



Remarkable Outreach

Three recent conferences and lectures not only connected music educators, testing scholars and professionals, and students with the College, but also advanced scholarship and experience into practice.

Music Education's Role in the Community



The New Horizons Band impacted conference attendees.

Mary Cohen's interest in prison choirs and Don Coffman's experiences with the New Horizons Band for seniors served as focal points to the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) conference, "Arts Education in the Community: What Roles Do CIC Music Education Programs Have?"

The conference, hosted by Music Education professors Cohen and Coffman, drew music doctoral students and music education faculty members from across campus and nine other Big Ten institutions.

Mindy Essex, a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University, said that in addition to networking opportunities, she enjoyed witnessing a New Horizons Band performance.

"It was a wonderful experience to see how much the seniors enjoy what they're doing," she said.

Test-Based Accountability Comes of Age



Koretz describes the College as the "Mecca of educational measurement."

Testing scholars and leaders gathered for the annual William E. Coffman Lecture featuring keynote speaker Harvard Education Professor Daniel Koretz, associate director of the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. Koretz led a discussion on test-based accountability and described The University of Iowa College of Education as the "Mecca of educational measurement."

Koretz, whom Professor Emeritus Robert Forsyth described as "one of the most highly-regarded educational measurement and assessment experts in the United States," said the increasingly high stakes

nature of the *No Child Left Behind* testing era has placed increased pressure on schools to perform and may lead to biased results.

"We don't know if holding schools accountable helps students learn more," Koretz said, adding that it's difficult to identify the impact of human responses to high-stakes testing, which can include schools attempting to change who is being tested to skew results, instructors coaching students to perform better on tests, and cheating. "You simply can't trust scores from high-stakes testing."

Current Challenges in Educational Testing

"Testing has long been a part of our educational system and in recent years has taken on great importance—some might say even too much so," said Robert R. Brennan, director of the Center for Advanced Studies in Measurement and Assessment and coordinator of the biennial CASMA and ACT, Inc. conference.

This year's conference on testing's current trends and challenges featured three panels—one representing the media, one representing test users, and the third representing test makers—all responding to the same questions and issues.

"In some cases, the differences in perspectives serve as reality checks for each panel as to how others view the same issues," said Cynthia Schmeiser (MA '73/PhD '83), president of ACT's Educational Division.

In addition to the panel discussions, the 200 testing professionals and students who attended the conference heard from keynote speaker Jim Popham, professor emeritus at UCLA. Conference-goers also attended sessions ranging in topic from higher education accountability to computerized performance testing simulations.

Remarkable Firsts

Iowa's Longest Serving Superintendent

Dennis M. Bishop (PhD '84) is the longest serving active K-12 superintendent in Iowa. He was also the youngest in the state when he accepted his first superintendent position 34 years ago at 28 years of age.



Dennis Bishop (PhD '84)

Now in his 40th year in education, Bishop's career includes working as a teacher in LaCrosse, Wisc.; as a principal in Minnesota; and serving as superintendent in the Iowa districts of Morning Sun, Highland of Riverside-Ainsworth, Dallas Center-Grimes, as well as Kingman, Kansas. He is currently in his ninth year at the Murray (Iowa) Community School District.

"Dennis sincerely wants to help children, especially those who might otherwise fall through the cracks," said Dennis Jeter, Murray School Board president. "He is a generous person, anonymously giving to students and families out of his own pocket. He is a positive, enthusiastic person who truly supports public education for rural schools."

Area Education Agency 14 in Creston, Iowa, selected him Superintendent of the Year in 2004. He also received the Iowa Community Betterment Leadership Award.

"Dennis is a collaborative leader who focuses on the needs of students," said Connie Maxson, an administrator at AEA 14. "He has worked with his board and staff to build an infrastructure that promotes the success of all students. His work on behalf of school improvement, including evaluation, professional growth, networks, and opportunities for collaboration make him an outstanding superintendent."

Bishop explains the key to his success as simply having a love for children.

"I try to get involved with the students, go into the classrooms and read to them, play with them, learn their likes and dislikes, and attend lots and lots of ball games. I enjoy what I am doing year after year."

Remarkable Research

Iowa Educational Research and Evaluation Association Recognizes College Programs, Alumni

Judy Jeffrey, director of the Iowa Department of Education, spoke at the annual IEREA conference in Iowa City on the challenges facing Iowa's schools in transitioning all high school students, regardless of race, gender, or socio-economic status, to college.

Jeffrey noted positive steps Iowa educators are taking, including The University of Iowa College of Education Belin-Blank Center's effort to provide Advanced Placement courses online.

"It's not all about school size. It's about student opportunity. That's what the conversation has to be," Jeffrey said.

IEREA is a group dedicated to promoting research and evaluation in education,

exchanging educational research and evaluation methodologies, and encouraging communications and cooperation among educational researchers and evaluators.

IEREA's president is **Jon Twing** (MA '89, PhD '93), executive vice president of Pearson Educational Measurement. This year's conference, titled "Success for All: Access, Connections, and Transitions," drew approximately 100 educators and researchers from across Iowa.

In addition to Jeffrey's talk, conference goers had a chance to attend poster sessions and additional topical presentations.

The annual Distinguished Research Award went to **Sarah Hagge** (MA '03) and **Kris Waltman** (BS '83, PhD '95) for their



Waltman (L) and Hagge receive annual Distinguished Research Award.

paper, "Teachers' Perceptions of NCLB: A Multi-Year Study." Waltman is associate director of the College's Center for Evaluation and Assessment.

Four Programs' Faculty Productivity Rank in Nation's Top 10

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* ranked four University of Iowa College of Education programs as some of America's most productive in its 2007 Research Universities Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index. The FSP Index measures the scholarly productivity of faculty based on their publications, citations, federal grant dollars received, and honorary awards won. Programs ranked in the nation's top 10 include:

- Education Evaluation and Research – #6
- Higher Education/Higher Education Administration – #7
- Counselor Education – #8
- Foundations of Education – #8

"One of the greatest challenges for academia has been finding a way to measure and evaluate scholarly—as distinct from teaching—productivity," says Lawrence Martin, Ph.D., developer of the FSP Index. "The FSP Index allows university leadership for the first time to get a clear picture of the comparative scholarly strength and vitality of their doctoral programs relative to others on an annual basis."

In its second year of analysis, the FSP Index has expanded its data-gathering program to include information from nearly 200,000 faculty members based at 354 institutions and representing 118 academic disciplines in nearly 7,300 Ph.D. programs throughout the country.

"For universities, the information is critical in the strategic planning process. For faculty, it is a benchmark for the advancement of their scholarly work. And for consumers," continues Martin, "the FSP Index provides valuable comparative information in terms of academic quality as they consider where to invest in a doctoral education."

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