

**National Social Science Association**

**Spring Conference**

**March 23 - 25, 2025**

**Planet Hollywood**

**Las Vegas, NV**





# National Social Science Association Board 2025 - 2026

## *Meet Our NSSA Board Members*

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Shelly Allen – Lamar University  
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James Benjamin – University of Arkansas – Fort Smith  
Maria Teresa de Gordon – Neumann University  
Barry Bruster - Austin Peay State University  
Jeff Stomper - College of Lake County, IL  
Krista Nelson - Southern Arkansas University  
Vani Kotcherlakota - University of Nebraska at Kearney



**NATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION**  
**Las Vegas National Social Science Conference 2025 Program**

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**SUNDAY, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**

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1:00 pm-5:00 pm	Registration - Conference Center Foyer
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Board Meeting - <i>Sunset 3 &amp; 4</i>
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Cocktail Reception - <i>Gallery</i>

**MONDAY, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

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7:00 am-11:00 am	Registration - Conference Center Foyer
7:00 am-9:00 am	Breakfast - Celebrity Ballroom
12:00 pm-1:15 pm	Luncheon - Celebrity Ballroom
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	Snack Break - Celebrity Ballroom

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**COCKTAIL RECEPTION POSTER PRESENTATIONS ON SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025**  
*Gallery*  
**6:00 PM-7:00 PM**

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**Poster Sessions**  
*Gallery*  
**6:00 PM-7:00 PM**

**Poster Presentation: *Unequal Burdens: Racial/Ethnic Mental Health Gaps in Post-Pandemic Education***

Tracy Reimer- Bethel University

The study aimed to better understand elementary students' mental health and well-being before and after the COVID-19 pandemic as well as whether there are differences in elementary students' self-reported mental health between racial groups. Minnesota Student Survey results were analyzed, and the results of Bonferroni post-hoc tests found significant differences in worrying a lot and feeling sad between racial groups. Hispanic or Latino/Latina students are significantly more likely to worry a lot than all other racial/ethnic groups. Black, African, or African American students are significantly less likely to feel sad than all other racial/ethnic groups except White students. Hispanic or Latino/Latina students reported the largest increases in worrying and feeling sad between 2019 and 2022. Study findings hold implications for practice, including building educators' cultural responsiveness, increasing mental health support in schools, and implementing social-emotional learning in elementary schools.

**Poster Presentation: *Campaigning for Change: The Critical Role of Legislative Advocacy in Healthcare***

Kitri Reimer- Drake University

This poster examines the critical role of legislative advocacy in advancing healthcare professions at the state level. It highlights the contributions of physicians, pharmacists, dentists, and other healthcare professionals who

have served as legislators, leveraging their expertise to expand scopes of practice, protect professional rights, and shape policy. Focusing on the 90th General Assembly of the Iowa Legislature, this presentation explores the collaborative efforts between healthcare graduate students and Iowa representatives to strengthen the pharmacy profession and the broader healthcare sector. These efforts included the development and support of key legislative bills, strategic meetings, and lobbying initiatives aimed at driving meaningful change. The poster contextualizes these actions by showcasing past national legislative achievements and outlining future challenges, emphasizing the ongoing need to advance healthcare practices and optimize patient outcomes.

**Poster Presentation: *Sexual Regret Among Undergraduates***

Elizabeth Perkins- Morehead State University

Three-hundred-and-forty-six undergraduates (75% female, 63% white/non-Hispanic, 81% heterosexual) at three universities identified the sexual decisions they regretted. The percentage of respondents reporting sexual regret ranged from 7.1% to 44.3%. The top three sexual decision regrets were "Not using protection during sexual intercourse" (44.3%), "Putting up with feeling used for sex" (41.4%), and "Having a hookup" (40.9%). Gender differences revealed that women were significantly more likely than men to regret hooking up, going along with what the partner wanted sexually, and giving in to feeling pressured to have sex (there were no racial or sexual orientation differences in regret). Symbolic interaction theory is used to explain the findings. Limitations of the research are identified.

**Poster Presentation- *Sexual Behaviors Outside of Committed Relationships***

Nicole Perez- California State University, Los Angeles

Sexual behaviors outside of committed relationships (often referred to as hookup culture) have become quite common in American society. Based on the data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health) Series, it was found that the majority of respondents have had sex on "one and only one occasion" with either 0-1 partners. Another majority has had a one-time partner with more than 5 partners. The changes in sexual attitudes and norms raise a need for deeper exploration into the behaviors, beliefs, and motivations surrounding casual sex, particularly among young adults. Hookup culture has become a norm for individuals to find a sexual partner however, finding a romantic partner is much more difficult. The normalization of hookup culture has prioritized short-term sexual encounters over emotionally intimate connections. A review of the literature on these beliefs reveals the reality of modern partnerships. An examination of how relationships have evolved is a core concept within this study, as the purpose is to explore how these social dynamics (in the context of gender and age) influence those in young adulthood. My research question is: What are the sexual behaviors and attitudes among young adults outside of committed relationships?

**Poster Presentation- *Using a Knowledge Assessment to Evaluate Undergraduate Psychology Students' Learning Across the Major***

Sheryl Reminger- University of Illinois Springfield

Undergraduate social science departments in higher education settings have an obligation to evaluate their program effectiveness. The Psychology Department at the University of Illinois Springfield designed an assessment examination to evaluate the content knowledge of psychology majors for this purpose. The exam assessed students in eight psychology content areas: research methods, clinical/counseling, cognitive, developmental, social, biopsychology, ethics, and general knowledge. The exam was given to 269 students when they began the major and then just prior to graduation. Results showed that there was a statistically significant improvement in exam performance over the course of the major. These results suggest that the assessment exam can be used effectively to track student learning. Demographic characteristics of the students were evaluated to determine if any variables could predict exam performance. Most variables, including age, gender, family financial background, hours employed, and online/on-ground status, did not show a relationship to exam scores. However, there was a significant relationship between exam scores and students' reported career plans. Students who reported that they were not planning to attend graduate school showed lower exam performance than students who reported intentions to do so. Results also suggested some racial/ethnic disparities in rates of learning, although conclusions were limited due to small sample sizes. We intend to further examine these findings to identify targets for program improvement. Our results suggest that assessment of students' content knowledge across the major can be a useful approach for evaluating the curricular effectiveness of a social science undergraduate program.

**Poster Presentation- *How Does Women's Self-Defense Training Affect Participants Beyond Learning Self-defense Skills?***

Leanne Brecklin- University of Illinois Springfield

Research has shown that women's self-defense training has been related to several positive outcomes for participants beyond learning self-defense skills. Psychological and behavioral effects of women's self-defense training participation will be examined in this study, including analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. For this two-part study, in-depth interviews were conducted with 34 past Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) participants, and a longitudinal study included pre- and post-program surveys completed by 54 participants of RAD. Changes in participants' psychological/behavioral self-descriptions, fear of crime, and self-defense efficacy will be discussed, as well as interview responses related to similar training effects. Based on the findings, implications for the development of future women's self-defense training will be presented, as well as suggestions for improving participant recruitment strategies.

**Poster Presentation- *Sangat: A Self-Service Kitchen.***

Kansa Nasir- Sam Houston State University

The project establishes a mobile communal space designed to promote sustainable cooking practices while fostering connections within the community. The kitchen serves as a platform to create unstructured and organic social bonds, transcending traditional definitions of community. It also blurs their boundaries and introduces an interplay between public, private, indoor, and outdoor spaces.

**Poster Presentation- *Embodied Narratives***

Tony Rincon- Sam Houston State University

This poster session will outline a case study of my project, Embodied Narratives. Leveraging my experience in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and photography, I have developed an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to engaging with teens. This approach seamlessly integrates Image Theater, martial arts, and photography. Participants utilize physical metaphors and creative expression to reflect deeply on their current circumstances and envision empowered futures. This process is designed to foster resilience and agency, helping teens build a stronger sense of self and navigate their lives with confidence.

**Poster Presentation- *Serial Killers: What is the Fascination with Murder and Crime?***

Krista Nelson- Southern Arkansas University

The fascination with serial killers is notable with a plethora of documentaries and podcasts that discuss the crimes of murderous individuals. This research proposes to examine some of the reasons that the public finds the crimes of serial murderers so compelling. The research questionnaire will be created by student members of an Advanced Topics in Psychology class that focuses on serial killers and mass murderers in history as well as in modern society. The students in the class are comprised of honors students at a small southern university. Data collection is expected to begin later this spring following approval from the University Institutional Review Board. The focus of the research is to identify some of the appeal and attraction associated with legendary cases, including Jack the Ripper and H.H. Holmes, as well as modern serial murderers, such as Jeffrey Dahmer, Ted Bundy, and the BTK killer.

**Poster Presentation- *The Bubble Cycle and Bridging Narratives***

Lilibeth Flores- Sam Houston State University

This poster session is related to Jody Wood's proposed paper, Needs Assessment: Social Practice Art and Public Health. My poster session will provide conference attendees with a tangible example of how art can be used as a tool for social change in rural communities. It will also demonstrate the value of community-engaged research and creative problem-solving in addressing public health challenges such as social isolation. I will present a case study for my projects, Bubble Cycle and Bridging Narratives. Both projects invite members of the public to

contribute stories, messages, and thoughts to shared publications. The work serves as a bridge, fostering connections in spaces that often feel fragmented or impersonal. Through storytelling, participants discover shared experiences and common ground, cultivating a sense of belonging and social connection.

