

# Center For Culturally Responsive Evaluation And Assessment



College of Education  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
[crea.education.illinois.edu](http://crea.education.illinois.edu)

CREA



It is no surprise to me that the contemporary literature of culturally responsive evaluation (CRE) was born from elaborating on a respected evaluation tradition alongside core questions and issues that scholars, practitioners, and evaluators of color raise (and have raised for decades). Stafford Hood's (1998) Amistad paper at the Stake Symposium illustrates this convergence of old with new. We who identify with CRE have a responsibility to understand our historical roots in evaluation while advancing contributions to the field.

CREA is a subset of the evaluation family. It brings us together for another opportunity for more nuanced professional

development and learning, building off of other developments, trainings, and collaborative discoveries in the American Evaluation Association and beyond. I look forward to the contributions of the next generation of evaluators who have as their primary task to expand on CRE theory and application through their training and work experiences in key research and evaluation agencies and positions in the field.

*-Rodney Hopson, Professor, College of Education and Human Development, George Mason University, 2012 AEA President and Founder/Director of the AEA Graduate Education Diversity Internship (GEDI) Program*

## Center For Culturally Responsive Evaluation And Assessment

### Research at CREA

**CREA's** research agenda uniquely investigates the role, impact, and utility of culture and cultural context in educational evaluation, assessment, research and policy. This research agenda is also embedded in CREA'S core mission to generate evidence for policy making that is not only methodologically sound but also culturally and contextually defensible. CREA's research and evaluation efforts prioritize culture and cultural context in the research projects and evaluations we undertake.

## Who We Are



A strategic initiative of the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) was established in 2011 with a primary mission to generate evidence for policy making that is ***culturally and contextually defensible***. In today's pluralistic societies, to achieve relevant and valid conclusions, researchers must have a substantive understanding of the nature and influence of diverse cultural norms and practices. CREA's focus on cultural responsiveness is unique in that no other university-based research center focuses on the centrality of culture

and cultural context in evaluation and assessment theory and practice. CREA's work increasingly has a national, international and indigenous presence in research, evaluation and assessment efforts and continues to promote the ever-increasing importance of cultural relevance in the formation of educational policies and practices. CREA is directed by Stafford Hood.



**Dr. Stafford Hood**  
Director  
slhood@illinois.edu

## A Brief Review of The Development of Culturally Responsive Evaluation: 1998 to 2014

Culturally responsive evaluation originated from two different, interrelated streams of educational research. It is grounded in the tradition of responsive evaluation articulated in 1973 by Robert Stake, to focus principally on issues of importance held by practitioners and stakeholders and less on those held by decision makers. The second stream coalesced in the mid-1990s when Gloria Ladson-Billings introduced “culturally relevant pedagogy” to underscore the importance of teaching to and through the cultural strengths of ethnically diverse students.

In the late 1990s Stafford Hood drew from the work of Stake and Ladson-Billings to argue that student learning can be more effectively assessed by using assessments that were culturally responsive in design. He named his breakthrough proposal Culturally Responsive Evaluation (CRE) and conducted the first national conference on the relevance of culture and assessment while at Arizona State University. Rodney Hopson subsequently founded the American Evaluation Fellowship Program in 2003, followed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Evaluation Fellowship Program (2008-2012) with Gerri Spilka.

Hood, S., Hopson, R.K., & Frierson, H.T. eds. (2015) *Continuing the Journey to Reposition Culture and Cultural Context in Evaluation Theory and Practice*. InfoAge Publishing Co. extends the conversation on the role of culture in evaluation.

### -Statement Contributors

James D. Anderson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Terry Denny, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Rodney Hopson, George Mason University

Karen Kirkhart, Syracuse University

## Core Mission:



## Core Focus:



## Core Questions:



## What We Do

As an interdisciplinary endeavor, CREA brings together researchers and practitioners to address the growing need for policy-relevant studies that fully respond to the influence of cultural norms, practices and expectations in social and educational interventions. The Center is led by a team of researchers and scholars, in collaboration with an international/interdisciplinary community of scholars and practitioners with a shared goal of preparing a culturally diverse pool of highly competent evaluators, assessment specialists, researchers and policy analysts. CREA serves as a vehicle to engage in methodologically rigorous evaluation, assessment and research to meaningfully address a range of educational (K-16), social service, and health service programs that serve low-income, traditionally disenfranchised and culturally diverse communities. The collective history, experiences, productivity, and reputation of its leadership provides the foundation for undertaking CREA's critically important mission.

