President’s Message
A New Division of Qualitative Inquiry?

One aspect of a division officer’s role that makes it “interesting” is its unpredictability. Last fall we were asked to provide commentary that would constitute revisions to the APA Standards. In the last issue of the Score, some portions of that commentary were reproduced. In early December, we received a request from APA to provide our reaction to a petition signed by 847 members of APA to form a new Division of Qualitative Inquiry. Because I believe this request has important implications for our division and, more broadly, research in psychological science, I am reproducing part of this petition and the division’s reply (fashioned with input from the division executive committee and chairs) in this column.

First, the following are excerpts from the petition. “Within APA there are indeed diverse traditions of inquiry, but most have gone unrecognized within the dominant, positivist—empiricist paradigm….largely encouraged by the shift in the philosophy of science, new groups have emerged in psychology. These include enclaves engaged in narrative research, discourse analysis, hermeneutic exploration, ethnography, visual representation, portraiture methods, and performance. In effect, today there is enormous intellectual ferment both within psychology and the social sciences more generally, and a rich expansion of practices taking place in the domain of qualitative inquiry. At the same time, there is no common zone in which psychologists from these disparate enclaves can come together to explore, debate, share, and create. There is no common forum where those invested in these various pursuits can explore the challenge of pluralism that these orientations represent, debate the comparative benefits and liabilities of various forms of inquiry, open their forms of research to critical and appreciative analysis, and develop new amalgams that can more effectively serve their needs.” The petition cites several goals that a new division would serve: develop critical and appreciative sophistication; provide a forum for sharing practices; provide a generative context for creating new practices; develop educational resources; promote inter-divisional exchange; engage in exchanges with relevant groups outside APA; provide academic support and mentorship for graduate students; generate publication opportunities; and enable APA outreach. The full text of their petition is contained at http://www.apa.org/about/division/qualpetition.html.

continued on p. 8

Neal Schmitt
President, Division 5
The Score is the official newsletter of APA Division 5—Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics—and is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. In keeping with this mission, the Score publishes the division’s business meeting minutes, committee reports, and announcements.

In addition, where appropriate and space permits, short articles (800–1000 words) on technical issues and professional activities of Division 5 members, or on topics of current interest may be accepted. Brief announcements and calls for presentations related to conferences or meetings of particular interest to Division 5 members may also qualify. Submissions should be sent to Score Editor, Chris Gruber: cgruber@wpspublish.com.

Mailing addresses come directly from APA. Please contact APA directly for issues related to your contact information. Non-profit bulk mailing is used except for the July issue which contains time sensitive material related to the APA convention in August and is mailed 1st Class. Consequently, copy deadlines are 45 days prior to publication: February 15 for the April issue, May 15 for July, August 15 for October and November 15 for January.

Guidelines for advertising appear elsewhere in this issue. Paid advertisements are solicited from a variety of sources and are not officially endorsed by Division 5.

Guidelines for the “What’s new?” column are provided with the column.

Urgent announcements should be submitted to the Division 5 Listservs, described in the box below.

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Listservs
Keep up with the absolute latest Division 5 news through its two e-mail lists.

DIV5 serves as a vehicle for discussion among members on topics related to evaluation, measurement statistics, and assessment.

DIV5ANN is used exclusively for announcements from Division leadership, such as convention or workshop information or policy changes. This is a “one-way” list that does not support listwide replies (that is, it is not structured to support discussion).

To subscribe to either or both lists, send the following message to

LISTSERV@LISTS.APA.ORG:

SUBSCRIBE DIV5ANN John Doe
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If you have any questions, contact Mark Daniel at Mark.Daniel@pearson.com.
Has Any Real Understanding of Measurement Gone Missing From the Professional Psychology Curriculum?

Cecil R. Reynolds
Texas A&M University

Source of the Problem
A call for science. The ability and skill to measure variables accurately has long been recognized as a cornerstone to progress in science. One need only read in the history of physics, medicine, or biology to discern this fundamental truth. It is also a cornerstone of much professional practice, done well, in psychology as well as in research. Yet with the growth of knowledge in areas such as cognitive development, learning, psychopathology, and the biological bases of behavior (e.g., genetics, neuropsychology, and physiological psychology), the teaching of measurement in professional psychology programs is competing more and more with other content domains—and, losing.

