

2002

## Conference Highlights Conference Highlights: The 2001 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association

Robert S. Barcikowski  
*Ohio University*

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## Conference Highlights

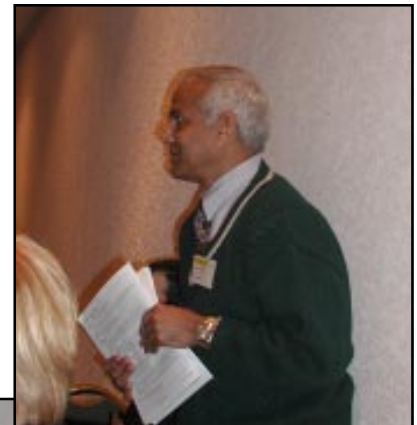
### *The 2001 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association*

Robert S. Barcikowski  
Program Chair  
Ohio University

The 2001 Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (MWERA) was held in Chicago Illinois from Wednesday October 24 through Saturday October 27 at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza. Based on attendance and member comments, I am pleased to call the 2001 conference another in a string of MWERA conference successes! Two hundred fifty three (253) persons registered for the conference; of these, 84 were new members and 62 were “student” participants. Our substantial attendance and hearty participation, in light of what our country had faced on September 11 just over one month earlier and the threats we were facing at that time, which made many people afraid to fly, and many others afraid to visit a large city, certainly showed the commitment and fortitude of our members. In what follows I would like to describe a few of the highlights

as I saw them from our Association’s perspective, but as usual, conference highlights for individual members were generally found in conversations with other members, comments made by reviewers on their or others’ presentations, or knowledge gained from symposia, invited speakers, roundtable discussions/poster sessions, business and division meetings, panels and/or workshops.

Unfortunately, President E. Jane Williams was unable to attend this year’s meeting because of a serious illness in her family—she was dearly missed. However, as you will see in the following highlights, our old pros, Immediate Past President Jeffrey Hecht and President-Elect Carmen Giebelhaus, were able to step in so that our meeting was able to flow smoothly. On behalf of the membership, I would like to thank them for their sterling efforts.



My graduate students and I were pleased to begin the conference on Wednesday afternoon with a well-attended and well-received workshop on hierarchical linear models. Wednesday evening at our Kick-Off Fireside Chat and Social sponsored by Riverside Publishing, Professor Jeremy Finn, Professor of Education at State University of New York at Buffalo, provided us with several candid comments and anecdotes from his research on class size and pupils' academic achievement and behavior. The exceptional hors d'oeuvres and repartee between the members and Dr. Finn made this a classic social.

At 8:00 AM on Thursday morning our conference began with six paper sessions and a Division K symposium. They were followed by the keynote address delivered by Jeremy Finn on small classes in American schools. Profes-

sor Finn provided research evidence to show that student achievement increased in all subjects when students were placed in classes of size twenty or less. Division meetings and paper sessions followed our keynote address, and I would like to highlight our New Member Welcome where Francine Michel brought together new members and MWERA book authors and awarded new members with a book authored by a MWERA member.

