

HIGHER & POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2015, ISSUE XIV



Welcome to our new students and welcome back to our continuing students! As the summer draws to a close, we wanted to share with you this newsletter as we prepare for an energetic start of the new academic year. We have so many exciting things to share with you about student and faculty accomplishments, new staff, and new programming for the coming year. Our newsletter says it all, and I welcome you to read it thoroughly.

For the new students, I look forward to meeting all of you and for those returning I am excited to hear about your summer adventures.

Let's get ready for a great semester!

Best,
Noah D. Drezner
Associate Professor, Higher Education
Program Coordinator, Higher & Postsecondary Education

COLLEGE EDUCATIONAL QUALITY BY DR. CORBIN CAMPBELL

First, welcome to all of our incoming HPSE students, and best wishes to our alums! I am writing about the College Educational Quality (CEQ) research project, recently sponsored by the National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral fellowship for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Do college rankings and standardized testing metrics represent colleges with strong educational practices? While many critiques of higher education focus on a lack of learning in college (e.g. Arum & Roksa, 2011), these studies do not view higher education from the inside: by watching the educational processes unfold. In the CEQ study, I use a new conceptualization and proximal methods to witness the educational quality of classrooms across diverse institutions of higher education. Building upon the previous work of k-12 and higher education scholars of teaching and learning, the study uses a developing framework of educational quality that focuses on college coursework and the practices that take shape between faculty, students, course content, and context.

In the fall of 2014, about 15 students from HPSE and 40 other students from higher education programs across the nation participated in the research team for the study. Site teams of observers conducted ~600 observations of college teaching and learning practices at 7 colleges and universities (and 2 more sites from an earlier spring 2013 study). By contrast with K-12 education research, which has an extensive, broad-scale, quantitative observational program of study (e.g., Hill, Charalambous, & Kraft, 2012), to date there was no similar study of college teaching. This study represents a beginning to this research program in higher education. The colleges and universities represented in the study range from highly selective and highly ranked to non-selective and unranked. The work begins to address substantive questions about educational processes across diverse institutions, for example: Do courses in high prestige institutions have better teaching quality than courses in low prestige institutions? Participating in the NAEd/Spencer postdoctoral fellowship during the 2015-2016 academic year affords the research team the opportunity to focus

deeply on analyzing data and fully developing, and subsequently sharing, the newly proposed conceptualization of college educational quality.

We are looking forward to sharing initial results at the 2015 Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) conference in Washington DC, where 5 HPSE students/alums and I will present 2 papers. I hope to see you there! I deeply appreciate the commitment of all the HPSE students and faculty colleagues who have supported the research team and the fellowship. I hope that the HPSE students who were team members have learned a great deal about the research process—and feel that they have contributed to this new avenue for better understanding teaching and learning across diverse institutions of higher education. Incoming students who wish to be involved with the research team in the 2015-2016 year should contact me by email: campbell2@tc.columbia.edu. Best wishes for a generative fall semester!

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CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Noah Drezner, HPSE Associate Professor and Program Chair, has received the 2015 Council for Advancement of Education's (CASE) [John Grenzebach Award for Outstanding Research in Philanthropy for Educational Advancement](#) for his work on "The Social Base of Philanthropic Fundraising in Higher Education: How Frames and Identity Matter." Dr. Drezner's research seeks to understand how donors' identities and their likelihood to give to higher education and at what level are related.

Dr. Corbin Campbell, HPSE Assistant Professor, has recently been awarded the National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship for the 2015-2016 year. The Fellowship Program supports early career scholars working in critical areas of education research. This prestigious fellowship provides funding and release from teaching and administrative responsibilities to allow early career scholars to focus on research project with great significance to the field of education.

Dr. Corlisse Thomas, HPSE Adjunct Assistant Professor, has recently been promoted to Vice President of Student Affairs at Stevens Institute of Technology.

Maria Anderson-Long, EdD Student and MA Advisor on her marriage to Chelsea Anderson-Long.

