A Note from the HPSE Program Coordinator: Dr. Anna Neumann

Dear HPSE students and friends of HPSE:

With each issue of the HPSE newsletter, we must pause and take stock while also congratulating ourselves and each other. In these pauses, we must give thanks for the opportunities we have had to learn—on our own and in/from community. Not least, we must consider our hopes and thoughts for the future. This is as true of our community as it is of ourselves as individuals.

Our pausing and taking stock forces us to see how lively, exciting, and rich an intellectual environment we’ve created—and continue to create—in TC’s HPSE. As several of the stories in this issue of the newsletter show, our students work closely with faculty who are leaders in research, policy, and practice throughout higher education as an expanding social institution. So much of our research, in fact, draws on practice and bears on it—so that it is hard to separate it from on-the-ground practitioner work. Research and practice overlap. In this spirit, the HPSE faculty work hard, by way of our teaching and advising, to help our students position themselves as research-savvy practitioners, and practice-anchored researchers in varying subfields of higher education: in teaching and learning improvement, assessment studies, students affairs administration and leadership, college leadership, building and leading campus cultures of diversity, sharpening the powers of affirmative action, designing faculty development for enhanced learning, financial management of higher education. In the near future we will be adding, as well, expertise in civic learning and philanthropic leadership for diverse institutions and communities. All to say: In TC’s higher education program, research supports practice, and practice—the challenges and opportunities it offers—is the launch pad for our research. Both sides of this “mission”—research and practice—help to advance the learning of our whole community.

We hope you will enjoy reading the sampling of evidence around much that I say above that’s reported in this issue of the newsletter. My very sincere thanks to Jessie Ostrow for her superb editorial leadership of the HPSE newsletter this year!

With all good wishes,
Anna Neumann
Professor of Higher Education
Coordinator, Program in Higher and Postsecondary Education
Director, MetroCITI – Metropolitan Colleges Institute for Teaching Improvement
Chair, Department of Organization and Leadership

Professors Noah Drezner, Anna Neumann, and Corbin Campbell to co-anchor the Higher and Postsecondary Education Program at TC starting September 2014! Exciting details soon to follow.

HPSE Students Win NASPA Case Study Competition.
Congratulations to TC HPSE M.A. students Phoebe Kingsak, Scott Van Pelt and Alexander Williams on winning first place in the 2014 NASPA Case Study Competition! The Case Study Competition provides graduate students and new professionals the opportunity to showcase their knowledge of the Student Affairs field. Phoebe, Scott, and Alexander were presented with an award during the NASPA Awards luncheon in Baltimore, MD, and they discussed their case study analysis during a presentation session.
Greetings from Dr. Corbin M. Campbell

Happy 2014! Spring semester brings a new mix of graduates, job searching, conference season, certification exams, culminating papers, and, of course, continued learning about the field of higher education. As I reflect on the journey for the upcoming graduates of HPSE, I was reminded of the importance of the HPSE curricular framework as you go out and work in the field—in whatever facet of our profession. As institutional researchers, student affairs administrators, policy-makers, advisors, or faculty, you will be equipped with a broad understanding of higher education—teaching, learning, and development; organizational analysis; and social/cultural context. When I was an Assistant Director of Housing at George Washington University, I had just finished my Masters in student affairs. I felt very equipped to handle and understand students’ development and how that applied to my practice. Yet, as a “middle manager,” I had to work hard to understand the role of the organization in student learning and development and the broader interactions between the institution and the local community of Washington DC. I am excited about the knowledge that you have gained in HPSE and the insight it will provide into your careers. I encourage you to think about how this knowledge sets you apart in the field of higher education and will act as a springboard to your leadership in the field.

While I am on maternity leave, I will miss seeing HPSE students on a daily basis, but know that I will be hearing about all of the great things you are accomplishing, and more importantly, what you are learning, the impact you are making in your work, and the kinds of questions you are asking about higher education in your spring semester. Best wishes!

Master of Arts Advisor Advice Corner

Twice a year, I am asked in my capacity as advisor to the M.A. program to contribute my advice to the HPSE Newsletter. This time, I thought I would do a little crowd-sourcing to see what our alumni have to say to graduating M.A. students who are facing a job search and the early days of launching a career in higher education. Here is what they had to say:

Shira Weiner advises current M.A. students to do as many informational interviews as possible. I would add that when you do arrange an informational interview, treat it as an interview—dress your best, have your CV and even references handy, and do your research about the institution.

