e., the data driven part). As I define it, ***data-driven*** is the notion that questions or problems require information in order to be answered appropriately and to the best of our abilities, and that the decisions that result from those questions and actions are based on evidence. In other words, they are based on information that we gather so that they are not just our gut instincts or reactions. There is more to it than just gut instinct. Historically, when you see the term "data-driven" in most of its contexts, it has a very, very narrow definition. That definition is limited to data in the form of standardized testing results. Why has there been such a narrow view? I believe that is because we tend to equate "data" with numbers, and test scores are numbers and therefore that's data-driven. I believe that this is a very, very limited perspective. Part of the reason that I view this as a very limited perspective has a lot to do with the types of things that all of us have likely experienced when it comes to standardized testing, as a student taking a test, a teacher trying to prepare students to take a test, an administrator trying to motivate our teachers to prepare students to take tests, parents who have to deal with the results of the tests, etc. It just sort of makes you want to pull your hair out on a regular basis!

I personally do not hold this narrow view of data-driven evidence. My approach to the notion of data-driven can be summarized in the following quote:

> *I honestly don't know anyone who loves standardized testing! But the standardized testing movement is not going away anytime soon. An examination of its impact on this country's educational system over the past 40 years will confirm that. Therefore I approach it from this perspective…and I strongly suggest that all professional educators adopt a similar attitude. Anytime we are given the responsibility of making decisions about children, we need as much information as possible in order for those decisions to be as accurate as possible. We ask students questions; we ask them to read to us; we require them to write for us; we test them over units of instruction; we observe them; we encourage them to be creative; we engage them in performance based tasks; etc. The results from standardized tests are just another source of information—about student learning, about our teaching, and about our curriculum. Please use them as such—add them to your long list of various sorts of information about student learning. They can only help improve the accuracy of the decisions that we make about our students, as well as our own instruction.* (Mertler, 2007)

Therefore, I do not have the limited view that the only things that can guide data-driven decisions are test scores. In fact, the way that I view all of this is that nothing should limit you in terms of the kinds of data that you collect in order to guide data-driven decisions, provided they are sound data. They can be based on a wide variety of sources of information about students. They can certainly be based on teacher-developed classroom tests, performance-based assessments, and informal classroom assessments techniques or tasks. Consider one of several informal classroom assessment techniques, called a "one-minute paper." A minute or two before students leave the classroom, the teacher says "Take out a note card and complete this sentence: One thing I learned today that I didn't know coming in is ___________," or "The one thing that I'm still confused about is ___________." If you think about it for a moment, a technique such as this provides a very efficient means of collecting some highly valuable information. If a teacher did not take that little bit of effort to collect this information at the end of a class period, there are potentially lots of things that he or she walked out of class *not* knowing about the students and vice versa. Other sources of meaningful student information include student journals, student reflections, interviews with students, and surveys of students (whether they be content-based surveys, attitudinal surveys, or affective surveys). All of these sources provide potential information about students and their learning that can be very beneficial. What I am really encouraging you to do is to develop an assessment system that includes *both* formative and summative assessments. You should not limit yourself in terms of the kinds of things that you can incorporate in this overall broad system of data-driven evidence.

Earlier, I talked about "instructional decision making" comprising the gut reaction aspect in the art of teaching. To me, the "data-driven" component is the *science* of teaching. It provides a more scientific and systematic approach to this decision making process. I do not think that those two things—the *art* of teaching and the *science* of teaching—are mutually exclusive. I hope that, as educators, we would do both of these. First, I would never want to take anything away from the teacher who is a true artist in his or her classroom, because that is a rare entity. I would never encourage somebody *not* to do those things. However, there are a lot of other things that we can also incorporate into that process, in order to improve that process. I believe that both researchers and practitioners have a great deal of responsibility here as well. We need to promote the notion of the data-driven science of teaching from the researcher perspective.

If we extend the idea of considering classroom alternatives and options and do so from a data-driven (i.e., the science of teaching) perspective, what I am really referring to is focusing on a more systematic approach to weighing alternatives and options. Employing a systematic approach implies that we utilize the scientific method. This means that we're going to generate ideas, develop hypotheses, design a scientific investigation, collect data, analyze those data, draw conclusions, and then start that cycle all over again by developing new hypotheses. (One of the other things that I will revisit later is the whole notion of all of these things being cyclical—this is not a "one time thing and then we stop" type of approach.) If we examine this from the practitioner perspective again, we will consider alternatives and options, but will do so in a more systematic fashion. This improved trial-and-error process is shown in Figure 1. It is still a "trial-and-error" process, but the "trial" piece becomes a lot more systematic and incorporates a good deal of professional reflection.

During the process of reflection, several questions should be addressed:

- How well did the idea work?
- Next time I do this, how am I going to do it differently?
- What do I need to do to extend what I have already tried?
- If my idea did not work, what am I going to do differently?

Contrary to the figure, this is not an "end-of-the-road" kind of process (note the arrow at the bottom). Based on their relative effectiveness, ideas should be revised and the revisions implemented again. It is important to recognize that sometimes the time frame from the first cycle to the next cycle maybe a year apart, especially if you are teaching in a K-12 setting. A benefit of finding yourself in this situation is that you have a year to reflect and generate ideas for the revised implementation during the subsequent cycle. It should be fairly obvious that this is a much more systematic process than just finding ideas on the Internet, throwing them together, and seeing how they fly. Therefore, the proverbial bottom line for me is that teaching, and education in general,

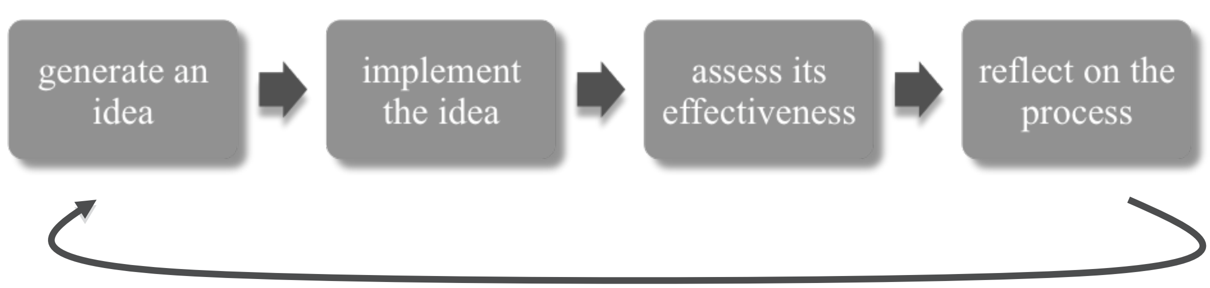

Figure 1. A more "systematic" process of trial-and-error.

is beginning to move away from *just* being an art form to being something that is much more scientific. The art of teaching has become the science of teaching (again, not at the exclusion of the art of teaching). I think that this requires a shift in mindset and I would really encourage all of us to consider maintaining the art of teaching while adding to it the science of teaching.

