



The Southwest Educational
Research Association News

Fall 2002

Fall-Winter

Make plans now to attend the . . .

SERA
2003
Annual Conference
in
San Antonio

St. Anthony Wyndham Hotel
300 E. Travis, San Antonio, Texas
(800-WYNDHAM)

February 13 - 15, 2003

Register Online Today

www.sera-edresearch.org

Conference rate available until Jan. 22, 2003!

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St. Anthony Wyndham

From the President

Randall Schumacker

The conference in Austin last year had one of the highest attendance rates in SERA's 25 year history, and by all accounts, was an overwhelming success. The upcoming conference in San Antonio received a record number of paper submissions thanks to a newly developed *online paper submission* process by Kyle Roberts. Conference attendance will also undoubtedly rival our previous conference attendance rate because of a newly developed *online payment process* by Vince Paredes. The paper sessions are getting better every year thanks to the quality of paper submissions. Division chairs are working hard at getting reviews completed in a timely fashion and the Program Chair is organizing the conference to minimize any conflicts with presentations. The council members have attracted more sponsors this year, which means expanded amenities for conference participants. Come, network, and enjoy meeting other graduate students and faculty from universities and school districts in the southwest region of the United States. Come hear the Invited Presidential Speaker, Dr. Cathleen Norris, President of the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE), and attend the reception afterwards that includes *free food and drinks*.

The conference will include paper sessions in educational administration, educational leadership, curriculum and instruction, educational research, teacher education issues, counseling and special education, and graduate seminar papers. Participants are as diverse as the paper session topics. There is something for everyone to enjoy and discuss with fellow colleagues and students. Don't miss the graduate student outstanding paper and travel awards. Exhibit tables will display information and materials by many of our sponsors. They will be located across from the registration desk. Stop by, talk with sponsors, and check out the books, journals, flyers, and brochures on display.

The Executive Council met in October for two days to conduct official SERA business and finalize plans for the upcoming conference. Approval of the online paper submission process and online registration payment process were two major items passed by council members. In addition, the council recommended the development of an online evaluation form to be used by

SERA conference participants to provide feedback to the council after each conference. Registration fees were increased and some monies will be allocated to the SERA Foundation fund to eventually provide graduate student scholarships. Nominations were taken for president-elect and member-at-large positions for an upcoming membership vote. Expenditures for SERA logo pens and pads plus a conference bag were approved.

As this year's president, I will continue the success of SERA and look for additional ways to improve the scope of service to members of SERA. I will strive to make SERA attractive to practitioners, graduate students, and faculty who want to share their ideas and research. Bookmark the web page for SERA at: <http://www.sera-edresearch.org>. Use this site to check on your paper submission status, pre-register and pay online registration fees, link to conference hotel information, access the online membership directory, and evaluate the conference. See you in San Antonio!

Looking Forward to 2003

In 2003 the annual meeting is at the St. Anthony Hotel in San Antonio, Texas on February 13th, 14th, and 15th. San Antonio is an exciting town, and the River Walk is a special place to visit. SERA membership continues to grow so make plans now to involve your graduate students and colleagues in the SERA 2003 conference. Come have some fun and bring someone!

You don't want to miss it!

To become a member of SERA or to become more involved in the organization, you can access our website at

www.sera-edresearch.org,

or contact the membership chair, Vince Paredes, at vparedes@evalsoft.com.

To register for the conference:

(1) Go to the SERA Webpage at <http://www.sera-edresearch.org/>, (2) Click on the Conference button at the top, and (3) Choose Conference Registration from the menu at left.

Upcoming Conference Highlights from the Program Chair and President-Elect

Ron E. McBride

What could be better than spending Valentine's Day in San Antonio? How about spending Valentine's Day in San Antonio with SERA friends and colleagues at the historic St. Anthony Hotel! Building upon the momentum established at last year's 25th anniversary celebration in Austin, the 26th annual SERA meeting looks to be yet another big event. The 2003 Division Chairs received over 180 proposals--one of the highest submission levels ever.

Randy Schumacker continues his hard work attracting new sponsors for the conference. LEA and Riverside have already committed, and several others are pending. As you circulate through the exhibit area at the conference, please be sure to thank our sponsors. Without their generous support we could not hold many of the functions we presently enjoy.