A call for action. It is time to move individually as faculty and professionally as a Division to put strong measurement training, a foundation for good assessment practices, back into the professional psychology curriculum. Knowledge of measurement is a need, not a want nor a luxury, for professional psychologists to serve patients and other clients at a high level of competency.

What evidence I have that the answer to my title question is a resounding “yes” is anecdotal, but pervasive and persuasive, to me. I have much opportunity to have contact with a variety of professional, practicing psychologists, but also researchers in many disciplines in psychology. I have been a journal editor for nearly 16 years (spread across 2 journals) and associate editor of several others, in addition to serving on 15 or so editorial boards—I read of lot of manuscripts that never see the light of formal publication. I also monitor several professional psychology list servs, mostly to respond to questions about testing and assessment. I have had the benefit of receiving feedback on an authored measurement text. I have learned much from these activities over the last 30 years, and I have seen a significant decline among professional psychologists in the level of understanding of basic concepts of measurement science across the board.

Example from educational regulation. On list servs and even in some state regulatory codes that govern diagnosis of disabilities or eligibility for special programs, I frequently encounter requirements for a specified “percentage” discrepancy in learning. Some might say that a student must have a 50% discrepancy between an achievement test score and current grade placement. Such a percentage would be calculated based on the difference between a classically derived grade equivalent (GE) on the achievement measure and current grade placement (GP) divided by the grade placement. Here we have an ordinal scale number being subtracted from a scale with little known properties (GP), producing a number with unknown characteristics, then divided by GP to produce a number with even lesser known characteristics. All serving to qualify students for scarce and expensive services.

While I find this disturbing, I find it more disturbing that typically there is no attempt to validate such a procedure and that so few psychologists understand why, from a measurement perspective, such mathematical manipulations might be problematic to interpret. I frequently encounter practice and research in which psychologists combine numbers derived from different scales of measurement and who draw wholly inappropriate conclusions, e.g., a person with an IQ = 90 is 50% more intelligent than a person with an IQ = 60, or who argue that an IQ decline from 100 to 75 represents a 25% loss of intellectual function, or who may know such conclusions are erroneous, but not why.

Example from test construction. A commercially published test I once reviewed for Buros, reported Cronbach’s alpha for several of its scores that were negative (and were not typos), which is quite a trick for a ratio of 2 variances. There was no discussion in the manual of the relative appropriateness of such a finding, why it might occur, or whether other assessments of reliability might have been more appropriate. In reviewing for various journals as well as being an editor, I frequently see measuring devices developed with no consideration for principles of item writing, subjected to no empirical item-selection methods, and either missing or inappropriate reliability estimates of the scores (almost invariably referred to as the reliability of the test). We are simply to accept that the item writers (authors of the research) intuitively knew what were the best or most appropriate items to measure the construct of interest on the first try, hence no evaluation of the items or how well they sampled the item domain was needed?

Recently I participated in the construction of a professional certification test for journeymen psychologists in which the items were written by all PhD, licensed, professional psychologists who had been certified previously in the area under a process that did not include a written exam. Among other approaches, I suggested a table of specifications be developed to ensure content domains from the job analysis were proportionately represented in the items.
and that different levels of questions (e.g., knowledge vs. clinical reasoning) could be represented in a specified manner as well and that item writers attend a workshop on writing multiple choice items or at least be given guidelines from major texts. None of these suggestions were accepted, but were set aside as unnecessary, overly cautious, or just burdensome. I was assured the item-writers (all volunteers, and all who volunteered were accepted) would produce an item set that was appropriately weighted toward job performance characteristics—and, that anyone could write good MC items anyway, so no training was needed. When I reviewed the first round of items, nearly 20% of the stems contained a double negative (the most common flaw) and less than half the items overall failed to violate at least one basic tenet of item writing (using complex, compound stems being the second most common problem). Almost all of the items fell into the domain of knowledge.

