

Comments from the Executive Editor

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This issue of *Research and Practice in Assessment* provides three articles that should prove beneficial to practitioners. The first article by Pieper, Fulcher, Sundre, and Erwin identifies a problem that plagues many learning outcomes assessment initiatives in higher education: the underuse of data. The authors describe a framework of analytical questions related to differences, relationships, change, and competency that can drive analyses resulting in useful information.

Considering the acceleration of globalism, the second article by Bresciani is timely. It explores cross-cultural collaboration among American and Mexican researchers. Through a qualitative methodology she uncovers several points of understanding and misunderstanding between these groups. She then postulates how these findings may be used to improve collaboration in cross-cultural endeavors in research and in the classroom.

The final article, by Thelk, examines whether a science and math test used at a four-year institution is appropriate for community colleges. She uses statistical techniques to ascertain if certain items exhibit differential item functioning (DIF). The presence of DIF could indicate bias. Indeed, many items did reveal DIF, which prompted a revision so that the instrument would be more appropriate for the community college.