

FROM THE EDITOR

Choosing Wisely

Faculty, student affairs educators, and administrative leaders in higher education regularly seek, generate, and use information to inform their decision making and their practices. Some of the information used by these individuals is related directly to student learning outcomes, and some of the information informs programs and services that advance student persistence and achievement. The accuracy of the data, the reliability of the measures, and the validity of the inferences remain paramount to assessment research and practice.

The contributions presented in this issue of *Research & Practice in Assessment* demonstrate the importance of data in decision making and selecting appropriate measures to demonstrate student learning and achievement outcomes. It is likely that you have faced challenges with the use of such measures.

The Summer 2017 issue includes three peer-reviewed articles that exemplify the importance of data use and utilization of strong measures to advance assessment practices in higher education. Addressing the challenge of predicting student readiness for college, Soland utilizes data reduction techniques to identify the strongest identifiers of college readiness. Gray, Brown, and Connolly present evidence of using the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Quantitative Literacy VALUE rubric to assess a single construct, Empirical and Quantitative Skill, in performance-based assessment. Prinski and Winterrowd examine the implications of measure selection when assessing the impact of campus counseling services on students' academic functioning.

Stitt-Bergh reviews *Learning Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*, a text designed for faculty to incorporate assessment techniques that not only measure, but also facilitate student learning.

This issue also includes a Notes in Brief that highlights the importance of teaching graduate students how to engage in robust assessment practices and affords the opportunity for faculty to reflect and examine their own teaching practices. I hope the scholarship and practices presented in this issue will be applicable to your work.

On a more solemn note, it is with deep sympathy, that I take this opportunity to remember and recognize two valued members of the RPA family, Kendra Jeffcoat and Deborah "Deb" Moore. Kendra Jeffcoat served as a member of the RPA Review Board and Deb Moore was a member of the Virginia Assessment Group as well as a member of the RPA Review Board. As colleagues and volunteers, they both gave selflessly of their time expertise. Kendra and Deb will be remembered fondly and missed deeply.

Regards,

Katie Busby

University of Mississippi

