



American Educational Research Association

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

FALL 2004 Newsletter

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Newsletter Editors

Greetings Fellow Graduate Students! We are Menthia P. Clark and John O. Alizor, Co-Editors of your Newsletter! We thank you for electing us to this challenging and rewarding position. In this Fall 2004 issue, we are committed to sharing informative articles written by the Graduate Student Council that are beneficial to graduate students in all stages of academic pursuits. Allow us to introduce ourselves and where we are in this journey.....

Hello! I am Menthia, returning to work as the Newsletter Co-Editor. As a Doctoral Candidate, I am thrilled to be completing my dissertation, *Say it Loud! I'm Black and I'm Proud! A Study of Successful Black Female Students in an Urban Middle School*. During my "tenure" as a graduate student, I engaged in many professional development opportunities with my advisor Dr. Dianne L. Taylor, and I invite each of you to also become involved in activities that distinguish you as a stellar student. Focus your scholarly work on your research interests until you find that needle in the haystack – the focus for your dissertation! Be flexible about methods (I became a mini quantoid!), and also don't forsake your other interests. My church involvement, mini-vacations to see family in Memphis, and non-academic television indulgences have provided that steady anchor when this process gets tough.

Hello, I am John, a first year Ed.D student in Higher Educational Administration at the Educational Leadership and Change program at the Fielding Graduate Institute, College of Education in Santa Barbara, California. I have developed learning plan strategies with the aid of my faculty mentor Dr. Joyce Watts, to help me make it through my first year. As I am entering my dissertation phase of my doctoral journey in

March 2005, I have chosen a title for my dissertation that involves my research interests - *Nigerian Americans in the United States Higher Education Institutions: Their perceptions of their parental involvement that led to their academic success*.

As I reflect on my attendance at the 2004 AERA Conference in San Diego, it amazes me - all of the invaluable things that I gained. What a mistake it would have been not to attend! In fact, it was at the San Diego conference that the Graduate Student Council elected me to the post of Newsletter Co-Editor. Also, while at the conference, I talked with well-known scholars, such as Gary Orfield from Harvard University. As you see, this was an awesome experience, and I encourage you as fellow graduate students to attend the 2005 Annual Meeting in Montreal.

Now that we have introduced ourselves, we would like for you to meet the other GSC officers who will be sharing their experiences through the academic journey. No matter what stage you are in, you will find great advice in this Fall 2004 Newsletter. So we invite you to sit back, relax and enjoy!!!

Cheryl M. Simpson

2004-2005 GSC Chair

University of Michigan

Hello everyone. I hope that each of you enjoyed a relaxing, yet productive summer. I am now a fourth year doctoral student at the University of Michigan's Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education. I began my work with the Graduate Student Council as a representative for Division J. I encourage you to learn more about the opportunities that are available for working with the Graduate Student Council (GSC) because my experiences over the past three years as Division representative, Chair-Elect, and now Chair have contributed greatly to my professional and personal growth.

On behalf of the Graduate Student Council, I am pleased to announce that we now

have a graduate student representative on AERA's Social Justice Action Committee (SJAC). Social justice remains an integral part of AERA's mission, and as such, the GSC is pleased to have representation on such an important committee. As the current SJAC graduate student representative for 2004-2006, I have recently been involved with the planning of the Brown vs. Board of Education Inaugural Lecture that will be held at the Reagan Center in Washington, DC on Thursday evening, October 14, 2004 at 6pm. This event is open to the public and I hope that many of you will be able to attend. Details regarding this event can be found on the AERA website.

I have been reflecting on my first year as a doctoral student so that I can share some of what I learned from that experience with you. I believe the best advice I received was to find fellow graduate students early on that could read my work and be honest in their critique. I sought fellow cohort members and more advanced students with varying interests to increase the amount of perspective my writing would receive. I cannot stress enough how helpful this was, and still is.

That first, long winter in Ann Arbor was challenging, exhausting, exhilarating, and maddening all at once. Though it was not easy to find time to relax, I made sure I included some activities in my life that were unrelated to my academic career. This sounds like common sense, but I believe it is more than that – I think it is a necessity. Becoming burned out in the first year was something I wanted to avoid, yet I still wanted to make a good impression, maintain excellent grades, and form the academic relationships I believed were beneficial. Spending time with people outside the University and enjoying non-academic activities once in a while gave my brain the short rest it needed. I remained organized and focused, and before I knew it, the first year had flown by. I felt much more comfortable as I entered into my second year in the program.

