



IDEA Reader's Corner

Iowa Developmental Education Association Newsletter, December 2018

A Challenge from IDEA President, Jennifer Condon



IDEA. I have an idea. Let's all make a difference in the life of a student today. Wait, we already do that! As the 2018-19 IDEA President, it is my honor to lead us into a year of sharing, reporting,

documenting, and improving what we do for students through developmental education in Iowa's fifteen community colleges.

My first IDEA conference in the 1990s was at Hotel Pattee in Perry. At that time I was a part-time academic assistant in Iowa Central's Student Success Center, and this fall I started a new school year on the Iowa Central Community College Fort Dodge campus for the 24th time. To be honest, I am not sure that I noticed much change in developmental education in my first 15 years. I know I made changes in my own classroom. I know that IDEA has been a conference to get and share ideas that impact our students. I know that today we have the attention of the State of Iowa not to mention federal programs like [Complete College America](#).

This attention should not catch us by surprise. Higher education is asked to be more accountable, to focus more on retention and graduation, and to do more with less. The [Developmental Education Work Group](#) was developed in response to [Future Ready Iowa](#). If you are not aware of what these groups are recommending, consider this information your

reading assignment for the rest of 2018. It's not that we haven't done this work, but we have failed to loudly and persistently share the stories with our colleagues, our leaders, and our service areas. This year, we must collect our data, record the stories, and continue to share our strategies. We are more than remediation in math, reading, and writing; we are connected with orientations, placements, and student development courses. Dr. Deb Daiek, NADE President, said it well in her letter last [March](#): "We are so much more. We need to remind ourselves and others of our motto: Proudly...we do serve the underprepared students...but we also help the prepared students to advance and the advanced students to excel."

The stories are ours to tell. Let's figure out how and where.

Jennifer Condon is Dean of Liberal Arts at Iowa Central Community College.

This issue marks the annual transition in leadership on the IDEA Executive Board, reviews highlights of the 2018 Fall Conference, and celebrates the winner of the 2018 IDEA Scholarship.

Executive Time: A Year as President of IDEA

Jennie Doke-Kerns, Ph.D.



This past year I had the honor of serving as president of IDEA. I am passionate about the work that members of this organization do on a daily basis. We work with some of the most challenging but often most appreciative students. These students didn't just assume they could go to college. For many it was just a dream that somehow came true. Regardless, our developmental instructors are meeting these students where they are and offering a hand up to help these students achieve their goals. I can't say enough good about the goals of this organization and the people I've had the pleasure to work with through my connections with it.

We all know that big things all seem to come at once, and this year was no exception for me. It was a busy and exciting time, as my own role at DMACC changed as well. This year I went from being a Developmental English/Academic Achievement Center faculty member to taking on the role of Director of Corrections Education and Academic Services here at the Newton DMACC campus. It had long been my goal to enter community college administration, and I look forward to the challenges this new role will continue to present.

This year was an important one for the Iowa Developmental Education Association as well. One of the most significant developments from this past year was IDEA's participation and representation on the Iowa Developmental Education Working Group. This group was formed by the Iowa Department of Education to examine and identify best practices in across Iowa and nationwide. Our association was widely represented on this group, including me,

Dan Nelson, Tom Mueller, and Noël Gorden, just to name a few. I know there are many other members who contributed either at the state level or in discussions at their own colleges.

I am proud of the contribution our association was able to make to this discussion, yet one of the best outcomes was our new connections to the staff of the Iowa Department of Education. Many IDOE folks were kind enough to join us for meetings and present at our conferences, making it clear that they valued our input and see IDEA as an important stakeholder in Iowa's mission to improve developmental education. I look forward to seeing how the group's recommendations are implemented in the future. One of the main recommendations was the creation of a Statewide Developmental Education Center, which could provide professional development opportunities, information on best practices, and up-to-date research in the area. I feel strongly that IDEA can have a leadership role in this initiative going forward, and our group stands ready to grow this partnership with IDOE to promote our common goals.

