



# EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

## 2024 NEWSLETTER



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Dear Educational Psychology Community,

It is hard to believe that another academic will be starting in just a few short weeks. I can already feel the energy that comes with the anticipation of a fresh start, and I look forward to the 2024-2025 academic year.

In this newsletter, we share highlights from our 2023-2024 academic year, hoping to spark memories for our alumni, speak to our current and incoming students, or entice prospective students to learn more about our program. Our year was a big one as we graduated six PhD students! I can tell you we all felt that number in April as students started to defend!

As we look to this upcoming year, we see another group of students knocking on graduation's door with many students taking their preliminary exams this fall. This fall also brings significant changes to our leadership. We bid farewell to Dr. Michael Trevisan, our outgoing Dean of the College of Education, and warmly welcome Dr. Karen Thomas-Borwn as our new Dean. We are excited to see the new directions and innovations Dr. Thomas-Brown will bring to our community.

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We love hearing from our community, so please reach out if you have a story to share or need more information about our program.

*Dr. Kira J. Carbonneau*

# EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

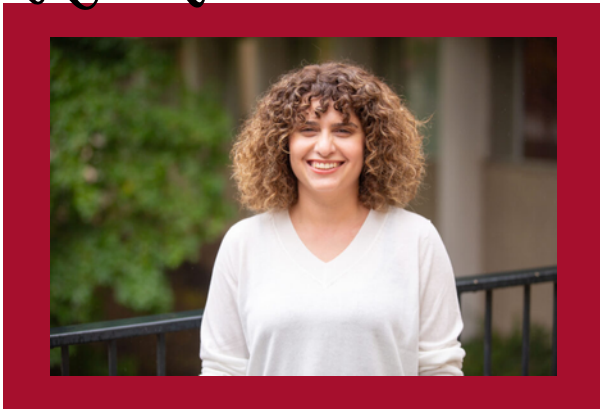
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## Congratulations!

**Dr. Robert Danielson**  
**Promotion to Associate Professor**



## Welcome



**Dr. Gamze Karaer**  
**Post-Doc in Educational Psychology**



**Dr. Oluwafemi Johnson Sunday**  
**Career-track Scholarly Assistant Professor**

## 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.



## Spotlight on Grants

Dr. Gotch: Empowering Teachers to See and Support Student Use of Crosscutting Concepts in the Life Sciences.

Picture for a moment sitting in one of the science classes you took as a student. You may find this to be a fond memory. If not, I promise we'll get through this trip down Memory Lane quickly. Chances are that your memory involves learning lots of "stuff." Principles, equations, cycles, properties... Maybe you had an opportunity to see this "stuff" come to life in a controlled lab setting, but the overarching theme was likely that science is a body of facts to learn and memorize. More and more in today's classrooms, students experience science as a process of discovery and sense-making. The teacher might present an intriguing phenomenon (e.g., an ecosystem in a bottle), and students work together to identify information they have on-hand, ask questions, apply previous understandings, and develop models to explain what is happening within the phenomenon. The [Next Generation Science Standards](#) (NGSS) include a set of crosscutting concepts (CCC) that can serve as lenses for making sense of things we observe in the world. For example, a student may apply the CCC of Stability and Change, and look for what things are changing and what things are staying the same within an ecosystem to explain populations shifts in a species of dragonfly. Or maybe a student applies the CCC of Patterns on a canyon wall to form a hypothesis about geological forces that have shaped the landscape.

In the National Science Foundation-funded [Discovery Research PreK-12](#) grant project, "Empowering Teachers to See and Support Student Use of the Crosscutting Concepts in the Life Sciences," a team of educational psychologists and science educators are merging the powerful potential of the CCCs with the powerful effects that high-quality formative assessment can have on learning. The team consists of Dr. Chad Gotch, Dr. Emma McMain, Chloe Dydasco, and Kexin Jiang, from the WSU Educational Psychology program, and Dr. Josh Premo, from Utah Valley University. The team works with North Central Educational Service District partners Dr. Andy Boyd (Ed Psych '11) and Cari Haug. Dr. Kira Carbonneau from WSU Ed Psych and Dr. Sarah Fick at Amplify contributed to earlier stages of the project.

