Dear Educational Psychology Community,

I often feel like a broken record as I talk about how much I enjoy being a part of the Ed Psych community, but the WSU Educational Psychology program is indeed a caring place to learn and grow for faculty and students alike. So, I am privileged to write to you all this year as the Interim Department Chair of the Kinesiology and Educational Psychology Department and Ed Psych program coordinator.

Our 2022-2023 academic year was filled with success stories and growth edges that allowed all members of our community to be reflective, share in happiness, and learn the joy and privilege of our profession to "revise and resubmit." We often grumble at reviewers' comments, but if we change our perspective, we notice that only a few occupations give people opportunities to try again with feedback! What an opportunity for growth!

Throughout this past academic year, I have found myself in uncomfortable situations, and each time I try to remind myself that discomfort means I am learning, I am growing, I am being challenged- these are all encouraging moments. As we enter the 2023-2024 academic year, I encourage you to embrace moments when you are asked to do something outside your comfort zone.

In this newsletter, we offer a sampling of our 2022-2023 moments with the hope that it will spark a memory of your past time with the Ed Psych program, speak to you as an incoming student, or tempt you to learn more about our program if you are a prospective student.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our newsletter. We love to hear back from our community. Please reach out if you have a moment to share a story or need more information about our program.
Dr. Brian French
Promotion to Regents Professor

"Dr. French’s contributions to the WSU community in the domains of research, teaching, and service have been extensive and of high caliber. His integration of these three areas of practice under a unifying philosophical frame provides a wonderful example and role model for others in harnessing the strength of each to promote the others". Dr. Avi Kaplan, Professor of Educational Psychology, Temple University

Dr. Shenghai Dai
Promotion to Associate Professor

"The accomplishments by Dr. Dai up until today are significant and exemplary, and indicative of the kind of educational leaders and difference makers many of us strive to be in our professional career. In my view, Dr. Dai has made sustained, unique, and exceptionally high-quality contributions to the theoretical and applied foundations of the field of psychometrics and educational assessment with practical significance and implications".

Dr. Seock-Ho Kim, Professor of Quantitative Methodology, University of Georgia.
We are currently facing a critical intersection where access to information, and misinformation, is at an all-time high. Once exposed to misinformation, formulating the correct understanding of difficult science conceptions can be considerably more difficult. This conceptual shift, from a misconception to the correct conception, is referred to as conceptual change. And while many attempts have been made to facilitate conceptual change by teaching “just the facts”, for example, think of a standard biology class attempting to teach human evolution, these approaches have not had as much success as teachers would have hoped (see the US’s historic record on acceptance of human evolution). However, another promising approach has surfaced – refutational text. Given their expertise in Meta-Analyses and Conceptual Change and funded by an approximately $500K grant from the National Science Foundation, Drs. Adesope and Danielson partnered with Drs. Gale Sinatra and Erika Patall (University of Southern California) to investigate the effectiveness of refutational approaches to facilitate conceptual change. And what they found surprised us!

Analyzing over 70 studies and including over 25 moderators (including the domain of science (geosciences, biology, social science, etc.), whether the topic was controversial (climate change vs physics), the grade level of the students (middle school, college, etc.), the type of knowledge measure (multiple choice vs essay), and where the studies take place (psychology research lab, classroom, or online), they found that the refutational approach consistently outperformed the classic expository (textbook) approach. These findings have been presented at both AERA and APA, and their manuscript is currently under review at Educational Psychologist. They are continuing to examine the effectiveness of refutational approaches in the classroom as well, and the preliminary evidence seems to support the advantage of refutations over traditional, expository approaches.

Spotlight on Current Grants

Drs. Adesope and Danielson's National Science Foundation Grant: Collaborative Research: Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Refutation Materials for Promoting Conceptual Change in STEM

Our Research Center and Labs

Learning Performance and Research Center
https://labs.wsu.edu/learning

The Psychometric Laboratory
https://labs.wsu.edu/psychometric

MERIT Lab
https://labs.wsu.edu/merit

Large-Scale Data Lab
https://labs.wsu.edu/lslab
Learn About Our Ed Psych Program

Website

https://education.wsu.edu/graduate/edpsych/

We Develop, Employ, and Test advanced methodologies to answer applied and basic research questions in the context of complex educational environments. We develop leaders who possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to transform educational environments.