I also adopted a strategy that first year that is now greatly benefiting me as I near the dissertation stage of my program. Since the beginning of my coursework, I have managed to write my course papers on my topic of interest – distance education. By mainly focusing on this topic from different angles for each course, I learned a great deal about the subject and collected many resources for the literature review

portion of my dissertation. I will always be appreciative to the fellow graduate student that suggested I adopt this strategy, and I hope that what I have included in this brief article helps you through your academic journey.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the 2005 Annual Meeting in Montreal.
Cheers, Cheri Simpson

Diane Jess – Kellehut
Chair Elect
Harvard University

Hi! Welcome to the GSC Fall Newsletter! I am a doctoral student in Learning and Teaching at Harvard's Graduate School of Education and the Chair-Elect of the GSC. My research interests are in self-efficacy, science



education and technology, and I am currently writing my dissertation proposal. I probably wouldn't have made it this far, well at least not with my sanity intact (!), if it weren't for a pact several of us who work and study together made: no matter what else is going on, we always go for a walk in the afternoon. Amazingly, we nearly always find a place to stop for coffee and/or chocolate along the way! Hmmm, come to think of it, my survival might depend more on the coffee and chocolate than on the walk...

Coffee and chocolate, while crucial, clearly aren't enough to help you through your doctoral program. So, when you are first entering into grad school, how do you figure out your path through the program? Is there a right way? And, if so, why doesn't someone just tell us what it is! Unfortunately, that's because there is more than one 'right' way to do a doctoral program.

That doesn't mean that there aren't some things you can do to make the process easier. In talking to grad students, one suggestion comes up again and again: get involved in a study group. During your classes, study groups can divide and conquer those incredibly long reading lists. Drafts of term papers can be edited in a study group as well. Then, once you are done with your classes, study groups can help keep you focused and

moving forward with your research. Some study groups have a monthly meeting devoted to talking through ideas or theories. As you are thinking through how to focus your interests, these meetings can be a great way to debate and hone your own ideas.

Doing a dissertation can be a very solitary pursuit. It is easy to lose focus during this period. Again, a study group can help you maintain your progress. After all, it's hard to procrastinate too long if it is your week to present your research or writing to your study group!

No matter how you end up doing your doctoral program, it will be the right way for you! Just remember to enjoy what you are doing, and be sure to look for the sessions that the GSC offers during AERA since they are particularly geared to supporting graduate students from start to finish! Good luck and see you in Montreal in April!

Division A: Administration

Matt Militello
Alex Bowers

Michigan State University

Your two AERA Division A graduate student representatives for 2004-2005 are Matt Militello and Alex Bowers, both educational administration students at Michigan State University. Matt is in his final year, and will soon defend his dissertation that investigates the collection, analysis and use of student achievement data in an urban school district. Alex is in his second year, and is interested in district level data analysis surrounding issues of state mandated accountability measures.

For the 2005 AERA meeting in Montreal, we are planning two events. The first will be a focused discussion on educational accountability

policies including current researchers pursuing studies at the state, district and school organizational levels. The second event will be the Division A graduate student reception, which will include, food, fun and a good time. Come meet your Division A graduate student peers from other institutions, kick back, and relax at the end of a long day of sessions. Don't forget to look for announcements in the Graduate Student Conference Center at the meeting!

On the long road to graduation, it can sometimes be difficult to find that specific focus that will not only ignite your own interest, but also be of sufficient interest to provide outlets for publications and avenues to pursue funding for your own research. One way of approaching this problem is to explore your division within AERA and find out what are the current hot topics, what major unanswered questions are the research questions turning to, and what people and research questions are receiving the latest round of funding. Finding these answers may reveal a topic that is interesting to you, which can help in the development of a matriculation plan. This way you will find a topic, fund your research, and publish your work.

For Matt, recent debates surrounding accountability based student achievement data became an interesting focus of his dissertation. For Alex, recent issues addressing state and district level accountability measurements are leading to interesting research questions and subsequent studies. They agree that as graduate students, you should become involved in the current discussions within their respective divisions. Through this exploration, you will find your topic of interest, which can lead to many other opportunities for networking, publications and funding.

