

Meeting of the Minds Evaluation Summary

	Number of Responses: 52	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree		No Response
		# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	# 5	
Question							
Overall Symposium Ratings	1. The opening session “How to be a Wise Consumer of Research” prepared me to actively participate in sessions.	4 8%	11 21%	12 23%	13 25%	5 10%	7 13%
	2. The structure of sessions (presentation, discussant panels, group discussion) was effective in linking research, policy, and practice.	18 35%	20 38%	10 19%	3 6%	0 0%	1 2%
	3. The sessions engaged my attention and encouraged me to think about research, policy, and practice.	33 63%	16 31%	2 4%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%
	4. The sessions resulted in clear implications for practice, policy, or further research.	9 17%	23 44%	16 31%	3 6%	0 0%	1 2%
	5. The overall balance between practice and research across sessions was good.	13 25%	27 52%	8 15%	3 6%	0 0%	1 2%
	6. My participation in this symposium has made me more knowledgeable about how to find, evaluate, and use research.	20 38%	13 25%	12 23%	4 8%	0 0%	3 6%
	7. Reflection and Discussion sessions helped me consider implications of policy, practice, and/or research.	16 31%	18 35%	10 19%	2 4%	1 2%	5 10%

Q 1: What were the most informative sessions you attended? Why?

Learner persistence (17 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- increased level of awareness.
- the information is relevant and helps clear up some misconceptions I had about adult school dropouts.
- very pertinent to my program.
- best I've seen in 3 years.
- the topic's relevance to classroom practice and programming.
- I was looking for more concrete means to improve teaching and evaluation in my adult basic education program.
- well presented, articulate, and applicable findings.
- ideas and practices I can share with local programs.
- new data was interesting
- closely related to professional interest - also implications were clear.
- Persistence and Reading Profiles of ABE were two of the very best sessions, thorough, and exceptionally well presented.

Reading Profiles (9 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- new info on very specific learner profiles matched to specific instructional needs to address/instructional strategies.
- my training is in ESL, not ABE as a whole, so I gained important info on skills
- areas to differentiate for learner
- I got a number of new ideas about what I want to do with this workshop's information.
- extremely interesting. This data should open our eyes to realities and somehow (eventually) make a difference in the way we do business.
- it answered questions I had and/or met needs I have; however there is a long way to go linking the research findings to practice.
- Persistence and Reading Profiles of ABE were two of the very best sessions, thorough, and exceptionally well presented.

Multiple Intelligences (7 Responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- the implication for change in our instructional practices.
- quite worth considering for embedding in adult education professional development.
- ideas and practices I can share with local programs.

Authentic Materials (6 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- I learned a lot of info I didn't know
- I got the most new ideas for practice and policy from this session.
- closely related to professional interest - also implications were clear.
- findings most relevant to my program; very clear.
- lots of time for questions, humor, and enriched my classroom repertoire.

Lab School Studies (6 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- Sustained silent reading from Lab School – frees up curriculum choices in reading; clear experimental method and clearly articulated results.
- new data was interesting.
- John Hellermann's work -- useful and thought-provoking. Even though I'm quite familiar with his work, the emphasis on literacy practices as a social activity encouraged me to look at other research in this area.
- The Lab school observing students instead of or in addition to instructors.

How Teachers Change (4 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- relevant information presented clearly, strong link to practice.
- made me analyze what I need to do to improve

Practitioner Inquiry (4 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- overview and definition of terms of practitioner research -- informative.
- sharing of practitioner research by those doing the research - excellent information and inspiring.
- Good connections made.
- it answered questions I had and/or met needs I have.

Individualized Group Instruction (2 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- presentation and discussion emphasized need for additional research on the primary instructional delivery mode used in adult education.
- very interesting.

The Forgotten R (2 responses, including the following reasons for selection)

- I was looking for more concrete means to improve teaching and evaluation in my adult basic education program and this session helped answer that.
- presented in terms teachers could understand and addressed issues that have been problematic for me.

How to Be a Wise Consumer of Research (1 response, including the following reason for selection)

- I think the intro to research was right on the money and set the tone for the whole conference.

