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Message from the President



*Dr. John Fischetti, President
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Dear Create Members,

As the new year is upon us, let me take this moment to thank and show gratitude for the hard work of all educators who each day do what is *right* for children. CREATE's legacy from its origins is in trying to get teacher evaluation and student assessment right

We look forward to a wonderful 2014 on two fronts:

- 1) The revitalization of our CREATE network of colleagues from the classroom to the board room through our CREATE Global Consortium; and,
- 2) Providing CREATE members with a 2014 conference that focuses on the pertinent issues we face.

My thanks to the team who is taking over the newsletter obligations, Margie DeSander and Jennifer Clayton (The George Washington University) and to Marco Munoz and Marita White (Jefferson County Schools, Louisville, KY) for many years of dedicated service.

We all are part of many organizations that overlap in interest. We hope that CREATE provides you a place to continue to evolve your teaching, professional development and/or research around classroom and school effectiveness.

My last few years in North Carolina and Louisiana have demonstrated to me that we have some work to do to help those who make the policy decisions about what works for learning and to "get" what research-based best practice is. As the Common Core evolves it may be neither if we don't use the knowledge base to guide us.

In 2014 we will dedicate ourselves to continuing the conversation and in sharing with you, our members, the current thinking of the related fields we work in. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

John Fischetti, CREATE President

CREATE Conference 2013 Reflections – Atlanta, Georgia October 10-12, 2013

By Paula Egelson, CREATE Past-President

CREATE Conference 2013 took place October 10-12 at Atlanta’s W Midtown Hotel. It was a sunny and beautiful fall weekend in Atlanta, a perfect time to hold a conference. The conference theme, “A Summit on the State of School Effectiveness: Improvement through Evaluation”, was most appropriate, given the slate of presentation topics and keynote addresses. Our conference was international in scope with presenters and participants attending from the United States, Canada, the Far East and the Middle East. Conference presentations focused on school improvement evaluation, principal and teacher evaluation and assessment.



One of our new conference strands was doctoral research, and it was quite successful. Over 20 doctoral students presented their work using a poster format during a heavily attended afternoon reception on October 10. Doctoral students presented their research and received feedback from conference attendees. Students appreciated the opportunity to share their work and get suggestions on how to improve it. We plan to continue this strand in the future.

We had a slate of highly influential conference keynoters, including (a) Jim Popham (teacher evaluation), (b) Ellen Goldring (principal evaluation), (c) our Jason Millman award winner Karin Chenoweth (school turnarounds), and (d) Andy Baxter (teacher effectiveness). Both Jim Popham and Ellen Goldring expressed concern about the current teacher evaluation and principal evaluation systems currently being developed that were too strongly influenced by current education policy. Karin Chenoweth described how high poverty, low achieving schools could be effectively turned around, while Andy Baxter talked about the role of classroom observation in teacher evaluation.

CREATE also initiated a new emerging researcher award this year in memory of three outstanding researchers: Dr. Charles Achilles (Seton Hall and Eastern Michigan University), Dr. Maxine Harper (University of Mississippi) and Dr. Penny Swenson (California State at Bakersfield). Doctoral student Stacy Leggett from The George Washington University received the first Achilles-Harper-Swenson Emerging Researcher award that was presented to her the morning of October 12. Stacy's dissertation topic was, "Personal and Environmental Factors Influencing Principal's Subjective Ratings of Teachers".



Special thanks goes to the 2012-2013 CREATE Board of Directors who were instrumental in ensuring that this conference was a success. This year's board was an outstanding one and have served as true advocates for CREATE.

