ERME Welcomes Professor Nathaniel Brown!

"My research focuses on how students understand and explain difficult concepts in science, and the methodological difficulties associated with capturing and measuring that understanding. My methods combine the detailed study of situated cognitive activity, exemplified by interaction analysis, and the objective characterization of such interactions, exemplified by construct-referenced (or Rasch) measurement.

One of my current NSF-supported projects is studying how students understand chemical phenomena involving dynamic systems. A major methodological challenge in that case is measuring multiple learning progressions that have interaction effects, so that movement along one progression can constrain or enable movement along the other progression.

I am also involved with the application of construct-referenced measurement to embedded classroom assessment in several areas. Currently, I am starting a collaboration with researchers at TERC to develop an assessment system for a new elementary-school science curriculum focusing on energy. In the past, I have worked with curriculum teams in other areas of middle- and high-school science and content-area literacy.

I'm also very interested in the practical differences between the use of construct-referenced measurement, i.e., one-parameter item response models, and two- and three-parameter item response models. Currently, I am working with colleagues at Indiana University, Bloomington, to rescale NAEP mathematics data using one-parameter
models to determine the impact on proficiency levels, particularly among groups that are more prone to skipping items on the test.

I am currently teaching Introductory Statistics and will be teaching Selected Topics course "Measuring Educational and Psychological Construct" this Spring (link to syllabus below). In the past, I have taught a measurement course with a strong emphasis on developing and piloting actual assessments, as well as courses on discourse and interaction analysis, using video data to capture student learning, and using learning theory to inform instructional design.

I would love to get involved with community theater, so if anyone has recommendations of good local companies, please let me know!

Additionally, Dr. Brown will be presenting at the next ERME Brown Bag Lunch Discussion on Thursday, November 15th from 11:30-12:30. More details will be sent next week.

View the syllabus for Dr. Brown's Spring 2013 class:
Measuring Educational and Psychological Constructs (ED960 Seminar)

**TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center Update ~ October 2012**

One of the primary accomplishments of the summer months at the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center has been the publication of the TIMSS 2011 Encyclopedia: Education Policy and Curriculum in Mathematics and Science (with 69 chapters) and the PIRLS 2011 Encyclopedia: Education Policy and Curriculum in Reading (with 56 chapters) written by representatives from participating countries describing the structure of their education systems, curricula and instruction, teacher education requirements, and assessment practices.

Led by Dr. Ina Mullis, the Encyclopedia co-authors primarily were ERME PhD graduates and students--Drs. Katie Drucker, Gabrielle Stanco, and Alka Arora, as well as doctoral students Victoria Centurino, Moira Ragan, and Courtney Castle. Each Encyclopedia begins with an Introduction that highlights commonalities in mathematics, science, and reading education from around the world, and also contains a number of exhibits summarizing educational policies and curricula. The Encyclopedias are available on the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center website at [http://timss.bc.edu/](http://timss.bc.edu/).
Religion and the Liberal Aims of Higher Education

Dr. Henry Braun, ERME Professor and Boisi Chair, has been actively involved in planning this symposium below. Click to view details and register.

The Boston College Sesquicentennial Steering Committee, the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, and the Boisi Professor of Education and Public Policy cordially invite you to attend the symposium

Religion and the Liberal Aims of Higher Education

Thursday, November 8–Friday, November 9, 2012
Boston College, Chestnut Hill Campus
John M. Coorcan Commons
Heights Room

What sets religious colleges and universities apart from their secular peers when both are committed to offering a liberal education? This conference brings together 15 distinguished scholars and writers, including six current or former university presidents, to examine the varied complexions of liberal education and the unique contributions and challenges that religion brings to the endeavor.

View the program »

The conference is free of charge and open to the public, but please register to help us arrange enough seating and refreshments. All events will be held in the Heights Room of Corcoran Commons.
Professional Accomplishments

Outstanding Poster Award

Current ERME PhD students Shelagh Peoples, Katherine Shields and ERME PhD alum Caroline Wang won an "Outstanding Poster" award at the BC Graduate Education Association Research Forum held in April, for their poster entitled "With Hiccups and Bumps: An Innovative Measure of Elementary Student Understanding of the Nature of Scientific Practices." Shelagh presented the full paper on this research, conducted as part of the Evolution Readiness evaluation project under the direction of Dr. Laura O'Dwyer, at AERA.

Bruce H. Choppin Memorial Award

Congratulations to recent ERME PhD Alumni Gabrielle Stanco, who won IEA's Bruce H. Choppin Memorial Award. Given each year, this international award recognizes the most outstanding doctoral dissertation analyzing IEA data.

