Welcome to insideEDU, the newsletter of the Department of Education at Washington University in St. Louis. Our faculty, staff and students have been busy teaching, publishing, and presenting at conferences across the globe. This newsletter showcases the amazing things happening in the department and provides news and updates for current and prospective students. Enjoy!

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FROM THE CHAIR: CINDY BRANTMEIER

An important mission of the Department of Education, through research, service and teaching, is to improve urban education at the local, national, and global levels. At all stages, we face challenges that involve equity and access, and as evidenced by our recent publications and presentations, our research continues to examine related racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural issues. We provide corresponding implications for classrooms, districts, and public policy substantiated by the careful investigations we conduct. Through scholarly pursuits, our service to the St. Louis community and schools, and the topics we teach, we engage in lively and informed discussions about the future of education.

I am nearing the end of my first year as Chair and am very excited to showcase the exceptional work done by professors and students during the past semester in this newsletter. I am also extremely pleased to extend a very enthusiastic welcome to Professors Odis Johnson and Ebony Duncan, who we highlight on this page. Our front cover features two esteemed colleagues who are retiring in July, Professor Tom Allen and Brenda Pierce. We are very fortunate to have benefited from Tom’s outstanding expertise in Educational Psychology and from Brenda’s extraordinary work with our student teachers and the St. Louis public schools, for many years. We will miss you both every day, and please know you have a home with us forever. I also want to extend a very special thank you to our staff for their dedicated and diligent work this year. I look forward to another productive and exciting year ahead.

NEW FACULTY

We are proud to welcome two new faculty members to the department. Each brings exciting scholarship and experience that will be invaluable to our students.

Odis Johnson Jr. is Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Education and Associate Professor of Education and Sociology. Previously, Johnson chaired the African American Studies Department at the University of Maryland. His research examines how neighborhoods, schools and public policies relate to social inequality, youth development and the status of African American populations. Johnson’s work on HUD mobility programs earned him the 2013 Outstanding Review of Research Award from AERA. Professor Johnson’s current work uses multilevel statistical methodologies to assess neighborhood risk propensity factors related to adolescents’ educational self-concept and persistence.

In the fall, Ebony M. Duncan will be Assistant Professor of Education. Duncan is a sociologist of education who situates her scholarly work in school effectiveness and critical race traditions. She received her PhD in Sociology from Vanderbilt University and is currently completing a one-year postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Education. This fall she will teach the Sociology of Education.

http://education.wustl.edu
Professor Odis Johnson was awarded a $91,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health - National Institute of Drug Abuse to study high-risk behaviors related to educational behavior within neighborhoods.

Professor Michelle Purdy’s manuscript, “Courageous Navigation: African American Students at an Elite Private School in the South, 1967-1972,” was accepted in The Journal of African American History (JAAH). She will also serve as co-editor for the issue.

Professor Michelle Purdy will be a panelist for the upcoming AERA 2015 Division F (History and Historiography) Mentoring Seminar, “Re-Imagining History of Education in the 21st Century.”

Professors Cindy Brantmeier and Mary Ann Dzuback were selected for the 2014-15 inaugural class of the Women Faculty Leadership Institute, sponsored by the Provost’s Office.

Professor Cindy Brantmeier, along with collaborators from San Diego State University, were awarded a STARTALK 2015 grant, sponsored by the President of the University States National Security Language Initiative.

Professor Cindy Brantmeier was appointed to be a member of the expert adjudication committee for evaluation of PhD research in the Department of Educational Sciences at the University of Oslo, Norway.

Brittni Jones was inducted into the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society during the annual Yale Bouchet Conference on Diversity and Graduate Education.

Kelly Harris was selected to attend the Summit for Transformative Education, to be held in June at MICDS.

Elizabeth Thorne Wallington was accepted into the 2015 Emerging Education Policy Scholars program.


In November, Professor Garrett Albert Duncan presented the keynote address for GlobeMed at Washington University.

In November, Mark Hogrebe presented at GIS Day Lightning Talks at Washington University.

In February, Professor Odis Johnson spoke at the Bahá’í Chair for World Peace 2015 Spring Symposium in College Park, MD. The theme was structural racism and the root causes of prejudice.

In February, Brittni Jones presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine.

In February, Ashley Macrander was an invited speaker for Washington University’s Day of Discovery and Dialogue event.

In March, Professor Odis Johnson was part of an AERA delegation that discussed various education Acts with key Congressmen, legislative aides and House and Senate subcommittees.

In April, Professor Odis Johnson spoke at a conference titled Starting at Home: Using philanthropy, research and practice to build a better Ohio, hosted by Ohio Housing Finance Agency and Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing.