The 2003 annual meeting is from February 13th (Thursday) to the 15th (Saturday) at the St. Anthony Hotel located at 300 East Travis Street. Valet Parking is \$16 at the hotel garage, or \$12 for self parking at the surface lot across the street. The conference room rate is \$129 per night plus tax. To get the conference rate, book early by calling 800-WYNDHAM or locally at (210) 227-4392. Let them know you are an SERA attendee.

In addition to excellent research presentations, symposia, and workshop activities, a number of other special events are being planned. The Friday luncheon will be held in the Anacacho Ballroom, a lovely balconied facility. Graduate students should take special note of the luncheon as several graduate student travel awards will be given out to help defray hotel costs. Winners must be present at the Conference Luncheon and must stay in the conference hotel. Two awards for outstanding papers are given each year: an Outstanding Graduate Student Paper award and an Outstanding Paper Award. So don't forget to submit this year. The regular member winner of the Outstanding Paper Award receives travel support to attend the American Educational Research Association meeting in April to present the paper. A submissions box will be located at the registration desk.

This year's Invited Speaker is Dr. Cathleen A. Norris from the University of North Texas who will talk about integrating technology into the classroom (see brief bio below). Look for announcements about the reception immediately following Dr. Norris' presentation.

Excellent research and scholarly presentations, great collegiality, wonderful ambience and the opportunity to spend St. Valentine's Day in beautiful San Antonio--who could ask for more?! **See you in February!**

Brief Bio: Dr. Cathleen Norris, 2003 Invited Speaker

Dr. Cathleen A. Norris is a Professor in the Department of Technology and Cognition at the University of North Texas (Norris@unt.edu). Dr. Norris' efforts in research, teaching and service all have a common focus: integrating learning technologies more effectively into classrooms, K-12 as well as post-secondary education. In the Snapshot Survey Project, Dr. Norris surveyed educators around the country to better understand their use of, beliefs about, and needs for technology in the classroom (<http://snapshotsurvey.org>). Dr. Norris is exploring design guidelines that address the unique needs of children in the WebKids and FindResearch Projects. She has also developed strategies to help educators extract value from the research literature on technology in education. Dr. Norris is currently the co-President of ISTE, the International Society for Technology in Education (<http://www.iste.org>).



Enjoy a stroll along the
PASEO DEL RIO
(River Walk).

Don't forget to register early!



Southwest Educational
Research Association
2003
Annual Meeting

February 13-15, 2003
at the
St. Anthony Wyndham Hotel
San Antonio, Texas

Please Post

Announcements

Please Post

- Register *early* for the 2003 Annual Meeting at www.sera-edresearch.org.
- **Deadline** for hotel reservations at the conference rate is **January 22, 2003** for the 2003 Annual Meeting. Access the hotel at <http://www.stanthonyhotel.com/> or by phone at **800-WYNDHAM** (San Antonio @ 210.227.4392). **You must ask for the SERA Conference discount!**
- The Conference Luncheon will be held on Friday. Make plans to attend! Graduate students attending the Conference Luncheon and staying in the conference hotel will be eligible for a chance to win one of the Graduate Student Travel Awards.
- Attend the Invited Speaker's presentation and join us for a wonderful reception immediately after the presentation.
- **Geoff Cumming of La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, will speak Saturday morning on using Excel software to teach and on using effect sizes and confidence intervals in research!**
- Graduate students must submit their papers to Ron McBride (rmac@tamu.edu) by January 26, 2003 to enter the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper competition. Please include all institutional contact information. Winner of the award and the \$200 stipend will be announced at the Friday Luncheon!

SERA 2003

Featuring a major sponsored reception with food and drink for conference attendees on Friday evening. Plan to stay on-site for

The GALA EVENT!

Janet Ray, UNT, Receives Award for the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper

Janet Ray, a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of North Texas, received a certificate and \$200 for the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award at the 2002 conference luncheon. A brief abstract of her paper, **Meta-Analytic Thinking: Using ESCI to Synthesize Effects Across Studies**, follows:

The practical significance, usefulness, and generalizability of research has for decades hinged on a finding of statistical significance. Voices of reform have called for the use of effect sizes, confidence intervals, and meta-analytic synthesis of research as a way to judge the practical significance and generalizability of a discovery. Researchers are called upon to think meta-analytically: looking at their results in a new way, thinking reflectively, and interpreting them in the global context of past studies.