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**ALL NSSA MEETING ROOMS ON MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2025**

**8:30 AM-9:45 AM**

**SESSION I- Sunset 5**

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**SESSION CHAIR: Barba Patton**

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***Paper Presentation- Anomalies make Math Skills difficult for Students***

Barba Patton- University of Houston, Teresa LeSage-Clements- University of Houston-Victoria

Students are often taught hard rules that expire as they advance to the next grade level. Surely there are anomalies in other content areas that lead to confusion in the student's learning cycle. Some will make you say, "Yes, that is true," while others will make you think, "I did not think about it." Some of the anomalies can be resolved by redirection but everyone must be on the 'correction train'.

***Paper Presentation- Succeeding in Italy-The Case of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni***

Marcus Stadelmann- The University of Texas at Tyler, Jill Carter- The University of Texas at Tyler

This research paper focuses on Giorgia Meloni, who was elected the first right-populist Prime Minister of Italy in 2022. The paper will cover her political ascent and both the 2022 parliamentary and the 2024 European elections. Finally, the paper will analyze her first two years in office and show how she has been able to increase her public support in Italy while becoming a constructive member of the European Council.

***Paper Presentation- Marketing Messages for Food Products***

Beheruz N Sethna- University of West Georgia, Angela Omogbeme, Verseo'ter Iyorkar- University of West Georgia

Consumers who perceive themselves as having weight problems show a stronger inclination towards products deemed beneficial for weight management and overall health. They show higher scores across various dimensions including Purchase Intention, Health average, Healthy-Nutritious-Good for Me, Mood average, Convenience average, Sensory average, Natural Ingredients, Price, Weight Control, Familiarity average, and Packaging average. This underscores the profound impact of perceived weight concerns on the prioritization of health-oriented product attributes.

***Paper Presentation- Analysis of Target Customer Satisfaction***

Ujunwa Pearl Johnson-Obi- University of West Georgia

The focus of this paper is to evaluate the products and services that Target provides that can better meet shoppers' needs. Target provides a wide variety of products such as clothing, electronics, groceries, beauty and self-care products, home goods, etc. Services provided include in-store pickup for online orders, same-day delivery, as well as a loyalty program called Target Circle, which provides personalized offers and discounts on everyday goods.

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**8:30 AM-9:45 AM**

**SESSION I- Sunset 4**

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**SESSION CHAIR: Charmaine Lowe**

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***Paper Presentation- AI as a Tool for Engaging English Language Learners in Cognitively Demanding Academic Tasks***

Charmaine Lowe- Austin Peay State University, Aria Lowe- University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

When integrated in academically appropriate ways, Artificial Intelligence has the potential to redirect emergent bilinguals' cognitive load toward higher-level tasks related to literacy production, academic oral language fluency, and organization and revising during writing projects. Providing more structured assistance than conventional technologies, such as spell check and grammar correction, AI tools can help provide ELLs with sufficient, structured support to create output at a higher level when engaged in literacy events in a foreign language.

**Paper Presentation- *AI is Blooming***

Kathie Good- Eastern New Mexico University, Becky Davis- Eastern New Mexico University

Allow your class to Bloom using AI for good not evil! Use AI on assignments to climb Bloom's Taxonomy through Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, and Evaluating. Students are taught the dynamics of assessment rubric design through the instructor in collaboration with students. The students are then provided simple guidelines and put the AI rubric design to the test. Does AI meet all the criteria of a sound rubric and allow students to Bloom at the same time? Students are introduced to positive and productive ways to use AI to simplify and build everyday tools for a classroom. Never stress over building a strong rubric again, find an AI host and build custom-designed rubrics to fit your custom-designed and unique curriculum. How can AI be expanded and used positively by teachers and students alike? Grow where you are planted and climb Bloom using AI.

**Paper Presentation- *From Biofilm to Battlefield: Evolutionary Origins of Collective Violence***

Davor Jedlicka- University of Texas Tyler

This collaborative study, conducted by a human researcher and ChatGPT-4, explores the evolutionary origins of collective violence, extending Russell Durrant's 2011 homology hypothesis. We propose that collective violence predates primates, with its roots in single-celled organisms' biochemical and sensory-driven behaviors. Collective violence is defined as synchronized group actions triggered by cellular sensing mechanisms, leading to coordinated biochemical or physical responses such as toxin release or physical attacks. This foundational process is reflected in human behaviors such as coordinated mob violence and wars, where shared stimuli and rapid neural signaling drive group actions. We posit two key hypotheses: first, that aggression mechanisms are evolutionarily conserved from single-celled organisms to humans; and second, that collective violence in complex species is coordinated by non-cortical structures, with the human neocortex rationalizing rather than initiating aggression. This study underscores the continuity of biochemical aggression mechanisms and their universal role in collective behavior. By linking molecular-level processes to social phenomena, this work offers insights into the biological foundations of violence, advancing interdisciplinary understanding and informing strategies to mitigate aggression at individual and societal levels.

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**8:30 AM-9:45 AM**

**SESSION I-C - Sunset 3**

**SESSION CHAIR: Anthony LaRose**

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**Paper Presentation- *Predicting Post-Industrial America: Can Education save the working classes***

Kevin Bolinger- Indiana State University

Since the 1970s America has been on a steep trajectory transitioning from an industrial economy supporting Labor to a service economy favoring the investment class. Those left behind in this wealth consolidation are easy prey to populist politics. This paper will examine how public education can be reconstructed to transition 21st-century workers into the marketplace by following the political shifts in the 70s, 80s, and 90s that led to the massive wealth shift. Far from addressing the shifting needs of the labor force, American education has only further divided the nation politically and economically.

**Paper Presentation- *Are There No Safe Spaces? The Growth of Human Trafficking on College Campuses in the US, Mexico and Canada.***

Anthony LaRose- University of Tampa, Chris Gurrie- University of Tampa

This paper explores the troubling trend of increased human trafficking in places that should be among the



safest, college campuses. This paper addresses the causes behind the growing phenomena in North America, the techniques used by traffickers and the university, police, and government responses.

**Paper Presentation- *Exploring the Transition to 8-Week Courses: Student Preferences, Stressors, and Outcomes***

John Petrone- Eastern New Mexico University, Mark Viner- Eastern New Mexico University

This presentation examines the transition from 16-week to 8-week academic courses, drawing on survey data from 49 graduate and undergraduate students. With a focus on modality preferences, stress levels, and instructor support, the findings provide valuable insights into the challenges and benefits of condensed course formats. The survey revealed that 57% of respondents prefer 8-week courses, citing accelerated degree completion and increased focus as key advantages. However, 93% of participants identified added stress, with 20% reporting high-stress levels due to workload compression and limited time for reflection and assignment completion. Despite these challenges, 87% felt they received adequate or significant instructor support. Open-ended responses highlighted concerns such as balancing work and academic responsibilities, while positives included faster course completion and greater efficiency in time management. This research contributes to understanding the complex dynamics of condensed learning environments, emphasizing the need for institutions to balance workload, provide robust instructor support, and maintain academic rigor. By addressing both the concerns and benefits identified, this study aims to guide educators and administrators in optimizing 8-week courses to better meet student needs. The presentation will include practical recommendations for course design and support strategies to enhance student success in accelerated programs.

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**8:30 AM-9:45 AM**

**SESSION I-D Sunset 2**

**SESSION CHAIR: Isela Almaguer**

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**Paper Presentation- *(Re)Interpreting Cultural and Literacy Praxis: Considering the Symbiosis of Cultural Capital and Literacy Practices***

Isela Almaguer- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

It is crucial to (re)interpret cultural and literacy praxis to further consider the symbiosis of cultural capital and literacy practices and cultural lived experiences. Parallels exist between the Hawaiian and Mexican American cultures, language, and literacy, and how multilingual learners use these components to mediate their learning. It is crucial to provide effective literacy practices and maintain a steadfast commitment to ensuring student success through culturally responsive and empowering pedagogical practices. Recognition, appreciation, and validation of students' culture should be exercised so that valuable asset is acknowledged as a resource from which to learn and grow. Literacy is a broad and evolving concept that includes culture, language, history, and lived experiences. This literacy legitimizes students' real-life experiences and their funds of knowledge (FoK) by capitalizing on cultural strengths and making content relevant. Critical in promoting inclusive learning opportunities for multilingual learners. We make a great impact through interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches, challenging the status quo and with an unwavering commitment to advocating for social justice. By engaging students as active participants in the learning experiences, self-efficacy, and agency are manifested through diverse and inclusive academic and linguistic opportunities in and out of formal school settings. These opportunities catapult students as global scholars. Ultimately, it is important to cultivate the view that diversity in all its manifestations is a fundamental component of excellence in education. Upholding the role of being the catalyst for educational success through thoughtful, culturally sustaining responsiveness to an evolving multilingual, multiliterate, and multicultural global population.

**Paper Presentation- *Let's Talk: Social Media Addiction, Sleep, and Academic Performance: Interventions to promote better academic and health outcomes***

Leona Johnson- Florida A&M University

Sleep is an essential biological need for human survival. Sleep is also an important aspect of one's quality of life. Research confirms that there is a high incidence of smartphone addiction in contemporary society which may potentially be harmful to one's health (Zhu et al., 2024). Smartphone addiction has been shown to have a significant impact on sleep (Zhu et al., 2024). Using electronic devices before bedtime may also impact sleep quality. This has been deemed a public health issue (Pham et al., 2021). Additionally, adolescents and young adults, including college students appear to be one of the most sleep-deprived groups in the United States. Sleep problems are also common among young adults, including college students which has been associated with health issues, including mental health challenges and impaired academic performance, especially for those who are addicted to social media (Friedrich & Schlarb, 2017). This study sought to examine the relationship between sleep quality, social media addiction, and academic performance for young adults and to determine what interventions may be employed to improve sleep. Fostering healthy lifestyle habits is crucial to promote well-being (Zhang et al., 2024). Additionally, it is crucial to identify strategies to reduce social media addiction to preclude the harmful effects of social media addiction. This has important implications for achieving optimal academic outcomes and health outcomes for individuals in contemporary society, including young adults.

