

Comments from the Editor

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This release of the first issue of *Research & Practice in Assessment* marks a new era in assessment related scholarship. The Board of the Virginia Assessment Group (VAG) and the Board of Editors of *Research & Practice in Assessment* have committed to a publication focused on student learning outcomes assessment. To some this focus may seem narrow; however, one needs only to review the inaugural issue of this journal to see the breadth of scholarship in the area of outcomes assessment. I am pleased to include four excellent articles addressing four different issues in assessment. Topics in this issue include assessing the impact of writing across the curriculum, the handling of missing data, the use of effect size with the NSSE, and a wonderful piece on improving the assessment of student learning through peer review. I hope you will find this new era and this first issue as exciting, interesting, and informative as I do.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have worked over the last 18 months to develop and launch *Research & Practice in Assessment*. The Officers and Board Members of the Virginia Assessment Group worked tirelessly to make the needed changes to the organization's by-laws to support the establishment of the journal. The members of VAG voted overwhelmingly to support the development of the publications, transforming an organizational newsletter to an electronic journal. And a special thanks to Keston H. Fulcher, Ph.D. (Director of Assessment and Evaluation at Christopher Newport University), Dennis R. Ridley, Ph.D. (Director of Institutional Research and Planning at Virginia Wesleyan College) and Rufus Carter (Coordinator of Institutional Assessment at Marymount University) who make up the Board of Editors for their time and commitment to this new publication. I hope that upon reading *Research & Practice in Assessment* you will be inspired to contribute to the literature on learning outcomes assessment by submitting your own work for consideration in the next issue.