Example from test norming. Even such basic issues as norming and reference groups are grossly misunderstood. A post on a list serv of psychologists inquired about what intelligence test might be the most appropriate for assessing the current level of intellectual function of an adolescent with a drug addiction. Several suggestions followed, but there was a surprising level of agreement with a post indicating that the psychologist could give any intelligence test but the results would be worthless because none of the tests had been normed specifically on adolescents with a drug addiction. How such a normative sample of adolescents with a drug addiction would answer the referral question of this young man’s current level of intellectual function was not considered among those who considered this a basic truth.

What is to be Done?
Pay attention to standards. I have many more and different examples. The salient point however, is the lack of knowledge or possibly respect for application of principles of measurement in developing diagnostic criteria or measurement devices. Few journals, and no APA journals of which I am aware, require even that authors discussing testing and assessment follow the language of the 1999 Standards for educational and psychological testing. How many of us even make the Standards required reading in a beginning test and measurements class? My experience in coauthoring what we intended to be primarily an undergraduate measurement and assessment text, lead to feedback that an introductory chapter on the basic mathematics of measurement was too complicated and not of interest in a course on tests and measurements—we did prevail in leaving the chapter in the book, but the reviewer commentaries underscore the lack of understanding of the pervasive need to understand how we measure in psychology, particularly the limitations of interval scaling, which we mostly use in psychology and education (although ordinal scaling is commonly encountered as well—I will restrain myself from the full story of the superintendent of schools who was demanding that on the local norms for reading in his district, all children score at or above grade placement on the GEs produced by the test—oh, to be in Lake Wobegon!), and the strengths of various methods of developing tests.

Provide training opportunity. One of the major issues is the minimal coursework in measurement at the doctoral level in APA accredited programs in professional psychology and the confusion among our professional psychology colleagues between measurement and statistics—they are commonly viewed as the same field, leading to the belief that measurement training is extensive in such programs when in fact most of such coursework is in statistics. I would argue that extended coursework in measurement is far more salient to professional practice in psychology than extended work in statistics. I know from conversations with various test publishing companies they have great difficulty locating professional psychologists for employment who not only understand their area of professional practice, but also have more than an elementary understanding of measurement.

Moreover, the lack of measurement expertise seen in these examples diminishes the ability of psychologists to provide the best possible psychological services to patients and other clients. This seems true in clinical areas (counseling, school, clinical, etc.) as well as other professional areas more closely aligned with research needs.

Divisional Initiative
What can or should we do? As a division, our executive board could seek to study the issue formally and determine if I am right, and if so, take the empirical ammunition to the APA Committee on Accreditation to seek requirements for measurement training beyond what is in the guidelines now (that tend to lump measurement with statistics and research training). As faculty in departments with professional psychology programs, we can educate our colleagues on the importance of basic literacy in measurement, beyond traditional concepts of reliability and validity, teach these courses, and not teach them in the abstract, but relate them to everyday problems of professional practice and of research—which of which there are innumerable examples. As reviewers, editors, authors, and the like, we can and should insist on work in the field of tests and measurement that at a minimum conforms to the 1999 Standards conceptually and also in the language that is used. The changes in terminology of the 1999 Standards are not window dressing, but signal an acceptance of a different way of thinking about measurement in psychology that had been incubating for several decades, and that is still not taught in most professional psychology programs and is largely absent from the vocabulary of the practitioners I encounter.

If we as Division 5 members and as an organization do not undertake this task, then who?
Programming Notes for Division 5 Sessions at the 2008 APA Annual Convention

Todd D. Little  
2008 Division 5 Program Chair

As always, The Board of Convention Affairs for the American Psychological Association determines the number of hours a Division will be allocated for the forthcoming Annual Convention. This calculation is based on the number of members in the division at the time of the last convention and the number of division members attending the last three conventions (Washington, DC; New Orleans; and San Francisco). Here, only the primary division membership indicated on an APA member’s registration form is used in the attendance portion of the formula. Based on this information, Division 5 was allocated approximately 23 programming hours for all sessions including business meetings, socials, and symposia. All available hours were utilized to provide programming across the areas of measurement, statistics, evaluation, and assessment.

