

# FERA Newsletter

Fall 2021



## Presidents' Corner

### Hello FERA Community!

We are looking forward to our onsite 65th Annual FERA conference November 17-19, 2021 at the Westshore Grand in Tampa, FL! The conference theme is *Forward Together: Educational Research to Rebuild and Reimagine Public Education*, and includes many exciting speakers from Florida universities, school districts, schools, and the Department of Education!

This year has been one of reflection and renewal for the FERA Board. Building on feedback from the Technology Survey you completed pre-COVID and the highly successful Virtual Form in November, 2020, the Board is reflecting on the history, values, and future of the FERA organization. We are excited to engage the FERA community and are planning opportunities at the conference (and elsewhere) to hear about **"What FERA means to you!"** Building on our over 65-year history, we plan to reify and grow our commitment to promoting Educational Research that advances and evidences our community values!

We also view this as an excellent time to reflect on how we came about as an organization and to honor our founders, Past Presidents and other leaders, without whose efforts and commitments we would not be here today. Be on the lookout for opportunities at upcoming conferences to hear from some of our original and wisest FERA members. Knowing our collective history roots us as a community and the foundation from which we can reflect and grow together.

We hope to see you at the 2021 conference!

Jenni Wolgemuth, FERA President

David Bustos, FERA President-Elect

Peggy Jones, FERA Immediate Past President

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## Florida Journal of Educational Research

The Florida Journal of Educational Research (FJER) is an open-access academic journal published by the Florida Educational Research Association (FERA). The purpose of FJER is to facilitate communication among educators, policy-makers, and researchers in the state of Florida and beyond.

### Editorial Team:

Executive Editor Jennifer Wolgemuth, Ph.D., University of South Florida

Associate Editor Maria Vasquez, Ph.D., Florida Atlantic University

Associate Editor Alyson Adams, Ph.D., University of Florida

Co-Managing Editors Lodi Rohrer and Deborah Christie, University of South Florida

**Submit Your Work to FJER:** FJER welcomes submissions from members and non-members! Presenters at the Annual Meeting of the Florida Educational Research Association are specially invited to submit their work! Please indicate if your submission was an FERA presentation. To submit a manuscript, visit [https:// journals.flvc.org/fjer](https://journals.flvc.org/fjer)

**NEW! FJER Moves to New Platform:** FJER is now part of the Florida Virtual Campus system. This move will expand the readership of FJER, and streamlines the submission process for you, making it easier to check the status of your publication throughout the review process. Before submitting you will need to register as an author (and reviewer if you choose) at <https://journals.flvc.org/fjer>

**Volunteer to be a FJER Reviewer:** FJER is seeking new Editorial Board Members and reviewers! We are also seeking graduate students to serve on the graduate student review panel. To volunteer as a Board Member or reviewer, please contact Jennifer Wolgemuth at [jrwolgemuth@usf.edu](mailto:jrwolgemuth@usf.edu).

### FJER Reviewers of the Year 2020

FJER is pleased to announce our Reviewers of the Year for 2020! We thank these individuals for their numerous, high quality, and above all generative and supportive reviews that inspired authors to deepen their work and thinking.

### Reviewers of the Year 2020

Amber Dumford, University of South Florida

Sophia Rahming, Florida State University

## Graduate Student Award Luncheon Presentation

### **Strategies for College-Level Student Engagement in Multiple Modalities: Learning from a Longitudinal Study on Yellowdig, a Community-Building Platform Designed for Collaboration, Social Presence, and Gamification**

The guest speakers, Drs. Aimee Whiteside and Suzanne Ensmann will showcase a study through the lens of disruptive innovation theory that explores student engagement with a tool called Yellowdig. Using the Electronic Learning Satisfaction Survey (eLSS) framework and survey tools developed by Dr. Albert Ritzhaupt at the University of Florida combined with other triangulated methods, our initial findings across multiple courses suggest that instructors can leverage gamification and social media-like reactions to foster student engagement, course satisfaction, and critical connections. Lessons learned include using data analytics to monitor student engagement while allowing faculty the time to facilitate just-in-time learning.