New Job Positions

Over the summer, Oscar Mayorga (MEd Alum) accepted an appointment as the Special Assistant to the President/Chief Diversity Officer at Anna Maria College in Paxton, MA.

Julie Miles (PhD 2004) has been recently promoted to Vice President of Measurement Services for Pearson (Assessment & Information, http://www.pearsonassessments.com/pai). She oversees a large group of dedicated staff within Test, Measurement, & Research Services which is committed to delivering innovative, online, high-stakes large-scale assessments. She oversees and supports staff members who are dedicated and bright and support Pearson's mission with their leadership and problem-solving as they engage in content development, online composition and publishing, and psychometric analyses.

Recent PhD Alum Caroline Wang accepted a job offer from the Value-Added Research Center (VARC) at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research in the University of Wisconsin - Madison as a Research
Current PhD student **Apryl Holder** is now the Data Alignment Specialist at Boston Public Schools in the Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Office. She writes, "I want to thank ERME (and especially Dr. Ludlow) for preparing and encouraging me for such an appropriate position."

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**Publication Announcement**

Current PhD student **Todd Reeves** had a paper accepted into publication:

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**AEA Presenters**

The 26th Annual Conference of the American Evaluation Association took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota on October 24-27th. (Click on the paper title to view the abstract.)

- **Professor Lauren Saenz** presented a paper titled, "**Evaluating Queer Experiences in a ‘What Works' Culture: A Democratic Framework for Advancing Equal Educational Opportunity.**"

- PhD student **Julia Rollison** presented a paper titled, "**Strong Partnerships Predicting Improvements in Long-term Outcomes: Findings from the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) National Evaluation.**"

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**APA Award Speaker**

Upon receiving the [Division 5 Dissertation Award](#), **Professor Mandy Li** was invited to speak at the 2012 APA Annual Conference this summer. Her talk was titled, "**Loglinear Models as Item Response Models: Dutch Identity and Beyond.**"

To check out the APA Division 5 Newsletter, [click here](#).
New Visiting Scholar

The ERME department would like to welcome Nandita Gawade, our new Visiting Scholar for the 2012-2013 year. Nandita is an econometrician at the Value-Added Research Center housed in the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at UW-Madison. Her work involves developing statistical models of student achievement on written tests, with the goal of measuring school and teacher productivity. In the coming year, her research will be focused on issues in developing value-added models for non-NCLB tests and subjects, and for early childhood assessments. Earlier this year, she received her PhD in Economics from Princeton University; her dissertation work was on measurement error in finite-valued variables. In her free time, she enjoys reading, knitting and walking her dog.

New Student Spotlight

ERME would like to welcome 26 new students this fall! (Breakdown of 4 doctoral, 17 masters, and 5 5th years.)

Below you will find introductions from some of the new students.

Beatrice Frederique ~ 5th year student

I am currently a Human Development major and Special Ed and Organizational Studies minor. Currently, I am an undergraduate research fellow in the ERME department. My research interests include educational policy, special education and gaps in college acceptance.

Kimia Mavon ~ 5th year student

I am from Miami, Florida. I will be receiving my bachelor’s from BC this year then starting ERME full-time shortly after. My undergraduate is in Secondary Education and Biology. I am very interested in understanding large scale summative science assessments, especially international comparisons. Right now I am working with Dr. McNeill in her project developing teacher supports for scientific argumentation. I’m extremely interested in learning how to create assessments that can accurately measure the dynamic nature of both oral and written scientific argumentation, and how this will impact the Next Generation Science Standards and future standards.

Katie Trefcer ~ 5th year student
I am an undergraduate Elementary Education major at BC. I am currently participating in my full practicum student teaching in Newton Centre. I have always been interested in teaching, educational policy and research and am glad that I am able to get all things out of my experience here at BC. I hope to jump into some research projects in the Spring when I am finished student teaching. My plan is to focus on elementary curriculum/assessment research but I am also excited to learn as much as I can through classes and work with ERME professor and fellow students. I am also looking forward to getting to know the other ERME students!

Samantha Ricker ~ Master’s student

I am from Lewiston, Maine and I have a B.A. in Psychology from Merrimack College. My research interests include educational technology, student preferences in continuing and professional education, and international trends or developments in education. I am currently working at the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center through Boston College as a graduate assistant and completing my research on electronic textbooks and reading comprehension through Merrimack College. As an ERME student, I am looking forward to expanding my knowledge of measurement and evaluation techniques in the field of education, while continuing my passion for educational research.