Sophia Li reminds students to explore broadly, “Be open to job positions even if they don’t seem to be a ‘perfect fit’—you never know where it may take you!” However, do not commit until you are certain of the “fit.”

Francisco Mena warns, “I had the wrong attitude graduating from TC. I didn’t care where I worked as long as I got a job.” A better approach, he says, would be “to figure out what types of institutions you would prefer to work in.” This will help identify institutions that might “align with one’s values.” Along the same lines, Jesse Nguyen says, “It’s helpful to be personally aligned with an institution’s mission. Not sure if I’d be happy working at a place where values are different than mine.”

Francisco reinforces Shira Weiner’s advice, saying, “Once one identifies preferred institutions network with at least 2 higher education professionals from your target institution list. For example, if one is interested in public community colleges in NYC then make a list of every CUNY community college and network with at least 2 working professionals from each college. Try reach out to these individuals to get informational interviews that will help you learn more about the college and possibly help get your application flagged once you’ve applied.”

Heather Correia warns, “Don’t burn bridges with your grad cohort. I see many other grads getting very competitive this time of year. The friends that I made in my cohort at TC are still some of the people that I turn to first for advice, even 6 years later.” Entering a new field is challenging. Heather advises, “Embrace that you will be learning in your first year and make time to learn the job. Once you have the job down then start volunteering for additional professional development opportunities and committees.”

By: Dr. Monica Coen Christensen

Andrea Johnson advises, “Avoid the silos that often form in organizations. Talk to people from different faculties and departments. Introduce yourself every chance you get. It not only helps you build your network, but it’s a lot of fun getting to know people from around the campus!”

To the wise advice of our alumni I would add...stay connected to TC. By connecting to me on LinkedIn and by joining the HPSE at Teachers College group you keep up your network. I often reach out to specific alumni when I become aware of a job opening I think would be a match for them… but I can’t think of you if I don’t know where you are and what you need next. Professional organization conferences are also a valuable resource for staying connected, as well as for broadening your network.
Research in Higher Education Practice

By: Diana Chadi

Prior to coming to TC, I held a full-time position at a university and saw my schooling as a separate entity. However, since coming to TC, my educational experience in the HPSE program has illuminated the integration of research and practice.

As practitioners, we are often faced with questions like “How effective is my programming?”, “How many students are affected by a new decision being made at the institution?”, “How are faculty influenced by emerging technological trends?” In turn, there is much that practitioners can learn and teach when thinking about how to answer these questions. First, before attempting to answer the question, a practitioner should survey the literature to understand current trends that already exist. Second, by conducting a survey or other type of data collection, the practitioner should examine their own institution’s trend and learn about how it fits in to the greater body of existing knowledge. Third, a practitioner should then use their newly acquired knowledge to inform future decisions.

Furthermore, by being engaged in practice, practitioners can develop new research to contribute to a specific discipline. For example, administrators working within higher education settings can observe emerging trends within a given institution and work toward developing a research agenda (formulating a research question, identifying a conceptual framework, research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation and reporting), thereby contributing to research in higher education.

While at first it may seem as if research and being a practitioner are disconnected, in truth, they are inextricably linked. Without research available to inform practice, much of what a practitioner may do or decide will likely be based on hearsay or anecdotal evidence at best. Similarly, without practice available to inform research, our research would be all for naught. As emerging researchers and practitioners, we must remember this lesson in hopes of producing our best work.

Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Kevin Kinser

By: Jessie Ostrow

Dr. Kevin Kinser, Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Policy Studies and Chair of Educational Policy at the University at Albany, is an M.A., ED.M, and ED.D alum of the Higher and Postsecondary Education Program at Teachers College, Columbia University. A novel concept at the time, Dr. Kinser’s dissertation focused on online learning in the late 1990’s. Dr. Kinser’s research today is deeply rooted in his TC HPSE dissertation.