Other Responses (Respondents listed session titles but did not always listing reasons for selections)

- #103--Supporting ABE Learners Studying at a Distance—gave a lot of research and support for our "pilot" DL program.
 - #201--Health Literacy--study on pain interactions—findings most relevant to my program.
 - #203--Evidence-based Practice and Professional Development—opens possible contacts for improvement in home state.
 - #204--Research Methods in ABE/ESOL—good explanation of research process.
 - #205--Anthropology and the Workplace
 - #301--Standards-based Reform—we are seriously faced with standards-based high-stakes testing.
 - #501--Impact of GED Credential on Earning Potential
 - #503--LD session—presented in terms teachers could understand and addressed issues that have been problematic for me.
 - #601--Student Learners Panel
 - #602--Research Methods for Distance Learning
 - #605--Interesting look at STAR—nice to know what is coming.
- Multiple Intelligence Theory, Learner Persistence, and Anthropology and Workplace—All of these showed me I am doing these things already and how to increase occurrence of these in my classes.

General Comments

- The sessions were **all** informative; some researchers are better at presentation skills than others.
- The small group, longer-session format was very effective.
- I think the structure really worked, but maybe we needed a little more modeling on focusing on policy implications. Well, the implications were not always clear, but they're a lot clearer than they were before.
- The focus on practice was very good, but I heard a suggestion that next year (!) half the sessions should be academic research and half the sessions should be practitioner research. Wouldn't that be great?
- Where can we get funding for that whole different outlook on learner persistence? Changes my workshop on making a Web site for your course - one goal is to encourage learners to become distance learners when they have to stop out.
- Great ideas and practices I can share with local programs.

Q2: Which sessions were most meaningful to you? Why?

#001--Instructional Paradigms--Implications for how to continue to encounter our students holistically, and how to start representing that better to the powers that be.

#102--Learner Persistence, because:

- (1) it caused me to come up with some new ideas on how I teach;
- (2) we are conducting our own learner persistence studies and want to improve learner persistence in our program;
- (3) there are lots of important policy implications and program design implications here;
- (4) this is an area I can have at least some influence on;
- (5) John Comings' presentation was very well thought out and the information relevant.

#103--Supporting ABE Learners Studying at a Distance, because

- (1) our distance learning population is growing;
- (2) the research and practices delineated in this session were significant.

#104--Use of Authentic Materials, because

- (1) the studies that got learner feedback were meaningful;
- (2) I am hopeful this can be implemented in classes at my college.

#201--Health Literacy Skills, because

- (1) Maricel Santos's presentation on health literacy study circles illustrated not just an interesting link between research and practice, but also between "the outside world" and instruction.

#202--The Forgotten R (no reason for selection listed)

#204--Research Methods for ABE/ESOL Populations (no reason for selection listed)

#205--Anthropology and the Workplace (no reason for selection listed)

#303/#404--Multiple Intelligences, because

- (1) it's a good study with useful theory to support building community with students and perhaps improve retention and self-efficacy;
- (2) it provided validation and research support for current practices in my teaching and program, and offered possibility/implications for change in our programs;
- (3) I can see immediate application of theory as a possibility for my program.

#304--Individualized Group Instruction, because

- (1) it was interesting to have this practice described;
- (2) it gave me much to think about;
- (3) it was a reflective exercise to examine what we're really doing in our programs.

#401--Effective Instruction in Adult ESL Literacy, because

- (1) it supported my biases.

#402--How Teachers Change, because

- (1) the session was very good and more meaningful for me as a professional developer;
- (2) provided implications for supporting student success;
- (3) as an administrator, part of my job is to coordinate and plan for staff development and this session was helpful for that.

#504--Impact of WIA and Welfare Reform, because

- (1) it clarified ideas for me.

#601--Factors Supporting Student Success, Learner Panel, because

- (1) it caused me to come up with some new ideas on how I teach.

#604--Longitudinal Studies of Language Learning, because

- (1) it has great preliminary findings that were effectively presented.