The project has employed co-design principles to learn from teachers what challenges they face in their phenomenon-based instruction and what resources could support them. After two years of interviews, retreats, Zoom check-ins, observations of student work, and studying of curricula, the team has built the [VMC3 Resource Center](#). This open-access website focuses on the intersection of visual modeling (VM) and the sense-making lenses of the crosscutting concepts (C3). There are four types of teacher supports within the center. Modeling Exercise Snapshots illustrate phenomena that may serve as seeds for scientific investigation. The Visual Library of Modeling Elements helps students get over the hump of "how can I draw this?", so they can create visual models of scientific phenomena. Formative Assessment Quick Prompts cultivate deeper student thinking and use of the crosscutting concepts, through targeted questions, self-assessment checks, and feedback stems. Vignettes demonstrate integration of the tools in a classroom lesson.

As the project enters its final year, the team will work with partner teachers to identify opportunities to implement VMC3 tools, and collect data on the impact the tools have on teacher practice and student learning. The team will also hold a workshop at the annual conference of the Washington Science Teachers Association to share the VMC3 with teachers and help the grant work reach classrooms around the state.

# Learn More About Our Research Center and Labs

**Learning Performance and Research Center**

<https://labs.wsu.edu/u/lprc/>

**The Psychometric Laboratory**

<https://labs.wsu.edu/u/psychometric/>

**MERIT Lab**

<https://labs.wsu.edu/u/merit/>

**Large-Scale Data Lab**

<https://labs.wsu.edu/lsd/>

## Suggestions and Considerations for Navigating the Job Market With Your Values Intact

Dr. Emma McMain



A year ago, whenever I mentioned that I was about to go on the job market, I could anticipate the common reactions: a sympathetic grimace, a low whistle, a “good luck, it’s rough out there!” Entering the job market, like reading Reviewer 2’s comments, has become the boogie-man punchline to many academic jokes. On the flip side, just search “navigating the job market” on LinkedIn to find a torrent of well-polished tips on how it’s really not that bad as long as you keep a positive attitude. In my limited experience, applying for jobs is neither the boogie man nor a shiny how-to guide: it is an emotionally complicated and time-consuming rollercoaster that can also provide a grateful opportunity to pause and self-reflect.

As many in our Ed Psych community know, I applied to fifteen tenure-track positions in the fall of 2023 and received an offer right before winter break—which I ultimately accepted—from the University of Arkansas. The tumultuous weeks of decision-making were probably the hardest part, as my partner and I weighed numerous factors, talked with friends and family, and imagined various paths toward unknown futures. Here, I offer a set of tips and ponderings (the abridged version, scavenged and synthesized from many wonderful mentors) that might help others through the process of searching for, applying for, interviewing for, and potentially accepting academic jobs.

### Continuation of Suggestions and Considerations for Navigating the Job Market With Your Values Intact

#### Searching



- Signing up for HigherEd Job alerts was my #1 tool for finding job openings. You receive daily emails with job listings based on your selected preferences, and I would recommend this to anyone on the job market!
- I love a good spreadsheet and suggest making one as soon as you begin searching for jobs. My spreadsheet included columns for Job Title, Link, Location, Required Materials, Status/To-Do, and Date Due/Submitted.
- Try to find a balance where you aren't wasting your time applying to jobs that are a poor fit, but you also aren't being so narrow that you miss out on a "stretch" job that could be potentially great.

#### Applying



- Ask your mentors for examples of their past cover letters, research statements, and teaching statements. Do not try to replicate these entirely (be yourself!), but it helps to see a range and get an idea of what information to include.
- Ask people what it's like to be on a search committee. What are common red and green flags in a candidate? What helps an application make it to the "read fully" pile after the first scan?
- Use each application as a chance to keep revising your materials. This could mean reorganizing, adding or (re)moving information, and including specific details about each job. Show the search committee that you've learned about their program and position and aren't submitting the same cookie-cutter materials to every job.
- Find subtle ways to show who you are. Be careful of your tone (stay professional), but you can still illuminate your personality and values through word choice and highlighted materials.
- Be careful of auto-fills on job applications. Sometimes the software will fill in fields based on your uploaded CV and get it totally wrong...always read through your application carefully before hitting submit.