On a final note, Division A will be looking for an incoming graduate student representative for 2005-2006. If you are interested, please be sure to come to the

Division A graduate student reception and talk to either Matt or Alex.

Matt Militello: militell@msu.edu or

Alex Bowers: bowersal@msu.edu

*find out the current hot topics,
major unanswered questions,
and research receiving the latest
round of funding...*

**This way you will find a topic,
fund your research, and publish
your work!!!**

Division B: Curriculum Studies

Tammy Turner-Vorbeck
Purdue University
Beverly Brennan
University of New Hampshire

Welcome back to another academic year full of promise and potential! As your returning Division B graduate representative, I, Tammy, plan to work with Beverly, our new junior representative, to share with you our enthusiasm and positive experiences associated with Division B. Additionally, we will keep you updated and informed about other opportunities and events associated with AERA as a whole.

Let me begin with an introduction. I am currently a Doctoral Candidate in Curriculum Studies at Purdue University. My dissertation: *Pedagogical Principles of Teaching Multiculturally: Three Teacher Case Studies*, was defended on August 27! My research interests include multiculturalism/diversity, curriculum theory, social foundations of education, and sociology of education, with a special interest in issues of family diversity and equity.

I consider myself fortunate to have been involved with AERA through presentations at annual conferences since my M.S. program in 1995. At times, the vast number of members, divisions, Special Interest Groups (SIGS), and even the conference programs can be overwhelming, but the tradeoff exists in finding access to so many other people who share the same interests and passions as you do. I would strongly encourage you to belong to more than one division that interests you and to belong to as many SIGS at AERA as your interests and budget allow. I participated in the annual AERA graduate dissertation seminar in April of 2003, led by professors Donald Blumenfeld-Jones and Paula Salvio, and left with a more informed and deeper commitment to my own research and the field of Curriculum Studies.

Now allow me to introduce myself. My name is Beverly and I am the junior representative for Division B. I am in my third year of coursework, and enrolled in the Literacy program where my interests are writing (especially poetry), writing pedagogy, teacher education and issues of

gender. There is a light at the end of the tunnel! In the spring, I will be taking my qualifying exams and if all goes well, advancing to candidacy. I anticipate that I will be working on my dissertation next year and I am surprised by how quickly the first two years of coursework passed.

One last bit of advice. Many of us have moved far and wide to enroll in our doctoral programs. It's a tough transition. I moved from San Francisco, CA to Portsmouth, NH (a BIG difference) to start the program at UNH. What helps me most is embracing my new environment and looking for the special things about it -- like the coffee shop down the street that makes frozen mocha shakes that I couldn't live without, and the staff at the local store that always ask me how I am and how my work is going. Look for the good in where you are. You'll find it. All the best!

Division C: Learning & Instruction

Meredith Park Rogers
University of Missouri – Columbia
Yi Yang
Mississippi State University

Greetings fellow graduate students! We are Meredith Park Rogers and Yi Yang, your Division C GSC Representatives. Before we discuss the importance of developing a relationship with your advisor, we would like to introduce ourselves.

I, Meredith, am the Senior Representative, and attend the University of Missouri – Columbia, and my research interests are examining design and implementation strategies for interdisciplinary and/or integrated methods of elementary science instruction. Three years ago, I moved to Columbia, Missouri from the “Great White North” – Canada! I grew up on a farm just outside of a small community in Southwestern Ontario. Just to clear up a few misconceptions about Canadians –

- no, we do not all live in igloos,
- no, you cannot ski all year round (believe it or not most of Canada does have 4 very distinct seasons!),
- yes, we live for hockey, and;
- yes, we enjoy our brewed beverages.

So I may be a little biased, but I recommend to everyone to visit Canada – Hey wait a minute, you

See
you in
Canada!
Don't
forget
your
passport



can by attending the 2005 Annual Meeting in April...it is being held in glorious Montréal, Quebec! Come join us and get a taste of some of the beauty that Canada has to offer.

(P.S. No I am not secretly working for the Canadian Tourism Commission...just a proud Canadian☺.)