This paper discusses the role of meta-analysis in the development of knowledge and the additional power of

meta-analytically examining confidence intervals for effects. The *Exploratory Software for Confidence Intervals* (ESCI), see www.psy.latrobe.edu.au/esci, is introduced as a means of synthesizing confidence intervals for effects from past research literature, the effect confidence interval for a present study, and the final pooling of a present study with prior research. By synthesizing effect sizes, and the CIs around them, past research findings reveal latent knowledge and theory that might never have been discovered if the studies had been considered individually. Although more than half of the research in a hypothetical study found no statistically significant effect, meta-analytic synthesis of effect sizes (and CIs around the effects) resulted in a different conclusion. This is the power of meta-analytic thinking: conflicting literature may yield a reasonable effect size, with remarkable precision, when examined meta-analytically. In addition, ESCI graphically reveals that the precision of an estimate grows from meta-analytic treatment of data. Confidence interval widths shrink as data is pooled, allowing a visual appreciation of precision.

A Note from the Executive Director

Bruce Thompson

What is SERA about? It's about (not necessarily in this exact order): (1) serious scholarship; (2) having fun; (3) making friendships that can be renewed at each annual meeting; and (4) providing a safe and nurturing environment for students to learn and grow. At every annual meeting I have learned something new, including the recent 25th annual meeting in Austin.

We started small. In fact, one of our first meetings was in San Antonio in the same hotel where we will meet around Valentine's Day in 2003. The St. Anthony Hotel is within walking distance from the River Walk (visit the hotel via the web at <http://www.stanthonyhotel.com/>). Our luncheon at that annual meeting in San Antonio many years ago was served in a small room in the basement. There were 3 waiters serving sandwiches to about a dozen of us. They were not very happy about our small size or our modest banquet order!

Since then we have grown and done new things. Some of these developments include:

- Nine or so "one-night room scholarships" for rooms of students are paid directly to the conference hotel;

these are given by random drawing during the Friday luncheon to students (a) staying in the hotel and (b) attending the SERA-subsidized luncheon;

- A student Outstanding Paper Award (with cash stipend!) is presented; and
- An AERA Outstanding Paper Award is made, and with SERA financial support (\$500), this paper is presented at AERA as part of the panel of Distinguished Papers from the various state and regional research associations.

In addition, our unofficial SERA one-person Entertainment Committee, Kathy Mittag from UTSA, usually comes up with an interesting music or dancing venue (or two or three) each evening.

The 25th annual meeting in Austin was one of our largest ever. However, we anticipate SERA 2003 "on the river" may be even bigger. Plan on attending in 2003, and bring a student or a colleague.

Better yet, bring 5 or 10!



Fall 2002

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER

The annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association is an ideal place to enhance your professional skills, such as presenting your research and learning about new advances in educational research, in a supportive, non-threatening environment. In addition, SERA is a great place to form new friendships and make acquaintances that will enhance your network of colleagues.

SERA has a history of supporting graduate students through: special paper sessions devoted to ongoing graduate student research; travel awards to cover a one-night stay at the conference hotel; a graduate student organization and special meeting room at the conference hotel; opportunities to talk with invited speakers; and fun evening activities in the host city.

Many of the officers and active members of SERA started out as graduate students attending the annual meetings. Therefore, we welcome your participa-

tion in SERA., and encourage you to become involved. Each year at the annual meeting, a new graduate student representative is elected to lead the graduate student organization, develop new ways to encourage graduate student involvement, and participate in meetings of the Executive Council.

Join us in February in the historic city of San Antonio, Texas, and become a part of SERA's legacy of active, involved and appreciated graduate students!

Remember to send a copy of your paper to Ron McBride at rmac@tamu.edu by January 26, 2003 to be considered for the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award and a \$200 prize!



Editorial Note:

We will highlight new strides in the field of educational research by running an ongoing piece called the "Research Column." If you have an idea you would like to submit for this column, please contact the newsletter editor, Amy Dellinger at abdellinger@cox.net.