*Congratulations!*

A big congratulations to Dr. Emma McMMain, who will transition to her new tenure-track position at the University of Arkansas.

### Interviewing



- Remember you are also interviewing them! Instead of feeling like you're on trial, think of interviews as a mutual getting-to-know-you session (even though the power is not equal, it is not all in the hands of the interviewer)
- If you are confused by a question, ask for elaboration or clarification or repeat the question back to the interviewers before answering to make sure you understand what they are asking.
- Answer thoroughly but also know when to stop talking (I admittedly struggle with this). End with a sense of finality rather than trailing off with "if that makes sense" or "so yeah."
- You can prepare your answers ahead of time with bullet points or practicing but don't read off a script.
- Be prepared with questions to ask the interviewers. For my on-campus visit, I jotted down questions for each person on my meeting schedule. These can be logistical ("What is a typical class size?" "What kinds of opportunities are there for internal seed grants?") or more abstract ("What do you most value about your program?").
- For in-person visits, pay attention to how you feel in the new environment (other than the normal nerves). What is the vibe like? Is this a place, and are these people you can see yourself aligning with?

### Accepting



- Remember there are many reasons for a rejection that have nothing to do with your worth. As hard as it may be, try not to get discouraged. You may be too similar to others already in the program, you may have a niche research focus the program can't support (better to know now than later), or you may simply lack experience (the catch-22 of being an early career scholar).
- When you do get an offer, don't feel guilty or like a "bad academic" for weighing multiple factors in your decision—including family, location, and other relational or emotional considerations. Salary and prestige are not everything, even though these tend to be highlighted by the status quo as "can't say no to that" factors.
- For those who tend to overthink (raising my own hand here), recognize that sometimes we overanalyze a situation as an attempt to gain control over something we can't control, or to somehow unearth new information that is simply unavailable. Challenge yourself to be comfortable with the unknowns that come with saying yes or no.
- I believe most paths are not cleanly "right" or "wrong," they are just paths. Huge decisions like accepting a job can feel monumental and life-changing (as they are!), but don't forget that so much of our lives are shaped by the thousands of tiny, seemingly insignificant decisions we make on a daily basis. Ask yourself, "if I make this BIG decision to accept or decline the offer, what small decisions will subsequently open up or shut down? What kinds of cumulative daily choices will be available, encouraged, and/or prohibited by taking this job?"
- Surround yourself by a strong support network in and out of academia, and return/pass on the support when you can!

## Support our Students



### Make A Gift Today!

Thank you for your generosity toward Washington State University students, faculty, and staff! Please use the tabs below to navigate to the areas you wish to support. You may also use the Search function to find...

 WSU Foundation /

[Click here](#)



**Giving back is just a click a way!**

You can support our students journey by donating ANY amount to our Educational Psychology Excellence Fund.

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## Student Representatives

### Outgoing Student Representative Morgan Jernigan

Serving as one of the Educational Psychology program student representatives for the past two years has been a fantastic experience. During this time, I acted as a bridge between my peers in

the program and our faculty, ensuring that student concerns and faculty insights were effectively communicated. This experience not only helped me to sharpen my communication skills but also allowed me to foster meaningful relationships with my program-mates and faculty members. As an extroverted person who likes getting to know the people around me, I gravitate toward positions like the student representative. I previously served in a similar position at my previous institution, and I felt that I would be able to bring my experience to this role within the WSU Educational Psychology program. I also really liked serving in this role because I could represent students who might have been nervous or scared to voice their opinions and concerns. Being in a graduate program where you are faced with some stressful and difficult things, I wanted to be able to alleviate some of that stress by being available to meet with students to address their concerns. Additionally, I brought other topics or discussions to our faculty members that I was observing within the program and my fellow students, which allowed for open discussion and improvements for everyone.



