



# the ED LEDGER

the newsletter of the  
Department of Educational Leadership  
at UNC Charlotte

## Welcome

Hurray! The spring semester has concluded. For some this was a fast moving semester and for others it may have seemed like the semester that would never end. I encourage everyone to reflect on both what went well for you, and also those things that did not go quite like you would have envisioned. During this time of the year we celebrate our graduates as they complete their doctoral education and now move forward to engage in substantive ways to advance the field of education. Kudos to everyone on the numerous dissertation proposals that were completed this semester! We also recognize the significant contributions of faculty and staff who have supported all of our students throughout the academic year in innumerable ways. This is especially true of Dr. Claudia Flowers who is preparing to retire. We gratefully recognize her leadership and scholarship shaping the department, students, and colleagues.

Time is consistently the one commodity that we never have a enough of, but I encourage everyone to find the time in the 24-hour rotation to take part in the experiences that allow for you to refocus, relax, and do the things that make you happy. Congratulations to our graduates!

Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable summer!

**Cathy Howell, Ed.D.**

Ed.D. Graduate Program Director

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## Celebrating the Retirement of **Dr. Claudia Flowers**

### What have been your favorite parts about working in Educational Leadership?

I got to be there when the department was born 26 years ago. I got to see everything develop. Bringing together the educational leadership folks, the research folks, the design and technology folks. That was fun to see that development process. I felt like I got to put my voice in to how the department was shaped. All the people I got to work with has been a great experience.

### What would you highlight as your greatest accomplishments?

It's all about the students. Seeing the students learn and graduate. They go on to be educational leaders, researchers, counselors. That was really nice to see them go onto make a difference in the lives of students. I would also highlight the development of the programs. We've made them better each year. That was nice to see.

### What are you most proud of?

I got to be part of a research team that made a real difference nationally. Our work changed how students with cognitive disabilities are assessed. That helped shape national policy and we really were a part of making a difference in the lives of those students. It impacted the teaching of literacy and numeracy. That has national and even international implications.

### What are you most excited about for retirement?

It opens up a new world and new adventures. Lots of traveling ... I will be hiking in the Andes and the Grand Tetons. I'm going to do more kayaking and scuba diving. I also hope to get my Master Gardener certification. I will also still be involved on some grants. I am excited to keep my involvement with the research and things I enjoy.



# Faculty Spotlight

## Dr. Jamie Kudlats

### What brought you to UNC Charlotte?

I spent 15 years as a middle school teacher and principal. I decided I wanted to put a lot of that experience into context. I decided to pursue my Ph.D. at Chapel Hill. Towards the end of the Ph.D. it was time to find a job.

I went on the job search. UNC Charlotte was appealing because I got a great sense that the program focused on practitioners. I also got a very warm feeling from the K-12 folks. They seemed very supportive. It felt like it would be a good fit. Plus, we are living in Durham, and it afforded us to not pick up and move right away.

### What are your favorite parts about working in Educational Leadership?

The biggest thing is the practitioner focus. The ability to work with aspiring school leaders. That's fun for me. It's exciting. It's engaging. It's interesting to not just share what I know through my experiences and expertise, but to learn from these aspiring school leaders. They are bringing so much to the table and to the coursework, so much experience and expertise. It's exciting to be in dialogue with these folks. That is by far my favorite part of the job.

### What research projects are you working on?

The focus of my dissertation was on the interpersonal relationships between principals and students. It's a very under-studied topic. Backing up a bit, my focus is on caring school leadership. The kinds of school leadership that really fosters positive school culture. What are the interactions like? What kind of affects does that have on principals, on students, and the school? I'm also currently working on a couple of papers with Dr. La Serna. One is digging into the life experiences and motivations of aspiring school leaders. Another is a paper exploring the historical relationships between principals and students.



Hometown  
Toronto, Canada

Previous Institutions  
UNC Chapel Hill  
George Washington University  
Kennesaw State University  
Georgia Tech.

Research Interests  
The Interpersonal Relationships  
Between Principals & Students

Other Interests  
Running a Summer Camp  
Time with 5 Year-Old & Newborn!

Fun Fact  
Played Keyboard with Members  
from Survivor and Billy Joel!