Programming for the Division 5 Contributed Poster Presentation and Symposia at the APA Annual Convention

For the 2008 convention, Division 5 received 98 proposals to consider. All proposals were assigned to at least 3 reviewers and received at least 2 completed reviews. Based on the results of the blind reviews, 61 of 90 proposals were accepted as poster presentations and 8 of 8 proposals as symposia or workshops. Submissions for poster proposals were down about 10% from last year. However, of the 61 accepted proposals, approximately half were included in the meet and greet session for junior scholars. For this session, the first author had to be a student. Comparison numbers for this number of student submissions is not available, but anecdotally, this number appears to be up while the proposals from established scholars appears to be down.

General Program Information about Contributed and Invited Sessions

Details with the final schedule of contributed and invited sessions that we are sponsoring or co-sponsoring will appear in the July issue of Score. In total, we will sponsor 2 poster sessions and 8 symposia/workshops. As with each meeting, we will have two business meetings (one Executive Committee Business Meeting and one General Business Meeting), the invited addresses by this year’s Division 5 Award recipients, and the Division 5 Presidential Address by Neal Schmitt.

In terms of a couple highlights, Neal Schmitt had two initiatives that are planned. One is a poster session dedicated to junior scholars of Division 5. Neal has organized a group of senior scholars to attend the 2 hour session and provide feedback to the presenters. A second session is on training in quantitative methods. This session will highlight many different “atypical” ways for researchers to gain training in quantitative methods. Finally, following up on last year’s successful event, Division 5 will again collaborate with Section IX of Division 12 on a Meet and Greet breakfast featuring our mutual interest in Assessment. We hope to build on cooperation with test publishers and emphasize all of our interests in encouraging students to take up work in this area.

With the exception of the Executive Committee Business Meeting, which is planned for the night before the conference begins, the programming of the Division 5 sponsored and co-sponsored sessions begins on Thursday August 14, 2008 at 8:00 a.m. and continues through Sunday, August 17 at 2:00 p.m. In addition to these, we will be co-listed on additional socials hours as well as multiple relevant programming sponsored by other Divisions.

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Western Psychological Services (WPS)—a leading publisher of tests for psychology, education and allied professions for 60 years—invites applications for the position of Project Director in the Department of Research and Development. Applicants must have completed their doctorate. Postdoctoral experience is desirable. Area of specialization is open (e.g., clinical, developmental, school), but strong research and writing skills and a demonstrated interest in quantitative methodology are a must. Experience in practice settings such as schools, hospitals, or clinics is particularly desirable.

The Research and Development department prepares tests for the commercial market. Project Directors work in a collegial setting with other staff PhDs as well as with test authors and WPS production, marketing and management staff. Full time position with good hours, a competitive salary, and excellent benefits. Offices are located in West Los Angeles. Visit our web site at www.wpspublish.com.

Send a vita and cover letter to Chris Gruber, PhD, Vice President of Research and Development, at RDSearch@wpspublish.com.
Reviewer Appreciation

One hundred eight reviewers agreed to provide reviews of the poster, symposium, and workshop submissions over the course of about 4 weeks between December-January. These reviews were completed online in time for the APA programming deadline of midnight January 24, 2008. Without the dedication and efforts of the reviewers, programming for Division 5 sessions at the APA Annual Convention would not be possible. Reviewers completed between 1 and 6 reviews, with median and mode of 3 reviews per reviewer. The reviewers this year were:

