



**TWENTIETH ANNUAL  
RUTGERS INVITATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON EDUCATION  
DEFINING AND IMPROVING QUALITY IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION:  
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

**CO-SPONSORED BY**

**THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ADULT LEARNING AND LITERACY (NCSALL)  
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY GOODLING INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN FAMILY LITERACY  
THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF ADULT LITERACY**

**THURSDAY OCTOBER 23, 2003 AND FRIDAY OCTOBER 24, 2003  
EMBASSY SUITES HOTEL, PISCATAWAY, NJ**

The twentieth Rutgers Invitational Symposium on Education will focus on the challenges of defining what constitutes a quality adult basic and literacy education system and the ways in which research can further inform the development and implementation of quality policy and practice. This two-day conference will provide many formal and informal opportunities to consider and discuss the issues of defining and improving quality. By addressing the fact that adult basic education seeks to meet the needs of very diverse stakeholders in a wide range of learning contexts, the conference will engage with questions related to goals, accountability, and efficacy and efficiency in policy, practice, and research.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Six concurrent sessions will feature nationally recognized scholars discussing their current work with a specific focus on issues of quality. These scholars include:**

**JUDITH ALAMPRESE, ABT ASSOCIATES, CHANGE STRATEGIES FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT**

**EUNICE ASKOV, THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY, RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE ON FAMILY LITERACY**

**HAL BEDER, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, QUALITY INSTRUCTION**

**ALISA BELZER, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, THE PRACTICE OF VOLUNTEER TUTORS IN DIVERSE PROGRAM CONTEXTS**

**BETH BINGMAN & CRISTINE SMITH, NCSALL, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**JOHN COMINGS, NCSALL, LEARNER PERSISTENCE**

**LARRY CONDELLI, AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH, ACCOUNTABILITY**

**VIVIAN GADSDEN, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, INTERGENERATIONAL LITERACY**

**JAMES GEE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, LITERACY IN THE ERA OF "NEW BASICS"**

**MARILYN GILLESPIE, SRI, TEACHING WRITING IN ABE**

**DAPHNE GREENBERG, GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY, THE CHALLENGES OF CONDUCTING ETHICAL AND QUALITY RESEARCH IN ABE**

**ELISABETH HAYES, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, ADULT LITERACY AND THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

**GLYNDA HULL, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, WORKPLACE LITERACY**

**STEVE REDER, PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY, LITERACY IN PRACTICE**

**MARY JANE SCHMITT, TERC, NUMERACY**

**SONDRA STEIN, NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY, STANDARDS**

**HEIDE WRIGLEY, AGUIRRE INTERNATIONAL, ESL**

- **A special panel discussion by international researchers from England, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia will be held on issues of quality in their countries. These international scholars will also share their perspectives by participating as discussants and commentators in other sessions.**
- **Informal discussion breaks each day will provide opportunities for conference participants to share their reactions and respond to the presentations from their perspectives as researchers, policy makers, and practitioners.**

# 20TH ANNUAL RISE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

The \$175.00 registration fee (special graduate student rate, \$99) for this two day conference includes six concurrent sessions, continental breakfast and a hot buffet luncheon daily. Registration is on a first received first registered basis, either by mail with personal check or charge card information, or by fax with charge card information. (Private fax machine 732-932-1640) Phone registrations will not be accepted. The deadline for registration is 10/11/03, or until maximum registrations have been received. Please complete the attached registration form, and return it to : Office of Continuing Education, 10 Seminary Place, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901-1183. Checks should be made payable to: Rutgers, The State University. Registrations will be acknowledged by a written confirmation and directions closer to the conference. If you have not received a written confirmation by 10/11/03, you are not registered. No walk-in registrations are accepted. Rooms are available at the Embassy Suites Hotel at a discounted rate of \$110.00 per night. The suite rate includes a full cooked to order breakfast each morning and an Evening Manager's Reception held nightly. For details or to make reservations call Embassy Suites at 1- 800- EMBASSY and say you are with the Rutgers RISE Conference. *Rutgers University Graduate School of Education is a registered provider (#96) of professional development programs for credit and non-credit, that may count toward the 100 hour requirement. (NJ teachers) The length of this conference is 14 clock hours. (NJ teachers)*

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### Thursday, October 23, 2003

8:00- 8:30 Check-In and Continental Breakfast  
9:15- 9:30 Welcome  
9:45- 10:45 Concurrent Session 1  
11:00- 12:00 Concurrent Session 2  
12:00- 1:30 Lunch  
1:30- 2:30 Concurrent Session 3  
2:45- 3:45 Discussion groups  
5:00- 6:30 Reception

### Friday, October 24, 2003

9:15- 10:15 Concurrent Session 4  
10:15- 10:45 Break  
10:45- 11:45 Concurrent Session 5  
12:00- 1:30 Lunch  
1:30- 2:30 Discussion groups  
2:45- 3:45 Concurrent Session 6  
3:45- 4:00 Closing Comments