# Student Spotlight

## Zhi Li

### What made you interested in educational leadership?

Before getting into the program, I didn't know educational leadership well. But after getting involved in multiple research projects and being exposed to some first-hand data, the importance of educational leadership became clearer. The work we do has a significant impact on different fields in education. We can find out the problem through data analysis and provide practical suggestions to reform educational programs and promote results. I would like to use what I have learned from our department to contribute to other cultural backgrounds.

### What brought you to UNC Charlotte?

My master thesis was about Formative Assessment. I searched for Ph.D. programs related to that topic and I found the ERME program. I didn't apply right away as I was unsure if I wanted to keep living in the U.S. or experience a new country. I received an email from Dr. Wang noting the program was still receiving applicants, and I felt it was an excellent opportunity. I went through the process and accepted the offer after talking to my parents. My parents are really supportive of my educational journey. They value education and want me to step out of my comfort zone and see the world myself.

### What is your research focus?

My research focuses on program evaluation and the application of Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC). My dissertation aims to test if LIWC can efficiently assist in data collection and monitoring when evaluating a research project that consists of qualitative interview data. I have also done research on evaluation context, self-efficacy and self-regulated learning strategies, students with disabilities, teachers' views on kindergarten entry assessment, and international female students in STEM.

Hometown

Guangdong, China

Previous Institutions

University of Pittsburgh  
Southern Medical University (China)

Research Interests

Program Evaluation & Linguistic  
Inquiry and Word Count

Other Interests

Traveling, Hiking, Swimming,  
American Drama, K-Pop, Animals

Fun Fact

Visited One Park Per Day  
During an Orlando Trip

# Dissertation Defenses & Graduates

The dissertation defense is the final milestone toward degree completion!



## **Dr. Bryndle Laine Bottoms**

**Ph.D. Educational Research, Measurement, & Evaluation**

Dr. Rich Lambert, Chair  
Dr. Carl Westine, Member  
Dr. Rebecca Shore, Member  
Dr. Kelly Anderson, Grad. Rep.

*A systematic approach to interrater reliability in teacher performance evaluations*



## **Dr. Sabrina Brown**

**Ed.D. Educational Leadership  
Community Specialization**

Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Chair  
Dr. Sandra Dika, Member  
Dr. Cathy Howell, Member  
Dr. Gloria Campbell-Whatley, Grad. Rep.

*Heritage seeking and its impact on academic success for Black HBCU students*



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### **Dr. Kiran Budhrani**

**Ed.D. Learning, Design, & Technology**

Dr. Florence Martin, Chair  
Dr. Mark D'Amico, Member  
Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Member  
Dr. Kimberly Buch, Grad. Rep.

*Examining course design knowledge and practice among faculty-designers using visual blueprints*



### **Dr. Shannon Clemons**

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendency**

Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair  
Dr. Claudia Flowers, Member  
Dr. Xiaoxia Newton, Member  
Dr. Chance Lewis, Grad. Rep.

*North Carolina high school alternative school administrators' perceptions of school performance measures*



## Dissertation Defenses & Graduates

The dissertation defense is the final milestone toward degree completion!



### **Dr. Jessica Cline**

**Ed.D. Curriculum & Supervision**

Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair  
Dr. Walter Hart, Member  
Dr. Rich Lambert, Member  
Dr. Michael Matthews, Grad. Rep.

*Exploring secondary classroom engagement in mathematics*



### **Dr. Nickoy Findlater**

**Ph.D. Educational Research, Measurement, & Evaluation**

Dr. Xiaoxia Newton, Co-Chair  
Dr. Stella Kim, Co-Chair  
Dr. Sandra Dika, Member  
Dr. Anne Cash, Grad. Rep.

*Expectancy-value model: Investigating academic success and retention predictors of first-year stem majors*



# Dissertation Defenses & Graduates

The dissertation defense is the final milestone toward degree completion!



## **Dr. Courtney S. Green**

**Ph.D. Educational Research, Measurement, & Evaluation**

Dr. Sandra Dika, Co-Chair  
Dr. Xiaoxia Newton, Co-Chair  
Dr. Mark D'Amico, Member  
Dr. Brett Tempest, Grad. Rep.

*Persistence of engineering transfer students:  
Identifying student-influenced and institution-influenced academic success factors*



## **Dr. Timothy S. Holcomb**

**Ph.D. Educational Research, Measurement, & Evaluation**

Dr. Rich Lambert, Chair  
Dr. Stella Kim, Member  
Dr. Carl Westine, Member  
Dr. Anne Cash, Grad. Rep.