Data-Driven Instructional Decision Making: D-DIDM

So, let us now put these first two ideas together to form ***data-driven instructional decision making***, or ***D-DIDM***. I define D-DIDM as a process by which educators examine student data of any type in order to identify students' strengths and deficiencies. This should be done within the cyclical processes that we just talked about. The ultimate goal of D-DIDM as a process is to reflect on and critically—and by that, I mean scientifically and systematically— examine curriculum, instructional practices, or virtually anything relative to and that might impact student learning. Now, I recognize the fact that, on the surface, this does not appear to be anything new. Teachers have been engaging in these kinds of professional activities since the beginning of formalized education in this country. However, I will argue that it has not been a *systematic* and *scientific* kind of professional undertaking. I think it has been much more of a trial-and-error process, as we have discussed earlier. I realize that sometimes trial-and-error can be very effective. But, I am inclined to believe that, for most of us who have ever engaged in trial-and-error as a process, this proves more frustrating than rewarding. Presented in Figure 2 is a visual representation of the process that I developed as a means of engaging in this process of data-driven instructional decision making (Mertler, 2007).

This process begins with the identification of a content area, concepts, skills, or behaviors where a majority of students do not seem to perform well, based on test data, classroom assessment scores, or perhaps informal assessments. Once identified, these concepts, skills, or behaviors should be rank ordered with respect to the most critical or important ones; number one on the list should be the one that needs the most attention. I then suggest identifying one or two of

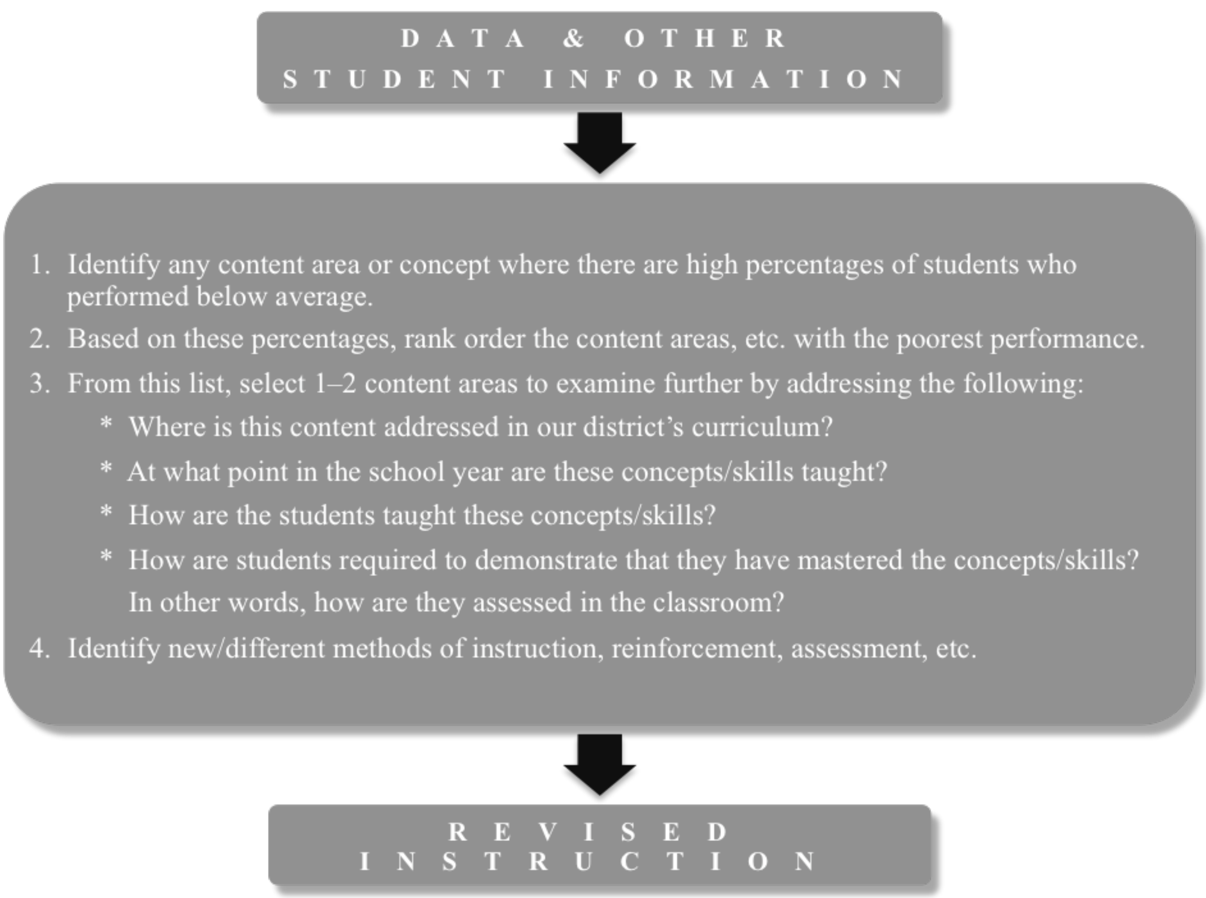

Figure 2. A procedure for guiding educators through a data-driven instructional decision making process (Mertler, 2007).

those (and they do not have to be the ones at the top of the list) that that then become the basis for engaging in a formalized systematic process in order to critically examine how or what might be revised in terms of instruction, reinforcement, etc. Once these have been identified, there are four critical questions to be addressed:

- Where are these contents or skills addressed in the curriculum?
- At what point in the school year are these concepts or skills taught?
- How are students taught those skills and concepts?
- How are students required to demonstrate that they have mastered those skills or that content? In other words, how are they assessed? How do we determine that they have mastered (or have not mastered) the content?

