The 2019 year is quickly concluding and I wanted to take time to reflect and acknowledge the accomplishments of our talented students, faculty, and staff. First, I hope that we continue to remember Riley Howell and Ellis “Reed” Parlier. The loss of their lives continues to impact the UNC Charlotte campus. Second, my thoughts are with Drew Pescaro, Sean DeHart, Rami Al-Ramadhan, and Emily Houpt, who were all injured during the shooting that occurred on April 30, 2019. From the new stories that have been shared about their recovery I am reminded of resiliency and the propelling need to go forward. I encourage everyone to take time a moment and think of those students and their families as we end the year.

During the fall semester the Ed.D. program welcomed the first cohort of PK-12 Superintendency (School and District Leadership) students as part of the revised curriculum and distance education at Mallard Creek High School. The program is led by Dr. Walter Hart who along with Dr. Jim Watson took the students to Raleigh and met with Governor Roy Cooper. Dr. Florence Martin also welcomed the first group of students to the Learning, Design and Technology concentration. You will read more about the accomplishments of Dr. Martin in this edition. Thank you to all the faculty for their hard work and dedication to student success.

This edition is filled with Ed.D. student accomplishments as they work toward degree completion. I congratulate everyone for their achievements, big and small as you continue to keep striving toward your goals. I also recognize that there are many others who are doing great work in our schools and communities who equally deserve recognition that sometimes goes unnoticed. For example, in August, Joseph Moree was named Principal of the Year for Richmond County. Let’s keep up the good work and strive for even better in 2020. I will see you in the next decade.

Wishing everyone peace and joy during this holiday season and winter break!

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.” – Thomas A. Edison

Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 8</td>
<td>First Day of Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 15</td>
<td>Last Day to Add and Drop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>Deadline to apply for May 2020 Graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>EERA Conference (Orlando, FL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 27-28</td>
<td>NCARE Conference (Greensboro, NC)</td>
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<td>March 2 – 7</td>
<td>Spring Recess</td>
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<td>March 30</td>
<td>Registration for Summer / Fall 2020 begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17 – 21</td>
<td>AERA Conference (San Francisco, CA)</td>
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The qualifying examination is the first milestone to degree completion of the Ed.D. The examination demonstrates the ability to understand the body of knowledge from core coursework in the initial (24 – 36 credit hours) portion of the doctoral program. During the examination meeting, students have the opportunity to demonstrate application of acquired knowledge through the written responses and oral defense of questions provided by faculty.

*Congratulations to the following students on successful completion of qualifying exams!*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPERINTENDENCY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erica Nelson</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Benson, Dr. Dika, Dr. Hart</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Brian Spaulding</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Benson, Dr. Watson, Dr. Lambert</td>
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<tr>
<th>CURRICULUM SUPERVISION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jessica Mitchell</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Shore, Dr. Shore, Dr. Dika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erica Moody</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Shore, Dr. Shore, Dr. Dika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chandra Shackleford</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Shore, Dr. Shore, Dr. Dika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nanci Burt</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Dika, Dr. Zenk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zachary Kendra-Dill</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Miller, Dr. Dika, Dr. D'Amico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regena Brown</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Miller, Dr. Lim, Dr. D'Amico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Porscha Street Elton</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Miller, Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Dika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Andrew Gardner</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Miller, Dr. Dika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paul Holliday-Millard</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Zenk, Dr. Dika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jules Keith-Le</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Merriweather, Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Zenk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connie Simmons</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. Miller, Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Lim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nicole Spoor</strong></td>
<td>Committee: Dr. D'Amico, Dr. Mabe, Dr. Lambert</td>
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<th>HIGHER EDUCATION</th>
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**48 credit hour sequence**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Coursework Qualifying Exams</td>
<td>Dissertation proposal</td>
<td>Dissertation Defense</td>
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</table>
The dissertation proposal defense is the second milestone in degree completion of the Ed.D. Students are strongly encouraged to refine a research topic of interest from the onset of the program. The proposal is comprised of chapters 1 – 3 of the dissertations – introduction, comprehensive literature review, and methodology. This formal proposal meeting requires submission of the written proposal at least two weeks in advance to the committee and typically a PowerPoint presentation. Successful completion of the qualifying examination and dissertation proposal acknowledges that a student is now a doctoral candidate.