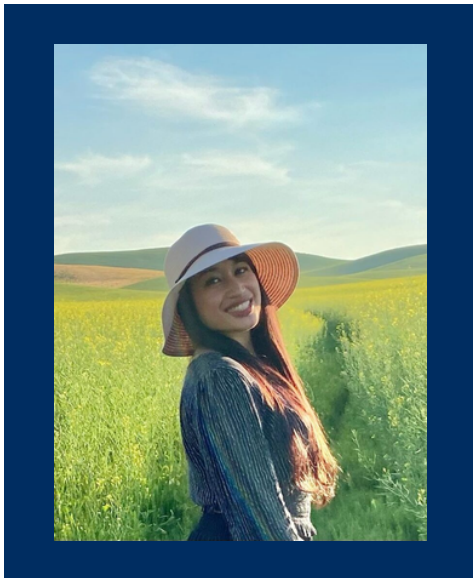
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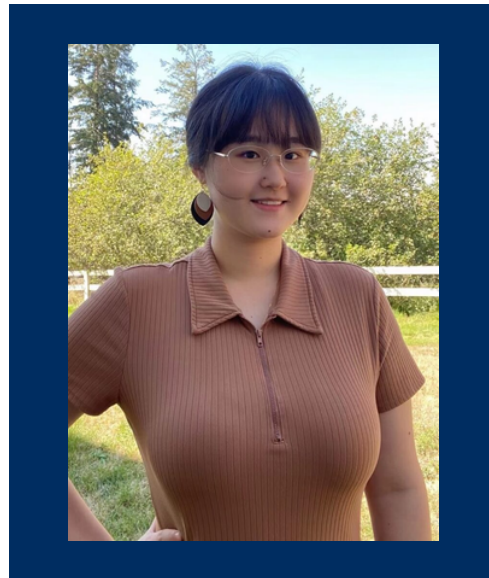
## Student Representatives Continuation

My last duty, which might be the most important and a personal favorite of mine, was to plan our semester social events! Although many of us take classes together or see each other during our bi-weekly seminar, many students who are earlier in their program don't get very many opportunities to spend time with students who are farther along in their program. These socials allow everyone to gather and spend some quality time catching up! I also love these socials because we have gotten into a potluck tradition where everyone brings a little taste of home, whether that's a traditional dish from where we are from or just something yummy to share! Although I'm sad that my time serving in this position is over, I am so happy to pass the torch to our new Senior Representative, Chloe Dydasco, and our new Junior Representative, Kexin Jiang!

**Senior Representative  
Chloé Dydasco**



**Junior Representative  
Kexin Jiang**



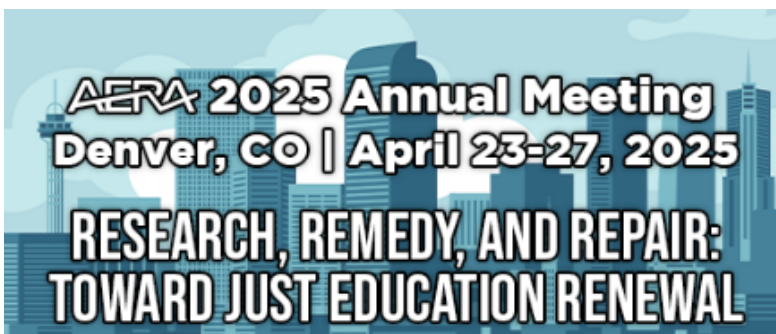
## 2025 Conferences

National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME)

2025 Annual Meeting

April 23-26, 2025

Denver, CO





# Advisory Board

In 2024, the WSU Educational Psychology Program established its first advisory board. The board's main purpose is to monitor our program's overall progress, stay informed about what skills are necessary to meet our communities' challenges, address issues of concern, and possibly develop strategies to address these concerns. We invited five diverse stakeholders to our board! Meet our advisory board.