In my estimation, this part of the process requires a great deal of professional reflection. This is not something that you sit down and do over a lunch break one day. It takes some time to process answers to these questions, to critically reflect on them, and to develop a plan for revising the instruction. How are you going to change your practice in order to improve student performance? Will you teach the content differently? Will you sequence it differently? Do you want to assess students differently? Please note that there is still an element of trial-and-error embedded in this process, but I hope that it is apparent that if you follow these four steps above, you now have a process that is much more systematic than just trying things haphazardly.

D-DIDM and the Merging of Three Critical Educational Practices: Action Research, Assessment of Student Learning, and Reflective Practice

With what I consider to be this scientific approach that data-driven instructional decision making uses, I believe that we are essentially merging three critical educational practices that I value very highly and that I am very passionate about. These three educational practices that I envision being merged together into the overall process of D-DIDM are:

- *Classroom-based (or site-based) action research*,
- *Assessment of student learning*, and
- *Reflective practice*.

I want to discuss each of these separately, while keeping in the front of our minds the process of D-DIDM. Let me begin with action research. Even if you are not familiar with the process of engaging in classroom-based action research, I think that it will be easy to see how it "fits" in with D-DIDM. I define ***action research*** as systematic inquiry conducted by educators with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process or in the particular setting (Mertler, 2009). First of all, realize that this is NOT research about someone else's students; it is NOT research in or about someone else's school or district; it is NOT research about someone else's course. Action research is research about *your* students, *your* courses, and *your* curriculum. It obviously has a different purpose than methods and techniques that you learned about in an introductory educational research methods course. For the most part, it is very different from the kinds of research that a lot of us in academia conduct and publish. That is not to say that you cannot publish action research, but in most cases, we are studying educational systems that are not our own. They are not our own students; they are school districts in which we do not work. I am not saying that we do not have an interest in those; we certainly do. However, I do not think that we have the same kind or level of (vested) interest as somebody who is studying his/her own practices directly. Therefore, the purpose of action research is to gather information about how that instruction is delivered, how students learn, all of the components of the teaching and learning process, but in our own settings. One of the characteristics that makes it unique—and, I think, makes it highly valuable for every professional educator—is that it is research done by educators for themselves and not for other, external reasons or purposes (Mertler, 2009). Those of us in academia publish and conduct research on topics that we are certainly interested in, but we also have other driving forces that "encourage" us to publish—promotion and tenure, to name one. Let me reiterate: I am not saying that the result of action research studies cannot be published and disseminated—I would strongly urge that you do that. But, the real benefit of action research—and, therefore, of data-driven instructional decision making—is that the results are going to benefit you and your students directly.

As most of you know, action research is a cyclical process—identify something, implement it, assess it, revise it, implement it again, assess it, revise it, implement it again, and so on. Action research is also very systematic, and since it is a systematic examination of your own practice, it is by definition also reflective. I am hoping that all of these things are starting to come together. Now, I don't think that action research is a *requirement* of a data-driven instructional decision making process, but it can strongly support it largely due to the fact that they can be integrated so nicely. Those who have studied action research know that there are numerous models of action research that have been floating around for decades. I offer my contribution (Mertler, 2009) in Figure 3.

Notice that the first cycle is comprised of a four-stage process, a process very similar to one that we examined earlier. The process begins by planning what is going to be done. This is followed by taking some sort of action, usually implementing the project. Something is then developed from the results of that implementation. What I am referring to here is your reflection and the development of a plan for revision. After completing that state, the entire process is reflected upon. The ultimate goal of the development of a plan and the associated reflection is for that information to serve as the impetus for planning in the next cycle. The action research process continues through a next cycle, or spiral of successive cycles. Personally, I do not like to think of action research as ever ending—its focus may change, or move in a different direction, but it does not end. A more detailed diagram of my model is presented in Figure 4.

In this figure you will notice that the same four stages—i.e., planning, acting, developing, and reflecting—appear across the top. The specific activities within each of these stages are undoubtedly familiar. During the *planning stage*, the topic is identified and limited in scope, related information is gathered and literature reviewed, and a research plan is developed. The *acting stage* is the point in the process when data are collected and analyzed. The *developing stage* comprises the development of an action plan; in other words, what happens from this point forward with what has been learned from the action research study? In the final *reflecting stage*, different levels of reflection can lead to various interpretations. Certainly, professional reflection can be personal and individual. However, I think reflection can be highly valuable if it is a process done collaboratively with colleagues. This might be as simple as bouncing ideas off of other people, or asking them for some advice or suggestions on some things that you want to try. Note that this does not mean that you have to follow their advice, but view it as yet another source of information that you can use.

The second important educational practice is assessment of student learning. ***Assessment of student learning*** involves all activities undertaken by teachers, by other educators, and by students themselves in an effort to assess student performance. There is a very important distinction here because these are not necessarily activities that educators are doing *to* the students. Assessment of student learning is something that should be done *with* students. Engage them and include them in the assessment process, through which additional sources of information are utilized to provide evidence upon which decisions can be based. This becomes part of a diverse assessment system. Designing this type of student assessment system can very, very effectively support the use of data-driven instructional decision making as a process. My argument here is that the more student information and data that we have, the better informed our decisions are bound to be. I would be remiss if I failed to note that this is not a guarantee—all of this information must still be compiled, made sense of, reflected upon, and then decisions made about where to go in the future.