I am Yi, and I attend Mississippi State University. My research interests are the effectiveness of online teaching and the study of quality online teaching strategies. I'm originally from China and I moved to the U.S. five years ago. My first stop was San Diego, where I lived for two years while earning my masters degree. From there I moved to Mississippi to begin working on my PhD in instructional technology. Although I am happy with my move to Mississippi, I miss the beautiful San Diego weather. For the past three years I have been working as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, which has provided me with the opportunity to develop and teach my own class, including preparing the course syllabus, instructional materials, and evaluating student achievement. I have really enjoyed my teaching experiences in the U.S., therefore, my professional goal is to obtain a position at a university that supports the teaching aspect of academia.

In the beginning...

Building the ALL important advisor/advisee relationship.

Throughout your years in graduate school you will have to interact directly and indirectly with your advisor, committee members, and other faculty and graduate students. However, when you are beginning your degree program the most important relationship to focus on developing is your advisor/advisee rapport. So you may be asking yourself: How do I build a productive and positive mentor/mentee relationship with my advisor? How do I assert myself, but in a respectful way, and what sort of guidance should I be expecting from my advisor?

Our advice is to start with simply contacting **your advisor!** Make an appointment – formal or informal, and be prepared with a list of questions you may have about program requirements, your potential research and teaching interests, etc. During the conversation remember to be polite and considerate of your advisor's time. He/She is a very busy person and you will

gain respect from him/her early on if you come organized to talk. Try your best to leave a good “first impression!” Remember, people will never get two “first impressions!”

Secondly, in addition to starting a line of communication with your advisor, you also need to maintain this line of communication. You should always run everything you are planning to do (research or teaching) by your advisor because 1) it is helpful to you to get his/her opinion and advise on how to make your idea better, and 2) it is just important to always keep him/her in the loop with what you are doing. Since your advisor will be your mentor throughout your program, he/she deserves your consideration. By keeping the line of communication constantly open with your advisor, he/she will be more aware of how you are progressing in your program, how your research interests are developing, and will therefore be able to better advise you in the right direction.

In addition to the communicating with your advisor, you need to begin collaborating with him/her on projects. Showing an interest in what they are researching will kick-start your research agenda and perhaps even result in respected publications that you can add to your curriculum vitae. Co-authoring papers and conferences presentations will demonstrate your scholarly research potential to your advisor, and make him/her more willing to ask you to assist him/her on future projects. Your advisor is like your “investment bank,” the more time you deposit in working with him/her, the greater the return for you.

For more information about how to develop a positive mentor/mentee relationship with your advisor, or other ideas about how to get the most out of your degree experience, come visit us at the Division C business meeting/social during the 2005 AERA Annual Meeting in Montreal next April. We will be happy to share some of our personal experiences with you and give some more tips on approaching your advisor, developing a network of colleagues and how to get organized for each phase of your degree. Hope to see you then!

Keep the line of communication constantly open with your advisor!



Make sure you check out the Graduate Student Council Website!
www.aera.net/gsc

**Division D:
Measurement & Research Methodology**

Stacey L. Farber
University of Buffalo
Dorinda J. Gallant
University of South Carolina

Greetings! Welcome to the Division D section! Before we tell you where to get the money, let us tell you more about who we are...

Stacey L. Farber is a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Psychology at the University at Buffalo and the second-year graduate student representative to Division D. She was selected by her faculty as a Peter Drapiewski Scholar in Educational Psychology for excellence in scholarship, research, and humanitarianism. She is currently working on her dissertation, *The Space Between: Roles Parents Play in their Children's Educational Success (or Non-Success). Examining a Model of Parental Influence across Family Race and Child Gender*. She currently lives in Maryland (and is planning a move to Ohio) while she works to complete her dissertation and enjoys life with her husband, seventeen-month-old son, three dogs, and one cat. Her research interests include culturally relevant teacher practice, parental involvement in their children's education, and the education of disenfranchised students.

Dorinda J. Gallant is a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Psychology & Research (Research Track) at the University of South Carolina and a second-year graduate student representative to Division D. She is a four-year African American Professors Program Scholar. Her research interests include research methodology, culture issues in testing, and assessment. In her spare time, she enjoys reading books by African American authors.

“It's Where the Money's At!”

There is no two ways about it ... in this economy and as graduate students, we are becoming more and more creative with how to stretch each and every dollar. So, it is important to jump all over opportunities that may bring in more dollars for the stretchin'. As fellow graduate students near completion of our degrees, we would like to pass on our two cents with

respect to seeking out and garnering those precious greenbacks.

