



EPEC Update

Education Policy and Evaluation Center
University of Georgia

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Impacting education policy and improving the quality of education through research and evaluation

EPEC UPDATES

2009 Education in Georgia: Second Annual State of the State Report

The College of Education, in collaboration with the Education Policy and Evaluation Center (EPEC), will host its second annual State of the State Conference at the University of Georgia Gwinnett Campus. Top state agency officials, key legislators, Georgia superintendents, and UGA academics will convene to discuss trends and issues related to P-16 education. Featured presenters include Governor Bob Wise, Jeff Humphreys, Ron Cervero, Amy Reschly, Pedro Portes, and Eric Houck. The conference will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2009, 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Faculty registration opens Tuesday, September 8 and will be confirmed by September 11. Please be advised that a limited number of seats are available for COE faculty. For more information, copy and paste the following link into your browser: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/dean/stateofthestate/SOS2009/index.html>.

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2009 EPEC Spring Conference on State/Federal Roles in Education Policy

The Georgia Education Policy and Evaluation Center held its second annual spring conference on May 1, 2009. Titled *Changing Horses or Paddling Harder? Reconsidering the State/Federal Relationship in Education Policy*, the conference featured faculty members' research in the areas of governmental relations, federal legislation, educational policy design, and resource allocation. Presenters were assembled into four panels that included professors and students from various departments within the University of Georgia's College of Education as well as visiting professors from other universities. Attendees included various member of the university community and some state-level policy makers.

To access panel summaries, copy and paste the following link into your browser: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/EPEC/>. Papers from the conference are being edited and will appear in forthcoming EPEC publications.



(Robert Gaines/EDAP)
Regents Professor Dr. Jeremy Kilpatrick (above) delivered the luncheon address, Education Policy in Transition: The "White Papers" Project of the National Academies.

Upcoming Event:

COE State of the State
October 1, 2009

EPEC Scholars and Fellows

Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot

Dr. DeBray-Pelot has received a sub-grant from the University of California-Los Angeles in 2009-2010 as part of the Spencer Foundation-funded project, "Suburban Change and the Schools: The Effect on the Educational Opportunities of Poor and Minority Students." She is one of 7 researchers from across the country who will focus on how external conditions facilitate or constrain the integration of low-income and minority students into the schools and on the policies, programs, and strategies schools and districts adopt to serve these students. The aim of the study is twofold: (1) to illuminate public policy issues facing metropolitan areas and their capacity to respond to an increasingly diverse school population; and (2) to develop an analytical framework that brings political and institutional factors into the analysis of suburban diversification.

Dr. Jori Hall

Jori N. Hall is an assistant professor and Education Policy and Evaluation Center (EPEC) Fellow in the College of Education at the University of Georgia. As an EPEC Fellow, she works with the Program Evaluation Group (PEG) to design and implement evaluations, utilizing multiple methods. Her current work includes serving as principal investigator for an evaluation of the Clarke County School District Math and Science Partnership (MSP) grant. This evaluation is designed to assess the impact of the MSP on teachers' content knowledge and students' academic achievement in mathematics and science. Dr. Hall also worked with the PEG to investigate the authorization and implementation process of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) in authorized Georgia public schools. The findings from this evaluation were particularly useful to guide the efforts of schools seeking to offer the PYP. Her other work includes providing evaluative feedback for National Science Foundation initiatives such as the Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers program and the Educative, Values-Engaged approach to evaluation.

Dr. Eric Houck

Eric A. Houck is currently involved in several projects: (1) a policy proposal to rethink the distribution formula for federal Title II funds and implications for Georgia's schools; (2) a paper examining the consequences of a change in student assignment policy for the wake County (NC) public schools; and (3) a paper proposing a new measure of efficiency for school districts using Georgia data, and a method of demonstrating student growth using Georgia's CRCT tests for elementary school students. With Dr. Dayton, he is also co-authoring a paper which examines the implications for schools and districts of the current fiscal crisis. Finally, Dr. Houck is soliciting COE faculty to contribute 10 page summations of their research for the 2010 Georgia Policy Papers, to be distributed to legislators and policymakers this spring. Each of these projects is somehow related to his interest in using school finance frameworks and methods to examine educational policies that may or may not be finance related.

Dr. Sheneka Williams

Sheneka M. Williams is a 2009 recipient of the Sarah H. Moss Fellowship Award. Dr. Williams spent the first half of the fellowship working under the tutelage of think tank scholar, Richard Kahlenberg, at The Century Foundation (TCF) in Washington, D.C. Richard D. Kahlenberg is a Senior Fellow at TCF (www.tcf.org), where he writes about education, equal opportunity, and civil rights. Dr. Williams will pursue a study that examines the political will of community stakeholders to either maintain or abolish socio-economic student assignment policies. The four districts to be studied are San Francisco Unified District, Brandywine, Delaware School District, Champaign (Illinois) Unit Four School District, and Jefferson County School District (Kentucky). Dr. Williams' study replicates previous research that she and Dr. Eric Houck conducted in Wake County, North Carolina.

