



Measured Steps

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I can trace the trajectory of my career back to a single moment in time with clear, discrete steps along the way. At each step, I have found myself immersed in the world of measurement and assessment. My story in educational measurement and assessment began in 7th grade and continues today.

My fascination with human learning started with a simple 7th grade Science Fair Project, where I studied visual perception by asking my classmates what they saw when looking at images—like this one: an old woman or a young girl? The differences in their answers astonished me! How could people look at the same image and see very different things? This curiosity steered me towards Psychology and Child Development classes in high school, where I gained my initial exposure to foundational theories of psychology, principles of child development, and even a little pedagogy.

Four years later, I earned a B.S. in psychology, then a master's in education, where I encountered the field of Educational Psychology. This was the first time I gave serious thought to both how people learn and the best ways to design assessments to measure their learning. I was hooked! I recognize now that this class was *the* pivotal moment that would shape the trajectory of my career.

The next step along my journey led me to the classroom, as a Montessori teacher for 3- to 5-year-old students. In the classroom, I was able to put into practice theories of child development, cognitive psychology, and educational psychology to foster my students' learning.

It was here where I saw the magic of learning unfold, and knowing how to measure their learning helped me identify students who needed additional support and those who were ready to be challenged.

This hands-on teaching experience fueled my decision to delve deeper into the science of learning by going to school for my Ph.D., specializing in Cognitive Psychology, Neuropsychology, and Learning Sciences at the University of Cincinnati.

Upon completing my doctoral studies, I transitioned to academia, joining the College of Education faculty at the University of Wisconsin—Oshkosh. Here, I undertook a multifaceted role, teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses while assuming additional responsibilities. Serving as the college's first edTPA (Educative Teacher Performance Assessment) Coordinator (this will be important later), and as the college's first Assessment Coordinator, I found myself once again immersed in the field of educational assessment. Drawing from experiences during my Ph.D. program, I embraced the concept of quantifying teacher readiness through a performance-based portfolio assessment.

I genuinely believe that performance-based assessments are strong measures of readiness to teach. They offer candidates, programs, state licensing/credentialing bodies, hiring districts, and the public (the parents and children with whom they will eventually work) confidence that new teachers are equipped and can excel in their roles.

To further enrich my career, I transitioned from UWO to Rowan University in New Jersey, where I served as the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management and Accreditation. In this role, I oversaw the national accreditation and state program approval processes, which were deeply embedded in the world of educational measurement and assessment. Collaborating with faculty members, I designed an assessment system to measure candidate learning and provide insight into program effectiveness.

In this capacity, I recognized not only the many ways educator preparation programs (EPPs) can demonstrate student learning and program effectiveness, but that the most important part of accreditation must be continuous improvement. With EPPs processing a myriad of data

sources, it was my responsibility to support the faculty's use of data to drive decisions and make curricular and programmatic changes to better prepare candidates.

In 2020, I embarked on my current professional chapter by joining Evaluation Systems of Pearson. In my first role at Evaluation Systems, I served as a member of the edTPA program team. I provided support to state education agencies and EPPs implementing edTPA. In my current capacity, I serve as the Director of Assessment Products, where I oversee not only the edTPA program, but also The Series assessment program that was developed by Evaluation Systems.

Collaborating closely with state education agencies across the nation, I am deeply involved in identifying and championing teacher licensure and certification initiatives.

I am truly fortunate to have found my way into this space and to have found my passion for measurement and assessment early in my career journey. The field continues to fascinate me, and as I look ahead, I anticipate many more years immersed in the ever-evolving landscape of educational measurement and assessment. My hope is to make meaningful impacts and contributions to further advancements in the field to improve outcomes and opportunities for both teachers and their students.

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