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Deborah Bandalos
J. Jackson Barnett
Alexander Beaujean
Yossef Ben-Porath
Ira H. Bernstein
Anne C. Black
Ann-Renee Blais
Shelley Blozis
Gwyneth Boodoo
James Bovaird
Sanford Braver
Gordon Brooks
Tim Brown
Angela Bryan
Gary J. Burkholder
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Gary L. Canivez
Noel Card
Grace Caskie
William Chaplin
David Conroy
Michael Coover
David Cordray
S. Bartholomew Craig
Patrick Curren
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Christine Demars
Richard DeShon
Craig Enders
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John E. Kurtz
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George Marcoulides
Jack Mc Ardle
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Jorge Mendoza
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Deanna Morgan
Jennifer Morrow
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Thanos Patelas
Ralph Piedmont
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Susan Reily
John Richard
Bruce Rogers
Joseph S. Rossi
Ehri Ryu
Amy Schmidt
Patrick Shrout
Stephen Sireci
Ron Spiro
James Steiger
David L. Streiner
Lawrence Stricker
Aaron Taylor
Jay C. Thomas
Mike Trevisan
Wayne Velicer
Alexander von Eye
Ted Walls
Bo Wang
Leigh Wang
Nathan Weed
Stephen West
Vicki Wise
Wei Wu
New Books

Multilevel Analysis of Individuals and Cultures
Edited by Fons Van de Vijver, Dianne Van Hemert, Ype Poortinga

In this new book, top specialists address theoretical, methodological, and empirical multilevel models as they relate to the analysis of individual and cultural data. Divided into four parts, the book opens with the basic conceptual and theoretical issues in multilevel research, including the fallacies of such research. Part II describes the methodological aspects of multilevel research, including data-analytic and structural equation modeling techniques. Applications and models from various research areas including control, values, organizational behavior, social beliefs, well-being, personality, response styles, school performance, family, and acculturation, are explored in Part III. This section also deals with validity issues in aggregation models. The book concludes with an overview of the kinds of questions addressed in multilevel models and highlights the theoretical and methodological issues yet to be explored. Published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Introduction to Statistical Mediation Analysis
By David MacKinnon

This volume introduces the statistical, methodological, and conceptual aspects of mediation analysis. Applications from health, social, and developmental psychology, sociology, communication, exercise science, and epidemiology are emphasized throughout. The book opens with a review of the types of research questions the mediation model addresses. Part II describes the estimation of mediation effects including assumptions, statistical tests, and the construction of confidence limits. Advanced models including mediation in path analysis, longitudinal models, multilevel data, categorical variables, and mediation in the context of moderation are then described. The book closes with a discussion of the limits of mediation analysis, additional approaches to identifying mediating variables, and future directions. Published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Psychometrics: An Introduction
By Mike Furr and Verne Bacharach

The book is intended for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses such as Psychometrics, Testing and Measurement, Research Methods, and Experimental Methods across a range of behavioral sciences and education. Our goal is to introduce psychometric principles at a level that is deeper and more comprehensive than found in introductory undergraduate testing and measurement texts but that is more intuitive than found in many of the advanced/technical sources for Psychometrics and Measurement. We hope that, by emphasizing concepts over mathematical proofs and by focusing on practical significance, this book assists students in appreciating how measurement problems can be addressed and why it is important to address them. Published by Sage

Fundamental Issues in Evaluation
Edited by Nick Smith and Paul Brandon

Providing state-of-the-art perspectives on what evaluation is, its purpose, and how to ensure it is done well, this book brings together major evaluation researchers from a variety of social and behavioral science disciplines. Each chapter identifies a fundamental issue facing the field today; considers its implications for theory, method, practice, or the profession; and explores one or more approaches to dealing with the issue. Among the topics addressed are the nature of expertise in evaluation, how to build a better evidence base for evaluation theory, promoting cultural competence in evaluation, how to synthesize evaluation research findings, ways to involve stakeholders in decision making, and much more. Published by Guilford Press
Portions of our reply are as follows: “we are opposed in general to the seemingly endless proliferation of new APA divisions. We think this produces unnecessary splintering of psychology in ways that are directly opposed to the notion that APA represents a wide array of subdisciplines that are basically psychological in nature. Instead the many divisions seem to produce an unproductive separation of psychologists both in terms of intellectual inquiry and the inevitable competition for resources.

Consistent with this view, we believe that the new division will further splinter psychological science in a way that is fundamental to all areas of psychology; that is, we all do research….Most of us engage in qualitative research as parts of a program of inquiry (e.g., I/O psychologists do job analysis research which is often a combination of participation (we perform parts of the job), observation, interviews and surveys) as part of many aspects of our practice and research. Such mixed methods researchers, in particular, may be ill-served by separating qualitative and quantitative researchers in two divisions.”

