



the ED LEDGER

the newsletter of the
Department of Educational Leadership
at UNC Charlotte

Welcome

Happy Spring 2023! Did it feel like spring break was early this year? I think we all commiserated over the irony of spring break beginning in February. I still hope that everyone enjoyed some time away and is looking forward to the back half of the semester.

We know it is springtime not only by the change in weather, but also by the number of students looking forward to graduating. There are several dissertation defenses this semester. I encourage everyone to consider coming out to support candidates during this key academic milestone. Dissertation defenses are open to everyone in the University community.

As we prepare to conclude the semester, I invite everyone to participate in the numerous events hosted by the Educational Leadership Student Organization (ELSO). They hosted several social events during the fall semester and continue to do so this semester. Come out and join any of their events that are shared via email and in Niner Engage.

Continue to keep the faculty and staff updated on your needs and all the best for a productive remainder of the semester!

Cathy Howell, Ed.D.

Ed.D. Graduate Program Director
Interim M.Ed. Higher Education Director

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Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Walter Hart

What brought you to UNC Charlotte?

A Toyota Prius (only kidding). UNC Charlotte has an amazing College of Education that is a leader in producing quality educators. Having completed my master's and doctorate at UNC Charlotte, I was honored to return many years later as a faculty member.

What sparked your interest in Educational Leadership?

I decided when I was in college that I wanted to be a teacher. I was blessed to have wonderful teachers, and I wanted to be like them. Teaching and mentoring young people were my ways of giving back. Becoming an administrator enabled me to support a wider community and impact the effectiveness of the district.

What research projects are you working on currently?

I just completed a book chapter about school funding in North Carolina. I am currently working on a study which examines the intersection of race and gender with the superintendency in North Carolina.

What leadership strategies have you found most helpful during your time as a faculty member within the department?

Learn from others. Our colleagues are often our best resource. I have learned from amazing people along the Educational Leadership hallway, and I greatly appreciate their support.

Advice to students pursuing a career in Educational Leadership

Being a school administrator is going to require faith, love, and courage. So, love all children, support all teachers, engage all parents, laugh lots, get organized, be passionate, and always be kind. Have faith in your ideas, but listen to others. Stand up for what is right, truthful, fair, and ethical. And amidst all of the "noise," never forget that you make a positive difference in the lives of many people.



Hometown

Charlotte (there are not many native Charlotteans, but I really grew up here!)

Previous institutions

Wake Forest
Winthrop University

Research interest(s)

The superintendency and school finance

Other interests

Wood Working

Fun Fact

Dr. Hart is among a group of school superintendents from across the US who met with President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in the White House to discuss school technology initiatives.

Student Spotlight



Hometown
Kannapolis, NC

Research Interests

Dissertation Focus: Impact of
Mindfulness Programs on Academic
Achievement

Additional Research Interests:
Practices that address the social-
emotional learning needs of students
Students with disabilities

Other Interests

Serving the community.
Spending time with his
wife and children.
Reading, church involvement,
and chess.

Rick Dunlap

What sparked your interest in educational leadership?

My initial interest came from discussing educational leadership with Dr. Alan King, who was my supervisor when I decided to pursue the master's degree. Through my discussions with Dr. King, I came to believe my impact can be magnified by serving in educational leadership roles.

What brought you to UNC Charlotte?

UNC Charlotte has been my learning institution from the beginning. I was a North Carolina Teaching Fellow and had a great experience. UNC Charlotte offered a cohort for the master's program, which allowed me to pursue this degree while attending classes within Rowan County. I believe it was a blessing from God when I received a notice of the new program at UNCC, which was being led by Dr. Walter Hart. He was the Assistant Principal at the school where I did my student teaching. I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Hart when he served as an assistant superintendent in the Rowan-Salisbury School System. After attending the interest meeting and speaking with Dr. Hart, I knew the UNCC program was the right place for me.

What advice would you have for other students?

Rely on your professors and classmates and stay strong and faithful to your journey. If you are here, you are here for a purpose.

How would you define "leadership" ?

