

President's Letter

When I joined the Executive Board of IDEA (the Iowa Developmental Education Association) in Fall 2019, I never could have imagined the year that would unfold. Our organization had just completed



one of its best conferences yet at the DMACC-Ankeny campus, and we had incredible momentum going forward. The next year would be a breeze—we made plans to return to the same venue for our Fall 2020 conference, and our only real concern was

updating IDEA's name to better reflect our national organization's rebranding from NADE (the National Association of Developmental Education) to NOSS (the National Organization for Student Success).

You know what happened next.

I am not going to minimize the situation by calling these "unprecedented times" or "the new normal," meaningless phrases that have become cliché and rote and do not adequately summarize what all of us are going through and have been going through since last spring.

However, our 2019-2020 President, Bea Houston, and the rest of our Executive Board carried on undeterred. We officially changed our name to IOSS (the Iowa Organization for Student Success), added a beautiful new logo designed by Iowa Central Community College student Karlee Ihde, put

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together a completely virtual Fall 2020 conference with the help of Hawkes Learning, and updated our Constitution and By-Laws for the first time in decades. In spite of the circumstances, or perhaps because of them, this has been one of our most accomplished years ever.

And I hear the same things from faculty and staff regarding their professional experiences during this time.

Every new day on the job feels like a new day of professional development. Adjunct instructors who had never taught online have become experts in designing courses in CANVAS, Google Classroom, and Blackboard. Advisors, tutors, mentors, and other college staff whom students depend on for one-on-one support have made themselves more available with expanded hours using virtual meeting software like Zoom, Teams, and Big Blue Button. Professors who wouldn't trade their experiences in the classroom for anything have completely revamped course materials, resources, and assessments to better engage students scattered across the state and the world. Administrators have found new, innovative strategies for scheduling courses and implementing policies to allow for social distancing, reduced traffic flow, and enhanced cleaning practices to lessen the risk of transmission on campus. In many cases, instructors are still in classrooms, wearing face coverings and wielding bottles of hand sanitizer and surface cleaner, working to protect their students' health while continuing to provide a quality educational experience.

Things aren't going to get any easier any time soon. But Iowa's educators have proven themselves again and again and again to be up for the challenge. What is best for our students? What will help them be successful? How can we support them, not just in their education, but in a world with an uncertain future? These questions will continue to drive us in everything we do; regardless of the situation, regardless of the challenges, IOSS members and educators across the country will continue to do the big work and get big results.

Justin Robertson
IOSS President
2020-2021

Success Going Viral Conference Highlights

Thanks to the Hawkes Learning staff who moderated and video recorded all of the conference Zoom sessions. These recordings will be available for IOSS members to view until February 2021. Find the link on the IOSS Fall Conference webpage or go directly to <https://ioss-conference-2020.heysummit.com/replays/>

Keynote 1: "How False Narratives, Not Data, Are Driving Reforms, and How to Use New Narratives to Increase Student Success"

In his keynote presentation, Alexandros Goudas, Associate Professor of English at Delta College in Michigan and NOSS Research Committee Chair,



addressed common myths about the value of developmental courses. Noting that repetition bias has given prominence to misleading anecdotes about developmental education, Goudas reminded listeners that "the plural of anecdote is not data" and proposed an alternative, data-based

narrative promoting a comprehensive approach to student success.

The first false narrative Goudas identified is that students in developmental education courses drop out mainly because they are "bored" or "frustrated" with these "uninspiring" courses--that more than one-third could have earned a B or higher in the college-level gateway course. However, Bailey's 2003 study promoting this conclusion included no control group and no comparison to students taking

college-level courses. In contrast, a 2020 Gates Foundation study found that the primary reason students drop out of college is financial. They're taking classes part time, often working full time to support themselves and their families, and the stress of college plus work and family responsibilities eventually overtakes their academic goals.