Vera (Shiyi) Shao ~ Master’s student

I moved here from China to start the Master's program. As an undergraduate, my past research experience had been in studying learning processes; I organized a classroom assessment project concerning short-term memory in oral interpretation study. I'm looking forward to learning more from courses, particularly regarding test construction and statistical methods. I'm excited to take part in research projects. So far, I have been enjoying my time in Boston, making new friends and enjoying city life!

Claire (Wen-Chia) Chang ~ Doctoral student

I'm from Taiwan. I finished my bachelor degree in Philosophy in Taiwan in 2004 and right after I went to study in the masters program in Communication Studies at Ball State University in Indiana. Back then, I was quite (or seemed to be) determined to pursue a doctoral study in communication and perhaps eventually teach at a university. Somehow life brought me to Bangkok Thailand where I worked for Education Development Center (EDC) for 4 years. While at EDC, I was involved in programs such as HIV/AIDS prevention project for street family/children in Cambodia, pre-departure training/education project for migrant workers in China, and IT/business training program for micro-entrepreneurs across Asia-Pacific countries. The small office team allowed me to work intensively on research and
proposal writing, program management and design/implementation of program evaluation, and grant management. My years with EDC also had a profound influence on my research/career interest on program evaluation and utilizing evaluation to engage/generate knowledge from underprivileged/marginalized groups (i.e., Indigenous youth, migrant/mobile students) to promote sustainable social change. I'm also interested in teacher preparation and professional development specifically how teachers are prepared and learn to teach students from diverse cultural background. While in ERME, in addition to learning all the mysterious statistical models and procedures, I'm looking forward to applying the theoretical and technical knowledge/skills to the real world through working on projects with faculty members and ERME students!

Caroline Vuilleumier ~ Doctoral student

I'm originally from Ridgefield, CT and completed undergraduate and first round of graduate studies at BC in the Lynch School. Previously, I taught math at Norwood High School for the past 4 years. I was also the coach of the Norwood Cheerleaders and Mathletes. I've been bumming around Boston since 2003, and I might never leave! My research interests are "Mathematics" and "Self-Concept in Adolescents." I am also working at the Roche Center getting their Two-Way Immersion Network for Catholic Schools up and running. Essentially, I am involved in the program evaluation side of the project. In ERME I'm very much looking forward to anything and everything to do with mathematical statistics!

Jobs, Workshops, & More

ERME Opportunities

Starting Oct. 31st, ERME will be e-mailing subscribers typically on a weekly basis with "ERME-related Opportunities." Please continue to forward job opportunities, workshops, seminars, and anything of educational value to Jillian.gomolka@bc.edu.

ERME on LinkedIn

Don't forget to join our LinkedIn group, "Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (ERME) at Boston College." This group is exclusively for ERME students, alumni and faculty and a great way to get connect with one another.

Subscribe to Horizon Search Inc
Horizon Search Inc is a great resource for anyone with an interest in educational research. Not only are they a full service national recruiting firm, but they also send out a newsletter which provides great tips for a successful job search as well as workplace communication strategies. Subscribe at http://www.horizonsi.net/.

From the ERME Department Chair

Hi everyone:

It has been a busy and interesting semester already and I hope you are all doing well in whatever your respective studies and jobs are. For those of you no longer in the area-- remember the beautiful fall colors? Well, they are still here for another few weeks before the next round of hurricanes come through and make a mess of everything!

I’d like to take this opportunity to share with you some department updates and business. This year, ERME had an enrollment of 17 masters students-compared to our normal 6 or 7. This also happened in a couple of other departments and one consequence was over-enrollment in ED462 Assessment and ED468 Statistics I. We now have a new section of Stat I in the spring and you may know that we have created a second section of ED667 GLM due to the increased interest in it—this means that GLM will be offered every semester. Great news in terms of our demand and worth but a strain on teaching!

You’ve seen my messages about our teaching needs. With the retirement of Dr. Haney and Dr. Pedulla now in his "retirement sabbatical" (there will be an event(s) for him next spring) and various leaves and sabbaticals (myself, Dr. Li and Dr. O’Dwyer), we are often seeking part-time teaching hires. Fortunately we have benefited recently from many ERME alums helping us out-- names you will recognize: Ismael Carreras, Lauren Chapman, Sarah Enterline, Rachel Kay, Dee Wallace Spencer and Kathy Flanagan. Special thanks are also extended to "honorary ERMEs" Charlie DePascale and Camelia Rosca. I haven’t listed the many people who’ve taught while still working on their degree and I apologize if I left your name off this.