**Paper Presentation- *Economic and Policy Uncertainties and Firm Value in Oil and Gas Industry***

Bahram Adrangi- The University of Portland

This study analyzes the response of seven U.S. oil and gas companies to uncertainties stemming from domestic, global, and oil market risks. Using an estimated panel VAR-MIDAS (PVM) model, the findings reveal that Tobin's Q for these firms declines in response to positive shocks in domestic and global economic policy uncertainty, recession risks, and the OVX (Oil Volatility Index). In contrast, Tobin's Q responds positively to favorable shocks in key financial indicators, including current and quick ratios, debt-to-asset ratios, and operating income after depreciation. Granger causality tests further confirm that the uncertainty variables considered are significant predictors of changes in Tobin's Q, underscoring their relevance in assessing firm value in this sector.

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**10:00- 11:45 AM**

**SESSION II-A Sunset 5**

**SESSION CHAIR: Ron Childress**

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**Paper Presentation- *CTE Policies and Practices: Findings from a Statewide Study***

Ron Childress- Marshall University

This session will present the findings from a statewide study of CTE policies and practices in secondary schools in West Virginia. Specific program elements investigated included program philosophy/rationale, structure, curricula, partnerships, evaluation, major challenges, and future directions. The study sample included 20 directors of CTE programs who had been in their current positions for at least one year. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with these 20 directors and thematic analysis was used to organize and interpret the findings. Findings indicate directors support career and college awareness and readiness, are positive about the future of CTE, and are focused on shaping programming to meet the needs of local industry. Recommendations for improving policy and practice and for additional research will be provided.

**Paper Presentation- *Tips for Developing Counter Bias Training for Healthcare Professionals***

Okera Nsombi- Eastern Washington University

It has been common for healthcare providers to complete diversity training. Despite these trainings, many healthcare providers with good intentions despise and/or gain little or nothing from them. Empathy, human development, and defining terms can be useful tools for more effective training.

**Paper Presentation- *Refugee Crisis and NGO Activism: Scope and Challenges***

Shamima Ahmed- Northern Kentucky University

As of June 2023, 110 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced from their homes due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, and events seriously disturbing public order (United Nations). While

governments struggle to respond to uncertain and unforeseen refugee crises, NGOs have been found to respond quickly to provide the needed humanitarian, social, and cultural assistance to refugees. While NGOs are credited with providing essential services to refugees, and in many cases helping refugees to improve their livelihood, they face many challenges in situations of complex political emergencies. This paper uses the refugee crises in Syria and Ukraine to demonstrate NGOs' effectiveness in addressing this humanitarian issue and the many challenges they face in that highly important service arena.

**Paper Presentation- *The Impact of AI on Overhead Accounting***

Farrell Gean- Pepperdine University

It is widely accepted that the three primary production costs are raw material, direct labor, and all the other indirect production costs called overhead. The troublesome cost to account for is the third type, overhead. It seems that AI has the most to contribute in helping account for overhead costs. This paper sets forth ways that AI can improve overhead cost accounting. The paper will present some empirical observations by controllers and CFOs to corroborate these theoretical hypotheses maintained by the author.

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**10:00 AM-11:45 AM**

**SESSION II-B Sunset 4**

**SESSION CHAIR: Maria de Gordon**

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**Paper Presentation- *Measuring Globalization in Higher Education: Developing a Scorecard for Social Impact and Academic Excellence***

Linc Johnson- UNLV

To assess how institutions engage with globalization across academic, social, and economic dimensions. Drawing on interdisciplinary frameworks from sociology, education, and policy studies, the scorecard evaluates indicators such as international student representation, global research partnerships, cultural inclusivity, and equity in access to international opportunities. Through case studies and preliminary findings, this presentation highlights trends, gaps, and best practices in institutional globalization efforts. It emphasizes the scorecard's utility as both a diagnostic tool for self-assessment and a benchmark for promoting accountability and innovation in higher education. By exploring the broader implications of globalization on social equity and academic excellence, this study invites educators, policymakers, and researchers to collaboratively enhance the role of higher education in an interconnected world.

**Paper Presentation- *Artificial Intelligence Enhanced Pedagogy: Examining How Teachers Elevate Their Practice***

Daryl Ann Borel- Lamar University, Amanda Dennard- Lamar University

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are revolutionizing the classroom experience, offering personalized tutoring, adaptive course materials, and assessments tailored to diverse learning styles (Kadaruddin, 2023). Such technologies augment educators' capabilities and alleviate their burdens, freeing time and energy to focus on helping students grow (Noy & Zhang, 2023). As generative AI becomes more integrated into education, this phenomenological study examined how AI tools influence teachers' abilities to create dynamic, differentiated, and effective lesson plans at a school district in southeast Texas. The study identified the perceived benefits and challenges of using AI in lesson design through individual interviews with teachers who use AI in their teaching practices.

**Paper Presentation- *Generational Differences in Academic Performance***

Maria de Gordon- Neumann University, Colleen McDonough- Neumann University

In this paper presentation we look at the generational differences in academic performance between Millennials and Generation Z. We want to see if their academic performance has improved or declined over the years.

**Paper Presentation- *Integrating MagicSchool AI in Higher Education: Its Impact on Cognitive Engagement, Academic Performance, and Alignment with Accreditation Standards***

Janet Birkey- Eastern New Mexico University, Elizabeth Lester- Eastern New Mexico University

This paper examines how the integration of Magic School AI, an artificial intelligence software designed by educators, impacts student cognitive engagement and academic performance, along with how it aligns with accreditation standards. The study explores how the software aligns with or challenges established educational standards and best practices, particularly higher education. Considering best practices and educational standards, this study uses a mixed-methods approach to critique how Magic School AI benefits educators. Preliminary findings indicate that Magic School AI successfully supports educators in their efforts to engage students and increase classroom performance. The findings will contribute to how university professors can integrate this free tool to save time and energy, thus creating better mental health for themselves and by extension, their students.

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**10:00 AM-11:45 AM**

**SESSION II Sunset 3**

**SESSION CHAIR: Praphul Joshi**

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**Paper Presentation- *Disparities of Colon and Rectum Cancer Over the Last Decade in USA***

Saptarshi Paul- Sam Houston State University, Praphul Joshi- Sam Houston State University

This study examines colorectal cancer mortality trends among white and black populations in the United States, highlighting disparities and emphasizing the importance of targeted interventions such as early screening initiatives and educational campaigns to improve outcomes.

**Paper Presentation- *The State of US, Our Politics, & Our Culture***

Mitchell Collins- The University of Arkansas- Fort Smith

This project, in exploring the rise in feelings of political and social distrust, division, and disenfranchisement in modern American institutions and its causes, is composed of a literature review to consider what notable research on the matter has to say regarding this rise; an analysis of the broad, historic trends in the arc of history which have motivated ebbs and flows in institutional trust; an exploration of the methods and research of a survey of University of Arkansas-Fort Smith (UAFS) students, staff, and faculty conducted for this project; a record of firsthand accounts from academic experts and politicians on their perspectives and knowledge of this rise; and a succinct summary of what one should (not) do to change it. As a whole, this paper outlines the state and causes of distrust, division, and disenfranchisement in America over time, defines—in a snapshot—the views of various demographic groups on political and social institutions, and lastly, reflects upon this research alongside thoughtful accounts from those in academia and politics on when, how, and why many Americans seem to have lost faith in not only their government but in the basis of American society itself, and what can, or cannot, be done about it.

**Paper Presentation- *Embracing the Future: Lessons Learned from Teaching Generative AI for the First Time***

Saeid Samadidana- Austin Peay State University

Teaching a Generative AI course at the university level for the first time presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges. This presentation explores the journey of designing, delivering, and refining a curriculum centered on one of the most transformative technologies of our time.

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**10:00 AM-11:45 AM**

**SESSION II-Sunset 2**

**SESSION CHAIR: Daryl Ann Borel**

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**Paper Presentation- *Urbanization and Cultural Sustainability Through Culinary Traditions***

Evelyne Delgado-Norris- Chicago State University

What are the secret histories of foods and culinary traditions within new urban landscapes? This presentation will stress the social and cultural life of foods as a marker of identity, collective refashioning, and cultural sustainability in the face of new urban ecologies. Food and culinary traditions will be viewed as a nexus for preserving cultural heritage and sharing histories and generational knowledge as well as carving a new sense of place.

**Paper Presentation- *Understanding and Incorporating Social Determinants of Health into Practice: A Guide for Nonclinical Healthcare Students***

Heather Merkley- Webber State University

Beginning in 2024, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) began requiring healthcare organizations to report five social determinants of health risk factors. The Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) encompass a wide range of factors that influence individual health outcomes based on conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age. CMS requires healthcare organizations to screen for five SDOH risk factors which are food insecurity, interpersonal safety, housing insecurity, transportation insecurity, and utilities (CDC 2024). The SDOH reporting mandate is part of the CMS to improve health disparities.

For non-clinical health information management and health administrative students, a comprehensive understanding of SDOH is crucial for data management, analysis, and careers in healthcare settings to improve population health. As SDOH risk factors are data that are integrated into electronic health records, they can become robust tools for improving patient care and health equity. However, nonclinical staff must be educated on SDOH risk factors and data, and how to incorporate this data to improve patient outcomes. Through a combination of readings, discussions, practices identifying SDOH, and case studies, this paper explores methods for educating non-clinical healthcare students on SDOH. Furthermore, students will be prepared to integrate SDOH considerations into their future nonclinical healthcare careers.