**Dr. Benjamin Heddy is an associate professor at the University of Oklahoma in the Science of Psychology, Data, and Research in Education program. In June 2023, he was named associate dean for research and graduate education. Dr. Heddy received his Ph.D. in Urban Education from the University of Southern California. Currently, he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on the topics of motivation, cognition, learning theory, human development, and research methods.**

**Dr. Sara Finney has a dual appointment at James Madison University. As Associate Director of the Center for Assessment and Research Studies, she oversees the creation of initiatives to emphasize using assessment results for learning improvement. As a professor of Graduate Psychology, she teaches statistics and measurement topics for JMU's Assessment & Measurement PhD program and Quantitative Psychology MA program. Her research involves the study of test-taking motivation and emotions, the incorporation of implementation fidelity data during the outcomes assessment process, and the application of latent variable modeling techniques to understand the measurement of psychoeducational constructs. External to JMU, she serves on editorial boards for scholarly journals and technical advisory committees that focus on measurement and educational effectiveness.**



**Dr. Erin Raab is the Chief Strategy and Impact Officer for the Vital Network. Collaborating with states, districts, and school leaders to ensure schools are places where educators can be well and teach well. Working to solve the educator shortage crisis by helping our schools retain the educators we already have. Dr. Raab is a mission-driven servant leader with a deep commitment to social justice and active anti-racism: I bring people together across lines of difference to collaborate in service of equity in education.**

# Advisory Board

**Dr. Patrick Meyer** manages the team of psychometricians, statistical analysts, and project managers involved in the district division of NWEA. This team conducts psychometric research for assessments such as MAP Growth and MAP Reading Fluency. His research interests include IRT, psychometric software design, and the psychometric characteristics of teaching measures. Dr. Meyer is the inventor and lead developer of jMetrik, an open-source software program used in over 20 countries. He has authored two books and published over 20 articles in peer-reviewed journals such as the Journal of Educational Measurement, Applied Psychological Measurement, and Educational and Psychological Measurement.

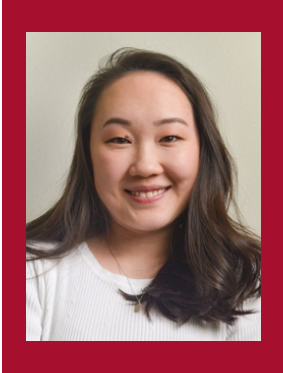


**Candiya Mann** has 20 years of experience in social science research, program evaluation, survey design, and data analysis; Candiya specializes in helping clients tell their stories with data. Candiya's clients range from federal grant recipients to state agencies, community colleges, and community nonprofit organizations. In the past 10 years, she has served as the independent evaluator for over 15 grant recipients, many for several grant cycles in a wide variety of National Science Foundation grants (ATE, TUES, ITEST, IGERT, IUSE), as well as Department of Labor TAACCCT grants.

# Welcome

and **Thank you** for supporting our  
Educational Psychology Program

*Congratulations*  
2023-2024 Graduates



**Dr. Thao Vo**

Dissertation: Ecological Framework for Item Response of a Youth Risk and Needs Assessment. Dr. Vo will continue this important work in her new position at the Center for Measurement Justice as a Critical Quantitative Methodologist Fellow

**Dr. Oni Samuel Oluwasola**

Dissertation: Concept Mapping and Reflection Prompts on Chemistry Learning Outcomes



**Dr. Landon Charlo**

Dissertation: Indigenous Program Evaluation Approaches, Frameworks and Models: A Systematic Review



**Dr. Samuel Aina**

Dissertation: The Interactional Effects of Pretraining and Signaling on Student Learning



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*Congratulations*  
2023-2024 Graduates