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THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
Presents

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**DEFINING AND IMPROVING QUALITY IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

**THURSDAY OCTOBER 23, 2003 AND FRIDAY OCTOBER 24, 2003, EMBASSY SUITES, PISCATAWAY, NJ**  
DIRECTED BY DR. ALISA BELZER AND DR. HAROLD BEDER, RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NJ

Contact the Office of Continuing Education 732/ 932-7496 X205 Website <http://www.gse.rutgers.edu/conted> Email: [gsece@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:gsece@rci.rutgers.edu)

**Rutgers Invitational Symposium on Education**  
**Defining and Improving Quality in Adult Basic Education: Issues and Challenges**

**Tentative Program as of 9/24/03 (Subject to Change)**

**Thursday, October 23**

**8:30 - 9:15**                    **Check-in and Continental Breakfast**

**9:15 - 9:30**                    **Welcome**

Richard De Lisi, Acting Dean, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University

Alisa Belzer and Hal Beder, Rutgers University, Co-Directors, 20th Annual RISE

**9:45 - 10:45**                **Concurrent Paper Session 1**

*Reconceptualizing adult literacy education and the digital divide*

Betty Hayes, University of Wisconsin

The role of computer-based technologies in adult literacy learning will be explored. The nature of new technologies, the kinds of literacies inherent in such technologies, and their implications for literacy learning and teaching will be discussed.

*Support to student persistence in adult basic and literacy education*

John Comings, National Center for the Study of Adult learning and literacy

Persistence will be defined, and the literature on ways to support it will be reviewed. Recently completed research on the topic will be reported and an argument for persistence support as part of a quality program will be made

*Professional development and evidence-based practice in quality adult education*

Cristine Smith and Mary Beth Bingman, National Center for the Study of Adult learning and literacy

The evidence of existing preparation, quality and stability of the work force, approaches and models that support professional development, and contextual factors that are needed to build teacher quality and the use of evidence-based practice will be explored. Implications for policies, practice, and research will be drawn.

*Connecting curriculum development with research: The EMPOWER Project*

Mary Jane Schmitt and Martha Merson, TERC

EMPOWER's curriculum and development/research model will be described. Case study data will be reported which documents a range of adults' mathematical understandings. The cases have implications for curriculum, professional development and further research.

**11:00 - 12:00**                **Concurrent Paper Session 2**

*The forgotten "R": The teaching of writing in adult basic education*

Marilyn Gillespie, SRI

An argument for the importance of teaching writing, often and afterthought, in adult basic education will be made. A chronicle of the evolution of research on teaching writing will be given. This paper will also examine what is known and unknown about writing in ABE and pose key questions for research, practice, and policy.

*The Adult Learner in Family Literacy: Issues of Role, Context, and Gender in Literacy Learning*

Vivian Gadsden, University of Pennsylvania

Adult learning is a significant feature of family literacy efforts. However, relatively little research or practice has examined the specific needs of adults in these interactions or the potential for adult literacy and family literacy to build more directly on the intersections of their populations and missions. Drawing from the literature, empirical studies of adult learners in family contexts, and observations in family literacy programs, this paper will : (1) reconsider the ways that adult learners are positioned as family members in family literacy research, practice, and policy and (2) examine the implications of this positioning in relation to adult learners' multiple roles in different contexts, the nature of these contexts and the diversity of people of them who contribute to literacy learning or serve as barriers, and the role of gender in setting expectations and determining approaches to working with the adult learner.

*What is quality instruction?*

Hal Beder, Rutgers University

Three instructional models prevalent in adult basic education-- functional, emancipatory, and basic skills--are compared and contrasted in terms of what constitutes quality in each. Issues for policy and practice will be discussed.

*Implementing quality adult basic education programs: Change strategies from three perspectives*

Judy Alamprese, Abt Associates

This paper builds upon recent interest and activities related to strengthening the quality of adult education programs. A framework for defining quality adult basic education services derived from research on their operation and other emerging work will be presented.

**12:00 - 1:30**                    **Lunch**

**1:30 - 2:30**                    **Panel Discussion and Paper Sessions**

Panelists in Session #1 and #2 will make brief informal presentations responding to the question, "What do you see as the central challenges and issues in improving quality for the field?" An interactive discussion among panelists and participants will follow. International panelists in Session #3 will describe initiatives to improve quality in their countries and share successes and challenges

**Session #1**

Marilyn Gillespie  
 Betty Hayes  
 Vivian Gadsden  
 Hal Beder

**Session #2**

Alisa Belzer  
 Nickie Askov  
 Heide Wrigley  
 Sondra Stein

**Session #3**

Allan Quigley, Canada  
 Ursula Howard, England  
 Inez Bailey, Ireland  
 Rosemary Wickert, Australia  
 John Benseman and Alison Sutton, New Zealand

***Shaping future selves in workplaces and vocational programs: An identity framework for exploring adult development***

Glynda Hull, University of California

This paper examines the tensions between the personal goals that adults bring to contexts for learning and the institutional goals that workplaces and vocational programs promote for workers and workers-in-training. Using data drawn from ethnographic studies of workplaces, a vocational training program, and a community technology center, the production, regulation, and enactment of identities, as well as the role of literacy in the process will be examined. How such a focus might inform our thinking about growth and change in adulthood and our conceptions of what constitutes quality practice in adult basic education will be discussed.