The Achilles-Harper-Swenson Emerging Researcher Award, 2014

Stacy Leggett, a doctoral student at The George Washington University, was the first recipient of the Achilles/Harper/Swenson Emerging Scholar Award. Stacy's dissertation title is "Personal and Environmental Factors Influencing Principal's Subjective Ratings of Teachers" and was presented as part of a new doctoral poster session to be held annually at CREATE. A description of Stacy's work is below:

The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and the North Carolina educator evaluation process developed from a State Board of Education mandate to reduce the dropout rate. The new instrument attempted to link teacher evaluation to student learning, but initial results did not demonstrate a significant correlation between principal ratings of teachers and aggregate teacher value-added data. The lack of correlation demonstrated the need to better understand principal ratings of teachers. Previous studies addressed the correlation between principal ratings and value-added data, but did not deeply explore principal characteristics influencing their ratings of teachers. This study will analyze the influence of principal and school data on principal ratings of teachers using the following predictor variables: principal use of leadership frames, principal beliefs about the malleability of ability, principal years' experience, school grade span, and school effect. The criterion variables will be the mean principal rating of teachers on each of Standards 1 through 5.

This study will use a positivist research paradigm and a series of multiple regression techniques to analyze data collected from a random sample of North Carolina principals to answer the question: Do principal characteristics and school context influence principal ratings of teachers on the North Carolina teacher evaluation instrument? The principal's total years' experience as a principal, administrator, and teacher will be collected. The total years' experience as a principal will be used in the regression model. School value-added composite, grade span, principal race, and principal gender will be collected as well as principal responses to 32 frequency rating items from Bolman and Deal's (1990) Leadership Orientation Instrument--Self, Part I, and 3 Likert scale items from Dweck, Chiu, and Hong's (1995) Kind of Person Instrument. The following data will be collected by matching the school code to publicly available data: Title I status, school size, percent of teacher who are fully licensed, percent of classes taught by highly qualified teachers, percent of teachers with advanced degrees, percent of teachers with less than 3 years' experience, and teacher turnover.

**23rd Annual
CREATE Conference
October 2 – 4, 2014
School of Education
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia**



<http://www.createconference.org/>

Consortium for Research on Educational Assessment and Teaching Effectiveness

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*Save the Date!!!
Proposals will be due May 15. Watch our website for
details! www.createconference.org*

Practitioner's Corner

“Assessing Teaching and Learning in the Classroom: Five Value-Added Audit Practices”

Michael Dunlop, MBA, Ed.D

As a college professor, I am always striving to make the classroom a more efficient and effective learning environment. Over the years I have observed that my teaching approach has modeled many of the techniques promulgated by the internal audit profession.

Following is a list of five of my teaching methods that are well-aligned with the best practices of internal auditing.

No. 1 – Course Planning

Planning to teach a new course, or an existing course, requires adequate preparation. In the case of a new course, the scope of planning widens since a measurable baseline may not have been established. Well before the first day of class, I always review the lessons learned and the recommendations from the last time the course was instructed. This includes reviewing prior course related assessment data. The most useful assessment data includes my own critical self-assessments (assuming that I instructed the course before) and end of the semester student evaluations. If necessary, I can make any necessary adjustments prior to the first class meeting. When the first day of class arrives, I regularly conduct a background knowledge probe of all the students enrolled. This is analogous to the preliminary survey administered to the audit client. This investigation helps me gain a better sense of the current condition of the students in terms of previous knowledge gained in other courses (i.e., prerequisites), other relevant experiences (e.g., internships/co-operative education, student clubs, and part-time employment), and the expectations that students have about the course.

No. 2 – Establish Course Objectives

It is important that students are made aware at the beginning of the semester regarding the course objectives and other expectations. Similar to audit objectives of an engagement, the course is guided by the standards set forth in the course syllabus, including the course description and a list of measureable student learning outcomes. Students are made aware that their performance will be measured against the Institution's grading standards (i.e., A, B, C, etc.). In addition, other expectations are established such as attendance, deadlines, and academic honesty policies.