The third, and final, component is reflective practice. I define ***reflective practice*** as a process whereby educators study their *own* teaching methods in an effort to determine what works best for *their* respective students. Many of the components contained in action research make it, by nature, a reflective process. One of the true benefits of reflective practice is that it really is a guiding force in one's own professional development. It permits educators to essentially design their own professional development that is meaningful, applied, and continuous. They are looking for resources to help answer their own questions about their own students, teaching, situations, settings, etc. I think what it does is foster a level of professional learning that is highly valuable, primarily because it is very meaningful and it is on-going. I believe that it is ongoing because, if it is incorporated into an action research process, it never really ends; it just goes through iterations or cycles. There is so much overlap between the notion of reflective practice and action research that they almost become one in the same. Of course, one can be reflective without engaging in action research, but blending them

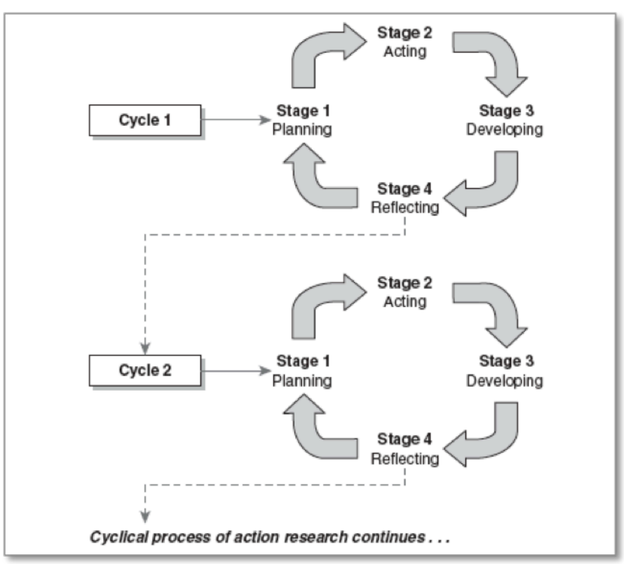

Figure 3. The process of action research (Mertler, 2009).

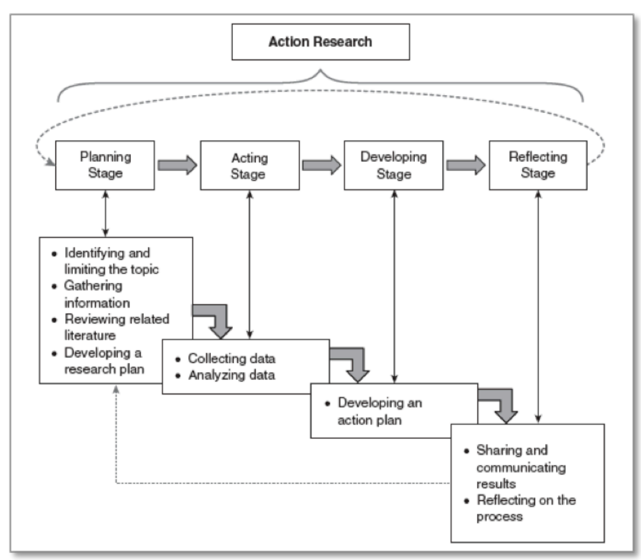

Figure 4. The integration of two organizational schemes for the step-by-step process of action research (Mertler, 2009).

together really gives you a sound process for professional development and learning.

At this point, I'd like to introduce a new model. I have shared several models in this presentation that are my variations on processes or ideas that have been studied for years. However, to my knowledge, I have never seen a visual depiction of data-driven instructional decision making. I wanted to try to find a way that I could illustrate my conceptualization of the integral nature of these three educational components—action research, assessment of student learning, and reflective practice—in an overall process of data-driven instructional decision making. My idea is that we take these three educational "procedures" and merge them into a single process called *data-driven instructional decision making*, or *D-DIDM* (see Figure 5).

I want to argue that we need to introduce and routinely, continuously engage in this process within our classrooms, with our students, within our respective educational settings. I realize that there are no guarantees—and I am not in the business of making guarantees—but I firmly believe that this process has got to lead to better instruction, better learning, and more productive students coming out of our classrooms.

Considering this new, integrated process of data-driven instructional decision making, let me address what I see as the critical roles of both researchers and practitioners. Beginning with researchers, I think again that we have a *primary* responsibility to improve teaching and learning at all levels. We need to do this through systematic inquiry. That is what we do anyway; we simply need to apply it *directly* to the teaching and learning process. Essentially, I think that we need to *model* the overall process of data-driven instructional making, as well as its "contributing" processes (i.e., action research, assessment of student learning, and reflective practice) for educators who may be uncomfortable with these concepts. There are a lot of educators out there who fall into this category, who are uncomfortable with this over-arching process and each of the three individual components. They tend to be uncomfortable for a lot of reasons. They do not like statistics and they believe that numbers are unavoidable in the process. They do not like the word "research." Researchers have a responsibility to help educators at all levels to be more comfortable with D-DIDM.

Along those same lines, I think practitioners have a primary responsibility to improve teaching and learning at all levels through systematic inquiry; the only thing that may be different here is that we are referring to the improvement of their own practice. To reiterate an earlier point, I believe that this broad notion of data-driven instructional decision making and incorporating action research and reflective practice is a *perfect* fit for practicing educators. There are reasons why all graduate students in educational programs take research methods. It is not to punish students; it is not to make students jump through hoops for no apparent reason. The reasons include the fact that a graduate degree is a research degree; we are teaching skills that we expect educators to use in schools and other settings. This is what action research is all about.

The other thing that I would suggest for practitioners is to work with colleagues for whom some of these ideas might be new or foreign or just plain frightening. They have to see the importance of it, the potential benefits of it. There is a question that I am repeatedly asked when I talk about this with teachers. It begins like this: "Okay, you want me to do action research in my classroom, you want me to collect all of this additional data, and then you want me to sit back and reflect on it, right? Well, I cannot do all of that during my lunch period or planning time, so when am I supposed to find time to do this? I don't have time in my day to do this." First, I recognize that this is a valid point. Second, however, the sincere response that I give them is that they should not see this as being some sort of extra responsibility for which they are not getting paid. (I have had numerous teachers say this to me before: "Why would I do this when I am not being paid to do it?") At the risk of sounding extremely sarcastic (and, sometimes, it comes out that way!), I usually respond with something like: "Well, I don't know. *Why* would you want to be a better teacher, especially if you're not getting paid to be a better teacher?" If educators make D-DIDM part of their daily work routine—which does not mean that you have to do it every day, but if it becomes part of their professional routine—then, it becomes part of annual professional development; it just honestly becomes part of the

