



# LAMAR LAUREATE



Special Edition

Spring 2008

Center for Doctoral Studies in Educational Leadership Ed.D.

## Preparing Doctoral Students to Graduate

Students who enter the Lamar University doctoral program in Educational Leadership commit to working hard over the next three years or longer to earn the degree. At the same time, doctoral faculty also commit to providing needed support to make this happen. For example, under the direction of experienced faculty, students begin work on a dissertation research agenda from the very beginning of doctoral coursework. Another way that faculty strengthen LU students' research experience is requiring attendance at Southwest Educational Research Association (SERA). SERA is a regional arm of the American Education Research Association (AERA) and one of the most widely-respected research organizations in the world. Most of our students are full-time practitioners and have little prior experience as researchers. For this reason, we require first year cohort students to attend SERA. Second year cohort students are required to present a research study at the conference. In the third year, since most are completing dissertations and preparing for graduation, attendance is voluntary. Student attendance at this conference has been supported in part by a grant from ExxonMobil.

In the spring of this year, we held our first Doctoral Dissertation Symposium. At the symposium, doctoral students in Cohort II, who had successfully defended their dissertation, presented a brief overview of their work to other cohort students in the program, faculty and invited guests. Presentations focused on identifying the research problem, the methodology, and findings.

The purpose of this activity was three-fold: providing an opportunity for graduating students to share their final work with other cohort members; providing an opportunity for students in their first year of the program to gather ideas for their own research and/or ways to build on the research being presented by graduating students; and providing an opportunity for second year doctoral students who are at a more advanced dissertation stage to see that this daunting process can indeed be completed within a timely fashion and produce quality research. The Lamar University doctoral program in Educational Leadership graduated all 15 Cohort I students in 2007. This year, all 21 students in Cohort II are graduating. We are proud of our 100% graduation rate.

This issue of the doctoral newsletter introduces you to the graduating students in Cohort II and to their topics of research. Through student hard work and the commitment of doctoral faculty and dissertation committee members in the College of Education and other colleges on campus, the Educational Leadership Ed.D. program is a vibrant example of continued high quality learning at Lamar University.

*Dr. Sandra Harris, Program Director*

## DOCTORAL STUDIES IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP



## Center Staff

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Hollis Lowery-Moore, Ed.D.

**Department Chair**  
Carolyn Crawford, Ph.D.

**Director**  
Sandra Harris, Ph.D.

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Robert Nicks, Ed.D.  
Dorothy Sisk, Ed.D.

**Affiliate Faculty**  
Elvis Arterbury, Ph.D.  
Andrea Karlin, Ph.D.  
Charles Nix, Ed.D.

**Administrative Associate Sr.**  
Melonee Fife

\*The Educational Leadership doctoral program at Lamar University offers three cognates:

- Diversity/Multiculturalism
- Effective Schools
- Higher Education

The Ed.D. is a 60-hour program with the following course

- outline:
- 7 core classes
- 4 research
- 5 electives
- 4 dissertation

**Newsletter Editor**  
Steve Murdock

# Graduating Doctors in Educational Leadership



**Belinda J. Box, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Dual Language Implementation in Eight Texas Elementary Schools*

Dr. Box undertook an investigation of dual language implementation factors in eight Texas elementary schools. A narrative analysis of interviews with principals revealed generalizations relating to program selection, planning and preparation, implementation and maintenance challenges, and effective leadership behaviors. Recurring themes of trust, perseverance, cultural competence and vision were presented as recommendations for practicing school leaders.

Dr. Box is currently an Elementary School Principal in Deer Park Independent School District. She also serves as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Houston-Clear Lake.



**Nancy Cammack, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Comparison of Self-Perception of Computer Literacy and Skills Proficiency of College Students in Effective Level Technology Course*

Dr. Cammack conducted a quantitative study using survey design of perceived abilities and hands-on assessment of computer skill sets. She found that the age group of an entry-level technology student has the most impact on perception of skills ability as well as hands-on demonstration of those same abilities.

Dr. Cammack is currently a full-time Instructor and Program Coordinator for the Computer Information Systems program at Lamar State College-Port Arthur.



**Timothy Chargois, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Student Achievement: Identification of Impact Variables*

Dr. Chargois conducted a quasi-experimental quantitative study and found that variables, such as school and class size, ethnicity, gender, and a teacher's years of experience impacted fifth grade student performance on TAKS math and reading.

Dr. Chargois is currently the Director of Research, Planning, and Evaluation for the Beaumont Independent School District.



**Linda W. Cook, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Identification of 5th Grade Teacher Behaviors That Lead to Improved Student Achievement*

Dr. Cook conducted a narrative inquiry regarding effective teachers with respect to at-risk learners, and found that effective teachers were ongoing learners, engaged in self-reflection, varied their instructional practices to meet a variety of student learning needs, and strongly believed in the ability of all students to learn and be successful.

Dr. Cook is currently the Counselor at Dishman Elementary School in the Beaumont Independent School District.



