“To make our way, we must have firm resolve, persistence, tenacity. We must gear ourselves to work hard all the way. We can never let up.” - Ralph Bunche

What's Inside?

Fall 2018 Qualifying Exams Page 2
Fall 2018 Proposal Defenses Page 3
Fall & Summer 2018 Dissertation Defenses Page 4-5

Meet Our New Faculty Page 6
Summer Trip to China & India Page 7
Meet Our Graduate Assistants Page 7

NCARE Proposal Workshop Page 7
Congratulations to Our Graduate Students Page 8
Funding Opportunities Page 8

Message from Dr. Howell

Clinical Assistant Professor & Graduate Program Director

During the past few months we have welcomed new students into our programs and we are saying farewell to a respected faculty member and students. First, we send sincere thanks and well wishes to Dr. Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell as she retires this December. She has taught graduate courses in research methods and statistical data analysis. Her research has focused on students with developmental disabilities. Second, we congratulate our summer and fall doctoral graduates. Finally, we recognize and congratulate everyone who completed their qualifying examinations. That is an important milestone in the process of degree completion. We will see you back for the first day of classes on January 9, 2019. Take time to relax and enjoy your family and friends during the break.

Wishing everyone peace and joy during this holiday season!

Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 9</td>
<td>First Day of Class</td>
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<td>Jan. 9 Proposal Deadline for NAFSA (Washington, DC)</td>
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<td>Jan. 16</td>
<td>Last Day to Add and Drop</td>
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<td>Jan. 25 Proposal Deadline for International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence (Austin, TX)</td>
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<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>Proposal Deadline for CAERDA (Xi’an, China)</td>
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<td>April 4-8 NCME Annual Meeting 2019 (Toronto, Canada)</td>
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<td>Feb. 28-1</td>
<td>2019 NCARE Conference (Charlotte, NC)</td>
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<td>April 5-9 AERA Annual Meeting 2019 (Toronto, Canada)</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 the fall 2018 qualifying exams!

### SUPERINTENDENCY

- **Richard Wells** Committee: Dr. Mickey Dunaway, Dr. Jim Watson, Dr. Rebecca Shore

### CURRICULUM SUPERVISION

- **Joseph Moree** Committee: Dr. Mickey Dunaway, Dr. Jim Watson, Dr. Tracey Benson
- **Aimee-Jeannette Miller** Committee: Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Maria Leahy
- **Meghan Frazier** Committee: Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Maria Leahy

### COMMUNITY

- **Chiquita Miller** Committee: Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Lisa Merriweather
- **Christa Guibaud** Committee: Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Chuang Wang
- **Mark Verburg** Committee: Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Chuang Wang
- **Emily Wheeler** Committee: Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Sandra Dika
- **Kathleen Bradley-Volz** Committee: Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Chuang Wang, Dr. Ayesha Sadaf
- **Christine Davis** Committee: Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Leslie Zenk
- **Rex Mangiaracina** Committee: Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Jim Watson
- **Rachael Forester** Committee: Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Sandra Dika
- **Brandy Stamper** Committee: Dr. Ryan Miller, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Florence Martin
- **Rosalba Scott** Committee: Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Florence Martin
- **Jessica Kapota** Committee: Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Ryan Miller
- **Zackary Hubbard** Committee: Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Sandra Dika, Dr. Ayesha Sadaf

### HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Year 1 to 3**
- **Admission**
- **Coursework Qualifying Exams**
- **Year 2 to 4**
- **Dissertation proposal**
- **Year 3 to 6**
- **Dissertation Defense**
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 to the following Doctoral Candidates!

Neda Pouraskari  
**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Sandra Dika  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Ryan Miller, and Dr. Charles Hutchison  
**Title:** Adherence to Islamic Dress Code and Experiences of Hijabi Muslim Women on U.S. Campuses

Karen Mitchell  
**Concentration:** Curriculum and Supervision  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Rebecca Shore  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Bruce Taylor, and Dr. Walter Hart  
**Title:** Student Engagement as Understood by Secondary Administrators and Teachers

Thanh Le  
**Concentration:** Community Specialization  
**Dissertation Chair:** Dr. Mark D'Amico and Dr. Sandra Dika  
**Committee Members:** Dr. Elizabeth Stearns and Dr. Kevin Bailey  
**Title:** NSSE’s Four Engagement Themed Model Fit with Respect to Persisting Transfer Students: A confirmatory Factorial Analysis Study
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 Doctoral Graduates!**