**Paper Presentation- *An Empirical View of Covid Lockdown Outcomes in Silicon Valley***

Tom Means- San Jose State University

In looking at the impact of COVID lockdowns in Silicon Valley, Estill (2022) found very disparate impacts using zip codes from Santa Clara County. Using simple descriptive statistics, he found very different impacts based on west versus east county zip codes for 2020. While some of these differences appeared large, none of them were tested for significant statistical differences. In this paper, we accomplish two things. First, we produce regression results to see what variables are important in determining differences in COVID rates by zip code. Second, we add three additional years, 2021-2023.

**RoundTable Sessions - Celebrity Ballroom  
10:00 - 10:30**

**Round Table- *Build to Educate: Using Lego Education to Build Tomorrow's Educators***

Bing Xiao- Austin Peay State University, Hanrui He- Austin Peay State University, Terri Easter- Rockford University

At the round table discussion, we will introduce the successful and high-impact event Lego Education, which the EdTech Studio hosted at the College of Education at Austin Peay State University. Lego transcends age and fosters creative thinking and problem-solving. The Lego Education (Essential + Spike) program provides hands-on learning opportunities using Lego bricks and components to teach students key concepts in subjects like engineering, coding, robotics, and mathematics through interactive, creative building and problem-solving activities. We will showcase the Lego sets used, including the Lego Education Essential Edition during the session. We will also share how the event was planned, how we obtained the grant, and how it was carried out, along with student feedback. At the end of the session, we will brainstorm with peers' ways to engage and connect with our students and future educators.

**Round Table- *The Future is Now: Preparing Preservice Teachers Through Educational Technology***

Terri Easter- Rockford University, Hanrui He- Austin Peay State University, Bing Xiao- Austin Peay State University

The conversation will dive into how these courses are structured to engage preservice teachers and prepare them for the realities of today's classrooms. We'll share perspectives on common challenges, such as resistance to technology and the need for instructor flexibility, as well as opportunities for growth and innovation. Topics like the role of artificial intelligence and other emerging tools will also come up as we reflect on how to adapt these courses for a rapidly changing world. This session offers a space for collaboration and fresh ideas, intending to reimagine how educational technology courses can best support preservice teachers. By sharing insights from different institutions, we hope to inspire participants to think critically about the future of teaching and learning with technology.

**Round Table- *NSSA Publications: Technology and NSSA Journal***

Eileen Ariza- Florida Atlantic University, Susanne Lapp- Florida Atlantic University, Barba Patton- University of Houston-Victoria, Benita Bruster- Austin Peay State University

This roundtable session will focus on the critical elements of publishing an article in either our NSSA Technology Journal or the NSSA Journal. All areas of the editorial process will be reviewed. Those considering submitting an article for publication in one of our peer-reviewed journals, please plan to attend.

**Round Table- *Empowering the Future: The Benefits of Integrating STEM Education into School Curricula***

Brooke Garza- St. Rose of Lima Catholic School

This presentation will explore the importance of integrating STEM education into school curricula and its myriad benefits for students, educators, and society. We will explore how STEM education fosters critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills by engaging students in hands-on learning experiences. By embracing project-based and inquiry-driven methods, students gain a deeper understanding of core subjects and develop a passion for learning.

**Round Table - *Change Your Life with AI***

Barry Bruster- Austin Peay State University

This presentation simplifies the concept of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and demonstrates practical ways to harness its potential in everyday life. Contrary to popular belief, AI is accessible and easily integrated into your routines. Discover how AI can revolutionize productivity, simplify tasks, and foster personal growth. Explore its applications in creating a smart home, improving health and wellness through personalized recommendations, and enhancing learning with tailored educational tools. This session will empower you with actionable insights and practical tools to embrace AI confidently and transform your daily life. Unlock the possibilities - AI is for everyone!

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**NSSA AWARDS LUNCHEON  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER DR. BEHERUZ N. SETHNA**

**12:00 PM-1:15 PM**



**Dr. Beheruz N. Sethna**

President Emeritus; Regents' Professor of Business; Beheruz N. Sethna Distinguished Scholar – UWG  
From 1994 to June 2013, Dr. Beheruz N. Sethna served as President of the institution now known as the University of West Georgia (UWG). He led the institution through two historic names and status changes from a college to a state university to a doctoral university. When he retired, he was the longest-serving University President in the State of Georgia (among both, public and private colleges and universities). The following accomplishments are shared ones, and reflect the work of several other colleagues and supporters.

During Dr. Sethna's tenure as President, the institution saw transformative change from a College to a State University to a Ph.D.-granting SACS Level VI University (the highest possible level). During Dr. Sethna's tenure, UWG's academic standards increased several times and full-time equivalent enrollment increased by approximately 50 percent to close to 12,000 students. Almost 40 new buildings were added during Dr. Sethna's tenure at UWG. More square footage was added than every other President combined since the institution started in 1906 – at an investment of almost one-third of a billion dollars of new construction and renovation funds. During his tenure, UWG awarded 33,000+ degrees, more than every other President combined in the institution's history (107 years, at the time he retired from his presidency). During his administration, the endowment was increased by more than 10 times its 1994 level.

Dr. Sethna has also served two terms in 1999-2000 and 2006-07 (each 12-15 months long) on an interim basis as Senior and then Executive Vice Chancellor for the entire University System of Georgia. In December 2013, after he retired from the position of President, he was given the University of West Georgia's highest honor, The Founder's Award.

Dr. Sethna is the first known person of Indian origin ever to become President of a University in America. He was also the first person of any ethnic minority to become president of a college or university in Georgia other than a historically black college. Since he retired from the position of President in June 2013, he has had 14 journal articles plus seven other intellectual contributions (single-author and co-authored). Over his career, he has had a total of 99 intellectual contributions, plus four successful external grant applications, demonstrating evidence of a career as a faculty member in addition to an administrative

career.

Dr. Sethna is a popular speaker with about 200 speeches to his credit. In addition to scores of speeches to service clubs such as Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis, he has been the keynote speaker at several international and national conferences and meetings sponsored by various corporate and academic groups. He has also been the keynote speaker at two Naturalization Ceremonies sponsored by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service in which new U.S. Citizens are sworn in. He has also been the Commencement speaker at U.S. colleges (in addition to UWG). He has a TEDx Talk to his credit entitled, "An American Star" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-xgdPxDPCaQ>. He has also been a featured speaker on Leadership-related topics at the American Council on Education programs for senior academic leaders across America and has been a keynote speaker at the University of Oxford in England multiple times.

Dr. Sethna has been married for more than 50 years to the multi-talented Dr. Madhavi Sethna, who has an MBA from IIM-Ahmedabad, an MA from Columbia University, an MS from Clarkson University, and a doctorate from UWG. Together, they have two children and four grandchildren. Dr. Anita Sethna, a surgeon specializing in facial plastics and reconstructive surgery at Emory University, has two daughters: 10-year-old Zarina Cole and 8-year-old Cyra Cole. Shaun Sethna is an engineer and an attorney (General Counsel), married to Sunita Shirodkar, also an attorney; they are the parents of two sons: 9-year-old Surin Sethna and 6-year-old Sian Sethna.

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**1:30 PM-3:00 PM**

**SESSION III- Sunset 5**

**SESSION CHAIR: Benita Bruster**

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**Paper Presentation- *Generative AI in Higher Education: Exploring Student Perceptions and Institutional Policy Needs***

Daniel Bailey- Austin Peay State University, Benita Bruster- Austin Peay State University

Generative AI writing tools, such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek, are increasingly shaping academic landscapes. These models utilize advanced language processing techniques to generate human-like responses through chatbot interfaces, making them widely accessible to students. Universities now face the challenge of integrating AI into academic settings while maintaining academic integrity. A key concern is the misrepresentation of AI-assisted work as original student output, which risks undermining learning outcomes and assessment validity.

**Paper Presentation- *Impact of Classroom Environment on Students' Affective Performance***

Thomas Harvey- Lamar University, Yan Yan- Lamar University, Ashlin Stinson- Lamar University

This study examined the impact of the classroom environment on affective performance in elementary schools, focusing on second-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classrooms. It explored four key indicators of a successful classroom environment: 1) physical environment, 2) social climate, 3) accommodations and advocacy for diversity, and 4) classroom expectations and routines. Through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, the research investigated how these factors influenced students' emotional and academic engagement. Observational data revealed classroom interaction dynamics, while interviews provided deeper insights into teachers' strategies for shaping these environments.

**Paper Presentation- *Artificial Intelligence in Education***

Mark Viner- Eastern New Mexico University, Elizabeth Stewart- Eastern New Mexico University, Tracie Campbell- Eastern New Mexico University

This study explores perceptions and applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education among students and faculty at a southwestern University. The research focuses on the familiarity, usage, and attitudes toward AI in classroom instruction, alongside ethical and practical considerations for its implementation. A survey was distributed to undergraduate and graduate students and faculty members to collect data on their experiences and opinions. Key areas of investigation include the frequency and types of AI tools used, their perceived



usefulness, and potential concerns such as privacy, accuracy, and overreliance. Participants were also asked about their confidence in using AI, its role in enhancing the learning and teaching experience, and preferences for integrating AI into academic settings.

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**1:30 PM-3:00 PM**

**SESSION III-Sunset 4**

**SESSION CHAIR: Ryan Kelly**

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**Paper Presentation- *Understanding Why In 1888 and In 1892 The Incumbent President Did Not Win The Election***

Darrial Reynolds- South Texas College

This paper aims to increase the understanding of why, in the 1888 and 1892 elections, the incumbent president did not win the election. Firstly, this paper examines how the eight Proclamations for the Suspension of Tonnage Duties ordered by President Grover Cleveland helped him lose the 1888 presidential election. Secondly, this paper examines how the Tariff of 1890 helped President Benjamin Harrison lose the 1892 presidential election. Lastly, this paper concludes with an analysis of how the tariff policies of Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison impacted their presidential legacies.