#605--Research in Progress--the Star project because we have been invited to participate.

Other Comments

- It was great to have as much discussion time as we did - that's usually not possible at conferences.
- Those sessions that engaged participants in discussion—great!
- Stopping discussion to fill out cards was frustrating - how many opportunities do we have to speak to each other directly?
- Great potential implications for program improvement.
- Hands-on practice for class and research design.
- Session done by Portland State Univ. - the video clips from their research were valuable illustrations and their research most closely matched my interests.
- All sessions were meaningful to me because they reinforced what I am doing and how it can improve them as well as add to them.
- Practical research gives me the incentive to complete my own research. Connections with person who will inform my work and with whom I can share.
- definite research; definite and specific examples; great discussions; excellent discussants; teacher staff development models
- knowing what other researchers are doing in those fields--great! Also, being able to communicate with other researchers; and possibilities of developing new research studies collaboratively with other researchers and practitioners.
- Wiki - great new resource.

Q3: What specific changes will you make in your practice as a result of the things you learned?

Orientation re-evaluation and duration

We are going to have a weekly meeting for our ABE/GED staff members to discuss individual students. I'm going to look at all our software and other sources to review their ready resources. I'll work with newly hired reading specialist and lead instructors to analyze our reading instruction and develop new strategies/training as needed. I will put together resources for programs.

I am more determined to advocate for a closing of the gap between research paradigms and researchers and practitioners.

I will do more inquiring in class.

Whole different outlook on learner persistence - changes my workshop on making a website for your course: one goal is to encourage learners to become distance learners when they have to stop out.

Encourage more use of authentic materials and bringing the outside in. Encourage use of native language in the classroom for explanations and directions.

I plan to submit some of the things I do in class for possible publication. I didn't realize what I do could have national implications.

Key points to share with supervisor, co-worker

Learner persistence project different look at how to do staff development.

Looking at data results as possible starting points. For the local study and professional development priorities.

Professional development to be revised to include study circles.

More PD for my staff on writing in the ABE classroom and DL

Learn about and offer more initial assessments to learn more about students needs so we can target those with differentiated instruction. I'm also planning to integrate sustained silent reading in our ESL classes.

I will probably be more vocal with state personnel. Advocate for teachers who are producing quality work.

Refer to retention as persistence. Develop different activities for orientation. Incorporate new knowledge in staff development activities.

I will use the issues raised in the sessions on PD in planning future activities.

Pair work: not interfere or interrupt **air** negotiations. MI: Share information with other teachers. Shift toward project-based learning. Persistence: Create a buddy support system for students.

Orientation to include long distance learning info. Find more avenues to elicit authentic materials from students. Find ways to make **??[illegible word]** restricted (by outside forces) a context friendly environment. Investigate multiple intelligences and learn styles/corollary or lack of it.

I think it would be very helpful to add application workshop to compliment the research because many of the attendees are classroom teachers. i.e., we learned of research findings regarding multiple intelligences. It would be helpful to leave prep and examples showing how to incorporate these in instruction.

Take a serious look at our ABE reading program.

I'll try to make research more available to our adult ed. programs by regular email announcement.

I'll be sure to preface all PD activities with research that supports the topic.

Spend more time on goal setting and progress assessment activities with students. Start discussions with colleagues about viewing our program as a learner resource instead of a program that students need hundred of hours of, which leads to design changes and curriculum changes.

Be more precise in giving information about LD to learners in our program. Organize my time to read current research and to conduct my own.

I want to examine our policies and which ones are within my sphere of influence.

Will have to review my notes and decide what areas to target. Will talk to educators about what I learned.

(1) Integrate practices to increase persistence. (2) Expand our DL program. (3) Add a reflective follow up component to professional development.

I am going to have to go home and sift through things before I see how I will use things.

The different websites, of course, will be useful for lessons and research, etc. No specific changes, but continues use of unscripted pair activities to encourage negotiation, co-construction, community building and language acquisition.

Incorporate research more into my PD.

More attention on student success and ways to gather data for goals, then proceed to support work toward success.

I will be a better "consumer" of research.