Culturally responsive evaluation (CRE) provides a theoretical framework that locates my scholarship on culture and validity. CRE challenges me to confront the privilege that evaluation exercises and to consider both positive and negative consequences of evaluation for marginalized communities. CRE anchors my attention to equity and social justice as the ultimate goal of my work and demands that my theories be judged against these criteria.

CREA itself provides a community of scholars who listen thoughtfully, critique carefully and advance one another's work; my scholarship has benefited from this rich context. CREA conferences challenge me to present my ideas-in-progress and to discover connections with the current thinking of colleagues. The CREA camaraderie and shared values fuel my commitment to this work.

*-Karen E. Kirkhart, Professor, School of Social Work, Syracuse University and 1994 AEA President*



## The View of an Ancient Evaluation Specialist

During the past twenty years I have read much of the CREA literature written by Stafford Hood and his colleagues. I have found it to be interesting, informing and promising.

In a world plagued by ethnic and racial hatred, cultural prejudice and religious bigotry, CREA's educational research and evaluation agenda welcomes shared leadership in promoting the relevance of culture in its work; a splendid and much-needed tactic.

Although conferences, master's degree programs and publications are indeed sensible beginnings, they should not serve as CRE'S ultimate goals.

I shall offer a daunting but noble challenge: Can CREA embrace and embody the belief that people from distinct cultures can be helped by CRE to live together harmoniously?

Can CRE demonstrate that diversity strengthens the global chances of a peaceful future? If so, CREA's promise of doing great things could be fulfilled.

Alas, I shall not live long enough to taste the proof of this pudding.

*-Terry Denny,  
Professor Emeritus of Educational Psychology  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

### Services:

- Provide schools, school districts and social service agencies with professional development in:
  - o Evaluation principles and methods
  - o Data-driven and evidence based decision making
- Provide teachers and administrators in diverse school settings with professional development tools, training and education in culturally responsive evaluation and assessment
- Provide graduate students with applied training to develop expertise in the use of empirical methods in educational research, evaluation and policy analysis



### Initiatives:

- **Grow the network and collaboration** of CREA's culturally diverse national, international and indigenous community of researchers and practitioners to generate culturally relevant policies, practices and insights in social and educational interventions
- **Conduct and disseminate** research on the theory and practice of culturally responsive evaluation and assessment
- **Acquire** contracts and grants with public and private entities to provide culturally responsive evaluations and assessments
- **Develop** a Masters of Education (Ed.M.) with a concentration in Culturally Responsive Evaluation, Assessment and Education Policy Studies for teachers, administrators and policy makers

## CREA-Dublin City University (DCU)

**CREA-DCU** was established by CREA Affiliated Faculty Professors Joe O'Hara and Gerry McNamara as part of a formal agreement between UIUC and Dublin City University (Dublin, Ireland) and is located in the School of Education Studies. CREA-DCU has similarly recognized that cultural sensitivity is a vital but often neglected issue in evaluation efforts with increasing importance given the changing cultural and ethnic context of education in modern day Ireland. In partnership with the DCU School of Education Studies' Centre for Educational Excellence, CREA-DCU's main mission is to advance educational access and equity by focusing on programs, policies and practices that impact the most marginalized members in Irish society. This collaboration is intended to move culturally sensitive evaluation to the center of educational discourse in the years to come.



**Educate Together National School in Mullingar, Ireland.**

## CREA Conference

**O**ur signature CREA conferences bring together a culturally diverse group of interdisciplinary, national, international, and indigenous scholars and practitioners to focus on the role of culture in evaluation and assessment. These conferences continue to forge alliances for action among conference attendees as well as a broader global CREA community. CREA

## CREA-Hawai'i

**CREA-Hawai'i** is dedicated to idea that "A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka halau ho'okahi" (all knowledge is not learned in one school).