Students' Lessons Learned

Graduate school is not just about attending classes. So much of what we learn is on the job training. With this thought in mind we asked some of our current students what they are learning in their assistantships! Here are their thoughts on the topic.

I have served as an Academic Success Coach in the Academic Success and Career Center at WSU for two years and I absolutely love it. I work with students who are on academic notice and are going through the reinstatement process to get back into good academic standing. Working with students one-on-one during coaching and in the classroom has helped me expand my teaching experience while also contributing to my research interests. Within my position, I have had the opportunity to create and implement new curriculum, serve on the reinstatement committee for the university, mentor and train other coaches and undergraduates, and expand my administrative skills. My experience in my graduate assistantship has prepared me for a large breadth of different career tracks including university academic and administrative departments as well as careers within industry. Overall, being in this position is setting me up for success in the future.

Morgan Jernigan
3rd year Ph.D. Student
By the end of 2023, I would have taught Classroom Assessment for four semesters and what a great, eye-opening experience it has been. The courses for Classroom Assessment are for students seeking to become teachers either in primary or secondary schools within the state of Washington. At first, it was nerve racking since I lacked experience in this subject. However, as I have taught these courses, I gained confidence and have learned about principles of measurement and assessment that have drastically changed how I approach these subjects. Between teaching and my own research, my assistantship is preparing me well to either teach at the college level or be a measurement or assessment specialist in industry.

Tony Kirakosian
3rd year Ph.D. Student

My work as a graduate student Course Instructor of Classroom Assessment in elementary school has been an enlightening journey that has provided me with experiences relevant in Educational Psychology. My work involves teaching pre-service teachers about Classroom Assessment and guiding them as they work towards developing their own assessment portfolio. As someone who had no prior teaching background, teaching pre-service teachers about classroom assessment has allowed me to develop better communication skills as a teacher as I endeavor to explain complex assessment concepts clearly and with confidence. As I guide future elementary school educators in understanding the intricacies of designing fair and effective classroom assessments, I am honing my own expertise in my field. Not only am I gaining relevant teaching experience recommended for educational researchers, but as an International student, I also have the opportunity to familiarize myself with the American educational system. I can apply this knowledge not only to potential future teaching roles but also to educational research, curriculum development, and even instructional design. My frequent delivery of lectures, leading discussions, and support of students as they develop their assessment portfolio, means that I am becoming increasingly comfortable addressing groups of individuals. Outside the field of education, I'm also cultivating expertise in public speaking, leadership, coaching and perhaps even the skills required for behavioral scientists.

Portia Amoa-Danquah
2nd year Ph.D. Student
Continuation of Students' Lessons Learned

CHLOÉ DYDASCO
3rd Year Ph.D. Student

Having the opportunity to work on our grant project along with high school science teachers here in Washington has been very gratifying and enjoyable, especially as a former teacher myself.

Being a "baby" researcher with a teaching background, I could not help but notice the similarities and differences with science teaching here in Washington versus what I experienced back home in Guam. For example, we use the NGSS standards back home, and it was comforting to know that teachers here in Washington also have their struggles with implementing the standards and components of NGSS in their classroom. It was relieving to know that we were not alone. I also resonated with the everyday challenges and successes that the teachers shared, and could relate to, and even recall feeling overwhelmed with extra tasks & activities, feeling overwhelmed by administrators, not having enough time to carry out things, the awful burnout, the awesome gratification from student work and successes, and the importance of finding a safe, supportive space to decompress and share with others.

I also gained more experience and learned more of the inner workings that comes with working on a NSF grant. I most especially love the interpersonal and collaborative aspects of our team working with high school teachers, which I often crave since I miss teaching in middle and high school classrooms. Working on this grant not only helped me develop and hone more research skills, but I was also able to find littles takeaways and make note of things to remember if I were to return to back teaching in a K-12 science classroom in the future. I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with an awesome team of researchers and teachers who I feel genuinely appreciate each other, and I look forward to doing more good work together.