I have always liked John Maxwell's take on leaders, "A leader is one who knows the way, shows the way, and goes the way." Our teachers and staff are called to serve our students. We must do this by knowing where we want to be, providing encouragement and support to help all get there, and by "walking the walk" along with those we lead.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense is the final milestone toward degree completion. A doctoral candidate disseminates the results of their study during the final defense to the research committee and academic community.

Josh Allen

P-12 Superintendency

"Small Magnet High School Support Staff Experiences with Student Mental Health Needs"

Chair: Dr. Rebecca Shore
Committee: Drs. Jamie Kudlats, Jimmy Watson, and Clare Merlin-Knoblich

David Lynn

Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation

"The Development and Validation of an Intercultural Competencies Assessment Instrument for K-12 Educators"

Chair: Dr. Jae Hoon Lim
Co-chair: Dr. Stella Kim
Dissertation Committee: Drs. Rich Lambert and Erik Byker

Sue Nash

P-12 Superintendency

"Middle School Principal's Perceptions of traditional and Standard-Based Grading"

Chair: Dr. Rebecca Shore
Committee: Drs. Walter Hart, Jamie Kudlats, and Jeanneine Jones

Elizabeth (Lizzie) Parsons

P-12 Superintendency

"Exploring the Effects of a Daily Audio-Guided Mindfulness Intervention for Teachers"

Chair: Dr. Rebecca Shore
Committee: Drs. Jamie Kudlats, Rich Lambert, and Amy Good

Nanci Burt Stafford

Higher Education

"A Qualitative Interview-Based Study of the Lived Experiences of North Carolina Community College Students who Report Food Insecurity"

Chair: Dr. Alan Mabe
Committee: Drs. Ryan Miller, Janet Spriggs, and Heather Coffey

The principle goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.

– Jean Piaget



Dissertation Proposal

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.



Ellie Haag

Higher Education

"Leadership and Context for Comprehensive Internationalization: Senior International Officer Perspectives"

Dissertation chair: Dr. Mark D'Amico

Dissertation committee: Drs. Ryan Miller, Alan Mabe, and Mike Putman



Hali Hutchison-Houk

Higher Education

"Theater Students' Sense of Belonging in a Non-Audition Bachelor of Arts Program"

Dissertation chair: Dr. Mark D'Amico

Dissertation committee: Drs. Ryan Miller, Rebecca Shore, and Elizabeth Murray



Kudos Corner

A space to celebrate exciting news beyond the doctoral program! Kudos to the following students:



BABIES ON BOARD

Congratulations to Kathleen Bradley-Volz and her wife Angela on their twin girls, Lillie Marie Bradley-Volz (left) and Sophie Harper Bradley-Volz (right), who were born on January 7.



Congratulations to Anthony Davis and his wife Aaisha on their baby girl, Averi Kamille Davis, who was born on February 6th.



Alumni Spotlight



Dr. Brad Smith, Ed.D.

How has your experience in Educational Leadership translated from your role as a student to your current role?

The coursework, faculty, and my peers in the program substantially accelerated my acclimation to and knowledge of the higher education arena. It afforded me a perspective that would have taken much more time to develop on my own and equipped me to move into new roles. It also connected me with faculty mentors and colleagues across campus, relationships that continue to be sources of support and camaraderie today.

What advice do you have for students?

Whatever your current role, and within reason, become involved in as many different efforts as you can. You never know when the experience and expertise gleaned from a side project might spark other professional interests and open other professional doors. *There are a myriad of opportunities within higher education. Be open to new experiences!*

How would you define "leadership"?
What is your leadership style?

The leadership qualities required for success can vary, but I suppose the ability to understand the perspectives of stakeholders, know available resources, and apply both towards achieving organizational goals is fairly universal. My style has been to surround myself with the right people, offer support for them to grow and be successful, and let them get to work. Pair that with genuine communication and demonstrating care for colleagues as professionals and individuals, and you create a team that works well in most higher education environments.

What is your favorite part about working in Educational Leadership?

I've been fortunate to be able to take part in education policy and advocacy efforts at the state level in this position, which I see as one of the most rewarding parts of my work. Recently, I joined the associate graduate faculty in the Educational Leadership Department and have greatly enjoyed working more closely with EDLD students.

