### **Nicole R. Rivera, Ed.D.**

Associate Professor of Psychology

[nrrivera@noctrl.edu](mailto:nrrivera@noctrl.edu)

**EDUCATION**

1999-2011 Northern Illinois University

* Advanced Certificate in Qualitative Research in Education (2011)
* Doctorate in Educational Psychology; Cognate in Educational Administration (2010)
* Master of Science in Education; Educational Psychology (2001)

1987-1991 Illinois State University

* Bachelor of Music; Music Therapy

Awards: Northern Illinois University, 2009 Graduate Assistant Teaching Award

Illinois State University School of Music, 2012 Outstanding Alumni Award

North Central College, 2021 Senior Faculty Distinguished Teaching Award

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2008-present North Central College

Associate Professor of Psychology

* Teaching: Courses in educational psychology, development, community psychology, cultural psychology, and career readiness
* Research: Informal Learning Research Group—lab focused on research and evaluation with museums and cultural institutions
* Department service: Internship Coordinator, Psychology and Neuroscience Cardinal First, Faculty Advisor for Psychology Club
* College Service: Chair of the Institutional Review Board (2016-present); Academic Task force (2020-present), Campus Climate Working Group (2020-present), Cardinal Operation Hope and Help (2020-present)
* Engaged learning: Facilitation of Sankofa and service learning trips; Community engaged learning courses; Chicago term

2000-2008 Adjunct and Instructor Positions

* Courses in psychology, special education, and music education
* Institutions: Northern Illinois University, DePaul University, Aurora University, College of DuPage, and Triton College

**CLINICAL EXPERIENCE: Music Therapist-Board Certified**

1998-2006 Giant Steps Illinois, Inc.

* Executive Director (2004-2006)
* Music therapist/Internship Director (1998-2004)

1991-2008 Music Therapy Contract/Private Practice

* Agency and home-based services
* Served individuals with autism spectrum disorder, developmental disabilities, behavioral health needs, and older adults

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & SERVICE**

DuPage Children’s Museum, Academic Research and Evaluation Partner; Education Committee

Association of Children’s Museum, Children’s Museum Research Network Member, Hand to Hand, Advisor

Chicago Cultural Organizations Research Network, Co-Director

The New American Colleges & Universities (NAC&U), North Central College Faculty Ambassador, 2017-2020

The Associated Colleges of the Chicago Area (ACCA), Psychology Division Co-Chair, 2019-2022

Morton Arboretum, Education Committee

Wonder Works Children’s Museum, Advisory Committee

Visitor Studies Association, Member

American Psychological Association, Division 2 (Teaching of Psychology)

Midwestern Psychological Association, Member

Council of Undergraduate Research, Member

**PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

Completed presentations including invited talks, peer reviewed conference presentations, workshops and international papers on the following topics:

* Music in Early Childhood
* Clinical Practices in Music Therapy
* Autism, Sensory Integration and Music Therapy
* Family-based Music Therapy
* Siblings of individuals with Autism
* Cultural Context and Development
* First Year College Experiences
* Psychology of Teaching
* Museums and Family Learning

**2013-2022 Presentations (bold: undergraduate student)**

Rivera, N. *Collaboration: Many Notes, One Tune.* Northern Illinois University, Music Education

Convocation. DeKalb, IL, February, 2013.

Rivera, N. *Culture: A Framework for Social and Community Practices.* (Half day workshop)

Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI, March, 2013.

Rivera, N., Almburg, A., & Preissner, K *Conducting community-based ethnography and course-*

*based action research* [Symposium];*Transformative learning and the expansion of*

*professional practices: Lessons from conducting community-based research* [Paper]. American Educational Research Association, San Fancisco, CA, April, 2013.

Rivera, N. *Exploring Identity and a Sense of Place with First Year College Students*. American

Educational Research Association Conference, San Francisco, CA, April, 2013.

Rivera, N., Azarbad, L, & Kelley, K. *Integrating and Managing Psychology Internships in the*

*Undergraduate Curriculum.* Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL, May

2013

Rivera, N. *Children’s Museums as a Place of Student Learning*. Chicago Cultural Organization

Research Network Meeting, Naperville, IL May, 2013.