No. 3 – Course Delivery

Delivering a course is similar to conducting the audit work engagement. For every course that I teach, I have been using a standardized “one-page” lecture template. This self-developed template serves as a checklist for each class meeting. The template includes information such as class announcements, lecture topics, in-class activities, outside homework assignments, and any handouts distributed. Furthermore, the template includes a location to track attendance, class duration, and instructor comments (e.g., what worked well for a specific lecture or class activity and what may need future modification/improvement). This outline is comparable to audit working papers.

Furthermore, I utilize a “tick marking” system where I simply check off what was covered for the day, as well as what still may need to be covered during the next class meeting. Another parallel between teaching and internal auditing is being cognizant of red flags. From an academic standpoint, red flags may indicate violations of Institution policy (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty). Even though I have established a strong level of rapport with my students and I enjoy helping them pursue their educational and career goals, I still need to maintain professional skepticism and be mindful of situations indicative of cheating, plagiarism, and dishonesty.

No.4 – Communication and Reporting

I consistently communicate with students utilizing a variety of mediums (e.g., in-class announcements, email, and online learning platforms). All communication related information to the students follows the rule of being “clear, concise, and complete.” Students appreciate this method since it allows the communication process to be more efficient and effective.

Throughout the semester, I collect data from students in a range of formats (e.g., exams, assignments, projects, etc.). I evaluate the relevance, sufficiency, and completeness of this evidence against the grading standards established. My ability to analyze and interpret the data with independence and objectivity is paramount to a fair and balanced grading and assessment process. Communicating interim progress may take the form of informal discussions on performance with students (e.g., before/after class and office hours), as well as a formal reporting systems (i.e., midterm and final grades).

No. 5 – Continuous Quality Improvement

A commitment to improvement is a very important aspect of my job. I always reflect on my experiences and on ways that I can make improvements. A parallel between teaching and internal auditing is the QAIP (Quality Assurance and Improvement Program). As a professor I have implemented a version of QAIP where I seek client (i.e., student) feedback via surveys and conduct regular internal and external assessments. I perform my own “internal” critical self-assessment, which is accomplished via weekly outline templates and though the end of the semester self-assessment. In addition, my QAIP is further assessed through “external” sources including student course evaluations, annual performance reviews by my department chair, as well as peer reviews with my colleagues.

Although my teaching process may appear overly-structured and mechanistic, the reality is that I have developed effective working relationships with my students. My students have often commented on the usefulness and relevancy of the courses that I teach and they have expressed a genuine appreciation for my teaching style. In summary, I feel that my approach to teaching has represented a “systematic and disciplined approach that adds value and improves an organization’s operations,” which is a valuable part of the definition of internal auditing.

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**ANNOUNCING THE 2014
JASON MILLMAN AWARD WINNER**

SUSAN BROOKHART



**CONGRATULATIONS!!
DR. BROOKHART WILL RECEIVE HER AWARD AND MAKE A
PRESENTATION AT THE 2014 CREATE CONFERENCE.**

SUSAN M. BROOKHART, Ph.D., is an independent educational consultant and author based in Helena, Montana. Sue's interests include the role of both formative and summative classroom assessment in student motivation and achievement, the connection between classroom assessment and large-scale assessment, and grading. She was the 2007-2009 editor of *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, a journal of the National Council on Measurement in Education. She is author or co-author of sixteen books and over 60 articles and book chapters on classroom assessment, teacher professional development, and evaluation. She serves on the editorial boards of several journals. Sue received her Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation from The Ohio State University in 1989, after teaching in both elementary and middle schools. She was a full-time faculty member at Duquesne University from 1989 through 2003, most recently as Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership. She currently serves as a Senior Research Associate in the Center for Advancing the Study of Teaching and Learning in the School of Education at Duquesne.

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Submit to: claytonj@gwu.edu
or desander@gwu.edu



The vision of the Consortium for Research on Educational Assessment and Teaching Effectiveness (CREATE) is improved student learning, development, and achievement in PK-12 schools, institutes of higher education, and other educational settings.