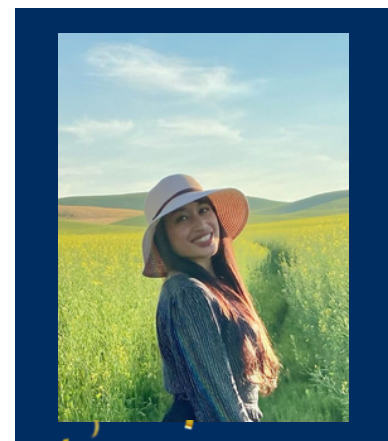
## **Dr. Oluwafemi Johnson Sunday**

Dissertation: Optimizing the Efficacy of  
Concept Map Feedback on Learners'  
Cognitive Processes and Motivation



## **Dr. Olasunkanmi Kehinde**

Dissertation: Investigation of Q-Matrix  
Designs with Hierarchical Cognitive  
Attributes for Learning Progression of  
Longitudinal Diagnostic Classification  
Model



## **Chl e Dydasco**


Thesis: The Effect of Choice of Different  
Concept Map Formats on Chemistry Learning  
and Motivation

*Congratulations!*



### Accomplishments & Awards!

Congratulations on Securing Summer Internships go to:

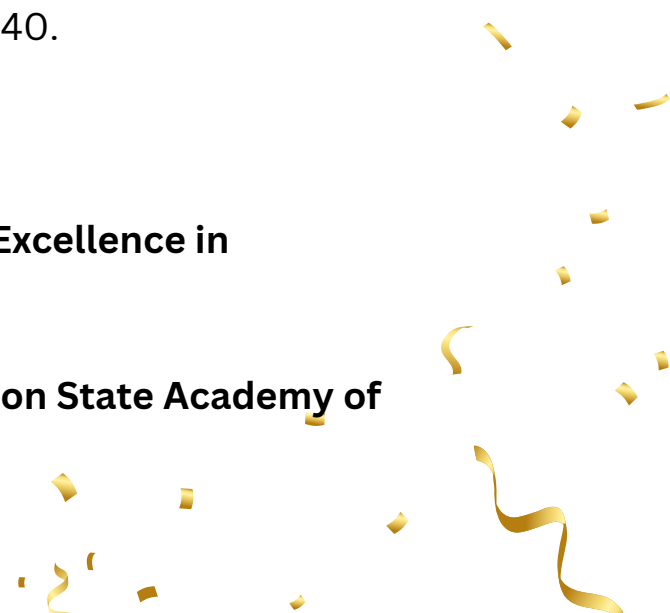
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- **Cihan Demir: Cambium Assessment**
    - Working on Large Language Models, Machine Learning, & Artificial Intelligence in Assessment
  - **Tony Kirakosian: Educational Testing Service (ETS)**
    - Ida Lawrence Summer Internship Program
    - Continuing work on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) study examining how opportunities to learn predict mathematics achievement
  - **Onur Ramazan: Learning Partnership**
    - Working as a Quantitative Research Fellow

*Congratulations*

*Award Winning Research!*

**Drs. Thao Vo, with Brian French, WSU IREACH and Huntington Medical Research Institutes researchers** win APA 2024 Award: “Examining Validity of CVLT-II SF Scores Among American Indian Adults: The Strong Heart Study,” has been selected as one of the three recipients of the APA Assessment Community Student Poster Award. This is a joint award, organized by APA Divisions 5, 12 (Assessment Psychology Section), and 40.

Congratulations to our faculty!

- **Dr. Chad Gotch was awarded the 2023-2024 Excellence in Teaching Award!**
  - **Dr. Brian French was elected to the Washington State Academy of Sciences Board!**
- 

### Accomplishments & Awards!

Congratulations on Securing Scholarships go to:



- **Kexin Jiang: College of Education Scholarship**
- **Morgan Jernigan 2024 Arnold Green Endowed Scholarship**

Way to go

Congratulations!