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Giving back is just a click a way!
You can support our students journey by donating ANY amount to our Educational Psychology Excellence Fund.
As a graduate assistant at the Learning and Performance Research Center (LPRC), I've taken part in a diverse range of projects that bridge classroom learning with real-world applications, significantly enriching my educational journey. For example, I've contributed actively to the program evaluation team for the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) program, creating surveys, collecting data, and reviewing reports. Additionally, my coursework in educational and psychological measurement has been complemented by hands-on involvement in a pilot and standardization study for a widely used inventory, spanning data entry, data management, and psychometric analysis. Moreover, LPRC has afforded me the opportunity to apply statistical and psychometric methods to statewide assessment data and participate in a cross-cultural study, experiences that extend beyond individual efforts. These unique experiences have made my time as a graduate student truly stand out, giving me the ability to effectively use a variety of methods and tools in real-life situations. I'm really grateful for the supportive environment that values hands-on learning and gives me practical skills.

Kexin Jiang: 2nd Year Ph.D. Student

The project I have been involved in is a grant from the National Science Foundation, and titled “Empowering Teachers to See and Support Use of Crosscutting Concepts.” It has helped me to explore K-12 science teaching under the guidance of the Next Generation Science Standards. With our exploration, I have built up background knowledge of scientific concepts and teaching practices, and experienced the formation of research partnerships. The cultivation of research partnership has changed my deficit-oriented perspective on partners (i.e., How could we use our knowledge to help teachers who cannot integrate crosscutting concepts into their teaching?) into a strength-oriented perspective, focusing on “supporting teachers’ sense-making of crosscutting concepts through their teaching assets and practical needs.” This process has further affected my research attitudes, transitioning from “research on participants” to “research with participants.” The latter research attitude has generated a more humanized relationship and research environment, embodied by the persistence of the researcher-teachers relationship and teachers’ initiative in our project. In the future, I, with my supportive team members, will continue to leverage teachers’ assets and needs to develop supportive teaching and formative assessment tools for crosscutting concepts teaching. I feel excited about that and ready for any potential challenges.
What is your current position title? and what tasks/projects/classes do you do?
I am currently an Assistant Professor in the School of Electrical Engineering at the University of Georgia. I both teach and do engineering education research at the University. I currently teach Probability and Statistics for Engineers to undergraduate students. I also teach research method courses to graduate-level students.

What has your career path been like? How did you end up where you are?
My career path has meandered through the colleges of engineering and education and back to engineering. I got a bachelor’s degree in electronic and computer engineering from Lagos State University in Nigeria in 2005 and a master’s degree in project management from the University of Sunderland in 2010. I moved to Pullman in September 2011 to pursue a doctoral degree in Educational Psychology, which I concluded in the Fall of 2016.

I had the privilege of working with Dr. Adesope on an NSF-funded project with some folks in the College of Engineering. Through that project, I reconnected to my roots in engineering. As a result, in addition to seeking Ed Psych faculty positions after my doctorate, I was also in STEM or engineering education. I was hired at the University of Georgia in 2017.

What are some of the things you like most about your job?
I enjoy the relative freedom that comes with being able to pursue my research interests as a research faculty member. As an academic, you can meet, network, and work with great colleagues from across the world. I also enjoy meeting and working with students who take an interest in research.

What has your time in the "real world" taught you that you were unaware of as a student?
One crucial skill set I learned in the "real world" is that you really can't go far alone for long. Forging collaborations and connecting with people doing great things will take you a long way. Furthermore, it should always be the case that you also strive to have something of value to contribute. Hence, I would say that you seek to collaborate, and when you find a resourceful network, be resourceful to that network.
Continuation of Alumni Check-in

What are some skills that you learned in the Ed Psych that have served you well throughout your career?

One skill I appreciate taking away from the Ed Psych program was the research method courses I took during graduate school. My advisor, Dr. Adesope, overly emphasized doing good jobs and seeking out the best outlets for one’s research study.

What piece of advice would you offer current and future Ed Psych students?