**Paper Presentation- *Developing the Great Arkansas Literacy Coaching Survey (GALCS)***

Ryan Kelly- Arkansas State University

Literacy Coaching has been present in the field of education for several decades, thanks to scholarly action regarding how to address reforms. Schools addressing this reform turned to expertly trained literacy professionals and literacy coaches. Presently, the alignment of literacy coaching with established theory is of great interest. This session will discuss the development of the Great Arkansas Literacy Coaching Survey (GALCS), intended to examine the current context of literacy coaching in greater detail.

**Paper Presentation- *Victim Ideology on Social Media: The Effect of Reminders of Inequality***

Shannon Rauch- Benedictine University

A victim-based ideology is central to White supremacist messages and can be frequently found on mainstream sources. The present research sought to examine the effectiveness of these messages on social media, particularly after academic reminders of America's inequalities. White participants (N = 67) viewed one of three articles: one that framed inequality in terms of oppression, one that focused on privilege, or a control message. They then read one of three Twitter posts: one with a blatant racist tone, one with a victim ideology, and one that recognized the struggles of Black Americans. Participants responded to these messages with measures of attitude and behavioral intent. They then completed measures of racism. Results showed participants agreed with both racist messages at the same level as an egalitarian message, although behavioral intent was more positive toward the egalitarian message. When participants were first reminded of the existence of oppression, the victim message had more appeal than the other messages. In addition, victim messages led to more general levels of racism (anti-black attitudes), particularly when it followed the oppression reminder. Results suggest that victim ideology may serve a compensatory function when people are faced with evidence of oppression. Implications for current anti-diversity attitudes, policies, and propaganda will be discussed.

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**1:30 PM-3:00 PM**

**SESSION III-Sunset 3**

**Session Chair: Teresa LeSage Clements**

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**Paper Presentation - *The Perceptions and Readiness of Aspiring Educational Leaders to Integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Academic Research***

Daryl Ann Borel, Lamar University

As aspiring educational leaders, principal candidates at Lamar University are required to develop an understanding of academic research. This study, conducted in the master's Research Methods course during the Spring and Fall of 2024, aimed to examine the perspectives, ethical considerations, challenges, and potential opportunities emerging educational leaders perceive in integrating AI into academic research, as measured by the end-of-course reflection assignment. The reflection prompts included demographic and background information, perceptions of the ethical use of AI tools, the role of AI tools as research assistants, and the effectiveness and challenges associated with using AI tools. The archived data from the end-of-course reflections was analyzed using a qualitative design method. The study sought to provide insights that could inform professional development, strategies for technological integration, and institutional approaches to AI adoption in academic research courses. The research highlighted how emerging educational leaders view AI's role in academic research, moving beyond surface-level assessments to understand the complex interplay of technological, pedagogical, and personal factors.

**Paper Presentation- *Essential Early Childhood Educator Dispositions: The Love & Care for Children***

Teresa LeSage-Clements- University of Houston-Victoria, Barba Patton- University of Houston-Victoria

Turnover is high in childcare learning centers, although some early childhood educators stay on the job despite low wages and a lack of professional respect. Quality education and childcare should be everyone's top priority since children who receive high-quality education and nurturing will have an advantage over young children without it. All children should have equal access to high-quality education. The focus of this study investigated childcare educator job satisfaction and the motivation of early childhood educators. Education stakeholders should note that the teacher's disposition of loving and caring for children is essential for selecting a successful early childhood educator. The results of this study will be presented.

**Paper Presentation- *Stratified Greetings: Exploring Social Boundaries in Christmas Card Exchanges with Unknown Senders***

Jenifer Kunz- West Texas A&M University

This study examines the social norms of Christmas card exchanges, focusing on the influence of sender status, receiver status, and card quality on response rates. Using a randomized sample from urban and rural areas in the southwestern United States, cards of varying quality were sent from high- and low-status senders to high- and low-status receivers. The findings highlight the significance of social status in exchange behaviors and the symbolic nature of gift-giving. Future research should explore the underlying motivations and cultural variations in these practices.

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**1:30 PM-3:00 PM**

**SESSION III Sunset 2**

**SESSION CHAIR: Munir Hassan**

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**Paper Presentation- *Impact of Digital Currencies on the Global Economy***

Munir Hassan- Johnson C. Smith University

Digital currencies have emerged as a significant force in the global economy in recent years. From Bitcoin to central bank digital currencies (CBDCs), these new forms of money are reshaping financial systems, influencing monetary policies, and altering the way transactions are conducted. The main objective of this paper is to explore the impact of digital currency on the global economy, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges it presents.

**Paper Presentation- *Needs Assessment: Social Practice Art & Public Health***

Jody Wood- Sam Houston State University

Social isolation and loneliness are pressing public health concerns, particularly in rural areas where geographic dispersion, limited resources, and transportation barriers exacerbate these issues. This needs assessment focuses on four vulnerable populations that are particularly prevalent in Huntsville, TX: teens, young adults of

college age, homeless adults, and older adults aged 65+. By understanding the unique challenges and strengths of these groups, this assessment aims to identify opportunities for social practice art projects that foster meaningful connections and reduce isolation.

**Paper Presentation- *If they'll buy poison, they'll (still) buy anything***

Ronda Priest- University of Southern Indiana, Steven Williams- University of Southern Indiana

This paper updates our ongoing research exploring the normative shifts in American smoking culture as it grapples with the absurdity of an addictive drug as a completely legal multi-billion-dollar industry that is expanding to new delivery systems.

**Paper Presentation- *A Return to Honor***

Bruce Bayley- Weber State University

Ethics and ethics training have been a traditional training staple of the law enforcement and corrections professions for decades. Unfortunately, much of this training centers on "what if" scenarios and the use of philosophical perspectives that not only confusing to both new and seasoned officers but also provide little to no guidance when confronted with the myriad of ethical dilemmas they may face in the field. To make matters worse, most of the Codes of Ethics used by these communities are nothing more than a copy-and-paste version of a national code. To this end, the concept of "Honor" will be explored as a possible foundational alternative. Highlighting the use and possible misuse of traditional ethics models, this presentation will investigate the various meanings of honor, identify and discuss its three primary elements, and review how "Honor" can be used to either supplement existing ethics training or replace it altogether. In addition, a cross-disciplinary approach will emphasize the universal application of honor among a myriad of social science professions.

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**3:15 PM-5:15 PM**

**SESSION IV Sunset 5**

**SESSION CHAIR: Barry Bruster**

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**Paper Presentation - *Rowing Against the Tide or Rolling with the Punches: Educating Gen Z Students for Lifelong Success in Dealing with Disinformation and Misinformation***

Chris Karadjov - California State University, Long Beach

This presentation reflects my two-decade experience in the changing education for U.S. students with respect to the ever-evolving digital and media literacy needs and the establishment of lifelong habits of data verification, source credibility checks, and careful consideration of the means at our disposal to combat disinformation and misinformation. Students in journalism and public relations have been instructed during the past two decades to adapt their practices concurrently with the technological changes while preserving some basic rules that never went out of vogue.

**Paper Presentation- *Negotiating National and Global Narratives: Faculty Perspectives on Internationalizing the College History Curriculum***

Christina Wilbur- Lamar State College - Port Arthur, Thomas Harvey- Lamar University

As community colleges prepare students for a globalized world, the challenge of internationalizing curriculum remains underexplored, particularly in history departments. This qualitative study, guided by Dr. Thomas Harvey, investigated how history faculty at three Texas community colleges perceived internationalization and how their perceptions shaped the content of their history curriculum, uncovering obstacles and opportunities.

**Paper Presentation- *Vicarious Trauma in the Helping Professions***

Dorothy R. De Boer- University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Vicarious trauma (VT), also known as secondary, is a phenomenon that has been discussed and observed in various helping professions, including emergency room doctors and nurses, police officers, faith leaders, social service workers, and witnesses of violent crimes. Though it is a relatively new concept, studies have demonstrated that individuals who work with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, including children, often exhibit many signs of vicarious trauma. This paper will examine the literature on vicarious trauma and the programs and strategies developed to assist professionals in the helping fields in managing its effects.

**Paper Presentation- *Marijuana Legalization and Drug-Related Disciplinary Actions in Missouri Public Schools***

David Yaskewich- Southeast Missouri State University

A state's legalization of medical and recreational marijuana for adults can have ambiguous effects on adolescent use, behavior, and academic performance. This study examined student suspensions and expulsions from Missouri's public schools before and after the opening of medical marijuana dispensaries in 2020 and the legalization of recreational marijuana in 2022. Using school district-level data from 2017 through 2024, the effects of marijuana legalization and retail availability on drug-related disciplinary actions were estimated at both extensive and intensive margins. At the extensive margin, random-effects probit models estimated a 21% increase in the likelihood that annual reports by school districts had indicated any drug-related suspensions or expulsions following legalization. Compared to districts without marijuana retail outlets, the occurrence of any drug-related disciplinary actions was approximately 28% higher in districts where a retail outlet was located. Tobit and Poisson's models further indicated that marijuana legalization and retail availability also increased the number of drug-related disciplinary incidents at the intensive margin.

