

Volume 27, Number 2, Fall 2015

## The Association of Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education



### *Views and News*

#### The Voice of Teacher Preparation in Independent Institutions



#### 2016 Annual Meeting and Conference:

February 22-23, 2016, Las Vegas, Nevada

Collaboration as a Cornerstone of Teacher Education

#### 2016 AILACTE Request for Proposals

Now through October 15, AILACTE is accepting session proposals for the 2016 Annual Meeting and Conference to be held in Las Vegas, February 22-23, 2016. We also invite AILACTE member faculty to review proposals.

The conference theme is **Collaboration as a Cornerstone of Teacher Education**. Proposals should address this theme with a focus on one of the three strands:

Strand 1 - Initiating Collaboration

Strand 2 - Assessing Collaboration

Strand 3 - Sustaining Collaboration

Two types of proposals will be accepted for the conference - 60 minute workshops and 30 minute presentations (to be coupled with similar themed presentations).

Read the full [Request for Proposals](#), including the questions for each strand.

Read the specific [Proposal Guidelines](#).

To participate in the proposal review process, email [info@ailacte.org](mailto:info@ailacte.org).

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## From the President

*Mike Hillis*



Greetings from Southern California!! You may recall in earlier letters that I would often refer to the beautiful Pacific Northwest, a place where I grew up and worked for the past 18 years. Well, this spring I decided to leave that part of the country and relocate to an area just down the road... take I-5 for about 13 hours and then hang a right into Ventura County. In all seriousness, this is an exciting move for me and it has reminded me that change is often a central part of all of our lives.

As I work to acclimate to a new culture, new community and new colleagues, I've been thinking much about our conference theme for the annual meeting. As you've probably noted by now, we're focusing on collaboration for the conference and asking that people consider the strands of initiating, sustaining and evaluating the process. In my new role at Cal Lutheran, I've been engaged in quite a bit of reflection over the past couple of months regarding this matter—how to better develop collaborative relationships with faculty, staff and the community. I'd like to share a few of these thoughts with the hope that it might stimulate your own process for submitting a proposal.

Over the past few years, I have been reading fairly extensively in the work of René Girard. While I'm not going to pretend to be a Girardian scholar and say I understand all of the complexity and nuance of his thinking, I would like to use one of his primary ideas as a way to consider collaboration.

Girard discusses at length the concept of mimesis—the process by which we desire what the other has through imitative behavior. The mimetic process, according to Girard, can be either positive or negative. With negative mimesis, our desire to imitate others may result in rivalistic behavior; we desire what others have, view the other's accomplishment as a diminishment of ourselves and see the “rival” as an obstacle to our success. Girard argues that this mimetic cycle can lead to many destructive ends, including the devastation of relationships.

However, mimetic desire can be a positive process—people inspired to action by emulating the good work in others. As Girard (2007) says, mimetic desire “is intrinsically good.... (I)t's the opening out of oneself” (p. 64). What I've learned from this is that in order to build collaborative cultures, it's critical that we take a personal step back, open ourselves to other possibilities and ideas and honor the accomplishments of others. For ultimately, collaboration is not about **me** and achieving **my** desires—it's about **us** and discovering the best way forward.

So, as we head into a new academic year and consider the many possibilities before us, I would encourage all to be mindful of each other. For all of us can and should contribute to this conversation; a conversation to challenge us, inspire us and move us.

Wishing you all the best for the start of the new year and I look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas!

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**Now is the time to renew your Membership to AILACTE!!!!**

*by Sam Hausfather, AILACTE Secretary*



AILACTE is the only national teacher education organization dedicated to your unique needs as independent colleges and universities.

- Shared perspectives about one's distinctive and strong sense of mission
- Opportunities to collaborate with like institutions

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## Characteristics of Effective Assessment Systems

*by David W. Denton, West Region Representative*



Perhaps the best known slogan of standards-based education change is *success for all students*, indicated by total proficiency on reading and math tests. While the goal remains elusive, some of the strange effects of applying accountability schemes with high-stakes testing are definite. A few news headlines summarize the situation: A school principal in New York fixed up incomplete responses on English tests; three teachers in Las Vegas erased answers and added their own; 35 educators in Atlanta set up an elaborate, multiyear system to falsify test scores.

Campbell (1976) predicted these kinds of problems decades ago, by noting that any social project, whether focused on education or otherwise, often produces unintended effects. One cause of failure is excessive dependence on quantitative indicators, which yield invalid results over time and corrupt the social processes reformers intended to improve. One solution, according to Campbell, is multiple measures constituting an index, much like the Cost of Living Index, which uses various categories for measuring and comparing. Another solution is to incorporate quantitative and qualitative results—both of which should be based on sound judgment as they apply to practical matters, or as Campbell (1976) calls it, “common-sense knowing” (p. 8).

Those involved in teacher preparation are sure to recognize the characteristics of effective assessment, whether used for licensure, program evaluation or accreditation,

or as they are applied in K-12 settings. Effective assessment depends on multiple measures, both quantitative and qualitative. It is also based on common-sense knowing—not obsession with data analytics. Although it may be impossible to avoid all of the unintended outcomes when assessment is linked to accountability, adhering to a few common-sense principles, such as those articulated by Campbell, are sure to benefit teacher preparation programs and the candidates they serve.

Campbell, D. T. (1976, May). *Assessing the Impact of Planned Social Change*. Paper presented at the Conference on Social Psychology, Visegrad, Hungary.

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## Technology Tip

*by Jennie Carr, South Region Representative*



Communicating with teacher candidates is pivotal. Email is currently the primary mode of digital communication for most higher education institutions. However, many college students find email to be dated and prefer instant communication like texting. As professors, we know we need to meet our students where they are—on their devices. **Remind**, formerly *Remind 101*, is a free easy-to-use communication solution which allows professors to connect instantly, safely and efficiently with candidates. **Remind** enables professors to send quick announcements to an entire class. Using any device, professors can create multiple classes of candidate contact information through the **Remind** website or app in 15 seconds. Candidates sign up to receive professor's announcements via text, app notifications or email. All contact information is kept private and secure. So, candidates never have access to professor's personal phone numbers. As of May 2015, **Remind** now offers "Chat"—a service similar to texting. When using **Remind's** "Chat," professors can communicate back and forth with candidates using any device. Professors can also set **Remind** "Chat" office hours so messages are only received when it is convenient. This semester, check out <https://www.remind.com/> and its many features for a more efficient way to communicate with candidates.

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**Views and News:** The Voice of Teacher Preparation in Independent Institutions is published twice yearly in partnership with the Charter School of Education and Human Sciences at Berry College, Mt. Berry, Georgia. Co-editors are Jacqueline McDowell and Kathy Gann.