Affiliated Faculty Research

EPEC affiliated faculty members are engaged in sharing their work with policymakers and advising the Center on its substantive priorities. If you are interested in affiliating, please contact Dr. DeBray-Pelot at edebray@uga.edu or Dr. Cohen at acohen@uga.edu.

Khalil M. Dirani, Assistant Professor, Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy

Dr. Dirani is a professor in the Human Resource and Organization Development within the Adult Education program (College of Education). Khalil has been actively working in the field of HRD for over nine years. He was born in Lebanon and had his undergraduate degree at The American University of Beirut (AUB) and his master's degree in Business Management from The Lebanese American University (LAU). Khalil earned his PhD degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC).

In his research, Khalil has aimed to test the applicability of Western human resources development and change theories in an international context in an attempt to understand how work outcomes might be altered accordingly. In a recent article published in the *Human Resource Development International* journal, Dr. Dirani tested the applicability of the Learning Organization concept in the Lebanese context and measured the correlation between a learning culture in and employee performance. Other areas of research that interest Khalil stem from his fascination with cultures and cultural differences as well as his enthusiasm to study international human resource development and Adult education practices. One specific interest is to understand how country specific culture influences human resources practices adult education. He is the lead author of an article (under review) which highlights the cultural changes among Lebanese individuals from collectivism to a more Westernized individualistic preference.

Khalil currently serves on different professional and academic committees within the Academy of Human Resource Development (Proceedings Associate Editor, International SIG), the Academy of Management (Organizational Development), and AERA (Workplace Learning SIG). For more information, please contact Dr. Dirani at dirani@uga.edu.

Some of Dr. Dirani's selected publications include:

- Dirani, K. M., & Kuchinke, K. P. (Under review). Job satisfaction and organization commitment: Validating the Arabic Satisfaction and Commitment Questionnaire (ASCQ), testing the correlations, and investigating the effects of demographic variables in the Lebanese banking sector. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*.
- Dirani, K. M., & Evans, J. (submitted). Winds of change: Transition from collectivism to individualism in Lebanon. *New Horizons*.
- Dirani, K. M. (2009). Measuring the learning organization culture, organizational commitment and job satisfaction in the Lebanese banking sector. *Human Resource Development International*, 12(2), 189-208.
- Dirani, K. M., & Yoon, S. W. (2009). Exploring open distance learning at a Jordanian university: A case study. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 10(2), 1-18.
- Dirani, K. M. (2006). A model linking the learning organization and performance job satisfaction. *Proceedings of the Academy of Human Resource Development*. Indianapolis, IN: AHRD.
- Dirani, K. M. (2004). Veterans Service Organization survey. In R. Stake, W. Platt, R. Davis, N. Vanderveen & K. M. Dirani, (Eds). *Integrating VBA training and evaluation: A five year history of assessment of the complex technical responsibilities of VBA personnel, 1996-2001* (pp. 103-172). Champaign, IL: CIRCE

EPEC Activities

Program Evaluation Group Projects

Because of the confidential nature of some projects, PEG program reports are not always posted on the EPEC website.

Current PEG evaluation projects include:

- 21st Century grants in two Georgia counties
- Clarke County Math and Science Partnership Grant
(PI: Dr. Jori Hall)
- Communities in Schools of Georgia AFL Demonstration Project
(Co PIs: Dr. Dorothy Harnish and Dr. Jessica Legge Mulenburg School of Public Health)
- Georgia Supplemental Education Services
(PI: Dr. Sheneka Williams)
- Chancellor's Office of The California Community Colleges evaluation of the Learning Disabilities Eligibility Model
(PI: Dr. Noel Gregg)
- NSF Creativity across the Disciplines grant exploring synthesis of art and engineering for innovative education at UGA (Torrance Center)

Recently completed PEG projects include:

- Preparation of Annual Report for GA Dept of Education Division of Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education
- Evaluation of Instruction at the Atlanta Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Center
(PI: Dr. Dorothy Harnish)
- Documentation of Implementation of Institute for Student Achievement principles in 3 Atlanta Schools
(PI: Dr. Sheneka Williams)
- Evaluation of GLISI professional development courses for PSC accountability working with Dr. Wendy Ruona.
(PI: Tracy Elder)
- Case study of the IB Primary Years Programme in three schools for the International Baccalaureate Organization
(PI: Dr. Jori Hall)