Dr. Kinser currently has two primary threads of research, one being for-profit (proprietary) higher education, and the other being international higher education policy. The connection between these two research interests is deep, according to Dr. Kinser, as it leads to thinking about how higher education changes as it enters the global market and how it is engaged in the world as a industry. He is the author of more than 40 articles, chapters, and scholarly reports, and regularly presents papers at conferences in the United States and abroad. He is the co-editor (with James IF Forest) of Higher Education in the United States: An Encyclopedia (ABC-CLIO, 2002), a comprehensive two-volume overview of American postsecondary education since World War II, and the author of From Main Street to Wall Street: The Transformation of For-Profit Higher Education (Wiley, 2006). His most recent books are The Global Growth of Private Higher Education (Wiley, 2010) and Multinational Colleges and Universities: Leading, Governing, and Managing International Branch Campuses (Jossey-Bass, 2012).

In reflecting upon his scholarly development at Teachers College, Dr. Kinser is thankful for the guidance of three primary mentors. He remembers Lee Knefelkamp, who helped shape him into the scholar he is today. Dr. Kinser advises TC HPSE students to “seek out opportunities, no one will hand them to you on a silver platter. Start out by taking charge of your own career.”
The College Educational Quality Research Project

Currently, in both the policy stream and the public eye, there is a focus on insuring that more students receive higher education and on lowering the cost of higher education. There is also growing concern about the affordability of college, a need for a greater proportion of US workers to have a college degree, and the need for better and more transparent data about colleges and universities. Professor Corbin Campbell has launched the College Educational Quality study to gather this data. In fact, presently there is no comprehensive data available for policymakers, the public, and prospective students and families to know about the quality of the education that is happening inside the walls of a college or university—and how that quality compares to the quality at other colleges and universities. To fill this gap, the College Educational Quality (CEQ) project aims to create alternative, innovative, and comprehensive measures of educational quality across institutions that could contribute to public understanding of college and university quality. And in the fall of 2014, with Professor Campbell as the Principal Investigator, the CEQ study is scheduled to conduct a multi-institutional pilot study. During our multi-institutional pilot study members of the CEQ team will visit colleges and universities participating in the study to observe classroom instruction. We will also collect and analyze syllabi from faculty members at participating institutions and we will survey students about their learning experiences at these institutions.

To carry out this study the College Educational Quality team has over 70 research team members. The national research team consists of TC HPSE doctoral students Marisol Jimenez, Jessie Ostrow, and Ed M alum Deniece Dortch. Additional research team members from the HPSE program are Ed M students, Theresa Cruz Paul, Conrad Walker, Chris Chamberlin, Joo-Hwan Lee, and Amy Deiner; and the following M.A. students: Habiba Braimah, Jessica Macklin, Clifton Shambry, Veronica Puente, Karen Diltsian, and Alison Fanizzi. There are also over 60 regional search team members throughout the country. In the long term, the research team may (1) use the measures obtained from the pilot studies to collaborate with provosts and other academic administrators, policymakers, and students/parents to create useable metrics on educational quality at the institutional level; and (2) develop a national center of institutions with measures of educational quality regarding academic rigor, teaching quality, and learning objectives. To learn more about this study, please visit: tc.edu/ceq

The Defining Good Teaching Project

In efforts to better understand and improve teaching and learning in higher education, Professor Anna Neumann has launched the Defining Good Teaching research project, which investigates how liberal education comes to life today in college classrooms, in the humanities and sciences, among increasingly diverse students. This study aims to define liberal education teaching and learning processes with attention to students’ liberal learning. The spark of liberal learning occurs at the intersection of key disciplinary ideas, students’ culturally informed prior knowledge, and teachers’ pedagogical moves to draw connections between their students’ prior knowledge and the subject matter. However, what this actually looks (and sounds) like in college classrooms is not clear and may vary depending on the unique subject matters, students, and teachers in question. The Defining Good Teaching research team strives to understand what it means to enact teaching that is attentive to students’ liberal learning. This study has potential implications for faculty development as well as for policy and leadership aimed at shaping the larger public discourse about “good teaching” in higher education.

This project is led by Principal Investigator Anna Neumann with project management by HPSE doctoral candidate and instructor Liza Bollitzer, and research assistance from HPSE doctoral students Dianne Delina, Jessie Ostrow, Elizabeth Strauss, and Jolie Woodson. The team has also recently been joined by M.A. students Kate Snyder Mazal and Veronica Puente-Arroyo. Members of the research team are conducting class observations of two liberal education classes in science and the humanities and carrying out interviews with professors this semester, with more to follow in the fall.