Serving as president of this organization has been a privilege, and I look forward to continuing to be active in IDEA in the years to come. This group is comprised of so many talented and passionate individuals who all bring their important parts to the discussion of how to reach our students and meet them where they are. This year has challenged me and helped me grow professionally, and for that I thank the IDEA Board for this great opportunity. But now the role of president is passed into the able hands of Jennifer Condon from Iowa Central Community College. I feel confident that Jennifer will be a fierce advocate for our students and our instructors over this next year and beyond. I look forward to seeing you all at the conference in 2019!

Jennie is the Director of Corrections Education and Academic Services, and Disabilities Services Liaison at DMACC's Newton Campus.

More Transitions: IDEA Executive Board Welcomes Three New Members for 2018-2019 and Bids Farewell to Three

Bea Houston, Western Iowa Technical Community College, is our new President-Elect.

Chris Woodson serves as the Dean of Student Development for Northeast Iowa Community College and has worked in higher education for the past 15 years. Chris has held positions serving in TRIO Upward Bound, counseling and student affairs administration. Her involvement in developmental education at NICC includes oversight of the college's learning centers, placement, disability services, counseling, student life, TRIO and libraries.



Chris earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Luther College and graduate degree in education from Saint Mary's University.

Chris, who will serve as Member at Large on the Executive Board, says, "I look forward to participating in IDEA and believe a comprehensive developmental education framework is key in supporting the personal and academic growth of our students."

Amy Moffitt, Testing Coordinator at Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge, will serve as IDEA Treasurer.



Amanda Rodenborn, former IDEA Treasurer, will remain on the Board as Member at Large. **Dan Nelson**, former IDEA Past President, will be the Community College Representative. Both Amanda and Dan are professors at Des Moines Area Community College. **Sue Wickham**, retired DMACC professor and current tutor at Mercy College of Health Sciences, will become Newsletter Editor and continue as Webmaster.

Thanks for many years of outstanding service to **Meridith Nelson**, Des Moines Area Community College; **Tom Mueller**, Hawkeye Community College; and **Ruth Kunkel**, Des Moines Area Community College—all retiring this year as IDEA Board members.

IDEA Board Member Ruth Kunkel Joins State of Iowa Board of Psychology



The world of higher education has become more widely merged with corporate, government, and community entities. My experience working in community colleges has given me a special perspective, continuously asking myself what opportunities I can become involved with to increase my knowledge in the field of psychology.

Recently, the Iowa Department of Public Health had an opening for a board member to fill a vacancy on the Board of Psychology for the State of Iowa. I couldn't allow this opportunity to pass by; this happened at a time that I have been completing graduate courses in the psychology discipline. Seeking additional experiences and exposure to various real-world topics that therapists and professionals in the field of psychology are facing, I had to reach out and apply.

Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate and his department reviewed my application and material. To date, I have attended two board meetings; I am learning as a board member that our goal is to educate our professionals – not remove licenses. Most practitioners are well meaning, but they are prone to make mistakes. Additionally, the educational requirements for licensure in the State of Iowa have been gravely misunderstood; unfortunately, some graduate students who have completed their educational programs and are seeking an Iowa license to practice are not eligible because their educational institutions lack proper accreditation here in Iowa.

I have several years remaining to complete my first term on the Board of Psychology; the information I have gathered will be valuable beyond belief, as my goal will be to share specific information with my students. As educators we need to continuously look outside the box and seek opportunities to grow, with the intent to enrich the learning experience offered to our students.

Ruth's Farewell as *Reader's Corner* Editor

My time has come to say "good-bye." My deepest desire would be to take on more and more projects without letting anything go; however, I cannot consistently produce the high quality I aim for.

The *Reader's Corner* is an opportunity to allow professionals a sneak peek inside the world of professional higher education and to give colleagues a glimpse of the ideas the writer is pursuing. This newsletter allows those across the state to contribute best practices and so much more!