**Congratulations on your successful dissertation proposal defense!**

**Daryl Lewis**

**Concentration:** Community  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. D’Amico  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Mabe, Dr. Miller, Dr. Salas

**Title:** A Qualitative Study of Factors that Contribute to the Student-Athlete Academic and Social Success.

**Howard Simms**

**Concentration:** Community  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Mark D’Amico  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Flowers, Dr. Abrams, Dr. Howell

**Title:** Exploring the Relationship of Grit as a Non-Cognitive Predictor of First Semester Academic Success for Community College Transfer Students

**Holly Pore**

**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Merriweather  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Dika, Dr. Benson, Dr. Butler

**Title:** The Impact of Secondary Career and Technical Education on Student Postsecondary Preparedness

**Richard Wells**

**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Dunaway  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Shore, Dr. Jones, Dr. Watson

**Title:** A Legal Analysis of the Involvement of School Resource Officers in Searches and Seizures in K-12 Public Schools

**Kristen Siarzynski**

**Concentration:** Community  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. D’Amico  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Lim, Dr. Campbell-Whatley, Dr. Howell

**Title:** A Qualitative Study of First Generation Undecided College Students
Congratulations to the following Doctoral Candidates!

**Adam Atwell**

**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. D’Amico  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Flowers, Dr. Cox, Dr. Putman  
**Title:** Access to the Baccalaureate: Identifying Predictors of Transfer for Associate Degrees in Career and Technical Education.

**Sabrina Brown**

**Concentration:** Community Specialization  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Merriweather  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Dika, Dr. Campbell-Whatley, Dr. Howell  
**Title:** Heritage-Seeking and Its Impact on Academic Success for Black HBCU Students.

**Christine R. Davis**

**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Lim  
**Committee Members:** Dr. D’Amico, Dr. Miller, Dr. Harris  
**Title:** North Carolina Community College Enrollment Since Implementing Tiered Funding To Promote Economic Development.

**Marc Davis**

**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Lim  
**Committee Members:** Dr. D’Amico, Dr. Miller, Dr. Harris  
**Title:** A Phenomenological Case Study of Faculty and Staff Experiences in Green Zone Training to Support Student Veteran Transition into Higher Education.

**Aimee-Jeanette Miller**

**Concentration:** Curriculum and Supervision  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Shore  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Lambert, Dr. Leahy, Dr. Coffey  
**Title:** Service-Learning: Social-Emotional Development and Civic-Engagement of Second-Grade Students.

**Chiquita Miller**

**Concentration:** Community Specialization  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Merriweather  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Miller, Dr. Lim, Dr. Glass  
**Title:** More Than Pizza: Culturally Relevant Professional Development in Afterschool
The dissertation defense is the final milestone toward degree completion. The defense is a formal meeting that is open to the public. Students are required to post an announcement of the defense at least two weeks in advance. They provide the committee with the complete dissertation at least three weeks in advance of the defense meeting. The meeting may begin with comments from the chair who will outline the process of the meeting.

Congratulations Graduates!

Sony Anderson

**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Chair:** Dr. Chuang Wong  
**Committee:** Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Chance Lewis, Dr. Gloria Campbell-Watley

**Title:** African-American Males: Do They Perform Better in Title I Schools or Non-Title I Schools

Nathan Chaplin III

**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Chair:** Dr. Jae Hoon Lim  
**Committee:** Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Hank Harris

**Title:** African American Student Athletes Perceptions of their Academic Experiences and Faculty Expectations of their Course Work at Predominantly White Institutions

Thanh Le

**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Chair:** Dr. Mark D’Amico and Dr. Sandra Dika  
**Committee:** Dr. Elizabeth Stearns, Dr. Kevin Bailey

**Title:** Validity of the 2013 NSSE Engagement Indicator Model for Persisting Transfer Students: A Confirmatory Factor Analysis Study
Congratulations Graduates!

April Smith

Concentration: Higher Education  
Chair: Dr. Sandra Dika  
Committee: Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Annelise Mennicke, Dr. Ryan Miller, and Dr. Bettie Butler  

Title: From Prison to College: Voices of Formerly Incarcerated African American Woman Pursuing a College Degree

Bradley Smith

Concentration: Higher Education  
Chair: Dr. Mark D’Amico  
Committee: Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Spencer Salas  

Title: From Early College to University: A Case Study Exploring First Semester Experiences

Richard Wells

Concentration: Superintendency  
Chair: Dr. Mickey Dunaway  
Committee Members: Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Jeanneine Jones, Dr. Jimmy Watson  

Title: A Legal Analysis of the Involvement of School Resource Officers in Searches and Seizures in K-12 Public Schools.