**2:45 - 3:45 Debriefing discussions**

Facilitated discussion groups will give participants an opportunity to share and discuss their reactions to the day's presentations from their perspectives as researchers, policy makers, and practitioners.

**5:00 Reception****Friday, October 24****8:30 - 9:00 Continental Breakfast****9:00 - 9:15 Opening Remarks****9:15 - 10:15 Concurrent Session # 4*****Tales from the field: The struggles and challenges of conducting ethical and quality research in the field of adult literacy***

Daphne Greenberg, Georgia State University

The opportunities and challenges of conducting scientifically-based reading research in adult literacy education will be described. Based on experiences conducting a major five year study of the efficacy of various approaches for teaching reading to adults, this paper will explore issues that have emerged related to the learner population, the workforce, the context, and researchers themselves.

***The relationships between program contexts and volunteer-based reading instruction in adult literacy education***

Alisa Belzer, Rutgers University

This paper will describe major variations in volunteer-based program contexts and will explore the connections between these contexts and instructional strategies that volunteer tutors actually use to help their students improve their reading. Implications will be drawn for strengthening instructional delivery in the volunteer sector of the field.

***Equipped for the Future (EFF) and standards based educational improvement: Keeping our eyes on the prize***

Sondra Stein, National Institute for Literacy

This paper will explore the ways in which the explicit focus on standards that EFF has engendered has led to changes in what happens in the classroom, in the program as a whole, and in how programs relate to the community. It will also focus on how this shift is beginning to make the system more accountable to learners and other customers and stakeholders of the adult learning system.

***Beyond the life boat: Improving the prospects of immigrants through adult ESL and training***

Heide Wrigley, Aguirre International

An adult ESOL system focused on providing high quality education and training can play a significant role in improving labor market prospects for participants. However, this can only be accomplished by taking into account the nature of second language learning, the diversity of immigrants and refugees to be served, and the difference in goals that bring adults to programs. This paper offers a framework for thinking about the issues that limit the effectiveness of the current system and provides ideas and suggestions for building a more flexible system likely to increase effectiveness.

**10:15 - 10:45 Break****10:45 - 11:45 Panel Discussion Sessions**

Panelists in Session #1 and #2 will make brief informal presentations responding to the question, "What do you see as the central challenges and issues in improving quality for the field?" An interactive discussion among panelists and participants will follow. Session #3 will focus on issues of dissemination and practical approaches for disseminating the findings of papers presented at this symposium.

***Session #1***

Mary Jane Schmitt  
Mary Beth Bingman  
James Gee  
Judy Alamprese

***Session #2***

Nickie Askov  
John Comings  
Daphne Greenberg  
Larry Condelli  
Glynda Hull

***Session #3 -***

Cristine Smith, NCSALL and Peter Waite, ProLiteracy Worldwide

**12:00 - 1:30            Lunch**

**1:30 - 2:30            Debriefing Discussions (see above)**

**2:45 - 3:45            Concurrent Session #6**

***Why reading reports don't have much to do with reading***

James Gee, University of Wisconsin

The report Research-based principles for adult basic education reading instruction holds a sequential, skills-based view of reading. This paper will detail an alternative view of reading which draws on a "New Literacy Studies" perspective. In particular, important precursors and the real, final goal of reading will be detailed.

***Accountability for adult education program quality: The third wave***

Larry Condelli, American Institute for Research

This paper summarizes the recent history of federal accountability efforts and the development of the National Reporting System (NRS). It also discusses future developments including the possible integration of processes and outcomes into a comprehensive accountability system focused on program quality.

***Filling in the "Black Box" of family literacy: Implications of research for practice and policy***

Nickie Askov, The Pennsylvania State University

Based on a national research agenda developed in collaboration with leading researchers, policy makers, and practitioners, the Goodling Institute at Penn State is pursuing a program of study focused on parental participation and its impact on adult and child outcomes, Parent and Child Together (PACT) time, the development of tools for observing Adult/Parenting education, and the establishment of best practices. This paper will explore emerging themes and implications for research, policy, and practice.

***Giving literacy away, again: New concepts of promising practice***

Steve Reder, Portland State University

This paper will contrast two approaches to increasing adult literacy: one based on *bringing people to literacy* through traditional program delivery, one based on *bringing literacy to people* by embedding support for literacy development in the cultural practices of learners. Suggestions will be offered for developing programs that combine features of both approaches.

**3:45 - 4:00            Closing Comments**

Alisa Belzer and Hal Beder, Rutgers University