**Candidate:** Marquis McGee  
**Concentration:** Community  
**Committee:** Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Lyndon Abrams, Dr. Ryan Miller, and Dr. Brett Tempest  
**Title:** *From Roots to Star Trek: A Case Study on Successful Persistence of African American Male Engineering Majors*

**Candidate:** Timothy Edward Taylor  
**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Committee:** Dr. Claudia Flowers, Dr. Tracey Benson, Dr. Jim Watson, and Dr. Kelly Anderson  
**Title:** *Student perceptions of their principal preparation program*

**Candidate:** Stacey Barber  
**Concentration:** Curriculum and Supervision  
**Committee:** Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Gloria Campbell-Whately, and Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson  
**Title:** *Social Capital and Access to Higher Education: Barriers to Higher Education for African-American Women in the Rural South*

**Candidate:** Lee Casey  
**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Committee:** Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Chuang Wang, Dr. Tracey Benson, and Dr. Greg Wiggan  
**Title:** *An Investigation of Academic Resiliency among African-American Males in Secondary Schools.*

**Candidate:** Theresa Kasay  
**Concentration:** Curriculum and Supervision  
**Committee:** Dr. Rebecca Shore, Dr. Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell, Dr. Anne Cash, and Dr. Kristen Beach  
**Title:** *Using the Multimedia Strategies of Learner-Generated Drawing and Peer Discussion to Retain Terminology in Middle School Secondary Education Science Classrooms*
Summer & Fall 2018 Dissertation Defenses!

**Candidate:** Tyrone McDonald  
**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Committee:** Dr. Claudia Flowers, Dr. Cathy Howell, Dr. Lisa Merriweather, and Dr. Lyndon Abrams  
**Title:** Suspension Rates for Students of Color in Relation to the Presence of School Resource Officers in Three Public School Districts in the Southeastern United States

**Candidate:** Nathan McLean  
**Concentration:** Superintendency  
**Committee:** Dr. Claudia Flowers and Dr. Jim Watson, Dr. Debra Morris, and Dr. Paola Pilonieta  
**Title:** Current Grading Practices of Secondary School Teachers in the Core Content Areas: What do grades mean?

**Candidate:** Nhu Nguyen  
**Concentration:** Higher Education  
**Committee:** Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Dr. Sandra Dika, and Dr. Lan Kolano  
**Title:** Vietnamese American Students’ Racial/Ethnic Identity Development and Campus Engagement Experiences at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI)

**Candidate:** Jennifer Nichols  
**Concentration:** Community  
**Committee:** Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Chuang Wang, Dr. Ryan Miller, and Dr. Charles Wood  
**Term:** Fall  
**Title:** A Qualitative Interview-based Study of the Experiences of Community Disability Services Providers

**Candidate:** Kao Vang  
**Concentration:** Community  
**Committee:** Dr. Florence Martin, Dr. Mark D’Amico, Dr. Chuang Wang, and Dr. Teresa Petty  
**Term:** Fall  
**Title:** Community College Faculty Perception of Preparedness to Teach Online
of my current projects stem from my previous funded projects, which center around two themes: one is to examine issues related to teacher learning (math/science) and teacher recruitment (diversifying the teaching pipeline); the other is to create a synergy between research/evaluation and community engagement in the context of evaluating interventions aimed at bridging social capital for students in urban alternative high schools. Besides these projects for which I was PI, I’m also collaborating with a former colleague in special education on one of his projects. At UNCC, I’m working on CAEP assessment with Laura Hart. **Advice for current students:** Learn as much as you can and enjoy your time in the program. For international students, I’d say try to go out of your own comfort zone and meet/make friends with people who are not from your own country. Also, don’t feel too stressed if you do NOT know your dissertation topic on day one. You will know what you want to do as time goes on.

**Dr. Walter Hart**

**Why did you choose academia as a profession?** Having spent three decades in the BK-12 arena, I understand how important it is that we develop and nurture visionary and culturally astute school leaders who can improve achievement, effectively manage their organizations, collaborate with their communities, and advocate for all children while demonstrating the highest ethical standards. I love teaching and coaching others, and I take the business of training the next generation of school leaders very seriously. **Current research projects:** I am currently working on two projects. My wife, Laura, and I are working on a study which examines the workplace experiences and perceptions of transgender teachers. Dr. Carl Westine, Dr. Jim Watson, and I are working on a project which analyzes the ten-year impact of the North Carolina Education Lottery on school funding. **Advice for current students:** While he wasn’t specifically addressing doctoral students, Benjamin Franklin’s words are salient: "It is true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily, and you will see great effects; for constant dropping wears away stones."