The petition states in several places that the goal of this proposed division is to “provide a forum for sharing practices” and to bring about a “productive relationship (of) positive/empiricist researchers with qualitative practitioners” and to “debate the comparative benefits and liabilities of various forms of inquiry.” It seems to us that separating research methods groups would be most likely to produce the opposite!

If the intent is to “unite qualitative researchers, then these goals seem inconsistent with our observation that quantitative and qualitative methods are not a clear dichotomy. For example, there is a longstanding tradition in statistics of discussing categorical variables as qualities and thus providing qualitative statistical analysis. Survey methods often combine closed ended (easily quantifiable) and open ended (qualitative) responses. Good ethnography begins with descriptive statistics of demographic data. If the new structure institutionalizes a separation between these behavioral science, or quantitative methods, and interpretive, or qualitative methods; we think this would be very unfortunate. This separation would more likely impede than promote the understanding and development of good research scientists”.

We hope that language in the proposal (petition) that “misrepresents quantitative methods as essentially empiricist and positivist be removed and that the proposal clearly recognizes the valuable role of mixed methods and quantitative methods in psychology as well as the important role of qualitative methods….Our hope is that we could cooperate in mutually productive ways whether qualitative people organize as a section of Division 5 or they secure APA approval as a new division.” We see advantages to a new section of qualitative inquiry in our division. A section may promote the development and teaching of qualitative methods. It would draw attention to the burgeoning development and use of qualitative methods across multiple subdisciplines in psychology as well as other disciplines. It would be more likely than a new division to produce productive interchanges and greater understanding of the role of multiple approaches to scientific inquiry. Given the large number of petitioners we did not openly oppose the formation of a new division, but our statement clearly stated a preference for a new section in our division.

The Executive Committee of the Coalition of Academic, Scientific, and Applied Psychologists (CASAP) commented on the petition as follows: “we believe that the most methodologically sophisticated and rigorous research combines qualitative and quantitative methods, and that splitting qualitative methods off into a separate division would undermine rather than facilitate such an integration. Moreover, the petitioners themselves articulate goals related to fostering a dialogue and building a partnership with their more quantitatively oriented counterparts—goals which we believe would be better served by exploring the formation of a section within Division 5, a possibility that has in fact been raised by Division 5 leadership.”

The APA Board of Directors will consider this petition and any comments on February 21 and the full Council of Representatives on Feb. 22–24, so by the time this issue of the Score reaches you, they may have made a decision. We have worked hard to incorporate and welcome the assessment section to our division and, I believe, would certainly do the same for a “qualitative” section if that were to occur. With a new section on qualitative methods, the potential for renewed intellectual vitality and discussion should be significant. If the petition is approved and a new division is established, I think Division 5 should take steps to work collaboratively (e.g., convention programming) whenever possible.

The Executive Committee and I would like your reaction to the possibility that a section on Qualitative Inquiry be added to our division. You can e-mail me or any of us using the addresses in this issue of the Score.
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The *Score* is the newsletter of the American Psychological Association’s Division 5—Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics. Division 5 is concerned with promoting high standards in both research and practical application of psychological assessment, evaluation, measurement, and statistics. Approximately half of the Division 5 members are university faculty members in quantitative psychology, psychometrics, educational psychology, or industrial-organizational psychology and half are engaged in careers in industry, including the areas of individual and large-scale assessment. More than 1,000 Division 5 members receive the *Score* each quarter.

Advertisements in the *Score* may be in the form of display advertisements or job announcements. Both types of ads can include graphics and other design features and can be submitted as text or camera ready display art. Prices for advertisements and size requirements are provided in the accompanying table. Advertising rates have been raised beginning with the January 2008 issue, the first increase in well over 10 years. Submission deadlines are 45 days prior to publication: February 15 for the April issue, May 15 for July, August 15 for October and November 15 for January. To advertise in the *Score*, please contact Associate Editor Glenn Milewski at gmilewski@collegeboard.org.

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