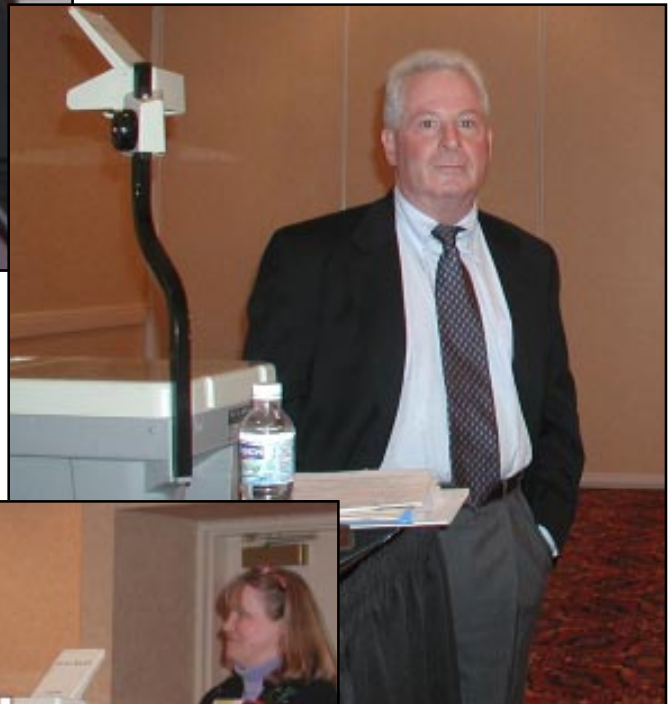
At the Division F business meeting Thursday afternoon Dr. Susan Brookhart, their featured speaker, discussed grading in its historical, social educational/psychological, and legal contexts. That afternoon Dr. Gordon Brooks and his graduate students presented a workshop on the use of Monte Carlo methods to assist in teaching introductory statistics to an enthusiastic group of attendees. Also, Dr. Mary Sudzina,



presented a very well received workshop on strategies for successfully integrating case studies in undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs. The final business meeting on Thursday was that of Division D which was sponsored by the Institute for Objective Measurement and which featured Dr. Michael Linacre from the Institute for Objective Measurement University of Chicago who discussed IRT modeling using the WINSTEPS/Facets software. Prior to going to dinner with new and old friends, members met at the Cracker Barrel Social that provided light fare and lively discussions.

Bright and early Friday morning Dr. Deborah Bainer Jenkins, former editor of our MWER journal, presented the very well attended MWERA sponsored workshop entitled "Publish or Perish". Dr. Bainer Jenkins provided her zeal-

ous group with tips, pointers and practical suggestions on how to secure publications. Prior to the Luncheon address, Dr. Eugene T. W. Sanders was the featured speaker at the Division A business meeting. Dr. Sanders discussed his transfer from being a university professor to the "real world" as superintendent/CEO of the Toledo City schools. Our luncheon address was given by Dr. John McIntyre, the past president of the Association of Teacher Educators, who delighted his audience with a discussion of the emerging trends for teacher education and offered suggestions for how colleges and schools of education should address these trends in order to prepare competent teachers for all children. Juliann Beatty from the Westin Greater Southern Hotel and Diane Share from the Columbus Visitors' Bureau concluded our luncheon with an exciting presentation on the benefits of being in Columbus Ohio the site of our 2002 conference.





On Friday afternoon Division G followed their business meeting with a symposium that was on the cutting edge of today's educational and social experiences entitled "The Muslim Experience in American Schools". Division G Chair, Dr. Anne Stinson, invited several Muslim educators to participate in this symposium among them was Mr. Yousef Hannon a Chicago school teacher who recently was the subject of an article in *Teacher Magazine* concerning this topic. Also on Friday afternoon Dr. Bainer Jenkins was the featured speaker at the Division J business meeting. Deborah Bainer Jenkins with support from Marie Holbein recounted the process of developing an innovative portfolio assessment to replace comprehensive exams in a doctoral program. That evening MWERA celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at its President's Reception hosted by President-Elect Carmen Giebelhaus with music, refreshments, and a delicious anniversary cake.

Saturday morning was filled with paper sessions, MWERA meetings, and an impressive Division K symposium on critical issues in international student teaching experiences. Then, at the presidential address, our Immediate Past President Jeffrey Hecht was able to step in for President E. Jane Williams and present an informative discussion on the use of Personal Digital Assistants (PDA's). Jeff's enthusiasm was infectious as he illustrated the wide variety of applications that are available for PDA's and showed how he personally used many of them. Late Saturday morning Dr. William Place chaired the session on conference feedback and planning. Division chairs and chairs-elect attended this session to get a jump-start on our 2002 conference. Based on the spirit of that meeting, I predict another terrific conference for 2002 in Columbus, Ohio.