“There's no place like home.” (No, we don't mean mom and pop; odds are you hit them up a long time ago.) We are talking about your home institution. Don't be bashful about this! As a graduate student, you already have a neon light on your forehead that says, “Ramen Noodles,” so you're not going to take anyone by surprise. Check with your advisor, department, and graduate school. They may have money for expenses such as conference registration fees or travel, particularly if you are presenting at the conference or if you are a graduate student representative to a particular division or committee. Your department secretaries have lots of golden nuggets of information ... and you may find them to be more approachable than department chairs or deans. Also check with your department and university Graduate Student Association. They tend to separately offer funding for conferences, child care, and dissertation-related expenses.

“The buck stops over there.” While you are exhausting all money sources at your home institution, continue to seek out other funding sources that may cater to your field of interest. Here are some sites to consider:

AERA Grants – <http://www.aera.net>
The Chronicle of Higher Education (for listings) –
<http://chronicle.com/free/grants/>
Grants.gov (for listings of all government-sponsored grants) –
<http://www.grants.gov/>

“I got my mind on my money and my money on my mind.” No one is born with the ability to write a winning grant, so it is good to seek out “those in the know.” Seek the advice of faculty with experience getting grants. In addition to little nuggets of advice, they may know people to whom you should talk. Or, they may be willing to mentor you through the grant process. And, don't forget about your fellow students. They may be willing to read drafts of your proposals and may know a thing or two about how and where to apply for grants. Also, look to see if your graduate school offers grant writing courses. Annual AERA conferences may offer workshops and seminars. Last year, the Graduate Student Council sponsored an excellent grant writing seminar. And, check out your university library for books on grant writing.

**Division E:
Counseling and Human Development**

David Simpson
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**Division F:
History & Historiography**

Dan Lovitt,
University of Washington, Seattle
Perzavia Praylow
University of Illinois At Urbana-Champaign

Greetings Division F members! We are Dan and Perzavia, your Division F Co-Reps. We are excited to represent you, and we have prepared articles to introduce ourselves.....

**“On Being a Graduate Student
and a Parent”**

My name is Dan Lovitt and I am studying at the University of Washington. I don't know how my institution compares with others, but it seems that there are only a few of us here who would call ourselves historians. I work as a research assistant in the Ed Psych wing and take classes with others who are studying leadership and policies, technology, curriculum, counseling, and cognitive theory. There are times when I feel quite peripheral.

As an older student with children of my own, my responsibilities are far ranging. It's not like the old days as an undergrad when college was the only thing in my life. Like many things in life, this presents both advantages as well as obstacles. While I no longer have the luxury of time, after twenty years, I do seem to have more focus and perspective. Sometimes, it might be best if things do not come easily. With the inevitable snags that come with parenthood I've had to make choices. In order to get some readings and writings done on time, I've had to decide what will get done and what will not. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Really. Having to

prioritize helps me to keep in focus what is most relevant and supportive of my ultimate goals.

**“The Benefit of Participating in the
History of Education Community”**

Greetings from Champaign, IL. My name is Perzavia Praylow and I the incoming graduate student representative for Division F. I am currently a second year graduate student at the University of Illinois At Urbana-Champaign in the Department of Educational Policy Studies.

In my short graduate career, I have constantly asked myself (and others) the following questions: What is the utility of historical research in understanding past and present educational challenges? What are the potential impacts of research in the history of education for law and public policy? Lastly, what are the career difference and similarities amongst historians who work in Departments of History or Colleges and/or Departments of Education and as an aspiring academic which do I prefer? In my search to both answer and give meaning to these questions, I have learned, among other things, that historical research and writing produces narratives that both informs and transforms our present and past understanding of education as a vehicle of democracy.

My understanding of the importance and utility of historical research and writing has been shaped by my involvement in a community of scholars who both see the need and utility for creating narratives that challenges how we think, remember and understand education. Division F (History and Historiography) and the History of Education Society each provide vehicles for graduate students to both learn and become engaged in the history of education professorate. It provides opportunities for networking, mentoring and collaboration as we each individually and collectively contribute toward our mutual work of using historical narrative to illuminate how groups both experience and shape educational processes and institutions.



Keep reading for
wonderful info
on funding your
graduate student
career.....