DeWelt, C., Shelly, R., Karlen, K., Rivera, N., Schacht, P., & Mark-Hummel, C. *The Living*

*Laboratory*.Association of Midwest Museums, Madison, WI, July 2013

Rivera, N., Pleas, D., **Martinez, M, & Rivera, A.** *Exploring the Impact of a Summer Bridge*

*Program on the Development of Competence and Emotional Coping for Diverse*

*Learners*. Diversity & Inclusivity Teaching & Research Symposium, New Albalny, IN,

October 2013.

Kern, P., Rivera, N., Chandler, A., & Humpal, M. *Giving Pracitioners a Voice: Outcomes of the*

*National Survey Study on ASD*. American Music Therapy Association Conference, Jacksonville, FL, November 2013.

Humpal, M, Rivera, N., & Powers, M. *Music Therapy for Individuals with ASD: Music*

*Therapists’ Responses to a National Survey & An Exploration of Services for Adolescents*

*and Adults*. Great Lakes Region of the American Music Therapy Association Conference,

Rosemont, IL, March 2014.

Rivera, N. *Informal Learning Spaces as a Community Laboratory*, Midwestern Psychological

Association Conference, Society of Teaching Psychology Poster Presentation, May, 2014

Rivera, N. Pleas, D., **Martinez, M. & Rivera, A.** *Exploring the Impact of a Summer Bridge*

*Program on the Development of Competence and Emotional Coping for Diverse*

*Learners*, Midwestern Psychological Association Conference, May 2014.

Maldonado, L, Kubarek, Sandor, J., & Rivera, N. *Growing Up Isn’t Easy: Developing Systems to*

*Grow Institutional Capacity*. Visitors Studies Association Conference, Albuquerque, NM

July 2014.

Rivera, N. & Powers, M. *Exploring Music Therapy Services for Adolescents and Adults with*

*Autism Spectrum Disorder.* American Music Therapy Association, Louisville, KY,

November 2014.

Maldonado, L. & Rivera, N. *Bridging Formal and Informal Learning: Supporting Science*

*Learning for Early Learners*, Opening Minds Early Childhood Conference, Chicago, IL,

January 2015.

Rivera, N. *Exploring Music Therapy Services for Adolescents and Adults with Autism Spectrum*

*Disorder in the Great Lakes Region.* Poster Presentation. American Music Therapy

Association, Kansas City, MO, November 2015.

Rivera, N., Jones, J, & Schwartzberg, T. *Meeting a Growing Need: Music Therapy for Adults*

*with Intellectual Disabilities.* American Music Therapy Association, Kansas City, MO, November 2015.

Maldonado, L., Price, A., Mast, F. & Rivera, N. *Museums as Socially Facilitated Learning*

*Environments for Children*: Session Moderator. Jean Piaget Society, Chicago, IL June

2016

Rivera, N., & **Boden, C.** *Exploring Long Term Memories of Museum Visits: Connections*

*Between Informal and Formal Learning.* Mid-Western Educational Research

Association. Evanston, IL, October 2016.

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. *Exploring the value of playful learning: Children’s museums,*

*School and home.* Opening Minds Conference: Chicago, IL, January 2017.

Rivera, N. **Villalobos, C. & Wermeling, R.** *Analyzing Memories of Museum Visits Through an*

*Autobiographical Memory Framework.* Midwestern Psychological Association

Conference. Chicago, IL. April 2017.

Foutz, S., Rivera, N., Tonsgard, A., & McCallum, C. *Creating a Learning Framework: How to*

*Get Started.* Association of Children’s Museum’s InterActivity 2017, Pasadena, CA.,

May 2017

Crabbe, P., Moll, H., Mark-Hummel, C. & Rivera, N. *Where No Researcher Has Gone Before.*

Association of Children’s Museum’s InterActivity 2017, Pasadena, CA., May 2017

May, S., Rivera, N., Nelson, K, & Foutz, S. *Children’s Museum Research Network: A Case*

*Study in Collaborative Research.* Visitor Studies Association. Columbus, OH, July 2017.

Rivera, N. & Maldonado, L. *Examining Cultural Assumptions: Implications for Equity in*

*Museums.* Visitor Studies Association. Columbus, OH, July 2017.

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. *Exploring the value of playful learning: Children’s museums,*

*School and home.* Concordia Early Childhood Conference, River Forest, IL, August

2017.

Rivera, N. & **Mahamane, I.** *Challenging the Traditional Narrative: The Role of Museums and*

*Cultural Institutions.* Diversity Research Symposium. Muncie Indiana: Ball State

University., September 2017.