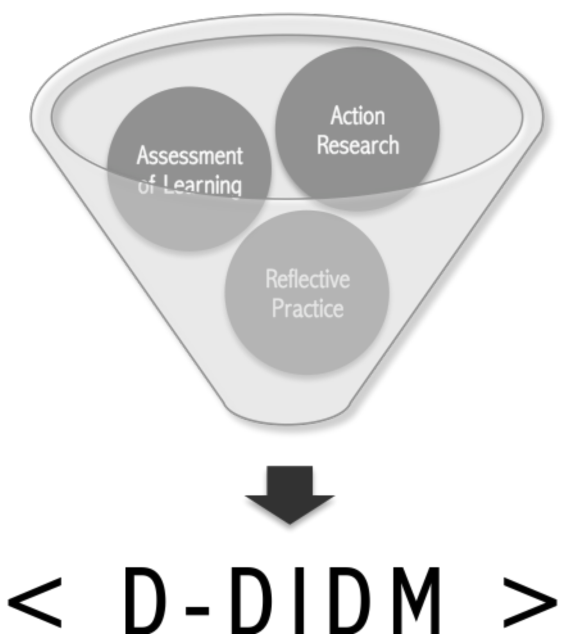

Figure 5. An integrated model of D-DIDM.

job of being an educator. It requires a different mindset…a different approach to the work of being an educator. My “off-the-cuff,” semi-serious response that I sometimes give people who ask me these types of questions is, “With the potential benefits of engaging in a process like this, how can you afford *not* to try it? How can you honestly afford *not* to see how it works for you?”

I have mentioned on a couple of occasions about working with colleagues, or researchers working with practitioners, so now I would like to add one final element to my working model of D-DIDM. If you notice, a lot of the responsibilities of researchers and practitioners overlap; they are very similar. I think those responsibilities can be merged very easily. One of the benefits of sharing the responsibilities is that it brings together different perspectives, ideas, experiences, and resources. Therefore, I am going to add one more thing to my model: ***collaboration*** (see Figure 6). If we engage in D-DIDM as a collaborative venture, working together toward a common goal, that is where I think the *real* benefits can be realized. You can certainly do all of this individually, but there is nothing that says that you cannot work together. Honestly, this becomes a perfect situation for the development and implementation of Teacher Learning Communities, as a means of fostering this professional collaboration. Revisiting our model, let us now add “collaboration.” So, we actively engage in this singular process of D-DIDM, conducting classroom-based action research, which utilizes student assessment data and other related information, all the while reflecting upon everything we do as we go along, integrating collegial collaboration whenever appropriate. This is my conceptualization of the process of data-driven instructional decision making.

Let me offer a couple of closing thoughts. I honestly do not think that this is a new practice or a new process. I think educators have been doing this in one form or another for a long time. I just do not believe that it has been as systematic as it could be, as systematic as I would like to see it. Furthermore, to my knowledge, I do not think it has ever been described as a comprehensive process as I have envisioned and described it today. And, it certainly never had a catchy acronym! Now, we have one—***D-DIDM***.

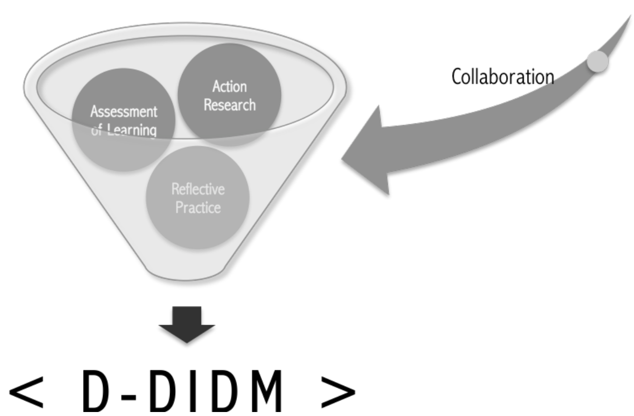

Figure 6. An improved version of the integrated model of D-DIDM.

Seriously though, I do want to caution anyone wanting to work with the process of D-DIDM because I think that it is very easy to become overwhelmed. I think that it is very easy for educators at just about any level to develop a lengthy list of potential improvements or revisions. Then, all of a sudden you have twenty or so things that you want to address. That is not realistic; there literally is not enough time in the day to do that. Also, if you try to incorporate too many things into the revision of your instruction (or whatever you are critically examining), when you evaluate the impact at the end of the process, you are not going to know what may have caused any improvements, or what did or did not work, because you simply have too many confounding things going on. D-DIDM needs to be done using a systematic, but also manageable, approach. Design it and engage in it so that you can take it piece by piece. There is no reason to go solo on this; collaborate with colleagues at any level that you think is appropriate, even if you just want to bounce ideas off of them. But remember that data-driven instructional decision making and all of its components represent an ongoing, cyclical process. It takes time; do not expect to see incredible improvements and changes in what you do after your first cycle.

Finally, why did I begin this paper by mentioning the definition for “mindset?” Engaging in a process of D-DIDM requires a change in one’s mental outlook and in one’s attitude, so that its practice becomes habitual, almost second nature. It should become part of the practice of your professional routine. If you are patient with the process, I truly believe that you will see rewards from your professional investment.

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Preparing Teachers of Tomorrow with Global Perspectives

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Introduction

Global education advances global perspectives and prepares globally competent citizens. Globally competent citizens know they have an impact on the world and that the world influences them. Global competency is often viewed in terms of three attributes: knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Given the importance of preparing pre-service teachers who can function as world citizens and who are ready to join the global workforce, the question for educators of gifted students is how to best provide students with opportunities that nurture this type of learning and awareness while leveraging the unique qualities of their giftedness. The model presented in this paper, a multi-disciplinary international service-learning project, may offer insight on the topic.

The purpose of this article is to focus on a community action service-learning project to develop global citizens who have and will continue to have an interest in both local and global community service. We will begin with a review of the research that supports the importance of service-learning opportunities to both the learning and psyche of gifted students. We will then describe an undergraduate teacher preparation program designed for gifted students. Finally, we will describe a service-learning project in Mexico that is an integral part of our students' overall experience.

