



## Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: **EDUCATION POLICY & EQUITY**

Department: **Educational Studies**

Degree or Certificate Level: **Ph.D.**

College/School: **School of Education**

Date (Month/Year): **October 15, 2021**

Primary Assessment Contact: **Jennifer Buehler, Program Director**

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? **Spring 2021**

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? **New program developed & approved Fall 2018**

### 1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

The Education Policy and Equity doctoral program is currently at the start of its third year. There are six students enrolled in the first cohort, two students enrolled in the second cohort, and four students enrolled in the third cohort.

We spent the second year of the program, 2020-21, developing and administering a **research methods exam** taken by all students at the midpoint of their second year. This assessment report details the results of assessment based on

rooted in quantitative research methods; the other, drawn from the journal *Educational Policy*, was rooted in qualitative research methods. Each was dedicated to the issue of teacher recruitment and retention. Students also received a supplemental article, a research brief drawn from the Learning Policy Institute in Palo Alto, CA, that provided context for the issue.

In **Part Two**, students were tasked with designing a study that used either quantitative or qualitative methodology to investigate the problem of teacher turnover during the COVID pandemic and then make policy recommendations based on the findings they believed their study would provide.

- **Timing:** The research methods exam was administered from **January 12-19, 2021**

is not a theory-based program; rather, the program is focused on application – that is, application of research tools to educational problems and educational policy interventions.

### **Result #3: Discussion of weaknesses in student work**

During the



#### **Change #4: Revise the rubric for the Research Methods Exam**

While one-on-one meetings with students emphasized oral feedback on the content of their exam rather than points on the rubric, faculty members did identify a problem with the rubric that we will change for the second iteration of the exam. We realized we need clearer differentiation in the way we evaluate Part Two. We need to specify different expectations for qualitative and quantitative research design. This change will be put in place before January 2022 when we administer the exam to students in the second cohort.

6.

build on the component parts already in place.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

N/A

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

N/A

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We will continue to make intentional decisions linked to assessment work as we build the EPE program.

Next steps in program development will include the following: a) developing expectations and a process for **written comprehensive exams**; c) developing expectations and a process for **dissertation proposals and defenses**; d) developing expectations and a process for **dissertations** themselves as well as **dissertation defenses**.

Regarding **assessment**, as we take stock of what student work on the research methods vtd methodsg

	Policy issue and potential solutions are clearly described and articulated, with no important omissions	Policy issue and potential solutions are mostly clearly described and articulated, with some important omissions	Policy issue and solutions are communicated in a confusing manner with many omissions	Policy issue and solutions are not articulated
<b>Synthesis of Relevant Research Evidence &amp; Concepts ( /10 Points)</b>	Major studies and concepts are included Research findings are accurately summarized	Most major studies and concepts are included with a few key omissions Research findings are summarized with some error	Many major studies and concepts are missing Research findings are summarized with many errors	No research findings are included
<b>Identification &amp; Explanation of Research Approaches ( /15 Points)</b>	Empirical approaches are described in depth with minimal error Quantitative and qualitative approaches are accurately explained and critically analyzed. This includes discussing how they complement one another, their strengths, and their	are described with moderate error. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are discussed, with some consideration of complementarity	Empirical approaches are discussed in insufficient depth with significant error Quantitative and qualitative approaches are considered without reference to their strengths and weaknesses	Empirical approaches are not discussed

*Saint Louis University School of Education  
Education Policy and Equity Ph.D. Program*

**References  
( /5 Points)**

Research evidence  
is cited sufficiently  
and correctly

References and  
citations include  
minor mistakes  
and/or omissions

References and  
citations include  
substantial mistakes  
and/or omissions



**Research Methods Qualifying Examination: Part II Evaluation Rubric**

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<b>Domain</b>	<b>Distinguished (A Level)</b>	<b>Proficient (B Level)</b>	<b>Basic (C Level)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory (D Level)</b>
<b>Introduction &amp; Literature Review ( /5 Points)</b>				



**Research Methods Qualifying Exam  
Information Sheet**  
Education Policy and Equity Ph.D. Program  
Spring 2021

**Exam topic**

Teacher turnover has long been a problem in education. Issues of teacher recruitment, retention, and attrition have been historically laced with equity issues. Given schools' varying approaches to educating students during the pandemic, along with students' dramatically different levels of access to educational resources while learning from home, equity issues as they affect teachers' lives and students' learning have become newly relevant in the moment of COVID-19. The topic of teacher turnover. One portion of the literature has focused on understanding why teachers stay or leave, while another body of work has tested policy interventions designed to improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, particularly in high-need communities.

Your task in the EPE research methods exam will be twofold. In Part One, you will consider the literature on teacher turnover broadly and, within the context of that literature, evaluate the methodological rigor, the strengths and limitations, and the contributions of two focal articles on the topic, one quantitative and the other qualitative. In Part Two, you will design an original research study that is focused on investigating the problem of teacher turnover in the current moment of coronavirus.

**Introductory resource:**

Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

**How to prepare**

Begin building your knowledge of the topic of the teacher turnover by reading the introductory resource listed above. The policy report by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond presents a conceptual overview of the topic. You will not be asked to write about this policy report on the methods exam.

Working from the policy report's list of references as well as your own search of education research databases, find and read other articles on teacher turnover in order to develop an informed understanding of the problem and knowledge of how it has been previously addressed in the research literature.

You are welcome to discuss the introductory policy report and additional articles you find with your classmates.

Prepare notes to bring with you to the exam. These may include annotations on the focal articles themselves, lists of key points, comparative charts or tables, etc. You will be allowed unlimited, unrestricted access to resources during the entire exam period.

Consider how you will design a research study that is informed by the current research

## Logistics

**Time frame for Part One.** Your work on Part One of the research methods exam will begin on Tuesday morning, January 12. You will receive an email at 9 a.m. that includes the prompt for Part One, the rubric for Part One, and the two focal articles that will be the basis for your analysis. You will have eight days to complete your work on Part One. All papers are due at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19.

**Time frame for Part Two.** Your work on Part Two of the research methods exam will take place on Thursday, January 21. You will receive an email at 9 a.m. that includes the

**Research Methods Qualifying Exam**  
**Part One: Article Analysis**  
Education Policy and Equity Ph.D. Program  
Spring 2021

Part One of the research methods exam will assess your skill in critically evaluating research literature. Your discussion of the focal articles presented below will reveal your general knowledge of the issue of teacher turnover as well as your knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

First, read the two focal articles you received today:

Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2011). Teacher mobility, school segregation, and

Questions.