In April, Professor William F. Tate gave the Wallace Foundation Distinguished Lecture at AERA in Chicago.

In April, Professor Michelle Purdy presented a paper at AERA titled “Dual Benefits: White Philanthropy, Black Students, and Elite K-12 Private Schools.”

In June, Professor Cindy Brantmeier will deliver the keynote address for STARTALK 2015, a symposium for the acquisition of strategic languages at the Language Acquisition Center in San Diego.

Professor Cindy Brantmeier was invited to be the plenary speaker at the 2015 World Congress of Extensive Reading in Dubai, UAE.
The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program is a unique opportunity for young scholars to conduct research with Mellon Mays director, Professor Jeffrey McCune, and in consultation with a selected faculty mentor from departments across campus. The research projects explore themes of identity, social justice and diversity. This year, two students from the Department of Education were selected to be Mellon Mays Fellows. Christian Gordon (right), under the direction of Professor Rowhea Elmesky, is working on a research project that examines black male schooling successes in a University City public school. The research specifically explores the everyday situations of two young black boys in order to develop an understanding of the experiences of gifted and exceptional black male students. Jonathan Williford (left), under the direction of Professor Cindy Brantmeier, is examining the linguistic framework of African American Vernacular (AAVA) and issues related to black power. Jonathan is collecting data on teacher’s perceptions of AAVA in educational settings at an inner city St. Louis public school and plans to offer corresponding implications for the teaching of Black Poetry.

This semester, Professor Cindy Brantmeier presented research and theory on reading and testing of English Language Learners (ELLs) to teachers at Oak Hill Elementary School, located in South St. Louis. Lyndsie Schultz and Haley Dolosic, both PhD students in the Applied Linguistics strand, presented corresponding workshops. The goal was to equip the teachers with the research and theory necessary to make informed and principled decisions for the classroom so that students are prepared for the state assessment of language arts. According to principle Karessa Morrow, this was the school’s first collaboration with Washington University. “We’ve made progress over the last four years with ELL students,” she said, “but working with Cindy Brantmeier, I truly believe that this is the year that we will achieve our target goal.” That goal? Ensure every student can read and perform at grade level. It’s ambitious for a school that has the highest percentage (50%) of ELL students in the city. But Morrow will not be deterred. “If parents, students, teachers, and all team members come together, I truly believe we will get 100% of our students to read and perform at grade level. That is my focus; that is my goal.” Additionally, undergraduate students in Applied Linguistics will be assisting the teachers as tutors for students at the school. Brenda Pierce, director of KDP, made the connections between Oak Hill and the Department of Education.
We are proud to announce the launch of a new joint degree between the Department of Education and the School of Social Work. The MSW/MAED joint degree program prepares graduates for excellence and leadership in schools. These graduates will fill a significant local and national need for professionals who can address students’ social and emotional needs, as well as their academic achievement. The Brown School’s MSW program addresses the psycho-social issues facing children and youth, as well as the systems that affect children’s readiness to learn. The MAED program provides exposure to the social foundations of education, educational psychology, and applied linguistics. With the MAED degree, graduates are also eligible for State of Missouri certification in elementary education for grades 1-6.

The joint degree program was created, in part, because of two former students, Casey Accettola (pictured above) and Amanda Shuman, and the success they have achieved as a result of their degrees in education and social work. Casey is a teacher at Maplewood Richmond Heights Elementary and Amanda is a teacher at North Side Community School in St. Louis City.

An important aspect of the program is the Wendt Fellowship. Established through the generosity of Brown School supporter Gregory W. Wendt, this Fellowship provides a select number of MSW/MAED joint degree students with full-tuition scholarship support as they prepare to address the greatest challenges of urban education. Those who accept the Wendt Fellowship commit to work a minimum of three years in urban public schools in the greater St. Louis region upon graduation.

**E - PORTFOLIOS**

Say goodbye to the thick binders students previously assembled for the teacher education portfolio and state certification. This semester the department implemented an electronic portfolio system that allows students to document their work and assemble artifacts online. The software, produced by Foliotek, is designed with teacher education programs in mind, especially as related to the process required for teacher certification by accreditation organizations. It allows individual students to follow their progress on meeting standards and provides a variety of summary functions at the program level for reporting requirements about student outcomes. The e-portfolio can also be shared with potential employers to showcase student work and experience. Creating an e-portfolio is required of teacher education students, but all education majors are welcome to develop their own electronic portfolios.
At the end of this semester, we say thank you and good luck to two longstanding members of our department, Professor Tom Allen and Field Placement Specialist Brenda Pierce. Together, they’ve given the department over 60 years of service.