**Paper Presentation- *Beyond Smash and Grabs: The Complexities and Media Representation of Organized Retail Crime***

Julie Cowgill- Benedictine University, Shannon Rauch- Benedictine University

Reports of "Smash and Grabs" have increased awareness of a newer form of organized crime, leading to responses from retailers, law enforcement, and policy-makers. This study explores the inconsistencies in the legal definition, practice, and media treatment of organized retail crime (ORC). Conflicting portrayals of organized retail crime create ambiguous perceptions of the factors necessary to label a crime as "organized" and whether or not policies are necessary to disrupt this type of crime. We will present an overview of state government policy websites that define organized retail crime and its impact.

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**3:15 PM-5:15 PM**

**SESSION IV-Sunset 4**

**SESSION CHAIR: Lindon Ratliff**

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**Paper Presentation- *The Influence of Anxiety on Response to Negative Sentiment Override Assessment Protocols during Couples Counseling***

Seth Olson- Sam Houston State University

Negative sentiment override (NSO), or messages and experiences interpreted increasingly negatively, is one way to explain dissatisfaction in romantic relationships. In addition, psychological factors, like anxiety, have been shown to increase levels of dissatisfaction. The current examined how significant anxiety, determined by responses to the Symptom Checklist-90, influenced the endorsement of items on Gottman's NSO scale. The study examined the item characteristic curves (ICCs) of the individual items on Gottman's NSO scale and then tested for differential item functioning between those with significant anxiety and those without significant anxiety for a sample of 262 individuals seeking counseling. The results demonstrate different ICC patterns between those with anxiety and those without. More specifically, individuals with anxiety reported elevated NSO compared to individuals without anxiety. Implications of these findings are discussed.

**Paper Presentation- *Teaching Severe Weather Safety to Self-Contained Students: Strategies for Effective Preparedness and Response***

Students in self-contained classrooms often face unique challenges that require specialized approaches to ensure their safety during severe weather events. Effective preparedness and response strategies for these students must consider their physical, cognitive, and emotional needs. This paper explores an action research project conducted by secondary education majors to implement a lesson for local students. Social stories, role-playing, and adaptive technologies are highlighted as practical tools to help students understand and retain emergency protocols.

**Paper Presentation- *Voices from the Land of Enchantment: Middle School Social Studies Teachers' Professional Development Experiences***

Presley Shilling- Eastern New Mexico University

This study explores the perceptions and experiences of middle school social studies teachers in New Mexico regarding professional development (PD) opportunities. Despite the critical role of social studies in fostering informed citizenship, it often receives less attention in PD initiatives than other core subjects. This research aims to illuminate social studies educators' specific needs, challenges, and preferences in a state with unique cultural and geographical contexts.

**Paper Presentation- *The Impact of Cannabis Legalization on Undergraduate Academics: A Qualitative Survey of Ethnicity and Usage Trends***

Selenda Cumby- Eastern New Mexico University, Presley Shilling- Eastern New Mexico University, Janet Birkey- Eastern New Mexico University

This presentation explores a qualitative survey of undergraduate students at a university in a state that legalized cannabis in 2021. Filling a gap in existing research, this study examines a previously unstudied state with a significant minority student population. Data were collected through an anonymous survey using Qualtrics and analyzed to assess the impact of cannabis legalization on student academics and university completion rates. This presentation will highlight findings related to ethnicity and differences between marijuana users and non-users.

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**3:15 PM-5:15 PM**

**SESSION IV-Sunset 3**

**SESSION CHAIR: Munir Hassan**

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**Paper Presentation- *Fostering Professional Growth through Action Research in Education***

Yvonne Skoretz- Marshall University

This presentation examines the design, delivery, and evaluation of the graduate course Action Research in Education, which is designed to foster individualized professional development for both initial licensure Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students and experienced teachers earning a Master of Arts (MA) in Education. Insights into course activities, evaluations, and reflections on course outcomes will be shared.

**Paper Presentation- *Organizational Structures That Promote Peer-led Professional Development***

Andy North- Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Research indicates teachers in rural school districts experience limited opportunities for professional development due to limitations on time, lack of resources, and heavy teacher workloads. This presentation examines organizational structures (e.g., infrastructure) that promote peer-led professional development in rural National Blue Ribbon Schools.

**Paper Presentation- *Tech Level-Ups: Technology-Centered Micro-Credential Program as Novel Approach to K-12 Professional Development***

Timothy Chang- California State University, Dominguez Hills

This study investigates the effects of a technology-based professional development (PD) program on teacher growth and instructional practices. It examines how integrating technology into PD influences teacher

confidence, pedagogical strategies, and student engagement. Informed by research, grounded in personal experiences facilitating technology PD, and informed by ISTE standards, this work underscores the cross-curricular potential of technology-integrated teaching to foster continuous improvement and prepare students with industry-relevant skills.

**Paper Presentation- *Supporting New ESL Teachers Through EQ and CQ Mentoring: A Qualitative Action Research Study***

Viktoria Korogodsky- Florida Atlantic University

This research addresses a critical gap in ESL teacher support by examining the intersection of emotional and cultural intelligence in teacher development. The findings will contribute to our understanding of effective mentoring mechanisms for new ESL teachers while informing the development of targeted professional development programs in multicultural educational settings.

**Paper Presentation- *Comparative analysis of global poverty (1990 to 2022)***

M. Prasada Rao- Central University of Odisha, Vani Kotcherlakota- University of Nebraska at Kearney

The main objective of the paper is to present a comparative Analysis of Global Poverty for the period 1990-2022. The paper will be discussed in four sections. In the first section, the definition and some measures of poverty are presented. The Review of Literature constitutes the second section. In the third section, the data and methodology sources are presented, and the comparative analysis of Global Poverty for the study period is given in the fourth section. The main conclusion from the paper is that there has been a significant poverty reduction globally.

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**3:15 PM-5:15 PM**

**SESSION IV Sunset 2**

**SESSION CHAIR: Mihae Bae**

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**Paper Presentation- *University-Led Approaches to Enhancing Elderly Care in Rural Communities: Insights from South Korea and Europe***

Mihae Bae- Stephen F Austin State University, Hyunsook Kang- Stephen F Austin State University

With the growing demand for accessible and effective care, universities in rural areas have a unique opportunity to drive innovation in elderly care. This study explores how mid-sized universities in rural regions can contribute to the development of community-centered, person-focused care for older adults by integrating strategies and insights from countries like South Korea and several European nations, including Germany, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands

**Paper Presentation- *Leadership in Action: How Teachers' Beliefs, Skills, Climate, Education, and Reflection Shape Their Leadership Approach***

Shelly Allen- Lamar University, Glen Harrison- Lamar University, Frances Perez- Lamar University

This study will examine the knowledge and skills that teachers feel they need to be effective teacher leaders on a campus. It will also examine how other factors, such as politics and coursework, have helped to shape their philosophy of teacher leadership. As well as trends in how teacher leadership master's candidates plan to refine and grow their skill set in the future.

**Paper Presentation- *Fostering Social Studies Instruction in Early Childhood Education: The Role of Video Analysis and Reflection in Online Teacher Preparation***

Dawn Berry- New Mexico Highlands University

This paper examines a practice-based online social studies course for preservice early childhood educators, emphasizing teacher-child interaction as a core pedagogical skill. The redesigned curriculum incorporated video analysis, virtual guided rehearsal sessions in breakout rooms, and reflective practice logs to bridge theory and classroom application. As the instructor, I structured learning through scaffolded cycles of representation (studying exemplar interactions), decomposition (breaking down strategies like open-ended questioning), and approximation (role-playing scenarios with peer feedback in virtual breakout rooms). Key facilitation strategies included modeling reflective thinking during video critiques, providing granular feedback on rehearsal attempts, and fostering collaborative problem-solving around real classroom challenges within the online environment. Preservice teachers demonstrated growth in recognizing responsive interaction techniques, such as scaffolding dialogue and fostering equitable participation. Implications highlight the need for hands-on, iterative practice in online teacher preparation programs. By embedding opportunities to analyze, dissect, and simulate high-quality interactions virtually, educators can develop the observational precision and adaptive responsiveness critical for early childhood settings. The study advocates for discipline-specific practice frameworks in online courses that prioritize relationship-building as foundational to social studies and holistic development.

**Paper Presentation- *The Weapons Priming Effect: A P-Curve Analysis***

James Benjamin- University of Arkansas-Fort Smith

Although there is evidence that short-term exposure to weapons increases the accessibility of aggressive thoughts, even with publication bias considered (Benjamin et al., 2018), the extent to which questionable research practices, such as p-hacking, influence our understanding of the phenomenon has not been tested. The results of a p-curve analysis show that there is no tangible evidence of p-hacking. However, p-curve analysis cannot address other concerns, such as potential experimenter allegiance effects or publication bias. It is recommended that more efforts to independently replicate the findings of earlier research (e.g., Anderson et al., 1998) are conducted and reported to improve confidence that the effect is robust.

**Paper Presentation- *African American Education and the Politics of Exclusion***

Mark Beeman, Meghan Brennan, Collins Ezea, Northern Arizona University

This research examines the recent banning of Advanced Placement (AP) African American Studies courses in the Florida public school curriculum. First, we analyze the ban as a contemporary social problem informed by a comparative analysis of critical academic scholarship on diversity education vis-a-vis the political rhetoric supporting the ban. This analysis is placed within the broader context of political discourse concerning Critical Race Theory and diversity education in general. Second, we situate the ban not as a unique contemporary development but within the context of educational practices affecting African Americans historically, especially as manifested in Florida and the U.S. South. Informed by the theoretical work on racial domination, hegemony, and cultural reproduction by DuBois, Omi and Winant, Desmond and Emirbayer, Bourdieu, Crenshaw, and others, our analysis places the current ban in the historical context of the struggle between race-focused practices of exclusion and inclusion. We find that the evolution of exclusionary practices has been consistent with the historical phases of race relations as outlined by theorists such as van den Berge and Wilson, but that the latest anti-critical Race Theory strategies mark a shift to a distinctive contemporary era.