The Ed Psych program at WSU has outstanding faculty and excellent course offerings that I would like you to take full advantage of. Remember that your program can prepare you for both academic and industry positions. The research methods courses you enroll in at WSU can prepare you for research roles in industry positions, so don’t limit your focus and potential. I will advise you to prepare yourself to be competitive for a research position at any prestigious R1 institution, as doing so means you will be competitive for all other faculty opportunities in your area of interest. Because the job opportunities that open at any given time are not guaranteed, ensure to learn how your skill sets translate to the industry (in fact, keep a second CV for that purpose, if you please). While still in your program, be more concerned about maximizing your opportunity to publish than just completing courses. (Do well in your studies! But remember that your transcripts are rarely of concern outside of academia). Don’t just complete class projects; do class projects that you can take to conferences and(or) may push for journal publication after completing your course. Collaborate with your professors, peers in school, and those you meet at conferences.

Dr. Emma McMain

Dissertation title: “Back to the relationship”: Educators explore social and emotional learning in a critical discourse community

Moment to Remember: During the second or third week of data generation for my dissertation (I was facilitating a "discourse community" for elementary educators), I looked around at the six participating teachers, all of whom were showing up with such an earnest desire to learn and share with one another, and realized how much I wanted to do this project with and for them. If there's one thing I learned from my dissertation, it's that the process and the people are always more important than the product.
Blessing Ankinrotimi

**Thesis title:** Systematic Review of Cybersecurity Pedagogical Tools

**Moment to remember:** Each step of pursuing my master's degree has been a transformative learning experience. My most memorable time was fostering connections with my peers and academic mentors. Their recommendations and guidance with my research projects resulted in remarkable breakthroughs. "Embracing diverse perspectives and collaborative learning is where transformative experiences thrive."

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Oluyemisi Oloniyo

**Thesis title:** Evaluating Early Childhood Education Programs: A Systematic Literature Review

**Moment to remember:** While reviewing the literature for my thesis, I realized that quality early childhood programs play a crucial role in laying the foundation for lifelong learning and development. Early childhood education sets the stage for building critical skills, such as language acquisition, problem-solving abilities, and social interaction, essential for success in later educational stages and life. Within these early years, children develop the foundation for cognitive abilities, self-discipline, and other factors that significantly influence their academic achievement as they progress through schooling. And educational scholars need to focus on understanding the intricacies of early childhood education, its impact on cognitive development, and its role in shaping future academic achievement.
Congratulations to Cihan Demir, Morgan Jernigan, Ola Kehinde, Tony Kirakosian, and Onur Ramazan for securing competitive summer internships!

Thao Vo named the 2023 WSU grad school dissertation fellow!

Oluwasola Oni awarded $10,000 from Microsoft to advance research in gaming and multimedia learning.

Congratulations! Dr. Shenghai Dai for winning the COE 2023 Excellence in Research Award!

Shout Out to Dr. Sola Adesope! A BIG congratulations to Sola for being appointed as a co-editor of the Educational Researcher journal! See full announcement here!
Ed Psych On the GO! at AERA

Blessing presented her research with engaging discussions during her poster session.

Kexin Jiang, Chloé Dydasco, and Portia Amoa-Danquah attending WSU COE AERA conference reception at Swissotel Chicago hotel.

Thao Vo and Rachel Wong (WSU Alumna) reunited at the Hyatt Regency after a busy morning of presentation sessions.

Chloé giving a paper presentation.

Onur Ramazan and Dustin Van Orman in Downtown Chicago heading to the conference hotel for AERA 2023 presentations.
Genna and Morgan take a trip to Chicago’s bean sculpture between sessions during the 2023 AERA conference.

Getting ready to present! Femi, Oni and Chloé!

Hanging out at the NCME fun run!

Ed Psych alumnus, faculty, and students!
Rolling Strikes at Zeppoz!

EdPsych students, faculty, and their families joined for some community building and fun amidst a busy semester.
More Conferences!

Genna Kieper presenting with one of her co-authors at the Division of Autism and Developmental Disorders International Conference in Clearwater Florida on her research related to culturally and linguistically diverse families and their perceptions of their students’ transition process and experience.

Chloé getting ready to present at NARST!