Rivera, N. & **Grandinetti, J.** *Parent and Caregivers’ Perceptions of Play and Learning.*

Midwestern Psychological Association. Chicago, IL: April 2018.

Rivera, N., Nelson, K., & Hahn, B. *Exploring Parent and Caregivers’ Perceptions of Learning*

*in Children’s Museums.* Association of Children’s Museums Interactivity, May 2018.

Mast, F., Matiasek, J., Bennett, N. & Rivera, N. *Engaging Undergraduate Students in Audience*

*Research.* Visitor Studies Association. Chicago, IL: July 2018.

Rivera, N. *Developing Grit.* The Center for Success in High-Needs Schools Conference,

Naperville, IL: June 2018.

Rivera, N., Nelson, K.R., Ngyuen, M. & Brenkhert, S. *Researching with a Field-Wide*

*Perspective*. Visitor Studies Association, Chicago, IL: July 2018.

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. *Needs Assessment for Culturally Responsive Programming*. Zero to

Three Conference. Denver, CO: October 2019

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. *Needs Assessment for Culturally Responsive Programming*. National

Association for the Education of Young Children Conference, November 2018.

Tonsgard, A. & Rivera, N. *Caregivers’ Perspectives of Play and Learning*. National Association

for the Education of Young Children Conference, November 2018.

Rivera, N. & **Renteria, N.** *Talking with children about play*. Midwestern Psychological

Association, Chicago, IL: April 2019.

Rivera, N., Ashton, S. Meisner, R., Nelson, K.R., Foutz, S. & Tonsgard, A. *Findings and*

*Implications of The Children’s Museum Research Network*. Association of Children’s

Museum Interactivity, Denver, CO: May 2019.

Letourneau, S., Rivera, N., Shelly, R., & Watson, J. *Listening to Children: Inviting,*

*Documenting and Using Their Input*. Association of Children’s Museum Interactivity,

Denver, CO: May 2019.

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. *Children’s Museums as Partners in Early Learning.* Zero to Three,

Ft. Lauderdale, FL: October 2019.

Rivera, N., Buxbaum, G., Groggel, A. Integrating Course Based Inquiry. Associated Colleges of

the Chicago Area Pedagogy Conference, Virtual, November 2020.

Shultz Angel, J., Miller, V, & Rivera, N. Getting Emotional Over History: Incorporating SEL

Standards in Museum Education. American Association for State and Local History

Conference, Virtual, October 2021

Shah, J., & Rivera, N. Conducting Campus Climate Focus Groups with Undergraduates at

Predominately White Institutions. Mid-Western Educational Research Association

Annual Conference, Cincinnati, OH, October 2021

Rivera, N. Examining the Roles of Student Leaders on Campus. Mid-Western Educational

Research Association Annual Conference, Cincinnati, OH, October 2021

Rivera, N., **Zaknoun, M.** Justice for All People: Disability Rights on Our Campus, North

Central College MLK Teach-in, January 2022

Gordon, R., Chod, S., Rivera, N., Shah, J., & Pleas, D. Centering student voices: Fidelity and

transparency in climate assessment. Conference on Diversity, Equity and Student

Success, New Orleans, LA. March 2022.

Rivera, N., Azarbad, L., & Peter-Hagene, L. Assessing department climate and supporting

inclusive practices, Mid-Western Psychological Association Conference, Chicago, IL

April 2022

Rivera, N., **Kucharski, L., Rizo, P., Vickers, E., & Wang, M**. Understanding student leaders:

Roles and impact on mental health, Mid-Western Psychological Association Conference,

Chicago, IL April 2022

**PUBLICATIONS (Note: Name changed from Allgood to Rivera 4/10)**

Allgood, N. (2003). Music therapy and sensory integration for children with autism spectrum disorders. *Early Childhood Connections.* 9, 21-27.

Allgood, N. (2005). *Music Therapy: The Use of Music to Address Sensory Issues.* S.I. Focus.

Allgood, N. (2005). Parents’ perceptions of family-based group music therapy for children

with autism spectrum disorders. *Music Therapy Perspectives .*23, 92-99.

Allgood, N. (2006). Collaboration: being a team player. In Humpal, M. (Ed.) *Early childhood and school age educational settings: using music to maximize learning.* Silver Spring, MD: American Music Therapy Association.

