

New Slate of Officers 2005-06

Chair - Daniel A. Laitsch, Assistant Professor,
Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser Univer-
sity, British Columbia, Canada

Program Chair - Jason N. Adsit, Assistant
Professor of Education, NCATE Coordina-
tor, and Director of Standards, Policy &
Assessment, Baldwin-Wallace College,
Berea, OH

Treasure - Megh Thapa, Senior Advisor, Office
of Planning and Service Coordination,
Northwest Regional Educational Labora-
tory, Portland, OR

Secretary - Chris Ferguson, Program Asso-
ciate, Southwest Educational Development
Laboratory, Austin, TX



Proceedings from the SIG-RU Preession:

The Intersection between Research and Practice

Chuck Achilles shared his experiences with research use, particularly through his relationship with class size research and its use and misuse. Phil Winnie shared his experience with research use, through the lens of the end-user (the learner) and his effort to create software that helps build a continuous loop between researchers, practitioners, and learners. The discussion after the presentations focused loosely on the four research questions below, and generated the themes noted:

- ① Identify the current best practices in research use (and how we know this)
- ② Identify the areas research use researchers should be focusing on for future study
- ③ Identify the political and policy constraints effecting research use
- ④ Discuss the role SIGRU and AERA should play in confronting the issues you discuss and in furthering research utilization

Discussion fell into the following categories

- ◆ Political realities of research use
 - ✦ Using the political realm to support re- search and research use agendas
 - ✦ The political realm using research to fur- ther political agendas
- ◆ Issues related to the role of the research broker
 - ✦ Honest disseminator of research knowl- edge?
 - ✦ Capacity of brokers to disseminate knowl- edge?
 - ✦ Constrained disseminator of research that supports a specific program, product, service, or policy?
 - ✦ Role of profit or politics in the broker- age process (textbooks perpetuating the misperceptions of popularized knowl- edge)?
- ◆ Role of method and data analysis in the process
 - ✦ IES and the search for internal validity to the exclusion of external validity
 - ✦ Tenure and the pressure for discovery (ten- ure and the locus of control: the institution of the department?)
 - ✦ Possibility and need for replication
 - ✦ Incentives for doing good research? See Boyer, Scholarship Reconsidered.

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SIG Business Meeting Report

SIG members met Tuesday, April 12 at 6:15 pm to elect new officers and conduct its annual busi- ness session.

Treasurer's report:

Daniel Laitch presented the treasurer's report. As of April 1, 2004, the SIG had an operating fund of \$548.47. Over the year, the SIG received \$602.00 in membership dues and other income, and after remitting the annual management fee of \$150.00 to AERA, entered 2005 with a balance of \$850.47.

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Proceedings continued

◆ Roles SIGRU and AERA play in confronting these issues?

AERA

- ✦ Distill what the research says (Research Points)
- ✦ Help policymakers understand how to use research appropriately
- ✦ Emphasize replication as an important process in research (help broaden the focus from discovery, to knowledge confirmation)
- ✦ Help re-public education (emphasize the importance of the social and community benefits that education provides)
- ✦ Fight policy based on bad/faulty/misinterpreted research
- ✦ Speak for the ultimate beneficiaries of good research well applied: the children in our schools
- ✦ Protect the research networks and transfer systems
- ✦ Emphasize the policy process for policymakers and leaders:

Process

- What does research tell us we should do?*
- How should we do it?*
- What is the appropriate timing (when is the appropriate time)?*
- Why it is important to do?*

Example (class size)

- Reduce class sizes*
- Through random assignment into learning cohorts*
- In the early grades, K-3*
- Because it provides better learning experiences for young children*

SIGRU

- ✦ Increase our emphasis on policy (our concerns are less political than AERA's)
- ✦ Disseminate research findings through SIGRU
- ✦ Protect the research networks and transfer systems
- ✦ Seek out broader collaborations among research interested groups
- ✦ Emphasize the policy process for policymakers and leaders (see table above)



Business meeting continued

Conference report:

Jason Adsit reported that the SIG supported five sessions during the conference:

- ➡ Pre-session: *The Intersection between Research and Practice*, an interactive discussion
- ➡ Open discussion forum, cosponsored by National Education Knowledge Industries Association (NEKIA), *Towards A New Vision For Knowledge Utilization in Education*
- ➡ Interactive symposium, *Let's Tell the Teaching Quality Story: What Does it Mean? Dialogue Between Researchers and Communicators*
- ➡ Symposium, *State-Based Research Utilization*
- ➡ Paper Session

New officers:

Two new officers were elected:
Megh Thapa, treasurer; Chris Ferguson, secretary.

SIG award:

It was decided that the SIG would investigate the criteria and procedures used by other SIGs for their award process. Volunteers will be sought this summer to investigate these issues.

Next year's conference:

Members felt it was important that the session at the next conference be used to generate more interest in the SIG. They decided to

1. Solicit a speaker for the business meeting. This speaker would be someone who would represent policy makers as well as someone who promoted the need for research and the use of research.
2. Use additional methods to publicize a call for submission for papers and membership.
3. Invite NEKIA to submit for a session.