#### **Dr. Aimee Whiteside's biography:**

Aimee Whiteside is an associate professor at the University of Tampa where she chairs the Online Teaching and Learning Committee. She co-edited the 2017 book, *Social Presence in Online Learning: Multiple Perspectives on Research and Practice*, with Amy Garrett Dikkers and Karen Swan. Her work has been featured in several peer-reviewed journals, including the *Online Learning Journal*, *Journal of Interactive Online Learning*, *International Journal of E-Learning and Distance Education*, *EDUCAUSE Review*, and the *Online Learning Consortium's Effective Practices*. Additionally, she has written chapters in several books, such as *Emotions, Technology, and Learning* and *Computer-Mediated Communication across Cultures: International Interactions in Online Environments* as well as special volumes in the *Advances in Research on Teaching* and the *New Directions in Teaching and Learning*.

#### **Dr. Suzanne Ensmann's biography:**

Suzanne Ensmann is an assistant professor for the instructional design and technology graduate-level program for The University of Tampa. Ensmann creates, develops, and teaches hybrid and online courses in the area of instructional design, distance education, research, human and program performance, and evaluation. Ensmann implemented the first Adult Education comprehensive online program offered at a state college in Florida and had been appointed to the iCivics Teacher Council by Justice O'Connor to support educational simulations and resources. Her research interests include digital-game-based learning, focus on the whole student's health and well-being using digital devices, and global learning. Most recently Ensmann's peer-reviewed articles included *Connections Before Curriculum: The Role of Social Presence During COVID-19 Emergency Remote Learning for Students in the Online Learning Journal* with Aimee Whiteside, Lina Gomez-Vasquez, and Ronda Sturgill and *Digital Games to Improve Learning in Haiti* in *TechTrends*.

## **FERA's 65th Annual Meeting**

The Florida Educational Research Association's (FERA) 65th Annual Meeting is right around the corner! The conference will be in Tampa, FLR at the [Westshore Grand Hotel from November 17th-19th](#).

**Registration:** You can [register online](#) or at the conference, however registering online in advance helps us better plan for the amount of coffee, snacks, lunches, and reception food we'll need!

**Hotel Reservations:** The deadline to [reserve rooms](#) at the *discounted conference rate* is October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. *Reservations made after that deadline will be at the hotel's regular rates.*

**This year's conference theme**, *Forward Together: Educational Research to Rebuild and Reimagine Public Education*, brings together thought-leading educators, administrators, policy-makers, and scholars in provocative dialogues about the possible futures of educational research in our state and beyond!

### **Featured speakers and topics include:**

**Jason Gaitanis**, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Accountability and Policy Research, Florida Department of Education

*On: Florida School and Teacher Accountability*

**Frank Gilbert**, Director of Test Development and Measurement, Orange County Public Schools

*On: The Past and Future of Test Development*

**Bobby Hoffman**, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Central Florida

*On: Motivation in Education*

**Aaron Kuntz**, Professor of Research Methodology at Florida International University

*On: Doing Responsible Qualitative Research*

**Vince Verges**, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Accountability, Research, and Measurement, Florida Department of Education

*On: The Status of Statewide Assessment in Florida*

The program also includes many thoughtful paper sessions, graduate student posters, and presentations from teacher inquirers!

**Health and Safety:** The FERA Executive Board is working diligently with hotel staff to maximize social distancing and sanitization during the conference. *Masks will be strongly encouraged. Masks and hand sanitizer will be made available to all participants and all rooms and social events will be set-up to facilitate social distancing to the extent possible.*

We look forward to the information sharing and generative conversations on the role of educational research in rebuilding and reimagining educational research in Florida and beyond!

We hope to see you there!



**Call for Submissions**

# **FERA NEWSLETTER**

## **Call for Submissions**

**DUE FRIDAY MARCH 14, 2022**

***Share your research projects,  
stories, lesson plans, or curriculum  
ideas!***

**Author Guidelines: <https://bit.ly/3b6tGal>**

**Email your Word doc to:**

**alypka@mail.usf.edu**

**SUBJECT LINE: FERA Newsletter Submission**

## Meet the FERA Newsletter Editor

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**Andrea Lypka** Andrea Lypka has worked with adult learners for over 10 years as an educator and administrator. She has a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology from the University of South Florida. She is currently the 2nd Vice President of Sunshine State TESOL and a community manager for the TESOL Intercultural Communication Intersection. Her research interests include instructional technology, L2 literacy, and digital visual research. She can be reached at [alypka@mail.usf.edu](mailto:alypka@mail.usf.edu)

## We would love to hear from you!

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Please follow the link to take a brief survey providing feedback and suggestions to the newsletter editors.

[Feedback/Survey Link](#)