By: Conrad Walker

By: Jolie Woodson

This study was supported by the Teachers College Provost’s Investment Fund ($20,000), entitled “Reinventing Research on Practice for Higher Education,” now supporting the Defining Good Teaching Project and the College Educational Quality Research Project.
Congratulations to HPSE Faculty with Publications


Dougherty, K.J. (2013). How will new college scorecard matter: The benefits, limits, and costs of the federal push for greater consumer information and institutional accountability, Sociology of Education Section Newsletter, 16 (3) p. 5-6.


Congratulations to HPSE Faculty and Students with Milestones

Dr. Thomas P. Rock was promoted in November to an Associate Dean at Teachers College from Executive Director of Enrollment Services. He will continue to oversee the Offices of Admission, Financial Aid, Marketing & Technology at TC, but in his new role, he now also oversees the Office of the Registrar. This includes Doctoral Studies and Room Assignments. He reports directly to TC’s Provost, Thomas James.

Rebecca Natow received the 2013-2014 Politics of Education Association’s Outstanding Dissertation award, and was also a 2013 finalist for the AERA Division J Outstanding Dissertation Award.
Congratulations to HPSE Faculty and Students with Grants


Jessie Ostrow, HPSE doctoral student, was awarded the NAGAP Graduate Student Research Grant for her planned investigation on student veteran decisions to pursue graduate education.

Congratulations to HPSE Faculty with Presentations and Invited Talks


Several articles have appeared in the higher education press, calling attention to work being done by Dr. Corbin Campbell and the College Educational Quality Project:


Dr. Thomas P. Rock was featured in the Chronicle of Higher Education in an article on helicopter parents in the graduate admissions world: http://chronicle.com/article/Parents-Now-Get-Themselves/144193/

Congratulations to HPSE Faculty and Students Presenting at The American Educational Research Association’s 2014 Annual Meeting


Jessie Ostrow, a HPSE doctoral student, recently received the Anna Neumann Supporting Student Research Award which is granted to a doctoral student who is engaged in research regarding issues relating to faculty and students’ teaching, learning and development. This year’s recipient is rapidly building a promising career in higher education and currently serves as the Assistant Director in the Office of Institutional Studies at TC as well as contributing to the research agendas of our distinguished HPSE faculty.

Ms. Ostrow supports diverse research agendas within higher education including teaching and learning and college educational quality. Ms. Ostrow is currently working with Dr. Neumann on her Defining Good Teaching research project to assist with the defining and charting of student learning in two general education classrooms. She also works with Dr. Campbell on her College Educational Quality (CEQ) Research Team. Ms. Ostrow was instrumental in the execution of the first pilot study by assisting with the creation of the classroom observation rubric and conducting site visits at two institutions in order to assess educational quality through classroom observation. In Fall 2014, Ms. Ostrow will serve as a site leader for the second pilot study. The TC community looks forward to Jessie Ostrow’s continued successes and wishes her the best of luck!

Spring 2014 HPSE Events

Resume Workshop with TCCS
January 24, 10am-12pm, Zankel 212C

HPSE/HPSEA Social
January 30, 8pm-11pm, Village Pourhouse

Resume Review Sessions with TCCS
February 28, 12pm-1pm, Zankel 406

Graduation Brunch
May 20

Spring 2014 HPSEA Events

Mock Interviews
HPSE alumni have graciously offered their time to “mock interview” current students looking to practice for future job interviews! Mock interviews will be held March 31, April 1, and April 2.

Karaoke Showdown with NYU
April 4, 7pm, Karaoke Duet 53
https://www.facebook.com/events/817563951625713/

Alumni Higher Education Speed Networking
April 7, 6pm-7pm, Thorneike 157
https://www.facebook.com/events/2185587895010441/

This edition of the HPSE newsletter was brought to you by the HPSE Newsletter Committee:

Chief Editor: Jessie Ostrow
Committee: Diana Chadi, Karen Dilsizian, Conrad Walker, and Jolie Woodson

A special thank you to Dr. Monica Christensen and Ms. Lucy Tam for their invaluable insight.

Higher and Postsecondary Education
Teachers College, Columbia University
525 W. 120th St. Box 101
New York, NY 10027
www.tc.edu/o&l/HigherEd/