One other consequence of these retirements and growing demand for our courses is that we have submitted a request for a new faculty position in Assessment. This would be a scholar/practitioner who would, in addition to developing/expanding their research agenda, create an integrated assessment sequence for ED060 Classroom Assessment, ED462 Assessment and Test Construction, and ED724 Technology Enhanced Assessment. When the search request is approved we will send out a description for your assistance in filling the position.
The Lynch School has initiated a series of department meetings, retreats, and faculty discussions aimed at formulating a forward-looking set of goals and objectives for LSOE over the intermediate and long-term future. In addition, ERME will undergo its own internal review next spring. Your ideas, suggestions, comments, and reactions to queries you may receive from me about ways to strengthen what we do will be greatly appreciated.

One way to support our requests for additional resources is to argue for our worth by documenting your accomplishments through your professional roles and responsibilities. Although it is nice to casually see what you are all doing, there actually is significant value for us when we can list awards, promotions, fellowships, books, articles, chapters, presentations, and grants. This newsletter still stands as the model for LSOE and is distributed to administrators outside of LSOE. So, your contributions to the Newsletter benefit us all.

Finally, I’d like to say how fortunate we are to have Jillian Gomolka continue with us as our Administrative Assistant. She and her two undergraduate assistants, Suzie Scordino and Beatrice Frederique, are responsible for numerous projects like this Newsletter, the website content, the marketing and recruiting materials, the upcoming documentation for our department review, searching and documenting what our benchmark institutions are doing (like for their websites), and participating in the 5th Year, Masters, and PhD Open Houses. Give them a "thank you" when you get a minute.

Best to all (I know--sounds like Santa Claus),

Larry

Below is one of Dr. Ludlow’s sketches, as well as some photos he took from his recent sabbatical train trip across Canada.
Hi ERME’iers,

I hope that you all had a great start to the semester and are enjoying your classes!

As you may already know, I am almost finished with coursework and starting my dissertation research. Having said that, I feel it is time for a new student who is passionate about ERME to take over my role as ERME student representative. I’ve truly enjoyed representing you over the past two years as the student representative and appreciated your support throughout the years.

I highly recommend that you look into taking over this volunteer ERME Student Representative position, as there are many benefits... You will have the opportunity to get to know the ERME faculty, students, and alumni more closely while organizing academic and social events. You’ll also have the chance to sit in department meetings to represent the student voice. This is a great way to network with those in your field of interest.
Ideally, the student should be able to commit to this position for two years, although time commitment throughout the semester is very minimal. Jill and other ERME students have been a great help to me while organizing events and I’m sure they will continue helping out with the logistics and by contributing with their event ideas.

If you have any interest in being considered for the Student Representative role, please let Jill or myself know as soon as possible. Either of us would be happy to let you know about the position in greater detail.

Again, I’ve really appreciated serving as your student representative, and look forward to transitioning the new representative.

Thank you and have a great semester!

Bercem

**For the Social ERME...**

**ERME/C&I Potluck**

The ERME/C&I Potluck held in September was a great time. The weather was perfect and we enjoyed trying each other’s delicious food creations! Thank you Drs. Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Larry Ludlow for hosting us. Here is a photo of some ERME students in attendance:

![ERME students in attendance](image1)

**ERME Social Gathering at CitySide**

We had a turnout of 25 current ERME students, faculty and alumni at the ERME Social Gathering at CitySide Restaurant, which was held on Oct 15th. Be on the lookout this upcoming spring for another ERME social gathering.

![CitySide Restaurant](image2)
Personal Accomplishments

Baby Announcements

ERME Master's student Sona An wrote, "On May 25th our son David was born making us the happiest people ever. He was a big boy! 8lbs 6oz and 20.5 inches." (At four months pictured top right)

Sarah Enterline (PhD, 2007) and her husband, Josh, happily announce the arrival of their son, Theodore, who was born on October 14.

Emilie Mitescu Reagan (Ph.D., 2011) and Dan Reagan are thrilled to announce the arrival of their daughter, Catherine Grace, born on October 12, 2012. All are happy and healthy! (pictured below)

Wedding Announcements

Doctoral student Katherine Shields and Rob Amos were married on June 16th at the Mass Audubon Habitat Center in Belmont.

Newlywed and 2nd year doctoral student Josh Littenberg-Tobias with his wife Liza at Whispering Pines Conference Center in West Greenwich, Rhode Island on June 10th. (on right)
Contact ERME at Boston College

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