I look back with fondness on working with the various board members of IDEA. I have held the role of President, President-Elect, Past President, and Editor – WOW, what a wonderful ride! This is my time to step aside and allow a colleague the opportunity to take this newsletter to the next level—to continue to improve and move forward.

It has been my honor to get involved and learn from my colleagues; you all have contributed greatly to the person and professional I have become. Thank you.

Ruth Kunkle, MS

2018 IDEA Conference Highlights

The 2018 IDEA Conference certainly lived up to its theme, “New Perspectives”!

Former NADE Vice President Annette Cook set the



tone in her keynote address, “Creating a Culture That Engages Students,” with a quote from Martha Casazza and Laura Bauer: “Institutions have historically looked at students with the idea of transforming them, but have failed to look at themselves and how to effectively

transform their own systems in order to better meet the needs of all students.” Challenging audience members to rethink how we interact with our students, Cook noted that underprepared and underserved students can be found at every level of education, and that most want and appreciate help.

Cook emphasized that ongoing academic advising is the most important student service, second only to instruction in determining student success. She discussed Shelton State Community College’s Student Opportunities for Achievement and Resources Institute, which she directed, as a successful model of wraparound services. Under SOAR’s intrusive advising program, navigators met with developmental students every 2-3 weeks and with traditional students once a month. By combining this advising with developmental courses, tutoring, and student success seminars, SOAR sparked an increase in student retention and persistence at SSCC.

In her follow-up concurrent session, Cook provided additional specific examples of student-centered support, including explicit instruction in “college knowledge” (e.g., R means Thursday on the course schedule; some classes meet for only part of a term); a description of important differences between high

school and college (e.g., 85% of college learning occurs outside of class); a handout on community resources (e.g., food pantries, mental health); and a list developed by diverse campus groups of the top five keys to success—printed on t-shirts given to all first-time freshmen, faculty, and staff.

Other concurrent session presenters offered fresh insights on standardized tests versus multiple measures for course placement, embedded skills instruction in college-level coursework, and strategies for implementing programmatic change. Attendees also had the opportunity to learn about alternative high school completion options and education programs in correctional settings—and special thanks to the Iowa Department of Education representatives who contributed to these sessions.

Sue Wickham

Editor’s note: PowerPoints from Cook’s keynote and several concurrent sessions, as well as Department of Education documents related to high school completion and developmental education, are available on the [Member Resources](#) page of the IDEA website.

Session Synopsis: Does ACCUPLACER Predict Anything?!

Community colleges across Iowa have been working to implement multiple measures not only at the urging of the [Developmental Education Working Group’s recommendations](#) (April 2018) but also because, as practitioners, we know multiple measures better assess the whole students entering our campuses. At the same time, several community colleges that have been using ACCUPLACER Classic as a placement tool since COMPASS disappeared are in the midst of switching to ACCUPLACER Next-Generation. With all of these

changes, many of which happened rapidly, it can be difficult to remember to stop and evaluate our assessment tools. There can be a tendency to focus so much on having a tool in place that we forget about checking its value.



Thus, at this year's annual conference, Marshall Stuart's presentation, "Examination Examination: Does ACCUPLACER Predict Anything?!" drew much attention. Stuart, Professor of Mathematics at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), led a thought-provoking session, detailing a statistical analysis of ACCUPLACER data collected over the last year since its inception at DMACC. DMACC deans tasked Stuart with determining any predictive correlation between ACCUPLACER scores and students' first-term GPAs. As Stuart presented his findings, he explained his mathematical approach but cautioned against reading too much into the data. As he reminded listeners, because the data were limited, so, too, were interpretations. However, with the information he was supplied, he showed attendees that ACCUPLACER Classic scores seem to have very little, if any, correlation to students' first-term GPAs.

Stuart's presentation left many listeners with questions about how their own colleges use

ACCUPLACER and other placement tools. Ultimately, the presentation and ensuing discussion concluded with a message heard around the state and across the nation—multiple measures for student placement are indeed vital.