RESEARCH INTERESTS FUELED BY PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES BY LESLIE A. WILLIAMS

My research interests have emerged from my personal and professional experiences. I am an immigrant from Belize of Garifuna ethnicity (African and Carib Indian ancestry) who grew up in working class, low-income communities in the boroughs of the Bronx and Brooklyn in New York City. My parents had received some postsecondary education in Belize, my mom had been a second generation elementary school teacher and my father was an accountant, so both placed a high value on education. However, they were unfamiliar with the education system in New York City so while we lived in the North Bronx, they enrolled me in a middle school in the South Bronx where an "aunt" was a teacher. The students at my middle school were almost all Black (African American and Afro-Caribbean) and Latino/a from low-income families, and school was situated in a neighborhood that included many abandoned buildings, rubble-strewn lots and other signs of poverty and neglect. It was in sharp contrast to what I had learned about schools and neighborhoods in the United States from the *Fun with Dick and Jane* books that the American nuns at my elementary school in Belize City had used to teach us reading. This contrast fed my early interest in issues of equity and justice as I struggled to understand why some groups and communities had markedly better opportunities and resources than others.

With the guidance of my "aunt," I was fortunate to get accepted to a selective public high school as well as a college access program, both of which helped to prepare me academically and socio-culturally for college. The students at my high school were racially and socioeconomically mixed and many came from immigrant backgrounds. However, my college access program was based in an affluent Westchester County town, thus offered a stark juxtaposition to the Bronx neighborhoods that were home to the program's participants. My interest in understanding why these dramatic differences existed continued to build. After high school I attended a small, selective, liberal arts

college in New England with a very small population of racial and ethnic minority and low-income students. I began to develop some frameworks for understanding these issues, especially the potential of education to reduce inequities and injustices.

These concerns have guided my professional direction and led me to work as an educator and on issues of education equity for the past two decades. I have taught, advised, supported and advocated for racial and ethnic minority, low-income and first-generation students first as a middle and high school teacher at an independent K-12 school in Brooklyn then as a dean of multicultural affairs at a liberal arts college in New England. I have also worked as a K-12 education reform and higher education access and success consultant at a philanthropic foundation that concentrated on improving the educational outcomes of historically excluded groups.

The personal and professional experiences described above have shaped my research interests, which focus on issues of higher education access, experiences and outcomes for racial and ethnic minority, low-income and first-generation students. I pursue these research interests by focusing on issues at three levels: 1) national and state policy such as affirmative action, college readiness and financial aid; 2) institutional and organizational programmatic efforts such as diversity initiatives, cultural centers and college access programs; and 3) individual practices and experiences such as teaching and learning. I'm currently working on my dissertation that is titled, *Beyond College Enrollment: Exploring the Relationship between Historically Underrepresented Students' Prior Participation in College Access Programs and Undergraduate Success*, which overlaps with all three levels described above. Within the Higher & Postsecondary Education Program (HPSE) I serve as the teaching assistant for Prof. Janice Robinson's Affirmative Action in Higher Education Admissions course and the HPSE Internship Program Coordinator. I hope to pursue a career as a higher education faculty member, administrator or researcher after I complete my studies.



ACADEMIC ADVISING CORNER BY MARIA ANDERSON-LONG

Welcome again to our new HPSE students! I am looking forward to working with the MA students this year as your academic advisor. When I first began my master's program at Ohio State, I was given several pieces of valuable advice from my supervisor. Now, having returned to school after a few years away I found myself reflecting on one of our first conversations after I arrived in Columbus. Having completed my master's and my first year in the EdD program here at TC, I want to share some of what she told me.

1. Say, "yes." Over the course of the next year or years, you will be offered many opportunities. You will often feel as if you have too much on your plate or that you couldn't possibly take on another responsibility. Think carefully about those opportunities and make room for the ones that you are most excited about, but also the ones that you might be most unsure of.
2. Say, "no." On the same note, it is also important to know your limits. Since you will be provided with so many opportunities, you will inevitably have to turn down some of them, and that's okay. You need to learn how you best balance your responsibilities, including taking care of yourself.
3. Take risks. Take a class that you might not normally be drawn to. While you might be sure of what you want to do after graduation or where you want to go with your career, taking courses or internships outside of your comfort zone will push you and expose you to different areas in the field that you might not otherwise experience. Grad school is your chance to explore a wide variety of topics, issues, and vantage points.