A second false narrative is that remediation is ineffective and a barrier to college completion, "actually preventing students from getting degrees." Instead, Goudas contended, college itself is a barrier to college completion; that is, the lowest pass rate is consistently seen in the lowest class in a sequence. In a study by Chen, dividing students taking developmental courses into three groups-- completers of all the developmental courses in their sequence, partial completers, and non-completers-- 49% completed all courses they were assigned, and their six-year graduation rate was higher than the rate for students taking no remedial courses (43% to 39%). Therefore, one can conclude that traditional remediation has been working for a large group of students.

The third false narrative is that corequisite courses (ALP) are *the* answer to remediation. Goudas noted that this "silver-bullet thinking," doubling the time on task for students with lower skills, is based on the flawed assumption that prerequisite courses are ineffective. Recent research has shown no long-term positive impacts of ALP on graduation rates. Furthermore, research results on math course completion rates were muddied because many colleges using ALP had also changed the math sequence for many students from a calculus track to a statistics track.

As an alternative to vilifying and eliminating stand-alone developmental education courses, Goudas proposed that holistic problems require holistic solutions. He advocated supporting students throughout their college years, not just in the first semester, and addressing finances and health care as

well as academic needs. He pointed to the City University of New York's wrap-around ASAP program (<http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/asap/>) as a model. This program combines developmental coursework as needed with robust financial aid (tuition, textbook costs, MTA cards), tutoring, advising, and counseling to help students stay on track to graduation. The three-year graduation rate for ASAP students starting in developmental courses was doubled to 48%, and for students who didn't need developmental courses, the graduation rate rose from 29% to 60%. Goudas suggested that colleges use "spectrum thinking" to move toward this holistic approach rather than inventing new programs every few years. Asserting that "intractable problems can't be reduced to simple narratives," he urged institutions to continue to support what is working well and integrate additional components.

In his follow-up session, Goudas expanded on these recommendations as he answered participants' questions. Although he acknowledged that student success programs could help all students, he insisted that because institutions don't have unlimited funds, they should provide the most support to students at the low end and middle of the achievement continuum. This focus would be consistent with the mission of community colleges and public four-year schools. He cautioned against forcing students needing basic skills instruction into an exclusively online curriculum, noting that self-pacing is a problem and these courses have a high withdrawal rate. As for ALP, he suggested establishing a cut point for entry-level courses rather than permitting students reading at the lowest levels to enroll in any class they want. Although allowing more students into these courses increases the pass rate, it also increases the failure rate, damaging students' GPAs when they could have been successful in developmental courses that would have built their skills. He said students who could benefit from a low-level class should retain the option to take it in person.

To ensure that students have a real opportunity to succeed, Goudas proposed a true mixed measures approach to course placement, one that combines results of several metrics, rather than a multiple single measures approach, by which students are permitted to enroll in a course even if they meet the cut point on only one of many metrics. He said investing more time in advising students on course selection would yield better results later, and that institutions should wrap students in a bubble of on-going support throughout their college years.

Goudas' website, Community College Data (<http://communitycollegedata.com/>), contains links to articles he's written on this topic, as well as lists of resources on corequisites and multiple measures.

Sue Wickham
MCHS

IOSS Recap: Department of Education Updates

This year the IOSS conference was held in a virtual format, through Zoom. Offering the IOSS conference virtually was a great way to allow college educators in Iowa a chance to interact and learn from one another, even in the midst of a pandemic. I did miss the face-to-face interaction and conversations with my peers, though. Hopefully, next year will bring us all together once again!

One session I always enjoy attending is hosted by the Department of Education. For the past three years, they have presented information related to the annual developmental education report. The third annual developmental education report came out in September 2020 and included data from 2013 to 2018. This report included cohort data (3- and 6-year cohorts) and individual college initiatives and policies around the area of developmental education. This year Kelly Friesleben and Chris Russell described the most recent statistics, along with initiatives and supports that are currently happening in the state of Iowa, regarding developmental

education reform. One key finding was that enrollment in developmental education credit hours and student count has decreased in the past few years. The cohorts have also shown that developmental education students are increasingly immediate enrollees, enrolled full-time, and female. Most students enrolled were taking a developmental math course, which tends to be the highest subject area each year.