Amanda Rodenborn, DMACC

Editor's note: The PowerPoint for Marshall Stuart's presentation is available on the [Member Resources](#) page of the IDEA website.

America Reads Books for Kirkwood Elementary Students

Children's books donated by IDEA conference attendees this year were sent to Kirkwood Elementary School in Coralville, Iowa, which serves 400 students ranging from preschool to sixth grade. In a letter to posted on the school's website, Principal Anita Gerling wrote, "Kirkwood is a true reflection of our world! There are sixteen different languages spoken by our families. We treasure and celebrate our diversity."

This year, Townsend Press (a long-time IDEA conference sponsor) and the Newton Correctional Facility added several boxes of children's books to those brought by IDEA members. At the Thursday luncheon and chapter meeting, Ms. Gerling told attendees that some of the books would be distributed during Kirkwood's family nights and others would be welcome additions to classroom libraries.



Dan Nelson, Principal Anita Gerling, and Molly Struve prepare to pack the boxes of donated books for delivery to Kirkwood Elementary School.

Reading List for Developmental Educators

To provide more new perspectives on our profession, keynote speaker Annette Cook recommended several books. IDEA members are cordially invited to read them and share their reviews in upcoming editions of the *Reader's Corner*.

Creating the Path to Success in the Classroom, Kathleen F. Gabriel (Cook's new favorite)

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, Carol S. Dweck

Fostering Habits of Mind in Today's Students: A New Approach to Developmental Education, Jennifer Fletcher, Adela Najarro, and Hetty Yelland, Editors

Academic Advising: The Key to Student Success, Terry O'Banion, Editor

What Works: Research-Based Practices in Developmental Education, Hunter Boylan

The Power of Determination: Fourteen Stories, John Langan, Editor

Access, Opportunity, and Success: Keeping the Promise of Higher Education, Martha Casazza and Laura Bauer

50 Tips for Academic Success: College Edition, Alan Farber

Attaining Excellence in Developmental Education: Research-based Recommendations for Administrators, Hunter Boylan and D. Patrick Saxon

IDEA Student Scholarship Winner

Congratulations to this year's IDEA Student Scholarship recipient, Laurice Verlaine Chewouo, a student at DMACC's Boone Campus. Originally from Cameroon, in West Africa, Laurice took ESL classes at DMACC's Ames Hunziker Center to learn more English prior to taking college courses. Her instructor encouraged her to try out her new language skills. Laurice recalled, "As a shy person, I barely talked to people at work or class, but I decided to step out of my comfort zone and stopped being afraid and discovered everything meaningful around me." She practiced with the course CD, got a library card, and worked toward mastering the academic English she would need as a college student.

Now a member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, she is active in several student groups and was accepted as an intern in the BioMaP research experience for undergraduates at Iowa State University. She will pursue a career in engineering. According to Dr. Jerrine McCaffrey, Laurice's Composition II professor, "She is dedicated and is truly one of the hardest working and most focused students whom I have taught in my twenty-six years of teaching. . . . She is a student who possesses a joy for the learning process."

Laurice is grateful for the continuing encouragement of DMACC faculty, "who made me feel like it would be possible for me to overcome all those obstacles and fears. From time to time I will stop by the office of my previous ESL instructor and have a chat on all the progress I have made since I left the course."

Join the IDEA Conversation

- Have you recently attended a conference of another professional organization? Summarize a session relevant to our membership for the *Reader's Corner*.
- Has your institution revamped its placement policies, developmental studies offerings, or academic support program? Provide a quick update.
- Have you located a great academic resource for student or faculty use? Share the wealth.
- Have you transitioned to a new position or received special recognition for your professional accomplishments? Let us celebrate with you!

To submit articles or information for future editions of the *Reader's Corner*, please send to:

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2018-2019 IDEA Executive Board

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(For contact information, please see the IDEA website linked to the right.)

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IDEA Website:

Check the IDEA website for 2019 conference updates, student scholarship information, and member resources.

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