*Lambda coefficient of rater-mediated agreement:  
Evaluation of an alternative chance-corrected agreement coefficient*





## Dissertation Defenses & Graduates

The dissertation defense is the final milestone toward degree completion!



### **Dr. Mark E. Verburg** Ed.D. Higher Education

Dr. Mark D'Amico, Chair  
Dr. Alan Mabe, Member  
Dr. Carl Westine, Member  
Dr. Hank Harris, Grad. Rep.

*NCAA transfer student-athletes and athletic identity*





# Dissertation Proposals

The dissertation proposal defense is the second major milestone toward degree completion. Proposals are generally comprised of chapters 1-3 of the dissertation: introduction, literature review, and methodology. Successful completion of all coursework, the qualifying portfolio, and the proposal defense acknowledges students as doctoral candidates prepared to complete their dissertation research.



## **Josh Allen**

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendent**  
Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair  
Dr. Jillian La Serna, Member  
Dr. Jim Watson, Member  
Dr. Claire Merlin-Knoblich,  
Grad. Rep.

## **Yolanda Blakeney**

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendent**  
Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair  
Walter Hart, Member  
Dr. Jillian La Serna, Member  
Dr. Chance Lewis, Grad. Rep.



## **Cassie Bryson-Evans**

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendent**  
Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair  
Dr. Jillian La Serna, Member  
Dr. Jim Watson, Member  
Dr. Spencer Salas, Grad. Rep.

## **Marcia Crippen**

**Ed.D. Higher Education**  
Dr. Mark D'Amico, Chair  
Dr. Kyle Cox, Member  
Dr. Ryan Miller, Member  
Dr. Lan Kolano, Grad. Rep.





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## Anthony Davis

**Ed.D. Higher Education**

- Dr. Ryan Miller, Chair
- Dr. James Lorella, Member
- Dr. Alan Mabe, Member
- Dr. Amy Good, Grad. Rep.



## Lisa Gaskin

**Ed.D. Higher Education**

- Dr. Alan Mabe, Chair
- Dr. Cathy Howell, Member
- Dr. Ryan Miller, Member
- Dr. Cindy Gilson, Grad. Rep.



## Katrina Green

**Ed.D. Learning, Design, & Tech.**

- Dr. Ayesha Sadaf, Chair
- Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Member
- Dr. Florence Martin, Member
- Dr. Meredith Troutman-Jordan,  
Grad. Rep.



## Titus Hopper

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendency**

- Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair
- Dr. Walter Hart, Member
- Dr. Jillian La Serna, Member
- Dr. Chance Lewis, Grad. Rep.



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## **Zackary Hubbard**

**Ed.D. Higher Education**  
Dr. Ayesha Sadaf, Chair  
Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Member  
Dr. Ryan Miller, Member  
Dr. David Pugalee, Grad. Rep.



## **Jennifer Joplin**

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendency**  
Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair  
Dr. Walter Hart, Member  
Dr. Rich Lambert, Member  
Dr. Amy Good, Grad. Rep.



## **Jules Keith-Le**

**Ed.D. Higher Education**  
Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Chair  
Dr. Mark D'Amico, Member  
Dr. Beth Oyarzun, Member  
Dr. Kimberly Buch, Grad. Rep.



## **Zhi Li**

**Ph.D. Educational Research,  
Measurement, & Evaluation**  
Dr. Carl Westine, Chair  
Dr. Xiaoxia Newton, Member  
Dr. Chuang Wang, Member  
Dr. Kelly Anderson, Grad. Rep.



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### David Lynn

**Ph.D. Educational Research, Measurement, & Evaluation**

Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Co-Chair

Dr. Stella Kim, Co-Chair

Dr. Rich Lambert, Member

Dr. Erik Byker, Grad. Rep.

### Kristina Morgan

**Ed.D. P-12 Superintendency**

Dr. Rebecca Shore, Chair

Walter Hart, Member

Dr. Jim Watson, Member

Dr. Hank Harris, Grad. Rep.



### Morgan Murray

**Ed.D. Higher Education**

Dr. Ryan Miller, Chair

Dr. Cathy Howell, Member

Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Member

Dr. Claire Merlin-Knoblich,  
Grad. Rep.