Allgood, N. (2009). Growing up with a sibling with an autism spectrum disorder: a phenomenological investigation of impact of young adult transition. DeKalb, IL:

*Thresholds.* Northern Illinois University College of Education.

Rivera, N. (April/ May, 2011). Individualized Education Program (IEP): Access and understanding. Triad, Ohio Music Educators Association.

Rivera, N. & Powers, M. (2012). Muzykoterapia a spectrum zaburzen autystycznch: dzialania

O charakterze interdyscyplinarnym w Standach Znednoczonych (Music therapy and autism spectrum disorders: Interdisciplinary practices in the United States). Stachrya, K. (Ed.) Podstawy Muzykoterapii. Lublin, Poland: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii

Curie-Sklodowskiej

Rivera, N. (2012). Book Review: Lim, H. Developmental Speech-Language Training

Through Music for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Music Therapy Perspectives*. 29 (2).

Rivera, N. (2012). Book Review: Lim, H. Developmental Speech-Language Training Through Music for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.  *Imagine*. 3 (1), p. 90.

Available at: <http://imagine.musictherapy.biz/Imagine/imagine__online_magazine.html>

Rivera, N. & **Barlow, D.** (2013). Walking a new path with families. *imagine*. 4(1), 22-24.

Kern, P., Rivera, N., Chandler, A. & Humpal, M. (2013). Music Therapy Services for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Survey of Clinical Practices and Training Needs. J*ournal of Music Therapy.* 50(4), 274-303. doi: 10.1093/jmt/50.4.274

Rivera, N. (2014). Book Review: Kern, P. & Humpal, M., Early childhood music therapy and autism spectrum disorders: Developing potential in young children and their families. *Journal of Music Therapy*. 51(1), 126-129. Doi: 10.1093/hmt/thu004

Rivera, N. & **Barlow, D.** (2014). Developing multicultural sensitivity in early childhood music

therapy practices. *imagine*, 5(1), 86-89.

Rivera, N. (2014). Book review: Schumacher, K., Alphabet stew and chocolate too: Songs for

Developing phonological awareness, literacy and communication skills. *Imagine*, 5(1),

130.

Rivera, N. & Gallagher, E. (2015). Museum: Community spaces for inclusive learning

Opportunities *imagine*, 6(1), 52-55.

Rivera, N. (2016). Institutional culture: Considering the impact on early childhood music

therapy. *imagine*, 7(1), 90-92.

Rivera, N. & Thoma Emmons, C. (2016). How learning frameworks reflect learning theory in

the children’s museum field. *Hand to Hand*, 30(1), 4-7.

Luke, J., Letourneau, S., Rivera, N., Brahms, L, & May, S. (2017). Play and children’s

museums: A path forward or a point of tension? *Curator*, 60(1), 37-46.

Rivera, N. (2017). Using technology and interactive media with young children: An interview with Chip Donohue. *imagine*, 8(1), 30-36.

Letourneau, S. & Rivera, N. (2017). Research network update: Results form a nationwide survey of play in children’s museums. *Hand to Hand*. 31(1), 19-20.

Rivera, N. & Rehkamp, J. (2018). The Range, the value, and the limits of applying research in

museums. *Hand to Hand*.

Rivera, N. (2018). Understanding perceptions of play. *imagine*, *9*(1), 32-33.

Rivera, N. & Ross Nelson, K. (2018). Caregivers’ perceptions of learning in children’s museum. *Hand to Hand, 32*(1), 19.

Rivera, N. (2018). Social and emotional learning to support adolescent development in high needs schools. *Success in High Needs Schools*, *14*(1), 49-59.

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. (2018, November). What’s play all about? Children’s Museums Weigh In. National Association of the Education of Young Children Blog. <https://naeyc.org/resources/blog/whats-play-all-about-childrens-museums-weigh>

Tonsgard, A. & Rivera, N. (2019, January). Just play with me: What research tells us about playing More confidently with our children. National Association of the Education of Young Children Blog. <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/playing-confidently-with-our-children>

Johnson, L.R., Stribling, C., Rivera, N., Preissner, K. Hsu, C.P., Jones, A. & May-Schroeder, A. (2019). “Earning the Right”: Conducting community based research. *Critical Questions in Education*, *10*(3), 161-179.

Rivera, N. (2019). Examining GRIT as an individual factor for achievement. *Journal for Success*

*in High-Need Schools, 15*(1), *49-57.*

Rivera, N. & Tonsgard, A. (2019). Supporting Social and Emotional Development in Children’s Museums. *Hand to Hand. 32(3),* 19-20.