*Class of 2019
Ed.D. Educational Leadership
Higher Education*

Hometown

Concord, NC

Current Role

Director of Assessment and Accreditation
Cato College of Education
UNC Charlotte

Fun Fact

I have an education family. My spouse and I began our careers as high school teachers (me social studies, her English). She is now an elementary school principal (our twin daughters attend her school), and I transitioned to higher education a decade ago.

Dissertation and Research

From Early College to the University: A Case Study Exploring First-Semester Experiences.



LEDGER Did you know???

While graduate school is rewarding, it is considered a large financial investment for your career and future. As a graduate student, figuring out how to afford graduate education requires consideration in different funding opportunities than span beyond a specific program. According to Dzirsa et al. (2020) we must fix the graduate school system that produces future scholars, including reforming how we fund graduate study. It is important that students explore and consider all options when searching for funding. UNC Charlotte provides funding resources that may help ease the financial burden of obtaining a graduate education.

Dzirasa, K., Lynn, C. D., Montclare, J. K., Stirling, L., & Wuest, B. (2020, September 1). We must change how we fund graduate school. *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/09/01/more-federal-research-funding-should-go-directly-grad-students-opinion>

"No other investment yields as great a return as the investment in education. An educated workforce is the foundation of every community and the future of every economy."
Brad Henry , former governor of Oklahoma

Graduate School Funding

Several sources of funding are available to help students pay for a graduate program at UNC Charlotte, including financial aid, tuition support, assistantships and fellowships. Some of those

<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/funding/funding-graduate-education>

Graduate Assistantship

Graduate assistants (GAs) receive financial support for their contributions to the teaching, research, and service missions of the University.

<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/funding/assistantships-and-employment>

Student Awards

Each spring the Graduate School administers fellowships available only to outstanding UNC Charlotte graduate students.

<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/funding/funding-graduate-education>

Scholarships

The NINER scholarship portal is UNC Charlotte's online scholarship application portal that matches students to scholarships. Students can apply to multiple scholarships using one application.

<https://scholarships.charlotte.edu/portals/student-application-portal>

Veteran Assistance

UNC Charlotte veterans are serviced by the Veterans Student Services Office (VSSO). Charlotte's Veterans Services Office is dedicated to the support and success of our military-affiliated student body.

<https://veterans.charlotte.edu/>

Cato College of Education

The Cato College of Education offers funding for incoming and current students. Award applications are typically due during the spring semester.

<https://education.charlotte.edu/resources/student-resources/financial-aid/unc-charlotte-funding>



Ed. Leadership in the News

Remain updated with current news in Educational Leadership .
Check out these articles that showcase relevant topics in education.



In Pursuit of the Great

Aaron Basko

February 2023 - Inside Higher Ed

Entrenched yet seldom discussed values are holding much of higher education back from successfully meeting the challenges we now confront

<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2023/02/21/management-principles-help-colleges-meet-todays-challenges-opinion>



Connecting in the Classroom and Beyond

Beckie Supiano & Karin Fischer

February 2023- The Chronicle of Higher Education

Students' overwhelming desire to connect and belong can serve as a guiding light for college leaders seeking to reshape the student experience. The goal: to make students' time on campus more engaging, more worthwhile, and more successful.

<https://www.chronicle.com/report/free/connecting-in-the-classroom-and-beyond>



What You Need to Know to Be An Effective Advocate for Education in 2023-24

Mebane Rash

February 2023 - Ed.NC

Explore concepts to understanding the legislative's role in education

<https://www.ednc.org/what-you-need-to-know-to-be-an-effective-advocate-for-education-in-2023-24/>

Conferences

Are you looking to get involved with a professional organization?
Would you like to share your research and learn from colleagues?