Research Supporting Service-learning with Gifted Students

The research literature of gifted education provides strong testimony that the most creative and gifted individuals exhibit higher levels of empathy, sensitivity, moral responsibility, self-reflection and autonomy of thought than the general population (Nelson, 1989). According to Renzulli (2002), gifted youth need opportunities, resources and encouragement for firsthand investigative or creative experiences within their self-selected areas of interest. He postulated that strategies used to develop giftedness in our students should give as much attention to the co-cognitive conditions of development as we give to cognitive development. The co-cognitive factors related to gifted students are: optimism, courage, romance with a topic, sensitivity to human concerns, physical/mental energy and vision/sense of destiny. Service-learning can provide teachers of the gifted with the vehicle to engage students in meaningful learning that appeals to their idealism and their need to make the world a better place. Through service-learning we have the opportunity challenge students' sense of purpose and meaning and set the groundwork for more reflective thinking about individuals' roles in society beyond the marketplace.

Service-learning has become an international movement that offers new approaches to teaching and learning and to the civic engagement of institutions of higher education. It provides students with an education that meets the highest academic standards and delivers meaningful service that makes a difference to the well-being of society. It can promote not only a greater commitment to improving conditions locally but also an understanding of the inter-relatedness of communities and societies across the world. Service-learning as it has also been applied internationally offers much promise to campuses seeking to define skills and learning outcomes needed for effective global citizenship.

Service-learning occurs in the context of a credit bearing course that combines formal academic study in a discipline, active learning in the form of service assignments in community development and reflection. According to Eyler and Giles (1999), service-learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems, and at the same time, reflecting upon these experiences as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. Reflection ties the students' experience and the community to learning in the classroom. All three components of service-learning deepen the students' learning in the given discipline and improve the quality of service for the members of the community. The heart of international service-learning is the tying together of academic learning with community-based work while connecting global awareness with civic engagement.

The National Youth and Leadership Council (2007) defines quality service-learning as having the following characteristics: (1) meaningful service; (2) intentional link to curriculum; (3) reflection; (4) recognition of diversity; (5) youth voice; (6) mutually beneficial partnerships; (7) ongoing progress monitoring; and (8) appropriate duration and intensity to meet community needs and outcomes. Schools integrating quality service-learning policies and practices have demonstrated significantly improved student achievement rates and development of pro-social attitudes and behaviors (Terry and Bohnenberger, 2003, 2004, and 2007; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

The research literature identifies three levels of service-learning: community service, community exploration, and community action. Community action is the highest level of service-learning, which exposes students to community problems and encourages them to solve those problems in a creative, socially constructive manner. This type of high quality service-learning requires students to become aware of a need in the community and provide a service. Students analyze the situation, generate new ideas and work as a team to implement a difference-making plan of action. In the process, students develop complex problem-solving skills and advance communication. They also develop perseverance to overcome barriers (Terry and Bohnenberger, 2004). Community action service-learning is especially effective for gifted students as it provides strong affective components while addressing both cognitive and co-cognitive development (Terry and Bohnenberger, 2007).

Program Overview

The university Honors Program is a selective minor of 21 hours culminating in a two semester research capstone thesis and presentation. In 2005, faculty from the Honors Program and College of Education and Human Services (COEHS) created Honors International Teaching Fellows (HITF), a sequence of courses for incoming Honors students who have shown an interest in education to take courses in both venues through a cohort community. The cohort design ensures community closeness, professor support, and student retention through these close knit learning communities. This HITF model gives students a chance to explore teaching as an option in their early career through field trips to alternative schools and study of global diversity issues in education. The seminar class environment of the HITF utilizes an interdisciplinary approach through reading, intercultural experiences, discussions, and study abroad.

The four year teacher preparation program is designed to empower students to recognize their ability and responsibility to make choices that affect the future. The curriculum develops knowledge of world geography, conditions, events, and awareness of the complexity and interdependency of world issues and events with an understanding of the historical forces that have shaped the current world system. Through study abroad, students become globally competent people who have a sensitivity and respect for personal and cultural differences, capable of empathy and can handle ambiguity and unfamiliarity. Through their community action service-learning experience they become a globally competent person who has critical thinking and comparative skills, including the ability to think creatively and integrate knowledge, and develop effective communications skills including an understanding of intercultural communication concepts. They recognize their ability and responsibility to make choices that affect the future.

HITF has four unique opportunities in both study abroad and community service. During their freshman year, students spend ten days observing and teaching a lesson in at least four Irish Schools and explore the West Country to experience Irish culture in its relationship to comparative literature and history. This is their first travel abroad experience, and the challenges of travel are lessened by understanding the language and also allowing the students to focus on the cultural immersion. In these first years of HITF, we have taken the students to Ireland—which meets language and cultural requirements—and have added the component of Comparative Education. Students learn about the national educational system of the Republic of Ireland and then observe the classroom manifestations of the curriculum in at least four school visits. Reflection and connection are important to this experience. Students then return to Kentucky schools to present what they have learned about Irish schools.

Now 'seasoned travelers,' the students are ready to step further out of the comfort zone to travel to a non-English speaking country in the second year. Students travel to Zacatecas, Mexico during their Spring Break to work in the impoverished schools and community of Viboritas. They bring with them the resources to create sustainable lessons, stock a library, and assist in the maintenance and use of a new ball court. In preparation, students study the effects of global economics and community development strategies. This trip becomes the main focus of this paper in later sections.

The experience of being a minority/non-language speaking worker is unique and challenging to our students. In the third year experience we bridge that feeling with local community needs. We collaborated with the English Language Learner Foundation to establish tutoring relationships for our students with English Language Learners (ELL) students in the large urban school district. Each HITF student is paired with an ELL student for a minimum of two hours of tutoring a week at the student's school. This unique experience helps these future teachers to learn skills necessary to reach this growing segment of the school population. Our students comment on how they hope to make a difference in at least one student's life and this experience provides them the opportunity to start even before they are certified teachers.