With all that being said, take this year, or years, to make the most of what our program has to offer. There are resources and opportunities everywhere you look. Don't be afraid to ask to get involved in something either! If you need anything this coming year, please reach out: maa2183@tc.columbia.edu.

ADVICE FOR NEW STUDENTS BY DIANA SIERRA

As a current MA student, welcome new students to a very exciting journey. Here you will find high quality of instruction, build a professional network and make friends for life!

My first word of advice is, if you are looking for an internship and have not found one through the internship fair, you should know that you can still find one on your own by directly contacting the offices where you would be interested in getting experience and just sending them your resume. You will find that in many cases doors will open up.

Another important aspect is, if you are a commuter such as myself (I live one train and two subways away from school!) it would help you to make time to study if you organize your schedule in a way that you do not have to come to TC every day. This way you will not waste so much time on public transportation.

Finally, be aware that the professors in our program are very approachable. Talk to them about your research interests and career plans. You will find an enthusiastic and supportive environment for your ideas to flourish.

Oh, one last thing! I know how some students complain about the group projects associated with most of our classes and how difficult it is for people to meet because of everybody's different and busy schedules. Well, see these as opportunities to meet other future higher education professionals. On a personal note, I have made really good friends because of the group projects.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

September 1:
Orientation for
new HPSE
students

September 2:
Classes begin

September 16:
Last day to
add/drop courses

STUDENT & STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MEET STACI & STACY



STACI LYNNE RIPKEY, EDD CANDIDATE

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Higher & Postsecondary Education program. My research focuses broadly on organizational change processes taking place within the college and university context, and looks specifically at university mergers in an effort to examine how institutions deeply rooted in tradition may carry out this kind of large-scale adaptation strategically in response to internal and external pressures. My interest in this slice of the higher education field emerged, both from my professional work experience, and from the incredible educational opportunities I have been able to pursue within the HPSE program at Teachers College.

When I first entered TC as an Ed.M. student, I had already earned my M.A. in Higher Education Administration and was working full-time in orientation and undergraduate advising at NYU's College of Arts and Science. As an academic advisor, I was deeply interested in exploring college student retention and success, and did so as the focus of my Ed.M. culminating project. During my time in that role I was also faced with the challenge of leading the College Advising Center through a large-scale change, and was struck by the numerous challenges that arose from students, faculty, administrators, and even alums when attempting to make any adjustment to "the way things had always been done." After moving through that process and learning many important lessons along the way, I pursued an exciting new opportunity at Columbia University's College of Physicians & Surgeons—only to be immediately tasked with leading another large-scale organizational transformation with its own unique set of challenges and resistance. By now, however, I was a doctoral student at TC, and I began to pursue coursework and preliminary research that allowed me to begin examining this from a scholarly perspective. In doing so, I became ever more passionate about better understanding this complex question.

It has been wonderfully rewarding to recognize and put to use all that I have learned and continue to gain from my HPSE faculty and student colleagues alike. Now, as Assistant Dean for Student Affairs & Academic Support Services and an Adjunct Faculty at NYU's College of Dentistry, I am able to lead a team in developing resources and services to support students' personal, professional, and academic success, while also contributing to the broader transformation of the institution. Each day, I apply the theory and scholarship of the field in my practice, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue learning from it and hopefully contributing to it in meaningful ways throughout my career as a higher education scholar, practitioner, and educator. As this new semester begins, I hope that you, too, will explore new ways to apply theory to practice, and lived experience to rewarding research.

WELCOME STACY CLEMONS, OUR NEW PROGRAM MANAGER

Stacy Clemons is the Program Manager for the Higher and Postsecondary Education Program. She is a first generation graduate and a native of Brooklyn, NY. She has a BA in Speech Communications and an MA in Higher Education. She worked as a Library Assistant to the Dean at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, CA. Her most recent position was as a Program Assistant for a TAACCCT grant program at the Community College of Rhode Island. She enjoys being an active member of her community in Brooklyn and attending the theater as often as she can.

Stacy is with us part-time she can be found Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10am - 6pm at Zankel 209.