Graduate Research Symposium

UNC Charlotte Graduate and Professional Student Government
March 24, 2023, UNC Charlotte Main Campus

<https://gpsg.charlotte.edu/graduate-research-symposium/graduate-research-symposium>

The UNC Charlotte Cato College of Education Research Symposium

April 3, 2023, UNC Charlotte Main Campus

The 2023 Rural Summit: From Cradle to Career

UNC Charlotte and Rural Impact

April 2-4, 2023 Charlotte, NC

<https://partnersrural.org/ruralsummit/>

ACPA Annual Convention

ACPA (College Student Educators International)

March 26-29, 2023 New Orleans, LA

<https://neworleans2023.myacpa.org/>

AERA Annual Meeting: Interrogating Consequential Education Research In Pursuit of Truth

AERA (American Educational Research Association)

April 14-16, 2023 Chicago, IL (in person) May 4-5, 2023 (online)

<https://www.aera.net/Events-Meetings/Annual-Meeting>

ASHE Higher Ed Research: Purposes, Politics, and Practice

November 15-18, 2023 Minneapolis, MN

<https://www.ashe.ws/conference>

NAFSA International Education Conference

May 30-June 2, 2023, Washington, D.C.

<https://www.nafsa.org/conferences>

To learn about additional organizations, please visit:

<https://www.studentaffairs.com/resources/websites/professional-associations/>



Spring Events

Coffee Chats
Trivia Nights
Writing Groups
and more!



Educational Leadership Student Organization

UNC CHARLOTTE

Open Meeting

March 21, 2023

The mission of the ELSO is to encourage professional development and improve the experience of the COED students through initiatives that enrich the intellectual, social, and cultural aspects of their lives. In so doing, we hope to develop a stronger community among students interested in the Department of Educational Leadership and excellence within the COED.

Interested in ELSO?
Please contact Kristin Villanueva, ELSO President,
kvillan1@uncc.edu

Serving Students



Trivia Night



Snacks in COED



Coffee Chat

Connect with us!



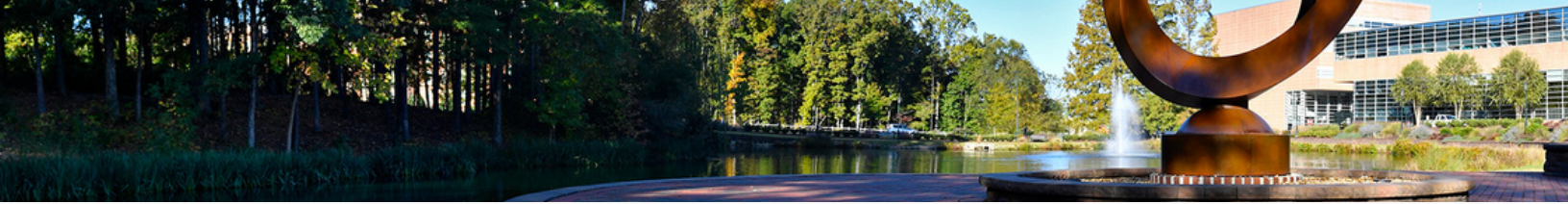
- **Educational Leadership and ELSO Facebook groups:**
[UNC Charlotte EdD](#)
[Educational Leadership Student Organization \(ELSO\)](#)
- **Niner Engage:** Niner Engage is a university platform to browse organizations and events. After becoming a member of ELSO, you will also be able to view invites and reminders [ELSO Niner Engage](#)
- **Group Me:** GroupMe is a mobile group messaging app to help groups connect. Email Vice President, Jacob Frankovich, jfrank01@uncc.edu, to join the ELSO GroupMe
- **Email Communications:** Look out for ELSO announcements in Department Emails





Upcoming Dates

February 27 - March 4,	Spring Recess - No Classes
March 6	Fall 2023 Schedule available
March 20	Last day to withdraw from course (s)
April 1-5	NASPA Conference Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
April 3	Cato College of Education Research Symposium
April 3	Registration for Summer and Fall 2023 begins
April 7 to April 8	Refresh Weekend -No Classes
April 12	Doctoral dissertation defense deadline
April 24	Dissertation Submission Deadline
April 25	Undergraduate Research Conference
May 1	Master's Thesis Defense Deadline
May 2	Last day of classes
May 3	Reading Day
May 4 - May 6	Final Examination
May 12-May 13	Commencement



Questions?
Ideas for a future newsletter?
Something to celebrate?
Let us know!
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