Luke, J., Tomczuk, E., Foutz, S., Rivera, N., Brahms, L., Nelson, K., … McKinney, K. (2019).

What caregivers observe about their children’s learning during a visit to the children’s

museum. *Journal of Museum Education*, 44(4), 427-438.

Rivera, N. (2019). Book Review: A Reader of Narrative and Critical Lenses on Intercultural

Teaching and Learning. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher, 31*(3), 382-386.

Rivera, N. & Wolf, S. (2019). Exploring the role of children’s museums as community anchors.

*Hand to Hand, 33*(1), 19-20.

Rivera, N. & Bynum, S. (2019) The role of children’s museums in communities: Equity and

access. *Hand to Hand,* 19-20.

Rivera, N. & Diaz, L. (July 1, 2020). Exploring the work of a children’s museum: Learning

about culturally responsive practices*. imagine,*

https://www.imagine.musictherapy.biz/exploring-the-work-of-a-childrens-museum- learning-about-culturally-responsive-practices/

Rivera, N., Apantenco, C., Galvan, J. & Pleas, D. (2020) Museums on the Sankofa Journey: Going Home to Learn about the Past. *FWD: Museum Journal, 105-114*

Luke, J. J., Rivera, N. R., Colbert, L. A., & Scharon, C. J. (2021). The problem of play in

children’s museums. *International Journal of Play*, 1-12. *Doi:*

10.1080/21594937.2021.1878773

Luke, J. J., Brenkert, S., & Rivera, N. (2022). Preschoolers’ social emotional learning in

children’s museums and community playgrounds. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*,

*20*(2), 229-241.

Rivera, N. R., & Shah, J. K. (2022). Be loud behind me, show me that you care: Conducting

campus climate focus groups with undergraduates at a predominantly white

institution. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, *34*(2), 140-155.

Accepted:

Flynn, A., Sundameier, B. & Rivera., N. (accepted). A new, brief measure of college students’ academic stressors. *Journal of American College Health.*

Under Review:

Ross Nelson, K. & Rivera, N. (under review) Stronger together: Communities of practices as a research methodology.

In Development:

Rivera, N., & Kucharski, L. Connecting to Campus: Examining the Role of Student Leaders on Campus Culture

**SELECTED INFORMAL LEARNING RESEARCH TEAM PROJECTS:**

*The following projects received internal funding to support summer paid student research positions.*

2014 Youth Volunteer Study, Student Researcher: Post, M.

2016 Museum Memory Study, Student Researchers: Villalobos, C & Wermeling, R.

2017 Caregiver’s Perceptions of Play, Student Researcher: Grandinetti, J. & Campbell, O.

2018 Children’s Museums as Community Anchors, Student Researcher: Renteria, N.

2019 The Ecosystem of Family Learning, Student Researchers: Hill, N. & Meekey, T.

2021 Campus Climate and Student Leader Study, Student Researchers: Lenaghan, E. &

Wang, M.

2022 Grandparents and Museum Visits, Student Researchers: Crespo, C.

Gaggiano, C., Kinney, B., Moyenda, E. & Whitcomb, E.

**SELECTED EVALUATION PROJECTS:**

*Multiple projects included paid and volunteer student research assistants.*

DuPage Children’s Museum

* Completed evaluations for eight different exhibits including two traveling exhibits
* Access Project, family-based programming for underserved families (IMLS funded)
* Multiple evaluations of the Artist in Residence program
* Formative evaluation of Questioneers exhibit (IMLS funded)

Morton Arboretum

* 2015 Technology Integration into School Field Trips Evaluation
* 2016 Youth Science Education Outreach Grant Evaluation
* 2017 Woodland Stewardship Program: Year Two Evaluation
* 2018: Youth Volunteer Program, School Program Outcomes, Woodland Stewardship Program—Year Three
* 2019: Outcomes of day camp attendance on attitudes towards nature
* 2020: Formative exhibit evaluation
* 2021: Visitor engagement focus groups
* 2021: Outcomes of day camp attendance on attitudes towards nature
* 2022: Gateway to Tree Science, Formative evaluation of Asian tree collection (IMLS funded)

Naper Settlement

* 2020: Translating school field trips to a digital format

I Support Community:

* 2017 Program Evaluation
* On-going consultation for program evaluation