Fall 2019 Dissertation Defense!

Candidate: Kristina Siarzynski-Ferrer  
Concentration: Higher Education  
Chair: Dr. Mark D’Amico  
Committee: Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Michelle Stephens, Dr. Cathy Howell  
Title: A Qualitative Study of the Experience of Faculty Advisors’ Participation in a Shared Model of Advising at a Private, Comprehensive University
Congratulations Graduates!

**Candidate:** Julia Erdie  
**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Chair:** Dr. David M. Dunaway  
**Committee:** Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Tracey Benson, and Dr. Coral Wayland  
**Title:** A Legal Analysis of Students First Amendment Rights in K-12 Public Education as it Relates to Internet Speech

**Candidate:** Scott Gartlan  
**Concentration:** Community Specialization  
**Chair:** Dr. Richard Lambert  
**Committee:** Dr. Stella Kim, Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, and Dr. Adriana Medina  
**Title:** Does ‘Working After Work’ Affect Teachers’ Confidence? Examining Teacher Efficacy in a Professional Development Program

**Candidate:** Christa Guilbaud  
**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Chair:** Dr. Florence Martin  
**Committee:** Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Xiaoxia Newton, Dr. Bruce Richards, and Dr. Andrew Polly  
**Title:** Faculty Perception of Knowledge of Practice in Designing and Implementing Accessible Online Courses.
Candidate: Holly Pore  
**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Chair:** Dr. Lisa Merriweather  
**Committee:** Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Tracey Benson, Dr. Bettie Butler  
**Title:** The Impact of Secondary Career and Technical Education on Postsecondary Preparedness.

Candidate: Howard Simms  
**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Chair:** Dr. Mark D’Amico  
**Committee:** Dr. Claudia Flowers, Dr. Lyndon Abrams, Dr. Cathy Howell  
**Title:** Exploring the Relationship of Grit as a Non-Cognitive Predictor of First Semester Academic Success for Community College Transfer Students.
Dr. Kyle Cox

Kyle Cox is an assistant professor of educational research, measurement, and evaluation at University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he teaches graduate level statistics and research methods courses. His research focuses on improving the feasibility of multilevel studies through design improvements and analytic advancements. This work is particularly suitable for educational research as it accommodates the hierarchical structures and complex theories present in educational settings. Specifically, Kyle has investigated statistical power in experimental multilevel mediation studies and is interested in the estimation of multilevel structural equation models. Prior to joining UNC Charlotte in 2019, Kyle earned his doctorate in quantitative research methodology at the University of Cincinnati after nearly a decade of teaching 6th grade math.

Dr. Jamie Kudlats

Jamie Kudlats is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He earned his PhD in Education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his Master of Arts in Education (Leadership and Educational Administration) from George Washington University. For nearly 15 years, Jamie served as a math teacher in grades 4 through 8, a middle school assistant principal, and a middle school principal in Atlanta before moving to Chapel Hill to pursue his PhD. While at UNC Chapel Hill, Jamie served as an instructor and student teaching supervisor in the MAT program at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. He also served on the editorial board of the High School Journal. Jamie also serves on the board of the Centre for Relationship-Based Education, a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of positive, genuine, intentional, and responsive relationships in schools.

Dr. Jillian La Serna

Dr. Jillian La Serna is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. She received her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership as well as her Master of School Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Liberal Studies and a Teaching Credential with a cross-cultural language and academic development certificate from California State University-Sacramento.

Before entering higher education, La Serna served as a public school principal, assistant principal, dual language-reading specialist, and elementary teacher. She has K-12 education experience in California and North Carolina, as well as international teaching experience in Peru. Currently, La Serna serves on the North Carolina Dual Language Advisory Council. La Serna’s research is centered on race, culture, and social justice in K-12 schools. She has conducted qualitative studies examining achievement of African American students in Spanish-English two-way immersion programs. Her current research focuses on the recruitment, training, and retention of visiting international teachers.
Dr. Rich Lambert was selected for the 2019 Harshini V. de Silva Graduate Mentor. Dr. Lambert is a prolific researcher and generously shares his knowledge, time, and enthusiasm to involve students in creating scholarly knowledge. His ability to challenge students to achieve beyond their expectations and his ability to influence and positively impact his students’ academic and professional lives. Congratulations to Dr. Lambert.