**IE:** How do you plan to spend retirement?
**TA:** I plan to expand my clinical practice with a growing emphasis on procedures to reverse cognitive decline attributed to aging. I am excited by the prospect of opportunities to immerse myself more deeply in applied neuroscience, to analyze the reams of data I’ve accumulated over the years, and to publish with greater frequency op-ed pieces on various social and political issues.

**IE:** What are your fondest memories?
**TA:** The excitement of developing new programs shaped entirely by our best professional judgment and the satisfaction of seeing them bear fruit. Also, the noon hour basketball games with former college stars, top high school players from the city, and NFL players, including Terry Metcalf, Mel Gray, and Jim Baaken.

**IE:** What will you miss the most?
**TA:** The classroom interaction and the opportunity to see the impact of various ideas on the lives of our students.

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**IE:** What have been your greatest accomplishments in the department?
**BP:** In 2007, I assumed the position of Field Placement Specialist for the department. My goal was to place our pre-service students with cooperating teachers who would accept them as students-in-training to become teachers. The following year, I re-installed Beta Upsilon, our chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, which had been inactive for over twenty-five years. These experiences were initially challenging but now I view them as two of my greatest accomplishments because of the support I received from the department and local school districts.

**IE:** What legacy do you leave behind?
**BP:** My legacy in the department is our chapter of Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education. I've had the privilege of working with students and members of the department to create service projects for eight elementary schools. Since the re-installation of the chapter, we have donated over two thousand books to students and teachers. Last year, our chapter was one of three to receive the Premier Award for Literacy Alive projects at the national level. I hope everyone will continue to associate Kappa Delta Pi with service in the community.

**IE:** How do you plan to spend retirement?
**BP:** I’m looking forward to traveling, reading, and enjoying my grandchildren.
Each spring our chapter of Kappa Delta Pi produces Literacy Alive!, a literacy-building program in partnership with a St. Louis public school. This year we partnered with Oak Hill elementary in south St. Louis. The theme, “Jump into Books,” was coined by chapter member Hannah Sher and each KDP member created a lesson plan that provided engaging, meaningful, and fun literacy-building experiences for the students.

Each participating teacher at Oak Hill received five free books for their classroom and all 300+ students received a free book of his or her choice. This self-selection of material is an important way to engage students in reading.

Our school selection process focuses on community factors such as the number of students receiving free and reduced lunches. For our students, Literacy Alive! provides valuable field experience. For teachers and students at Oak Hill, it is an important reminder that the larger community is committed to helping all students thrive.

CAPSTONE/ED STUDIES

The Capstone Seminar in Educational Studies, taught by Professor Rowhea Elmesky, has been an extremely rewarding aspect of my major. Set up as an intimate, discussion-based class, we were given the opportunity to reflect in creative and interactive ways on all of the material we covered in our major courses. For example, Professor Elmesky designed a project inspired by “Ted Talks” that allowed us to express a passion for any topic we have come across in the major. Our “Ted Talk” project, entitled “Changing the Terrain of Education in the United States,” gave us the opportunity to elaborate on what we feel is the most influential factor surrounding education in the United States in a dynamic and inspiring presentation. The project was unlike any other assignment I have completed in my four years at the University.

Another exciting part of the course was our service-learning project. We tackled the issue of self-advocacy in the classroom. Each week we met with students from University City High School to provide tools for and encourage effective communication, conflict resolution, and confidence. The sessions were hands on and enjoyable. By the end of the project, we provided the students with strategies they can use to advocate for themselves in the classroom, accompanied by a student-created video display of the rights they believe they are entitled to and the responsibilities they believe they must uphold in the classroom. -Christine Pritula (BA, 2015)
OUR GRADS AT A GLANCE

Emma Ackels (MAED, 2012) is currently teaching first grade at St. Martin de Porres Catholic School in Philadelphia and was selected to be her school's representative on the district's new ELA curriculum committee.

Maura Tobin (MAT, 2012) is currently teaching Latin at Parkway North High School and Parkway Northeast Middle School.

Anna Sobotka (MAT, 2011) is in her third year of teaching 9th and 10th grade English in the Jennings School District. She is also starting a Poetry Slam team at her school.

Tom Herpel (BA, 2008) is in his seventh year teaching Latin at Parkway High School in Ballwin. Every two years he leads an Italy trip for students and he coaches the boys and girls soccer teams.

Madeline Raimondo (MAT, 2009) is currently teaching social studies at Kirkwood High School in St. Louis County.

NEW COURSE OFFERINGS

Three new courses will be added in Fall 2015. They include Freshman Seminar: Social Forces, Development, and Early Childhood Education (Educ 102) taught by Kelly Harris; Topics in Education: Introduction to Applied Linguistics (Educ 200) taught by Lyndsie Schultz; and Child Development (Educ 512) taught by Paul Notaro.

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