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**ALL NSSA MEETING ROOMS ON TUESDAY, MARCH 25,  
TUESDAY, March 25th, 2023**

7:00 am-9:00 am

Registration

7:00 am-9:00 am

Continental Breakfast **Celebrity Ballroom**

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**8:15 AM-9:45 AM**

**SESSION V Sunset 2**

**SESSION CHAIR: Praphul Joshi**

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**Paper Presentation- *Understanding Social Determinants of Health and Its Impact in Healthcare***

### ***Access and Health Outcomes***

Alma Yap- Sam Houston State University, Praphul Joshi- Sam Houston State University

Understanding the social determinants shaping health outcomes and health equity across the U.S. population is vital for developing population health initiatives and prioritizing the allocation of healthcare resources. Healthy People 2030's goal related to social determinants of health (SDoH) recognizes the importance of addressing the so-called "upstream" factors (such as socioeconomic status, education, job stability, healthcare access, housing, and others), which are commonly unrelated to healthcare delivery — in improving health and curtailing health disparities. This abstract accentuates the need for holistic approaches to public health initiatives to tackle the impact of SDoH. Currently, limited standardized methods are in place to address SDoH uniformly and effectively across healthcare settings (Serba, 2020 and Greenwood et al., 2023). The measure of organizational healthcare performance in providing medical care alone is insufficient proof of reduced health inequities, improved well-being, and optimal health outcomes. The promotion of healthy choices and healthy lifestyles cannot simply eliminate health disparities and inequities. This research explores the common health-related social needs affecting individuals' access to healthcare and the population characteristics with barriers to healthcare access. Additionally, results from the literature review provide for an essential discussion of the SDOH-related tools and interventions utilized at the individual and community levels. It also highlights the significant potential for healthcare providers, clinicians, and interdisciplinary healthcare professionals to address the social risks that affect the health outcomes of individuals and the population, empowering them to make a difference.

#### **Paper Presentation- *Globalization and Monetary Policy Interdependence***

Hamid Milani- University of Wisconsin Stevens Point-Wausau

One of the main arguments in favor of flexible exchange rates is that they insulate domestic economies from foreign disturbances in conducting independent monetary policy. Indeed, after the breakdown of the Bretton Woods System in 1973, it was expected that freeing exchange rates would lead to greater autonomy in conducting national monetary policy and less interdependence in both inflation rates and the rate of change in output. However, in recent years, some have questioned the validity of the insulating properties of flexible exchange rates under a globalized world economy. The purpose of this paper is to shed some light on the effectiveness of monetary policy in highly interdependent world financial markets by reviewing recent articles in this area.

#### **Paper Presentation- *Artificial Intelligence: "Empowering a Generation of Change"***

Jayant Mecharla- Kingston University

The study categorizes AI into three primary types: Narrow AI (Weak AI), which focuses on solving specific tasks like facial recognition or virtual assistants; General AI (Strong AI), which aims to replicate human intelligence across various fields; and Superintelligent AI, a hypothetical form that could surpass human capabilities. The paper further examines the broad applications of AI across industries such as healthcare, finance, education, and transportation, highlighting its impact on automation, predictive analytics, and real-time decision-making.

#### **Paper Presentation- *Autonomous Vehicles: Development Challenges and Security Threats***

Michael O'Connor- Austin Peay State University

Current ADS hardware and software suites are truly a symphony of autonomy and have implications to be outfitted into various vehicles, such as the Kodiak Robotics and Textron Systems RIPSAN M3, an autonomous tracked and unmanned military ground vehicle. Current innovations in machine learning have allowed the Waymo Driver ADS to learn over twenty billion miles of simulation combined with over twenty million miles of real-world driving. With future research in artificial intelligence and hardware innovations, autonomous vehicles can seamlessly integrate into today's society.

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**8:15- 9:45 AM**

**SESSION V Sunset 3**

**SESSION CHAIR: Duane Dowd**

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**Paper Presentation- *Fitness Communication: Improving Outcomes Through Communication Research***

Chris Gurrie- University of Tampa

This research draws on insights from organizational cultural approaches to better understand fitness outcomes for participants and organizations. The work takes an organizational theoretical framework paired with applied outcomes to understand how communication research intersects with the practice of fitness and how communication data can improve the lives of participants in sport, fitness, and business activities by understanding the intersections of organizations, culture, health, marketing, and place.

**Paper Presentation- *The Role of Religious Convictions in Marital Processes: Mediating Effects of Altruism, Empathy, and Attributions***

Duane Dowd- Central Washington University

This study examined the relationship between religious participation and marital satisfaction in a sample of 126 married couples. Questionnaires were completed, which included measures of satisfaction, religiosity, attributions, empathy, and altruism. Men and women were analyzed separately to avoid confounding effects. Religiosity was modestly but significantly related to marital satisfaction for both men and women. This relationship was mediated partially for women and completely for men by the combination of empathy, altruism, and attributions. Relationship attributions were responsible for most of the variance in the mediation, and religiosity was related to attributions for men only. These results suggest that the impact that religious participation has on marital quality may, in part, be due to the effect it has on our cognitive processes.

**Paper Presentation- *Indigenous Communities: Deprivation of Land, Displacement, and Their Role in Managing the Destruction of Cultural Heritage***

Paola De La Rosa Rodriguez- Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, México

The confiscation of territories belonging to indigenous communities by large corporations with the blessing of the Mexican government has led to mass human displacement, cultural loss, and murder. This paper highlights two cases that illustrate this ongoing encroachment and indigenous attempts to fight back against these forces. The first is the massacre and territorial dispossession in Viejo Velasco, Chiapas, and the forced displacement of Triqui families in Tierra Blanca Copala, Oaxaca. Both cases demonstrate systematic patterns of human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, forced displacement, and torture, in the context of a struggle for territorial control of indigenous communities. In addition, this paper discusses how extractive projects and industries continue to create distress in the lives of marginalized indigenous peoples, including through the destruction of sacred burial grounds, significant cultural locations, and ancient archaeological sites.

**Paper Presentation- *Undergraduate Students' Experiences of Using AI for Completing Class Assignments***

Daljot Kaur- Francis Marion University

Bard (now Gemini), Perplexity, and You.com to complete class assignments. They shared their experiences of using the AI apps by responding to an online open-ended survey. The findings included preferred AI Apps, Skills for using AI, Feelings and Views about using AI, and Differences and Similarities between AI and Search Engines such as Google and Bing. This qualitative study was conducted to understand the Artificial Intelligence (AI) experiences of twelve undergraduate education major students enrolled in an introductory course at a southern university in the United States. Participants were required to use AI applications such as ChatGPT, ChatSonic, Google.

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**10:00 AM- 11:45 AM**

**SESSION VI Sunset 2**

**Session Chair: Walle Engedayehu**

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**Paper Presentation- *The Conscience-Science Correlative***

Imafedia Okhamafe- University of Nebraska

Perhaps only as a conscience-science correlative can we best affirm and advance a viable dogma-free philosophy of technology and information (amid an ever-dancing, ever-laughing center).

**Paper Presentation- *A Review of Aphasia Assessments: How a Monolingual Assessment Could Lead to Oversight of a Maltese-English Speaker's Post-Stroke Linguistic Difficulties.***

Lorraine Vassallo- University of Malta, Malta, Europe

The assessment of aphasia for bilingual people in only one language may not provide a comprehensive understanding of linguistic abilities, which may result in clinical oversight, resulting in inaccurate diagnoses and treatment recommendations. It is important to conduct assessments in both Maltese and English to obtain a more holistic view of the individual's language proficiency and impairment. A detailed comparative review of renowned aphasia assessment tools in English and a group of assessments that have been translated and adapted to other languages is examined here. This paper justifies selecting the Brisbane Evidence-Based Language test for this research study, which focuses on the adaptation of an aphasia assessment for Maltese-English bilingual adults with post-stroke aphasia.

**Paper Presentation- *Correlates of Health Among OK Women in Custody***

Cary Wood- Sam Houston State University

This study explored the effects of different predictors on the number of health conditions among female inmates. The population for the given study was 544 female inmates among three minimum to medium security prisons in Oklahoma that are a part of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections (OK-DOC). The population was between the ages of 19 and 71, with a mean age of 39.03. This study's results indicate the profound effect sleep has on the overall health of a person using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index. It also shows a correlation between depressive symptomatology and sleep quality. This highlights the quality of life in prison, showing how the conditions faced within correctional facilities can negatively affect the health of female inmates. This is worsened by the limited access to healthcare within the U.S. prison system.

**Paper Presentation - Using "The Eyes on the Prize" Series As A Teaching Tool**

Jeffrey Schulz Central Community College--Grand Island, NE

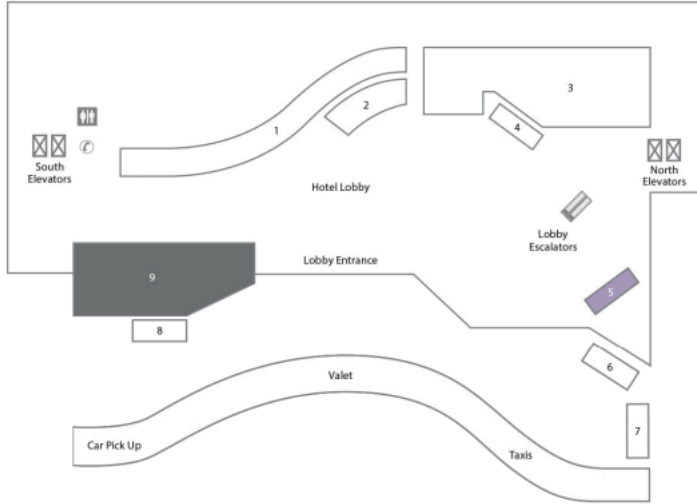
This paper is part III of a series of papers given at this conference. It discusses various topics of the Civil Rights Movement and innovative ways of teaching it to community college students. Effective assignments and teaching strategies for enhancing student retention of content will be discussed in the presentation.