**Division G:
Social Context of Education**

Alexis A. Lo`pez

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Mark Evan Nelson

University of California, Berkeley

Greetings! We are Alexis A. López and Mark Evan Nelson, your Division G Graduate Student Representatives. We would like to share tips for obtaining dissertation grants, but before we do, we would like to introduce ourselves....

Hi! My name is Alexis, and I am a 4th year doctoral student in Language & Literacy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My research interests focus on social aspects of language testing, particularly the effect that tests have on different stakeholder groups. Currently, I am involved in a 10-state consortium that is developing a large-scale English proficiency test in response to the No Child Left Behind Act. I am returning as Division G co-representative and I look forward to seeing you all again.

Hello everyone! My name is Mark; I am new to AERA and very pleased to be involved! After receiving a BFA in Painting and Art Education from Pratt Institute, I taught Art and Design to inner-city youth in New York. Then, on an extended vacation in Japan, I was first introduced to (and got hooked on) language teaching. Currently, I am working toward a PhD in Education in Language, Literacy and Culture at the University of California, Berkeley. I am chiefly interested in understanding the cognitive, sociocultural and pedagogical implications of communicating via multiple semiotic modes, concentrating and working with particularly on the visual/pictorial and linguistic channels. This, I feel, is a natural integration of my two great, abiding interests: art and language. I look very forward to meeting you all!

*...see yourselves as PhD's!!
Focusing on the end of this
journey helps you to see the
importance of this process.....*



**Tips and Information for
Graduate Students Searching for
Dissertation Grants**

One of the greater challenges for doctoral students is finding ways to support their dissertation or research studies. Here are some tips to help you search for dissertation grants.

1) *Start Early:* Do not wait until you are ready to start your dissertation to look for dissertation grants, start as soon as you begin your doctoral program. The process could take several months to a whole year, so make sure you plan ahead.

2) *Sources:* Always start searching for dissertation grants and fellowships within your own institution and your department. There are also outside sources you may want to consider:

AERA/IES

<http://www.aera.net/programs/ies/index.htm#postdoc>

AERA/NSF/NCES

http://www.aera.net/grantsprogram/res_training/diss_grants/DGFly.html

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY WOMEN

http://www.aauw.org/fga/fellowships_grants/index.cfm

FORD FOUNDATION

<http://www7.nationalacademies.org/fellowships/forddiss.html>

SPENCER FOUNDATION

<http://www.spencer.org/>

TESOL INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH
FOUNDATION

<http://www.tirfonline.org>

WOODROW WILSON FOUNDATION

<http://www.woodrow.org/womens-studies/>

3) *Follow Application Process:* Each dissertation grant program has its own criteria, so before you apply, make sure that you meet all the requirements. Letter of references are very important in the selection process. It is better to ask professors who know you well to write strong

letters of recommendation for you and help demonstrate your potential as a promising or potential scholar than to ask famous professors in your field that do not know you. But above all, make sure your application is complete and that all the required documents arrive on time.

4) *Proposal*: No matter where you apply for a dissertation grant, the key is to write a very strong proposal. It is highly probable that someone from outside your field of study will read your proposal, so it has to be clear enough for any reviewer to understand. For more information, see: http://www.ssrc.org/publications/fellows/art_of_writing_proposals.page

**Division H
School Evaluation & Program
Development**

Janice Fournillier

University of Georgia Athens

Hello! I am Janice Fournillier, a Doctoral Student in Educational Psychology–University of Georgia, Athens. This year, I am serving as a Division H GSC Representative.

Get Involved: Hope is on the way!

By no means do I aim to campaign for any political group. And, I have no affiliation to any political party, given my citizenship status. However, as I stared at the television in between writing overdue papers and listened to the speakers repeat similar stories, I suddenly got the feeling that graduate school was very much like an election campaign. Although I always knew that schooling/education was very political and there was the power/knowledge constantly at work, it really is a political campaign. The results would not only depend on the thousands of voters, but I also needed to have enough funds, a good campaign manager who is knowledgeable about laws, and enough physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional strength to take me to that final night when the results are announced.

Yes, it began with being chosen as a possible candidate by a group of esteemed professors who interviewed and accepted me based on my discourse which included my transcripts, references, and the texts I developed

during the interview. The nomination papers were signed and the pre-campaign began as I prepared to get on the road.