**Terri Estes, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Teacher Efficacy and Its Relationship to Instructional Effectiveness*

Dr. Estes conducted a survey-based quantitative study and found that the relationship between teacher efficacy and student academic success was multifaceted. Factors that influenced this relationship were the teacher's tenure in the classroom, teaching advanced curricula, and teaching subjects that are tested by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills test.

Dr. Estes is currently the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Career and Technology Education at Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School in Orange, Texas.

# Graduating Doctors in Educational Leadership



**Donna L. Gober, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *The Effects of a One-Semester Wellness Course on Student Perceptions of Success in College*

Dr. Gober conducted a mixed-method study and found significant differences from pre- to post-course in freshman students' perceptions of success in five of the eight factors measured in the College Success Factor Index. Qualitative findings showed that students attributed learning outcomes and changes in perceptions to participation in the wellness course.

Dr. Gober is currently an Instructor in the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Lamar University and will join the faculty in the Department of Wellness at Southern Methodist University in the fall.



**Dorothy K. Gray, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Acculturation Factors That Influence Mexican American Students and Their Success in School*

Dr. Gray conducted a narrative inquiry of first and second generation Mexican American adolescents and found that the key factors that influenced their success in school were family support, teacher support, extra-curricular activities, personal characteristics and heritage culture.

Dr. Gray is currently an Adjunct Professor for the Pedagogy Department at Lamar University. She is also the Program Coordinator for Bilingual/ESL/Migrant/Dyslexia and Master Reading Teacher at the Region 5 Education Service Center in Beaumont, Texas.



**Wayne Guidry, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *The Effects of Looping on Students' Reading Achievement Enrolled in a Gifted and Talented Class*

Dr. Guidry conducted a quantitative study comparing reading achievement scores between looping and traditional classroom designs. Findings indicated that looping may have a positive effect on the reading achievement of students enrolled in a gifted and talented classroom.

Dr. Guidry is currently the Assistant Principal at Hamshire-Fannett Middle School.



**Pauline Colburn Hargrove, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *An Investigation of the Life Experiences and Beliefs of Teachers Exhibiting Effective Classroom Management Behaviors in Diverse Urban Schools*

Dr. Hargrove conducted a qualitative phenomenological study using narrative inquiry to investigate the life experiences and beliefs of teachers who were successful classroom managers. She found that decisions made by teachers which created respectful, caring learning environments with positive student-teacher relationships were influenced by the values, beliefs, and high expectations of their families as well as by their own passion, spirituality, self-efficacy, professional development, and sense of responsibility.

Dr. Hargrove is currently serving as Superintendent of Little Cypress-Mauriceville Consolidated Independent School District in Orange, Texas.



**Chuck Holt, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *An Investigation of the Life Experiences and Beliefs of Teachers Exhibiting Effective Classroom Management Behaviors in Diverse Rural Schools*

Dr. Holt conducted a phenomenological study utilizing a narrative inquiry process to study highly effective teachers. The study indicated a relationship between effective teachers and these factors: the ability to build relationships with students; high expectations; well-developed classroom procedures; and a belief in the relational care of students.

Dr. Holt is currently the Superintendent of Schools for Lexington Independent School District in Lexington, Texas.

# Graduating Doctors in Educational Leadership

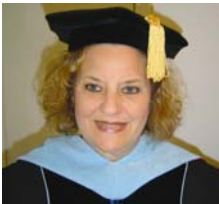


**Nola Jensen, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Academically Successful Title 1 Middle Grade Campuses: Three Case Studies*

Dr. Jensen conducted a qualitative study of three successful Title 1 middle grade campuses. She found administrators, teachers, and students operating in quiet, calm environments with academics as the central focus and the result was academic achievement.

Dr. Jensen is currently a Classroom Teacher in Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District.



**Kimber L. Knight, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *A Study Investigating the Levels of Concern in Teachers and Administrators Regarding the Adoption of a New Math Curriculum*

Dr. Knight conducted a quantitative study investigating teachers' and administrators' level of concern regarding a new math curriculum. She found that answers to the questionnaire were inconsistent with the open-ended responses, and therefore concluded that teachers' and administrators' levels of concern were difficult to determine.

Dr. Knight is currently the Assistant Principal at Regina-Howell Elementary School in the Beaumont Independent School District.



**Jay Lambert, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *How the Skills, Competencies and Knowledge Areas Necessary for Success as an Entry-Level Student Affairs Practitioner are Learned*

Dr. Lambert conducted a quantitative study, using survey methodology. He found that both practical experience and coursework were important to learning the skills, competencies, and knowledge areas necessary for success as entry-level student affairs professionals. He also found that students must be given opportunities to tie their classroom and practical experience together in a reflective and integrated way so that they will be able to adapt to their new world as professionals.

Dr. Lambert is currently the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs at Lamar University.