### Heather Ramsey

**Ed.D. Learning, Design, & Tech.**

Dr. Beth Oyarzun, Co-Chair

Dr. Drew Polly, Co-Chair

Dr. Florence Martin, Member

Dr. Erik Byker, Grad. Rep.





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### Liane She

**Ed.D. Learning, Design, & Tech.**

Dr. Florence Martin, Chair  
Dr. Ayesha Sadaf, Member  
Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Member  
Dr. Bobby Hobgood, Member  
Dr. Concepción Godev, Grad. Rep.

### Steve Smith

**Ed.D. Higher Education**

Dr. Mark D'Amico, Chair  
Dr. Jeff Cox, Member  
Dr. Cathy Howell, Member  
Dr. Spencer Salas, Grad. Rep.



### Cynthia Stone

**Ed.D. Higher Education**

Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Chair  
Dr. Kevin Bailey, Member  
Dr. Mark D'Amico, Member  
Dr. Leslie Zenk, Member  
Dr. Brett Tempest, Grad. Rep.

### Johnine Williamson

**Ed.D. Higher Education**

Dr. Lisa Merriweather, Chair  
Dr. Mark D'Amico, Member  
Dr. Jae Hoon Lim, Member  
Dr. Gloria Campbell-Whatley,  
Grad Rep.





## Qualifying Portfolios

All students in the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Ph.D. in Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation programs are required to complete a qualifying examination as part of their degree requirements. The Ed.D. program uses completion of evidences for superintendency students and a portfolio for the higher education and LDT concentrations to exemplify the requirement.

### Ed.D. P-12 Superintendency

Dr. Walter Hart served as Chair for all of following:

**Josh Allen**

**Titus L. Hopper**

**Yolanda L. Blakeney**

**Jennifer L. Baucom**

**Cassie J. Bryson-Evans**

**Sue M. Nash**

**Rick D. Dunlap**

**Lizzie Parsons**

**Susan E. Gann**

**Courtney B. Stallman**

### Ph.D. Educational Research, Measurement, & Evaluation

**Hannah Luce**

Dr. Kyle Cox, Chair

Dr. Stella Kim, Member

Dr. Dawson Hancock, Member





## Kudos Corner

A space to celebrate exciting news beyond the doctoral program!

### **Katie Watson**

Hired as the new Graduate Program Coordinator for the Software and Information Systems department in the College of Computing and Informatics! Katie will cover the MS in Information Technology, MS in Cyber Security, and all of the graduate certificate programs as well. Katie began this new position in May and is a doctoral student in the Higher Education concentration.

### **Brian Flynn**

Congratulations on being awarded first year funding from the Craig R. Brown Fellowship and the Philip Morris Educational Leadership Doctoral Fellowship! Brian is a newly admitted student in the Learning, Design, & Technology concentration.

### **Morgan Murray**

Congratulations on being awarded funding from the Association of College and University Housing Officers! Morgan is a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education concentration.

### **End-of-Year Socials**

Thank you to the Educational Leadership Student Organization, Dr. Cathy Howell, and faculty from the P-12 Superintendency and Learning, Design, & Technology concentrations for hosting socials to celebrate the end of the academic year! Thank you also to everyone who joined in the festivities!







## Upcoming Dates

<b>May 23</b>	First Day of Summer Classes
<b>May 30</b>	Memorial Day
<b>June 29</b>	Summer Graduation Deadline
<b>June 30-July 2</b>	No Classes
<b>July 4th</b>	July 4th Holiday
<b>July 21</b>	Review Deadline for Dissertations
<b>July 28</b>	Defense Deadline for Dissertations
<b>August 4</b>	Dissertation Submission Deadline
<b>August 8</b>	Last Day of Summer Classes
<b>August 15</b>	New Academic Year Begins



Special thanks is extended to **Jacob Frankovich** and **Taniqua Canzater** for their work as Graduate Assistants this year! Jacob is responsible for developing the amazing layout of the Ed Ledger this year. He has put in numerous hours to make each edition incredible and to highlight all the accomplishments being made in the department. Taniqua worked to review content and secured development of the spotlight stories in addition to keeping everyone updated on departmental events via Facebook.

With appreciation,

**Cathy D. Howell, Ed.D.**  
Ed.D. Graduate Program Director



**CHARLOTTE**  
*CATO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION*

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May 2022

Written, Edited, and Designed by  
**Taniqua Canzater & Jacob Frankovich**

Coordinated by  
**Dr. Cathy Howell**