The road trip would be long and hazardous I was warned. I began gathering supporters: my peers on whose shoulders I could lean and who would wipe my tears; professors who would form my committee and assist me in getting funding, friends and relatives who would support me, and networks who would mobilize other “voters.” Yes, “by the sweat of thy brow thou shall eat bread” made sense.

Yes, but I needed to get involved in many other ways. I began volunteering and working with peers when the time allowed. I was visible. Believe me it helps! The people whom I least suspected helped me out when I was in a tight spot because they knew who I was.

In the midst of it all, my campaign manager reminded me to look for opportunities to get involved locally and nationally, so I joined the Division H’s mentoring program, which afforded me the opportunity to network with experts in the field. Hope is on the way! I was able to bring theory and practice together in a safe internship environment. This program brought me to the Graduate Student Committee, an activity that I recommend highly to all students interested in Evaluation Research.

As the Chairperson of the Graduate Student Committee for Division H, I have the privilege of working with Sonia BenJeefar; Steve Culpepper, Geoff Maruyama, and twenty-four members of the advisory student committee. Here are even more shoulders on which I can lean. I promise never to forget those who supported me throughout the campaign!

**Division I
Education in the Professions**

Nancy Sinclair
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Division J: Postsecondary Education

Hugo A. Garcia

University of Southern California

Tricia Bertram Gallant

University of San Diego

Hello! We are Hugo A. Garcia and Tricia Bertram Gallant, Representatives for Division J. Hugo is a M.Ed. candidate in the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California. His research focuses on transfer and retention, and he works with Dr. Linda Serra Hagedorn (Division J Vice-President). Tricia is an Ed.D. Candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Diego and a member of ASHE. Her dissertation is on systemic factors that (dis)able integrity cultures in three American universities. She is a board member with the Center for Academic Integrity (see www.academicintegrity.org)

TIPS FOR GETTING THROUGH

Stay tethered to your purpose. We can all get lost in the routine tasks and we often end up with more tasks than we can handle at once. It is this routine work which can limit our potential if we let it bog us down. Ask yourself some questions, "What is my purpose for being in graduate school?" and "How are these tasks aligned with that purpose?" Sometimes we must let go of tasks that conflict with our real work.

"Don't worry. There's a light at the end of the tunnel!" Has someone directed this statement to you yet in your graduate program? We often say this to people when they are experiencing difficult times or challenges. Our interpretations of this normative saying, however, may not be so normative. How we perceive challenges may influence whether this saying motivates us or undermines our own abilities.

Throughout your graduate student career, it may seem like you are stuck in a tunnel that has no end. But every tunnel has a beginning and an end, constructed as such to get us through or under obstacles. How you perceive and interact within your graduate program is probably similar to how you experience other challenges. When you experience new things, do you perceive obstacles or opportunities? When faced with difficult work, do you create your own pathway or allow others to drive you where you don't want to

go? When you experience disappoint or setbacks, do you ask, "why me?" or "why not me?" Our suggestion is to see the tunnel as a passageway rather than a hole in the ground. You can either travel the path and experience the adventure, or bury yourself alive. Now that's tunnel vision.

DIVISION J NEWS

- **Website** We are designing a new user-friendly and informative website with division events: www.aera.net/divisions/j/.

- **Graduate Student Listserv**

If you are a registered Division J student and supplied your email address to AERA, you will receive informative emails through the listserv: aera_division_j_student_member@listserv.aera.net If you are not registered but would like to receive these emails, please email triciab@sandiego.edu

- **Newsletter** We are currently working on the PEN – our division newsletter---which will be published three times a year---on the first of October, February and June, and on the Division J website. Please pass special topic ideas to us.

- **Dissertation of the Year Award**

We are pleased to announce the Division J Dissertation of the Year Award which will be chosen by a committee of faculty and doctoral students and presented at the annual conference. If you are in the dissertation completion phase, watch for more information!

- **Graduate Student Seminar @ AERA 2005** Division J will be holding a graduate student seminar prior to the AERA conference where doctoral students and new faculty meet with senior faculty. Details should be available for the February edition of the PEN.

Division K: Teaching & Teacher Education

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Look for the next GSC newsletter this Spring!
Hope to see you at the 2005 Annual Meeting!!