Congratulations to Dr. Florence Martin, recipient of the Inaugural Thomas L. Reynolds Leadership Award, which is given for outstanding service as a Graduate Program Director at UNC Charlotte. Dr. Martin has worked with colleagues to revise, lead, and/or create four programs while at UNC Charlotte: the Graduate Certificate, M.Ed., and Ed.D. Concentration in Learning, Design, and Technology (LDT) as well as the Post-Master’s Certificate in University and College Teaching. Dr. Martin serves as a Professor of LDT in the Department of Educational Leadership.
The fall 2019 Ed.D. Superintendency cohort, led by Drs. Walter Hart and Jim Watson, visited Raleigh to learn about education finance and policy with state leaders. The visit included a trip to the North Carolina Legislative Building and a meeting with the North Carolina Association of School Administrators, and was followed by a meeting with Governor Cooper in the Executive Mansion.

UNC Charlotte was well represented in November at the 2019 ASHE Conference in Portland, Oregon. Conference presenters included: Dr. Cathy Howell, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Ryan Miller, and Dr. Mark D’Amico. Graduate student presenters included Paul Holliday-Millard, Sonyia Copeland Richardson, Rachael Forester, Yi Wang, Nickcoy Findlater, Courtney Green, April Smith, Jerry Lynn Dahlberg, Peter Tkacik, Bradley Smith, and Madison Levan. We will see you at ASHE 2020 in New Orleans, Louisiana! The call for proposals begins in February 2020.

Presenters at the Association for Educational Communications & Technology conference in Las Vegas, NV included faculty: Drs. Florence Martin, Chuang Wang, Ayesha Sadaf, Carl Westine, Beth Oyarzun; doctoral students: Bryndle Bottoms, Tong Wu, Kiran Budhrani; and our former Postdoc: Rob Moore. Next year’s conference is in Jacksonville, Florida!
The Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation department welcomes Reema Srivastava and Kristin Villanueva as new graduate assistants for fall 2019. Both are working on multiple research projects with faculty and administrative duties for the ERME and Ed.D. programs.

We are excited to announce the newly formed graduate Educational Student Leadership Organization (ELSO) at UNC Charlotte. We began the process of laying the groundwork and getting the organization officially chartered in the Spring of 2019.

As officers of an official student run organization at UNC Charlotte, we look forward to welcoming new members and planning events for the spring semester, beginning in January 2020. We warmly invite any UNC Charlotte graduate student in the Cato College of Education to sign up and become a member of ELSO. We will announce our next membership event in the spring.

Sincere thanks to outgoing officers: President - Christa Guilbaud, Vice-President – Dave Frantzreb, and Treasurer - Nickcoy Findlater.

The executive officers of ELSO 2019 - 2020: President: Tuba Gezer, Vice President: Bryndle Bottoms, Treasurer: Scott Holcomb, Events: Tong Wu, Secretary: Kristin Villanueva

Meet the New Graduate Assistants

The Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation department welcomes Reema Srivastava and Kristin Villanueva as new graduate assistants for fall 2019. Both are working on multiple research projects with faculty and administrative duties for the ERME and Ed.D. programs.
Login to the Niner Scholars portal for funding opportunities.

The Department of Educational Leadership and the Graduate School have provided a wide variety of resources to assist graduate students with financing their education. Check the sites frequently for updated information and apply early to avoid missing deadlines. Complete the FAFSA at fafsa.gov. Our school code is 002975.

As of Fall 2017, graduate students must take at least 4.5 credit hours to be considered enrolled half-time. This has increased from the previous half-time definition of 3 credit hours.

Note: The definition of full-time graduate enrollment has not changed. To be considered full-time, graduate students must enroll in at least 9 credit hours.

For more information, please review information from the Office of the Provost or the Office of Financial Aid.

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Facebook Group

This closed group is for students, alumni, faculty, and staff of the Cato College of Education at UNC Charlotte. Group membership must be approved by the group administrator. The purposes are to communicate, connect, and celebrate your successes! This may include completing coursework, qualifying examinations, dissertation proposal, and sharing academic or professional tips. Click the Facebook icon to join.

Newsletter Contributions

The newsletter is a semester communication created and developed during the fall 2019 semester by doctoral graduate assistants Reema Srivastava and Kristin Villanueva. Each issue features information that is relative to student and faculty experience. The newsletter is distributed by the Graduate Program Director to all current doctoral students, faculty, and staff.

What information would you like to see in the Ed.D. Ledger? Have news to share? How can this newsletter better serve you? Contact the Dr. Howell, chowel22@uncc.edu, with suggestions and feedback.