Our mission is to use a Native Hawaiian lens to offer empowering, values-based evaluation approaches that support insights and conclusions which, in turn, promote equity and justice in the diversity that is Hawai'i. To do this we will weave together and share cultural knowledge, tools, and practices that are grounded in and affirm a Native Hawaiian worldview.

The CREA-Hawai'i was established in 2016 and is directed by Drs. Herb Lee Jr. (Executive Director of the Pacific American Foundation) and Katherine A. Tibbetts (Director of Research and Evaluation at the Lili'uokalani Trust).



**CREA-Hawai'i Hui (gathering) University of Hawai'i- West Oahu**

continues to establish a strong foundation to which scholars, practitioners, and administrators can look to inform their evaluation and research endeavors.

## Want to get involved?

Visit our website at <http://crea.education.illinois.edu>  
Contact us at [crea@education.illinois.edu](mailto:crea@education.illinois.edu) or 217.333.2981

## University of Illinois Core Personnel

### Stafford Hood

*Sheila M. Professor and Director  
Professor Curriculum & Instruction and  
Educational Psychology*

### Thomas Schwandt

*Professor Emeritus, Educational Psychology*

### Jennifer Greene

*Professor, Educational Psychology*

### Katherine Ryan

*Professor Emeritus, Educational Psychology*

### Rosa Milagros Santos

*Professor, Special Education*

### William Trent

*Professor, Ed. Policy, Org. & Leadership*

### Eboni Zamani-Gallaher

*Professor, Ed. Policy Org. & Leadership*

### Andrea Fierro

*Administrative Aide*



## CREA Affiliates

### Katrina Bledsoe

*ThinkShift Collaborative  
DeBruce Foundation*

### Tamara Bertrand-Jones

*Florida State University,  
Tallahassee, FL*

### Nicole Bowman

*Bowman Performance  
Consulting  
Mohican/Munsee, Evaluator*

### Fiona Cram

*Katoa Ltd., Maori Evaluator  
& Social Psychologist,  
Auckland, NZ*

### Olatokunbo (Toks) S. Fashola

*MERAssociates, Vienna, VA*

### Kevin Favor

*Lincoln University, Lincoln, PA*

### Pamela Frazier-Anderson

*Frazier-Anderson Research &  
Evaluation, Atlanta GA*

### Henry Frierson

*University of Florida at  
Gainesville, FL*

### Juan E. Gilbert

*University of Florida at  
Gainesville, FL*

### Drew Gitomer

*Rutgers University,  
New Brunswick, NJ*

### Leslie Goodyear

*Education Development Center,  
Waltham, MA*

### Melvin Hall

*Northern Arizona University,  
Flagstaff, AZ*

### Laura Pan Luo

*China Agriculture University,  
People's Republic of China*

### Rodney Hopson

*George Mason University,  
Fairfax, VA*

### Karen Kirkhart

*Syracuse University,  
Syracuse, NY*

### Michelle Knight

*Teachers College  
Columbia University*

### Joan LaFrance

*Mekinak Consulting,  
Turtle Mountain  
Chippewa Evaluator  
Seattle, WA*

### Chance Lewis

*University of North Carolina  
at Charlotte, NC*

### Dominica McBride

*Become, Inc., Chicago, IL*

### Gerry McNamara

*Dublin City University,  
Dublin, Ireland*

### Monica Mitchell

*MERAssociates, Vienna, VA*

### Sharon Nelson-Barber

*Culture & Language in  
Education  
WestEd  
Honolulu, HI*

### Joe O'Hara

*Dublin City University,  
Dublin, Ireland*

### Katherine Tibbetts

*Queen Liliuokalani Trust  
Honolulu, HI*

### Nan Wehipeihana

*Kinnect Group,  
Maori Evaluator  
Wellington, NZ*



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AT ILLINOIS

[crea.education.illinois.edu](http://crea.education.illinois.edu)

217.333.2981

[crea@education.illinois.edu](mailto:crea@education.illinois.edu)