**Dr. Rob Moore**

**Why did you choose academia as a profession?** I did not know what I wanted to do my masters in and it was not until 2009 or so when I discovered what is my current career — instructional technology. In my field there is a tremendous amount of growth and opportunities and I am confident that I will secure a tenure-track position. I selected a career based on my interests and it worked out that it is also a high demand field right now. **Current research projects:** I am currently working on several publications based off my dissertation research that focused on student engagement and discussion forum participation in several massive open online courses (MOOCs) offered by Harvard University. I am also working with Drs. Oyarzun and Martin on a time management for online instructors research study and Drs. Martin and Wang on an article about faculty perceptions of professional development support for online teaching. **Advice for current students:** Develop your writing and citation management procedure and process as soon as possible. I use Mendeley but I came to that after reviewing and testing out several others such as RefNotes and using Google Drive.

**Dr. Stella Kim**

**Why did you choose academia as a profession?** Becoming a teacher has been a dream for me since when I was young kid. I decided to pursue my master’s degree because I wanted to become a teacher. I thought to teach someone, I had to be equipped with knowledge and skills in a specific area. During my master, I found my interest in research. Teaching and research are the two main functions of university professors, so I ended up being here in UNCC! **Current research projects:** I am working on three research projects. The first research project is the extension of my dissertation, which is to apply multidimensional item response theory equating for domain-based tests using simulated data. The second research is on classification consistency and accuracy, which are considered as reliability in the context of criterion-referenced tests. The third research is on generalizability theory. The existing multivariate generalizability theory is extended to incorporate multiple random-effect study designs. **Advice for current students:** Please take an active role in your learning and research. As I continued to work with my advisor, I recognized that I was accountable for my success. Search each professor’s research interest and find someone who matches your interest.
Faculty members Dr. Chuang Wang and Dr. Florence Martin led a group of graduate students on a fifteen-day visit to China and India this summer. Students had the opportunity to observe classroom teaching in Chinese and Indian K-12 schools and higher education institutions and interact with the local teachers, administrators, and students. In addition, they attended lectures given by Chinese and Indian educators to get information about current research and practice, and explored the historical places in three large cities, including Xi’an, Mysore, and Wayanad, to understand the cultural backgrounds of the two countries.

Meet Our Graduate Assistants

The department of Educational Leadership held two sessions of Graduate Assistants Bootcamp for developing new GAs’ academic, research and communication skills. Faculty members, staff and senior GAs shared their experiences with the new GAs about writing literature reviews, applying for IRB approval, and collecting and analyzing data by using computer software.

NCARE Proposal Workshop

Dr. Jae Hoon Lim hosted a writing workshop to help graduate students create their proposals for 2019 NCARE (North Carolina Association for Research in Education) conference. Students went over the conference proposal submission requirements, developed their drafts, and received feedback from Dr. Lim.
Congratulations to Dr. Younis

Dr. Matt Younis is an alumnus of UNC Charlotte who is the Assistant Principal at Polo Ridge Elementary School in Charlotte, North Carolina. His degrees include the Master of School Administration and Ed.D. in Educational Leadership.

He was the 2017-2018 recipient of the Legacy for Leadership Outstanding Dissertation Award. Dr. Younis received notification that he is the 2018 recipient of the International Alliance for Invitational Education award for the ‘Outstanding Dissertation in the Field of Invitational Education. He was nominated by his dissertation chair, Dr. Rebecca Shore, Associate Professor. Dr. Younis has been invited to attend the World Conference meeting on October 10-11, in Lexington, Kentucky, to receive the award. Congratulations to Dr. Younis on this achievement!

Congratulations to Kiran Budhrani

Kiran Budhrani is an instructional designer at the Center for Teaching and Learning and doctoral student of Educational Leadership at UNC Charlotte. She represented the university at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) International Convention at Kansas City, Missouri last October 23-27, 2018, where she presented three research projects, was invited to three panel discussions, facilitated a half-day workshop for Instructional Designers, and also served in leadership roles within the GSA (Graduate Student Assembly) and Design & Development division. Congratulations to Kiran on her achievement!

Funding Opportunities

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.

Ed.D. Connections

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 bi-semester communication created and developed during the spring 2018 semester by doctoral graduate assistant Tong Wu. 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.