Now that the students have had travel, service, and tutoring experiences they possess the *ganas* or desire for the ultimate experience. Student teaching abroad affords HITF students the opportunity to test their cultural learning and teaching skills in one of many environments. Teacher candidates teach eight weeks abroad with eight weeks stateside, meeting both the requirements for state certification and international school schedules. For those HITF students who cannot take advantage of this experience, we look for local placements with teachers and schools that support global initiatives.

Honors International Teaching Fellows Service-learning Program in Mexico

The purpose of the Honors International Teaching Fellowship service-learning experience was to promote global awareness while engaging in community action. The project was designed to combine service objectives with learning objectives with the intent of mutual benefice; the activity changes both the recipient and the provider of the service. We accomplished this by combining service tasks with structured opportunities that linked the task to self-reflection, self-discovery, and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge content during community exploration and action.

The road to Mexico was paved by many wonderful contacts who made its vision possible. Using the model of an established Alternative Spring Break for service-learning in Mexico, we worked with a non-profit organization to design service-learning directly attached to schools and their communities. We focused our first efforts on the state of Zacatecas, the second poorest Mexican state, and a previous site of community development by the non-profit organization. We believed that collaboration and networking were critical to our success. In our first year, we toured outlying communities, saw working sustainable economic and environmental projects, and primarily met the people of these villages. We saw their homes, shook their hands, and spoke together through our eyes. We visited a middle school that had computers (provided by the state), though no electricity to enable the use of the computers. Our collaboration with the non-profit organization enabled them to collaborate with state agencies, resulting in the installation of solar panels for electricity.

Reflecting upon our first trip to Zacatecas, Mexico, we realized we wanted to design a community action service project which would be dynamic, sustainable and meaningful. Using the National Youth and Leadership Council's characteristics for quality service-learning (2007), Table 1 identifies the relationship between student activities and the characteristics of high quality service-learning.

We then applied the Best-Practice Model for Community Development (Terry and Bohnenberger, 2007) which incorporates the cognitive apprenticeship model, the creative problem-solving process, well organized cooperative learning groups, reflection and celebration. The faculty advisors employed scaffolding, modeling, coaching and fading throughout the alternative spring break community action program to move the students from dependence to independence. On this second trip our students spoke with community members, teachers, and children to assess the needs of each community. Through intense discussion and negotiation they chose to focus our efforts on Viboritas. The students explored the community's needs and resources and developed an action plan involving fund raising activities. Additionally, students broke into grade span groups to present lessons to students in the schools and especially in Viboritas.

While we are not in Mexico to involve ourselves in politics, we need to work with politicians to create sustainable change. Much to the students' surprise, they were asked to create presentations to Congress, a local television program and a national radio broadcast. As is vital to service-learning, the students wrote daily structured and unstructured written reflections which became the framework to process and synthesize the information they gleaned through their service-learning activities. The service-learning component of the HITF Program challenged students to apply their problem-solving skills to actual problems in the community of Viboritas and empowered them to take hands-on action that makes a positive difference for those involved. Students identified problems in the community and implemented an action plan. While these particular students may never return to Viboritas they planned fundraising activities to send resources with the next group of HITF students. HITF students had the opportunity to expand their societal awareness, practice skills of positive action and make their vision of a better future a reality.

We began our project with an immersion in the culture and the geography of the area. Mexico is a very visual loca-

Table 1
NYLC & HITF

The National Youth and Leadership Council (2007) defines quality service-learning as having the following characteristics:	HITF Service-learning in Mexico meets the criteria by;
(1) meaningful service	Involving the students in community develop strategies, planning, and implementation.
(2) intentional link to curriculum	Students prepare and implement lessons which are part of their teaching training.
(3) reflection	Students write structured and unstructured journal entries about their experience, translating that into information used in SCR Presentation.
(4) recognition of diversity	Time is set aside to discuss diversity issues of stereotypes and poverty. Along with this comes a more complete understanding of immigration issues.
(5) youth voice	The students listen to the voices of the children and then lend their own youthful voices to public arenas.
(6) mutually beneficial partnerships	Our students get organizational and teaching practice while the village schools get assistance, resources, and the knowledge that someone cares.
(7) ongoing progress monitoring	FWP and HITF will continue a presence in Viboritas until the community has met it's needs.
(8) appropriate duration and intensity to meet community needs and outcomes	While our trip is only one week a year, other students from NKU in variety of disciplines can and will visit Viboritas to help with sustainable programming.

Date	Activities
Saturday,March 8, 2008	Arrived in Aguascalientes and traveled by motor pool to Zacatecas; checked in The Hotel Parador; formal welcome by Senator Sebastian Martinez
Sunday,March 9, 2008	Breakfast as a group; departed to Cathedral for 11:00 mass (optional)
	Toured La Bufa (monuments, chapel, Museo La Toma and area), Teleferico,
	Museo Rafael Coronel, and Zacatecas Centro; dinner and sharing of reflections
Monday, March 10, 2008	Breakfast as a group; welcome and introductions by Secretary of Education's staff members; traveled by motor coach to schools and visited 3 schools: student presentations in respective classrooms, documentation of their needs, and distribution of gifts); returned to hotel and prepared for evening's presentation; traveled to Capital and met with Commissioners; dinner and reflection on the day
Tuesday, March 11, 2008	Breakfast as a group; traveled by motor coach to schools with the Secretary of Education's Staff members (visited 2 schools: student presentations in respective classes, documentation of their needs, and distribution of gifts); dinner and selection of the school to "adopt"
Wednesday, March 12, 2008	Breakfast as a group; traveled by motor coach to schools with the Secretary of Education's Staff members (visited 3 schools to observe teaching methodologies: 1 elementary, 1 honors school & 1 secondary school); departed to the Office of the Secretary of Education where we were honored, photographed by the press, and given gifts; faculty and 3 students departed to 97.9 Radio Zacatecas for 6:00 radio program; dinner and reflection
Thursday, March 13, 2008	Breakfast as a group; traveled by motor coach to Viboritas with the Secretary of Education and staff members; reception at Viboritas sponsored by the Mayor of Guadalope; classroom visits and identification of schools; distribution of gifts; agreement between NKU and the Viboritas community; departure for University of Zacatecas; toured University of Zacatecas; early dinner at one of the dormitories of UAZ
Friday, March 14, 2008	Breakfast as a group; all students, faculty and Senator Sebastian Martinez participated in a television interview conducted by Blanca Ibarra Rojas. Two students and one faculty member attended a commemorative Reception at UAZ; ten students and two faculty members traveled by motor coach to San Ignacio's elementary and middle school; student presentations in classrooms; tour of Tacoaleche with Edwardo Rija and final visit to La Bufa
Saturday, March 15, 2008	Depart hotel by motor coach to the Aguascalientes Airport and travel home