# NSSA 2025 PROGRAM MAP

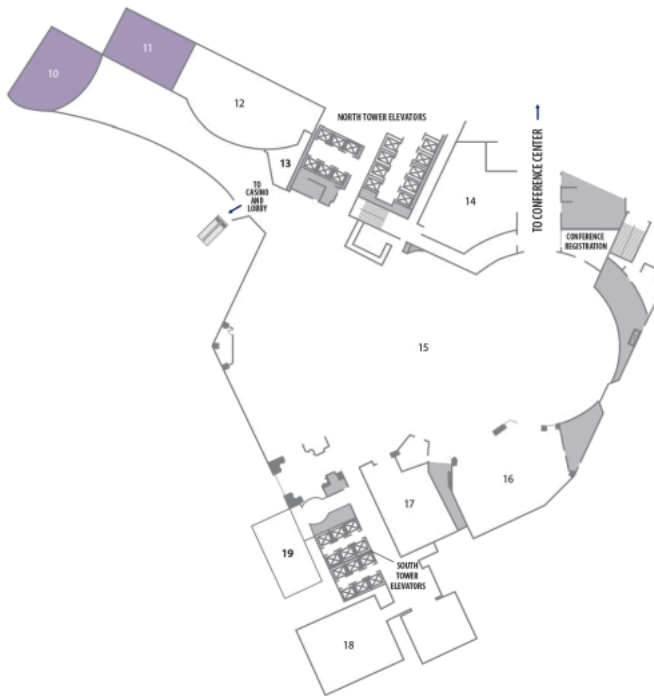
## Planet Hollywood

### PROPERTY MAP

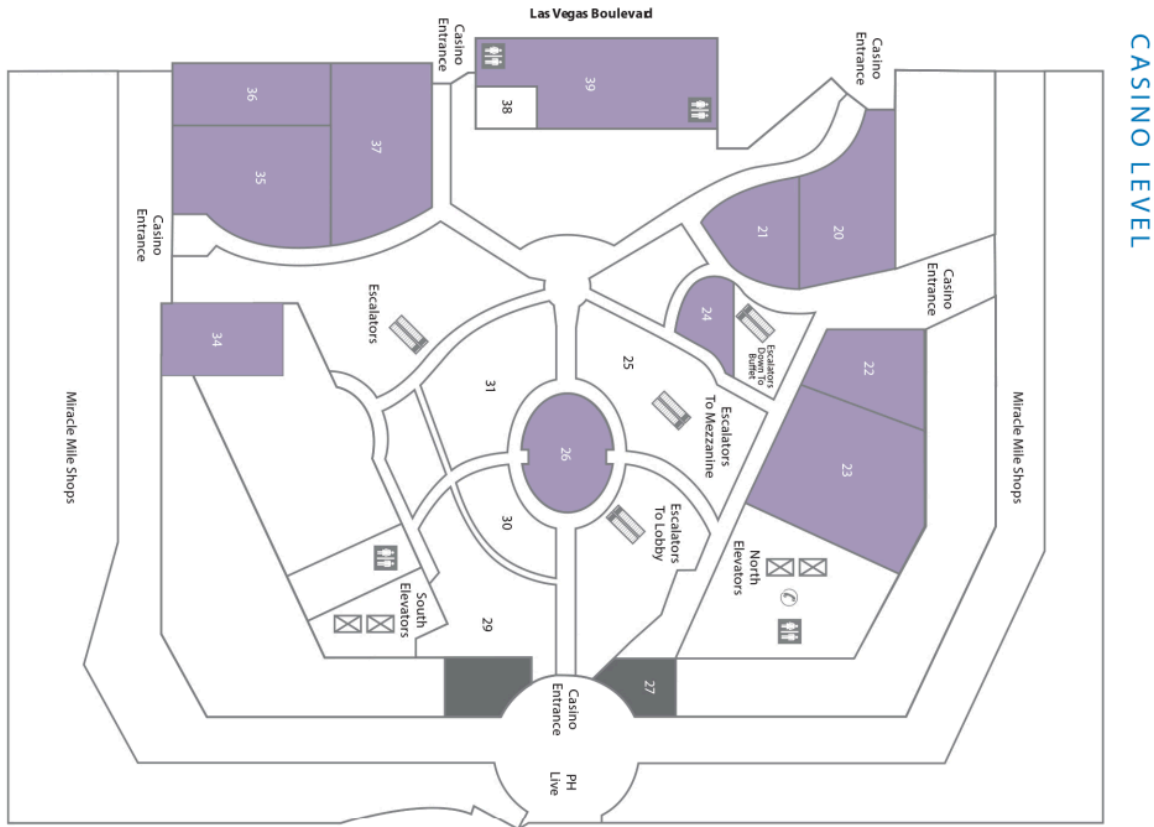
#### LOBBY LEVEL



#### MEZZANINE LEVEL



# NSSA 2025 PROGRAM MAP



CASINO LEVEL

## RESTAURANTS/BARS

- 5. Starbucks
- 10. Koi Restaurant and Lounge
- 11. Strip House
- 20. Gordon Ramsay Buger
- 21. EXTR A Lounge
- 22. Starbucks
- 23. Café Hollywood
- 24. Spice Market Buffet
- 26. Heart Bar
- 34. Earl of Sandwich
- 35. Ringer Wings, Pizza & Sliders Sports Book
- 36. Pink's Hot Dogs
- 37. Yolös Mexican Grill
- 39. P.F. Chang's China Bistro

## CASINO

- 25. Main Casino
- 29. High Limit Slots
- 30. Poker Room
- 31. The Pleasure Pit
- 32. High Limit Tables
- 33. Cashier
- 38. Total Rewards

## SHOPPING

- 9. PH 24
- 27. PH Need It
- 28. PH Want It

## FACILITY

- 1. Front Desk
- 2. Car Rentals
- 3. Diamond Registration
- 4. Concierge
- 6. Bell Desk
- 7. Bag Check
- 8. Valet Desk
- 12. Showroom
- 13. Box Office
- 14. Business Center
- 15. Mezzanine
- 16. Sin City Theatre
- 17. The Chapel at Planet Hollywood
- 18. Spa by Mandara, Fitness Center & Salon
- 19. Diamond Lounge

# SAVE THE DATE - FUTURE NSSA CONFERENCES

**Summer 2025 Virtual Conference  
June 16, 2025**

**Fall 2025 Conference - Hot Springs, AR  
October 19 through 21, 2025**

Our upcoming Fall Professional Development conference at the Embassy Suites, Hot Springs, AR, is from **October 19 through 21, 2025**. The conference has negotiated rooms at Embassy Suites for a reduced price of \$114.00. The proposal deadline is **September 22, 2025**. •

**NATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
SPRING 2026 CONFERENCE  
Flamingo, Las Vegas  
March 22 through 24, 2026**

Our upcoming Las Vegas conference at the Flamingo, **March 22 through 24, 2026**. The conference has negotiated rooms at Flamingo for a reduced price of **\$49.00**. Rooms at this reduced will go quickly!





# NSSA Journal and NSSA Technology Journal Guidelines and Submission Information

## Author's Template for Articles

*Replace the words Author's Template for Articles with your manuscript's title.*

Author(s) Name(s)  
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## Abstract

*The abstract is to be in fully justified italicized text, as it is here, below the author's information. Use the word "Abstract" as the title, in 12-point Ariel or Times New Roman, boldface type, centered relative to the column, initially capitalized. The abstract should be in 12-point, single-spaced type and up to 250 words. Leave two blank lines after the abstract to add the keywords, then leave two blank lines to begin the main text.*

*\*The submission cannot have been previously published nor submitted to another journal for consideration simultaneously.*

**Key Words:** (3-5 words)

**Introduction** Skip two lines and begin your paper after the keywords. These guidelines include complete descriptions of the fonts, spacing, and related information for producing your manuscripts. Please follow them.

## Formatting your Paper

All printed material, including text, illustrations, and charts, must be kept within a print area with 1" margins. Do not write or print anything outside the print area. The text must be fully justified. Images must be centered or within the text. Papers must be submitted in WORD only. No PDF files will be accepted. Make sure to disable ALL document security.

## Type-style, Font, and Length

**Use Ariel or Times New Roman in 12pt.** All text should be 1.5 or double-spaced. Paragraphs should be indented. **Do not put in headers, footers, or running heads.** Papers submitted should not exceed **25 pages nor be less than 12 pages.**

## Footnotes

APA avoids footnotes. Use citations to avoid footnotes, according to **APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition style.**

\*All citations in the text must be in the reference list, and all listed in the list must be used in the text. Check to make sure all citations in your paper are cited correctly.

## References

All references are to be according to APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition. All references should be listed at the end of the paper in alphabetical order according to the author's last name. The citations within the text should be enclosed in parentheses. Follow the APA 7<sup>th</sup> in-text reference guidelines, including a hanging indent for each citation.

The journal aims to inform authors within two months of receipt of manuscripts. However, this goal does not guarantee a turn-around time. All manuscripts will be returned for corrections if guidelines are not followed. We reserve the right to refuse any manuscript and do not necessarily state reasons for refusal.

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# Submission Date Deadline: June 16, 2025

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