**Robin M. Latimer, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Democratic Values Supporting the Core Identity of Liberal Higher Education*

Dr. Latimer's survey research suggested that an array of democratic modes of participation may be one of the links theorized by Jurgen Habermas between democracy and higher education. Additionally, her research indicated that a traditional university model is recognized and valued by older Americans, who also strongly value participatory modes of democracy.

Dr. Latimer is currently the Director of Education at Boys and Girls Country in Hockley, Texas, a residence for children of families in crisis since 1971.



**Kirk Lewis, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *A Case Study of Systemic Reform to Improve Ninth Grade Advancement Toward Graduation in a Multi-High School District*

Dr. Lewis conducted a case study of systemic reform efforts in a multi-high school district and found that systemic change was possible when principals and teachers built positive relationships with their students and changed the delivery of instruction to introduce more rigor and relevance into the academic program.

Dr. Lewis is currently Superintendent of the Pasadena Independent School District.

# Graduating Doctors in Educational Leadership



**Cynthia McCartney, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Experiences of Secondary Hispanic Immigrant Students: Their Stories of Challenge and Triumph*  
Dr. McCartney conducted a narrative inquiry study of secondary Hispanic immigrant students. She identified the following four emerging themes: respect for homeland, family, friends, and others; responsibility to family; resiliency; and hope.

Dr. McCartney is currently a Teacher at Central Medical Magnet High School in Beaumont.



**Janice Perrin, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *The Role of Teacher-Student Interactions During the Guided Reading Component of Literacy Instruction*

Dr. Perrin conducted a mixed-method investigation focused on the role of teacher-student interaction during the guided reading component of literacy instruction. She found that the teaching repertoire of teachers was balanced across three interaction domains: Transmitting Information, Summarizing, and Questioning. When comparing teachers' self-reported perceptions of their teaching to analyzed video recordings of their teaching, teachers were accurate only 5% of the time.

Dr. Perrin is currently the Director of Instruction in Deer Park Independent School District.



**Paul Eric Shipman, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Effects of Seating Position on Student Performance in High School Mathematics Classrooms*

Dr. Shipman conducted a quantitative research study and found that seating position affected course performance in certain groups with respect to gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status when students were allowed to self-select, but seating had little or no effect when students were placed alphabetically.

Dr. Shipman is currently the Principal at Dishman Elementary School in Beaumont, Texas.



**Clyde W. Steelman, Jr., Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Relationships Between Expenditures and Student Performance in Chapter 41 and 42 Class 1A -3A Texas School Districts*

Dr. Steelman conducted a quantitative research study and found that Chapter 41 school districts spent more per pupil, and scored higher on the TAKS fifth and seventh grade math and reading tests compared to Chapter 42 districts.

Dr. Steelman is currently the Deputy Director of Administrative and Business Services at the Region 11 Education Service Center in Fort Worth, Texas.



**Ted Stuberfield, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *Principals Leading schools Noted for the Academic Achievement of African-American Males*

Dr. Stuberfield conducted a phenomenological study using narrative inquiry. He found that African-American male student achievement was impacted by principals who emphasized high expectations by facilitating a school environment that empowered all stakeholders, reinforced the belief that all students have the ability to achieve, and used effective instructional and motivational strategies that incorporated culturally proficient leadership.

Dr. Stuberfield is currently the Principal at Martin Elementary School in the Beaumont Independent School District.



**Mike W. Wallace, Ed.D.**

Dissertation Title: *The Lived Experience of Public School Teachers: A Phenomenological Hermeneutic Study*

Dr. Wallace conducted a hermeneutic phenomenological investigation of public school teachers across Texas and found that their perception of "Whom I am," "What I Do" and "The External Forces that affect my teaching" varied by years of experience, but not by subject or elementary/secondary assignment.

Dr. Wallace is currently Assessment Coordinator for the College of Education and Human Development at Lamar University.

# Doctoral Information

## Center for Doctoral Studies in Educational Leadership

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**We're on the Web!**

[http://dept.lamar.edu/  
leadership](http://dept.lamar.edu/leadership)

## Doctoral admission requirements:

Students will be admitted to the Ed.D. program as a cohort in the fall semester of each academic year. The Doctoral Executive Council will consider all applicants and make recommendations regarding acceptance.

Applicants should meet the requirements summarized below:

- Evidence of a completed master's degree from an accredited university in an area related to the proposed studies.
- Commitment and demonstration of interest in education as a career and to the advancement of education through professional leadership.
- Essay of approximately 500 words.
- Interview with program faculty.
- Current or previous involvement in educational leadership encompassing a number of settings, including schools, colleges and universities, health and human service agencies, and community-based organizations.
- A formula score greater than or equal to 1350 based on [GPA (last 60 hours) x 200] + Verbal GRE score + Quantitative GRE score.
- Three completed recommendations.
- Applications submitted by January 30 for early admission consideration.
- Later applications considered through March 31 or until all positions are filled.

**LAMAR UNIVERSITY**  
A Member of The Texas State University System  
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