tion and our students immediately realized it. The city of Zacatecas, colonial capital of the state of Zacatecas, is set nearly 9,000 feet above sea level in the semi-arid mountainous region is the. The city was founded by the Spanish for silver mining and the city retains both the architectural and cultural heritage of its Spanish colonizers. The sights seemed to overwhelm our students: art and history museums pepper the blocks of cobblestone streets; cathedral spires rise above the skyline; the volcanic outcrop, La Bufa, home of memorials, museums, shops, and the wares of indigenous people. We sat in the shade of a lonesome tree and read D.H. Lawrence's reflections of Mexico and its "spark of contact" to touch the students' global consciousness.

The following day, we traveled in worn buses over bumpy dirt roads to communities so far flung it was hard for our students to imagine they existed in the same space and time, and so near, to the capital city of Zacatecas. Here they witnessed poverty like they had never seen or imagined. They were in awe of the people who extended hospitality the likes of which they had never experienced outside of their own family. They interacted with students in over-crowded classes, with little or no resources (including indoor plumbing and electricity) housed in schools of various stages of disrepair. Typically, there was one teacher who taught all subjects for multiple grade levels. They questioned the students' eagerness and motivation in the midst of the empty promise of future employment in their state. The students witnessed how their presence helped the Secretary of Education's staff to realize the impoverished conditions in the state's outlying schools. With our visit came pledges and action by the state and within days desks were replaced, electricity was provided, and plans were made to build a library and a basketball court. The students' question: "Who has gained more? The communities have a little more of what they need. We have a spark of contact that changes our lives profoundly. Who has gained more?"

On the third day of school visits, we remained in the capital city and visited three schools. These schools resembled affluent suburban and private schools. The students were surrounded by the latest technology, taught by master teachers, provided opportunities for advanced scholarship and closely resembled students familiar to our students. The students immediately seized upon the stark contrast between the opportunities offered to students in the city and the rural environments. Experiencing this contrast seemed to leverage their altruistic views and propel them into action.

Impact on the HITF Students

Analysis of the students' reflections indicate that the students derived the benefits of service-learning as identified by Holland and Saltmarsh (2000 as cited in Kronich, 2007): 1) reduction of negative stereotypes, 2) greater self-knowledge, 3) finding reward in helping others, 4) greater spiritual growth, 5) increased personal efficacy, 6) increased desire to include service in one's career path, 7) increased ability to work with others, 8) increased leadership skills, and 9) increased feeling of being connected to a community. Overwhelming, the students' reflections and comments made during focus group interviews indicate they were most impacted by the benefits of reducing negative stereotypes, increased personal efficacy and being connected to a community. These students live in a predominantly homogeneous environment and have little or no contact with Latinos. They are aware of the controversy surrounding illegal immigration and prior to being immersed in the rural areas of Zacatecas, had little understanding of the societal complexities surrounding illegal immigration. This student entry represents the students' new understandings of the Mexicans' reasons for immigrating to the United States.

> I think coming out of this experience I understand a little bit of what it is like to be Mexican living in the rural areas of Zacatecas. I have experienced the Mexican culture and understand more of its themes, practices and people. I have realized some of the stereotypes I had and now understand the reasons Mexicans come to America. I will never side against the Mexican on immigration because I saw the circumstances that shaped their perspective.

Prior to the trip the students felt that Mexicans come to the United States to seek the American Dream. They thought that Mexicans would prefer the conditions in the United States to their home state of Mexico. "So my trip has only been an observation…my purpose being here to connect for at least an instant. I will carry back with me a small understanding of the Mexican people."

As a result of their community action service-learning experience, they understood the factors contributing to immigration: abject poverty, lack of employment opportunities and the compelling need Mexicans have to financially provide for their families. They were surprised to learn of the strength of the fiber of family and community connections. "The Mexican community is far more family-oriented than I thought they were. They enjoy spending time together and holding hands as they walk down the streets." They also understood the conflicting demands of providing financially for one's family and the tension created by forced geographic separation from the family.

The students were also impressed by how their interactions with the Mexicans, in spite of language barriers, transcended global barriers and cultural differences. "'Spark of contact' has no language. Contact is not Mexican, does not speak Spanish or English, is not American. It is a worldly concept that brings different people together to touch each other in ways you may not always know or understand." As a result of this experience, students understood that cultural differences need not be cultural barriers. "I don't think the person I am has changed much, but the view I have of those around me will never be the same. I miss Mexico, its people, the beauty but most of all I miss its heart."

Through the community action service-learning, the students collaborated with the staff of the Zacatecas Department of Education, members of Congress, and the Secretary of Immigration. Through this collaboration, the students saw how their efforts resulted in the contribution of new resources for schools and communities they visited. These resources included establishment of libraries, construction of playgrounds, and provisions for electricity, computers, and other educational resources. From this experience, students felt greater personal efficacy and saw that their efforts could benefit community others. "Even little old me can make a difference." Another student reported renewed confidence what altruism can do, "I can fight poverty with organizations like *Future without Poverty* with a new understanding of what poverty is and what can be accomplished."

Through an intensive experiential community action project, these gifted pre-service teachers will view their world with new, expanded and altruistic lenses. They gained both insight and a global perspective. "I think the experience has given me both confidence and humility. Confidence because I have a better understanding of the world and its complexities and humility because I have a greater respect for other perspectives."

We believe that the ultimate purpose of teaching is to change lives; empower students to think more effectively and have them see and understand their world and their lives in a clearer, more focused way.

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