The initiatives related to developmental education vary, based on institution. These initiatives involve classroom changes and advising changes. A little over half of the community colleges in Iowa use multiple measures for placement into math and writing courses, and over half use corequisite classes. These numbers have increased greatly in the past few years. Other classroom initiative examples include supplemental instruction, self-paced courses, and academic labs. Advising-related initiatives include in-person or online tutoring, early alert systems, and mandatory orientation or registration with academic advisors.

Molly Struve
ILCC

Breakout Session: "Culture from the Couch"

Exploring culture is an important part of the college experience, and many students are required to complete assessments that revolve around cultural experiences. My presentation, "Culture from the Couch," provided an overview of cultural assessments and options for safe, meaningful virtual cultural experiences for students.

The session first discussed assessments that revolve around cultural experiences (such as attending a museum or performance and writing a reflection). Virtual options were presented, including live-streaming performances, gaming platform performances, virtual museum tours, the Google Arts and Culture project, YouTube channels,

academic film streaming services, and archives of PBS content like *Art21* and *Austin City Limits*. Options for (socially-distanced) in-person experiences were also touched upon, followed by tips for forming meaningful cultural assessments.

Kara Weyand
ICCC

NOSS Update

Thanks to all of you for participating in our state chapter. I currently have the honor of serving as the interim vice president of NOSS, and I encourage you to explore the opportunities and resources available through membership in the national organization.



As our keynote presentations exhibited this year, the national organization offers a broad range of opportunities for connection, support, and research. Our two keynote presenters addressed common national concerns, and their experience and knowledge may serve as a valuable resource for practitioners across the country. While NOSS offers engagement with other instructors during the annual national conference, it also provides support all year through networks focused on topics such as national trends, research, equity, and inclusion. Along with the networks, the organization offers webinars to help support continuing professional development. Events and resources may be found at the following links at the NOSS website:

Resources: <https://thenoss.org/NOSS-Resources>

Events: <https://thenoss.org/events>

NOSS is still planning our national conference in Las Vegas. It has been moved to June 15 to 18,

when we hope travel will be normalized. Along with the many presentations and sessions, this year's conference will occur in coordination with the fourth annual math summit, which will meet June 14 to 15, taking place the days before the main conference. This combination should make a great opportunity for networking and exchanging ideas. Plan now for a trip to Vegas.

Further, as you look toward the coming year, consider a local program you believe deserves attention and recognition. In order to help give programs greater recognition, NOSS is beginning a new award, "Programs of Promise," an upcoming effort to highlight innovative efforts at our institutions. If you have a program or know of one which you believe deserves recognition for its efforts helping students, consider submitting your program of choice this coming year.

Thanks for your efforts and, if you are not already a member, consider joining NOSS. Our combined experiences help support our colleagues and students, and NOSS gives us a voice in the larger national discussion, which affects the lives and futures of students.

Dan Nelson
DMACC

IOSS Exec Board Transitions

Thanks to long-time Executive Board members Jennifer Condon (ICCC), Susan Wylie (IHCC), and Jennie Doke-Kerns (DMACC) for their contributions to our organization. They are stepping down this year, and the Board is welcoming three new members—Kara Weyand, Kate Sanders, and Abby Underberg—who introduce themselves on the next page.

Kara Weyand, Member at Large



I am a Humanities Professor and the Humanities Coordinator at Iowa Central Community College, where I've worked for 6 years. I earned my Master of Fine Arts from Iowa State University and teach a variety of art and

humanities courses, including drawing, painting, 2-D design, and art history. I enjoy being an active member of the faculty on Iowa Central's campus. I've served as both a faculty and student mentor, a faculty club sponsor, and worked on a variety of teams and committees such as the Faculty Senate and Quality Faculty Plan committee.