Support Services

Program Evaluation Group

As you develop programs and apply for funding, consider using the Program Evaluation Group (PEG) as part of your evaluation team. PEG researchers have a track record of more than ten years of providing rigorous program evaluation research, technical assistance to schools, quantitative and qualitative data collection, and information analysis at the local, state, national, and international levels. Evaluation activities usually include collection and analysis of data that focus on both processes and outcomes. PEG utilizes multiple methods of data collection such as paper and online surveys, individual interviews, focus groups, and on-site observations. PEG projects have included in-depth analysis of data sets such as surveys, student achievement scores, and enrollment histories. As part of your project team, the PEG research professionals can offer assistance with evaluation design, sampling strategies, development of data instruments and protocols, the IRB process, data collection, data management and analysis, and reporting findings.

EPEC Activities

Policy Research Group Projects

Closing the Achievement Gap Education Summit

The *Closing the Achievement Gap* Summit, co-sponsored by Rep. Alisha Thomas Morgan (D-Austell) and Rep. Virgil Fludd (D-Tyrone), was held at the State Capital on May 18. Seminars focused on college preparedness, high school dropout rates, and college attainment. Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot, EPEC associate director for policy, presented on middle grades education and Jennifer Leahy, EDAP doctoral student, discussed linkages between testing and dropout rates. The inaugural summit served as an opportunity for local stakeholders to explore innovative solutions to key education policy issues in Georgia.

Call for 2010 Education Policy Papers

The 2010 issue of the Georgia Policy Papers will contain 8-10 chapters presenting research of COE faculty and graduate students that address on-the-ground educational issues in Georgia. Each paper will present a national overview, a Georgia context, a summary of research finding and a list of policy prescriptions for Georgia educators, legislators and policymakers. The goal of the Policy Papers series is to demonstrate the powerful capacity of COE faculty to conduct research that has meaningful impact on teaching and learning in Georgia's schools.

For more information, please contact Dr. Eric Houck at eahouck@uga.edu by September 20, 2009.

EPEC Co-convenes Policy Briefing on Capitol Hill

The Education Policy and Evaluation Center (EPEC), the Center for Civil Rights at UNC School of Law, the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles at UCLA, and the Forum for Education and Democracy co-convened a policy briefing, *New Initiatives for Integrated Education in the Obama Era: Reversing Two Decades of Resegregation*, on June 12. Gary Orfield of the Civil Rights Project moderated the discussions on immediate and long-term policy options available to promote racial school integration. Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot and Dr. Erica Frankenberg (UCLA) discussed federal policy options for achieving racial equity in schools in their presentation titled *Federal Legislation to Promote Metropolitan Approaches to Educational and Housing Opportunities*.

Chapel Hill Conference Focuses on the Future of Integrated Public Education

On April 2, The Center for Civil Rights at UNC School of Law, the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles at UCLA, and the University of Georgia Education Policy and Evaluation Center co-hosted a conference at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill for advocates, scholars, organizers, litigators, researchers and students committed to integrated schools in the South and the nation. The conference was particularly relevant in light of the 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 (PICS)*. Presenters included Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot and Dr. Sheneka Williams (with Dr. Eric A. Houck).

Support Services

Policy Research Group

The Policy Research Group is currently soliciting faculty members' working papers for posting on the Center website. These are generally papers that have been submitted to a scholarly journal for review or have been presented at a conference. The PRG is also interested in talking to faculty conducting policy-related research that could be featured in the policy section of the website.



EPEC Policy Briefs

Any faculty who are interested in turning research findings into a policy brief, please contact Dr. DeBray-Pelot at edebray@uga.edu. For policy briefs published this year, please visit the EPEC website or copy and paste the following link into your browser: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/EPEC/projects/briefs.html>.

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About EPEC

Policy Research Group

The Policy Research Group within EPEC aims to conduct objective and timely research on education and education policy issues. Associate Director Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot and research fellows are available to assist faculty with writing briefs for prospective posting on the EPEC website or for dissemination to policymakers and key stakeholder groups. Current projects, research briefs, and working papers can be accessed by pasting the following address into your browser: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/EPEC/policy/index.html>

Program Evaluation Group

The Program Evaluation Group within EPEC offers rigorous program evaluation, technical assistance, data collection, and information analysis for a variety of public and private stakeholder agencies, foundations, and institutions on local, state, national, and international levels. PEG core staff, under the direction of Dr. Dorothy Harnish, is comprised of professional staff skilled in carrying out multiple projects utilizing various research methods to assess the need for educational programs and their impact and effectiveness. Reports, research briefs, and presentations can be accessed by pasting the following address into your browser: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/EPEC/evaluation/index.html>

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