- **Portia Amoa-Danquah's** first publication and sole authorship was “ An Exploration of Imposter Syndrome in STEM and STEM Self-Efficacy in Adolescent Learners from a Teacher’s Perspective,” published in the European Journal of STEM Education.
- **Dr. Femi Sunday** was chosen as one of seven Journal of Engineering Education Star Reviewers for 2023. This award places him in the top 1% of over 360 reviewers, highlighting the quality and constructive nature of his feedback.
- **Genna Kieper** will begin a position as the Director of Impact Innovation at the University of Cincinnati in August.
- **Dr. Thao Vo** earned the 2024 Harriet B. Rigas Award.
- **Redempter Nzuma** won second place in Arts & Education Sciences at the WSU GPSA Research Exposition.
- **Dr. Nathaniel Hunsu, an alumnus** of our program, earned tenure at the University of Georgia.
- **Dr. Michael Trevisan** completed his tenure as Dean of the COE and will be rejoining the educational psychology program. Welcome Back!

*HAPPY  
Retirement*



After a career dedicated to advancing the field of educational assessment and statistical methodology, Mr. Austin announced his retirement this summer. Mr. Austin's research has primarily focused on measurement invariance, response styles, psychometric methods, and methods for identifying and correcting sources of non-invariance in predictive equations that produce test bias or differential prediction. We will miss his quick wit and sense of humor! Thank you, Bruce, for always lighting up the hallway.

**Check  
out the  
fun  
pictures  
below**

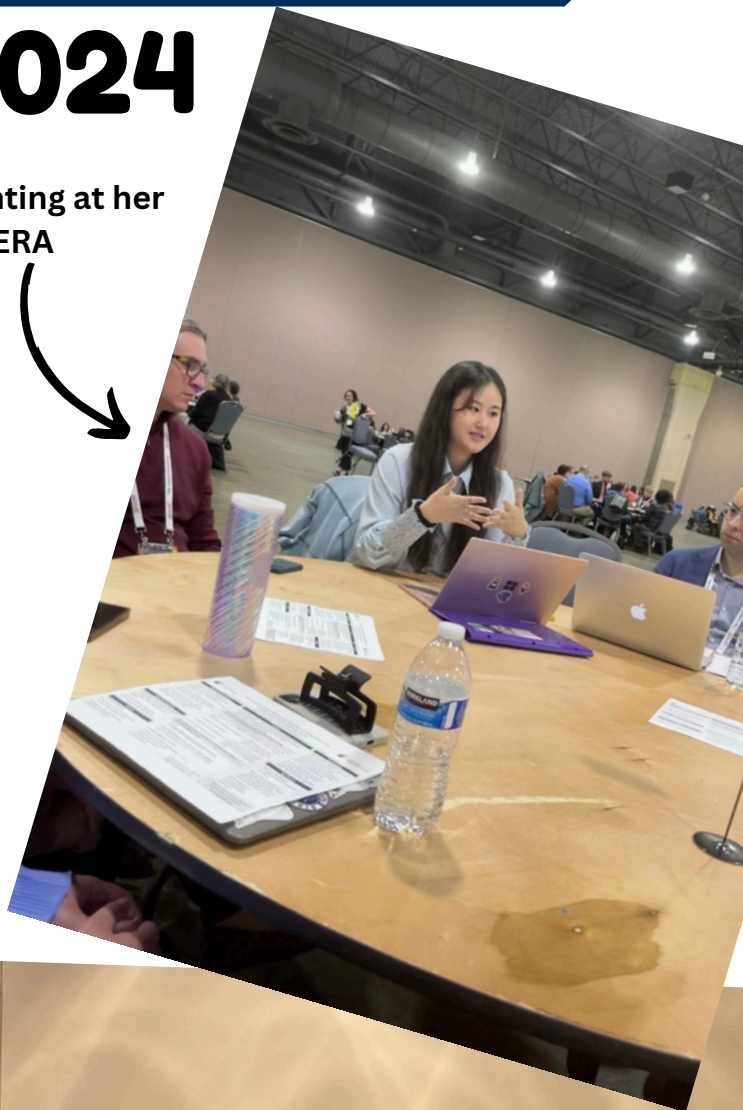


## Conferences 2024



Dai and Dongni Guo (WSU alum) on the streets of Philly at AERA.