Kate Sanders, Member at Large



I am Katherine Sanders, (Dr. Kate to my students), and I am one of the Instructional Specialists in the (CLC) Comet Learning Center at WITCC (Western Iowa Tech Community College). After a 25-year teaching career in elementary (mostly kindergarten), I earned

my doctorate in curriculum and instruction, and priced myself out of my job. Thank heaven for WITCC.

The ECE program at WIT hired me as an adjunct to teach early childhood classes, and later, I was offered an opportunity to teach literacy skills and

CPT prep in our learning center. What a blessing. I could still teach literacy, but I no longer had recess, lunch, or bus duties!

Good fortune and a supportive family have afforded me the opportunities to study education in Auckland, NZ, Cairo, Egypt, and Ansan, South Korea. I do enjoy traveling, but my true passions are spending time with my high school sweetheart and husband of almost 50 years, my seven grandchildren, and meeting my two, new, great grandchildren.

I wish to embrace this opportunity to work with the IOSS members and Board of Directors to the fullest. Thank you for your kind and sincere welcome.

Abby Underberg, Corrections Consultant



I am the Director of Adult Education and Literacy as well as the Corrections Education Liaison for Iowa Central Community College. I've served ICCC since 2013, working in two correctional facilities, overseeing and developing classes that assist

students who are incarcerated to achieve their High School Equivalency Diploma.

Other educational programs that I developed and coordinated were literacy classes, life skills classes, short-term vocational certification classes, and the Second Chance Pell program. Before my employment at ICCC, I taught a Nurturing Father's program at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility for about 10 years while working as a social worker.

I'm excited and honored to represent the field of Corrections Education by serving on the IOSS Board as the Corrections Consultant.

America Reads Extends to 2021



A silver lining to our virtual conference is the opportunity to extend the IOSS book donation partnership with Spalding Park Elementary School in Sioux City, IA, for a full year. Please follow the link below to Spalding Park's Amazon Wish List and select a book, a few books, or a whole collection to support the youth at Spalding Park. You can have the books shipped directly to the school at the address below.

Spalding Park Elementary Wish List:
<https://a.co/5nToq6V>

Shipping address:

Mandi Bradford, Principal
Spalding Park Elementary School
4101 Stone Ave.
Sioux City, IA 51106-1860
Phone: 712.274.4043

Thank you from your IOSS Executive Board, Principal Mandi Bradford, and all the Pawsome Panthers who will be enjoying these books.

2021 IOSS Student Scholarship Application Season Is Here

Applications for the \$500 IOSS Student Scholarship are now being accepted. At a time when the pandemic has strained the finances of so many students, this award can be the boost one promising individual needs to continue in college.

The scholarship will be awarded to a student who has successfully completed at least one developmental education course, who has maintained a cumulative college grade point average of 2.5, and who plans to continue enrollment in a post-secondary educational institution during the 2021-22 academic year.

Applicants must submit a copy of the most recent college transcript, a letter of recommendation from a school official, instructor, or counselor, and a 500-word essay on the following topic: "How my involvement in a developmental education course(s) has helped me prepare for my future college courses."

The online application form, which contains more details on the application process, can be found on the IOSS website (www.dmac.edu/ioss) or directly accessed at <https://forms.gle/Gk2eyaNKynsEKU2P7>

Spread the word to your students about this opportunity! The application deadline is May 1, 2021.

Join the IOSS 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 to 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:

IOSS Newsletter Editor, Sue Wickham
smwickham@dmacc.edu

2020-2021 IOSS Executive Board

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Corrections Consultant: Abby Underberg, ICCC

Stay in Touch with IOSS and NOSS

IOSS Website:

Check the IOSS website for 2020 conference recordings; 2021 conference updates; student scholarship information; Executive Board contact information; and member resources, including IOSS meeting minutes and materials from conference presentations.

www.dmacc.edu/ioess

The NOSS website:

<https://thenoss.org/>

IOSS Facebook:



Like us on Facebook to receive updates on IOSS and our annual conference!

https://www.facebook.com/iowaoss/?ref=py_c