Will experiment with new reading activities in my class. Will experiment with "standing back" while SS engage in pair/group work.

No specific changes, but will take the research findings presented here into consideration for future research.

Read Strucker's full study; utilize info in tutor training, try practitioner research now that I know what it is.

Q4: What next steps do you recommend to continue dialogue and exchange among practitioners and researchers?

List serves (5); connection with researchers; Wiki on different topics (3). Bring it down to regional/local level with continued follow up maybe in the form of periodic regional meetings.

PD packages supporting such exchange.

Working sessions (fewer) where practitioners can look beyond RECEIVED information and find ways to translate their knowledge into form that validates their knowledge.

Keep state professional development in line with research findings. Collaborate with state practitioners on more research. Continue to do symposia like this one - in different parts of the country. We need more funding available for doing research.

More sessions that highlight technique, programs, or ideas work on our students.

In CA – make this part of the PDC workshops and always a part of CCAE conferences.

I'd like to know how researchers make decisions about what to study. How much input do they get from practitioners? If not much, I recommend creating more structured ways for practitioners to tell researchers their interests/needs.

Bring the research model to major states national conferences. Repeat conference every 2 years.

Study circles at site/district/area/state level (2)

How about having discussion sessions where people who have implemented what they've learned share their results?

Create ways to bring the dialogue and exchange among practitioners and researchers.

Post data at Web site so the process can continue.

A quick link on NCSALL Web site "Current research projects and their current status" with the research question and current phase and anticipated completion data.

Annual meetings like this symposium. It's rare in other meeting to have researchers and practitioners with program directors and state directors together. I would like this to be a yearly conference (3). More regional RTP conferences (2).

Email, website, state leadership projects. Send out updates/final drafts of current ongoing research.

GED: Are there any study outcomes on the Spanish GED? For example, does the Spanish GED increase wages of the GED recipient?

The Web site should help keep the dialogue going. I also plan on emailing many of the people I met here.

The small group, longer-session format was effective. Also having the chance to talk more informally with session participants was good. Perhaps trying out this model with national organizations.

I would like to see practitioners guide research more and larger samples from which conclusions are drawn.

Post abstracts from this symposium to your Web site - use a framework for a Wiki site. Need more research: prevalence and role of learning disabilities in adults attending ABE and literacy classes and implications for assessment, instruction, and need for accommodations.

Registration and Check-in, Staff Efficiency, Symposium Organization

	Number of Responses: 52	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree		No Response
		Question	# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	
Registration and Check-in	The Web registration system was easy to use.	33 63%	5 10%	2 4%	0%	0%	12 23%
	Symposium information was readily available.	29 56%	9 17%	4 8%	0%	1 2%	9 17%
Symposium and Hotel Staff	Symposium staff was helpful and courteous.	42 81%	6 12%	0%	0%	0%	4 8%
	Hotel staff was helpful and courteous.	37 71%	6 12%	3 6%	0%	0%	6 12%
Organization	The symposium flowed smoothly.	34 65%	10 19%	4 8%	0%	0%	4 8%
	The concurrent session format was effective.	26 50%	16 31%	3 6%	1 2%	0%	6 12%
	Use of practitioners as discussants was helpful.	16 31%	17 33%	14 27%	1 2%	0%	4 8%
	Sufficient time was given for workshops.	20 38%	17 33%	6 12%	3 6%	2 4%	4 8%
	Sufficient time was given for breaks and lunches.	27 52%	15 29%	3 6%	3 6%	1 2%	3 6%

Comments:

Longer break and lunches
 Fewer topics with longer time slots would be good.
 Outstanding!
 You don't need to provide so much food next time.
 Good Conference
 Meeting rooms too small.
 Plan 1 hour for break-out interest groups.
 Discussants varied greatly in effectiveness.
 Include more research on ESOL learners.
 Keep to time frame in workshops.
 Very well organized. Let's do it again in a couple years.
 Food was outstanding.
 I thought the scheduling and format worked out really well.
 Larger rooms or more chairs. Deli sandwiches for lunch.
 Having the food available and not running out.