Kexin presenting at her 1st AERA



Ed Psy Students and Faculty at AERA!





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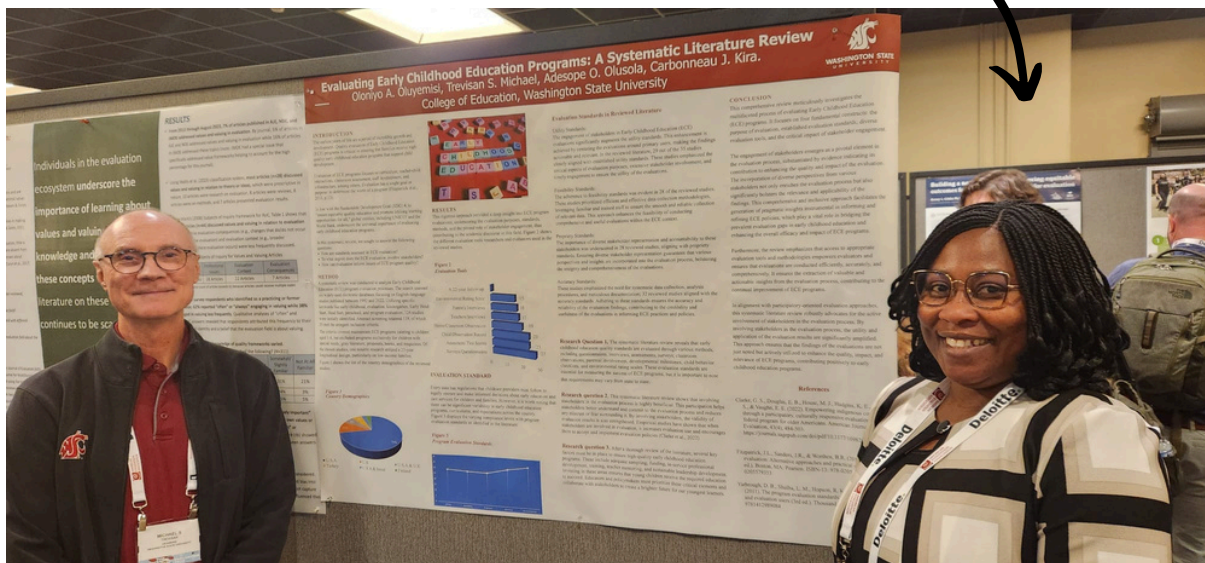


Debbie at her 1st AERA!



Dai, Morgan, and Tony on the streets of Philly at AERA.

Dr. Trevisan and Yemisi presenting at AEA!



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Out and about at AERA

Femi, Dai, Gan, and  
Robert



Dai and Thao



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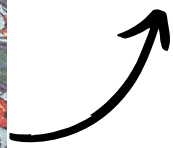
Kexin, Chloe, and Dai.



Dai and Brian at the NCME Run



Dai and Emma at AERA!



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**Dai, Dustin (WSU alum) and Thao**



**Leisure time of AERA: Kexin, Tony, Femi, Chloe, and Morgan met up at the LOVE sign !**

**Thao being interviewed at AERA!**

**Kexin, Ola, and Portia at AERA!**



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Ed Psych students and faculty at the COE reception at AERA



WSU Officially Alumni Thao & Rachel: Dr. Thao Vo and Dr. Rachel Wong (program alum) reunited at AERA. This year, both are officially graduates of the WSU Educational Psychology Doctoral Program.

# Graduation



Landon and Thao at Graduation



Brian and Thao at Graduation

Femi and Sola at Graduation



Debbie at Graduation



# Earning Awards & Doing Research



Femi dissertation defense



WSU Graduate Student Award Thao: Dr. Thao Vo presented with WSU Association for Faculty Women 2024 Harriett B. Rigas Award for Outstanding Doctoral Student, nominated by her faculty mentor, supporter, and advocate, Dr. Brian French.



ETS Orientation: Tony contributed to a group discussion about how the ETS Mindset "Serving Together" is important to facilitating just and equitable educational assessment.