

# UCCS LEAD PHD E-Newsletter



Ph.D. Educational Leadership,  
Research, and Policy

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS

Spring 2021

Greetings, LRF PhD Community! As we make our way through the spring semester, I am excited to share College and Department updates, news on student and alumni professional and scholarly endeavors, and important dates. For those looking to graduate in Spring 2021, please note that the last day for a spring dissertation defense is Friday, April 16th. The last day for a summer defense is July 9th. Spring commencement will be held in two formats. The virtual commencement ceremony will take place at 1 p.m., May 14, 2021. Graduates will receive diploma jackets and other materials by mail. For all graduates who would like to celebrate in person, UCCS will hold the first-ever "Picture on the Plaza" celebration the following week. Weather permitting, graduates will be able to have a professional photo taken on El Pomar Plaza. Any Spring, Summer, or Fall 2020 graduate who wants to participate in in "Picture on the Plaza" will be able to do so. As always, please feel free to contact me any time with your questions or concerns.

—Dr. Andrea Bingham



## REMINDER: DISSERTATION CREDIT REQUIREMENT

During coursework students will complete 10 credits of LEAD 8990: Doctoral Dissertation. After coursework, students must be continuously enrolled with a minimum of one credit hour of dissertation credit per semester (excluding summer) during completion of the dissertation. A total of 30 hours of dissertation credits are required for program completion; students must be enrolled in at least one dissertation credit the semester of their defense. It is the responsibility of the student to create a dissertation credit completion plan that meets the requirements of the Graduate School (a maximum of 10 dissertation credits during the fall and spring semester and seven in the summer). After successfully passing Portfolio II of the PhD program, a student must form a dissertation committee within one year; if the student has not done so, he or she may not enroll in any further dissertation credits until a committee is secured. Students should work with their dissertation committee chairs to develop a dissertation credit plan.



# CONGRATULATIONS, PhD Summer and Fall 2020 Graduates!



**CONGRATULATIONS,**  
**PhD Summer and Fall 2020 Graduates!**

**Dr. Matthew Adams**

“Investigating the Lived Experience of Teachers Interacting with Difficult Student Behavior”

Chair: Dr. Mendez

**Dr. Adric Arndt**

“Predicting Student Outcomes Using Principal Evaluation Results of SB 10-191: An HLM Approach”

Chair: Dr. Mendez

**Dr. Brandan Comfort**

“The Study of Open Enrollment Programs in Two Colorado Metropolitan Areas”

Chair: Dr. Mendez

**Dr. Holly Sandler**

“Exploring the Evolution of First-year Educators’ Dispositions toward Diverse Students and Perceptions of Performance as Culturally Responsive Educators: A Portraiture Case Study”

Chair: Dr. Mitchell

**Dr. Darrin Steele**

“The Lived Experiences of Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in an Adaptive Sports Program: A Qualitative Exploration”

Chair: Dr. Mendez

**Dr. Marjory Webster**

“Tuition Discounting: Promoting Access in American Postsecondary Education”

Chair: Dr. Witkowsky



## **SUCCESSFUL PROPOSALS FROM SUMMER/FALL 2020**

**Brandan Comfort**

“The Study of Open Enrollment Programs in Two Colorado Metropolitan Areas”

**Kathryn Starkey**

"A Policy Paradigm: Faculty Perspectives of and Experiences with Colorado Prior Learning Assessment Policy"

### **FALL 2020 RESEARCH SEMINAR**

**Dr. Christopher M. Mullin**

**Director, Strong Start to Finish, Education Commission of the States**

This Fall, the LRF department held a virtual research seminar with Dr. Christopher M. Mullin. Dr. Mullin discussed how policies at the federal, state, institutional, and departmental level create the environment within which independent actors implement practice. His session focused on how research can and can't inform the development of policy.

Visit Dr. Mullin's website [HERE](#).



### **STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD LINKS**

**[LRF PhD Student Travel and Dissertation Research Funding Request](#)**

**[UCCS Graduate School Travel Award Instructions](#)**

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Dale K. Willson is a first-year doctoral student in the Educational Leadership, Research and Policy program. He serves as the Assistant to the Dean of the Faculty and Acting Provost at Colorado College, assisting the faculty body in executing essential functions such as reviews and promotions, governance and administration, and supervision of academic administrative assistants.

Dale enrolled in the ELRP program after receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Louisiana at Monroe in 2004, and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma in 2015.



DALE K. WILLSON

From 2011 until 2018, Dale served as an active-duty Soldier and Officer, deploying to Afghanistan in 2012 and the Middle East in 2017. His spouse, Kori, is an active-duty Signal Officer at Fort Carson, with a long-term goal of becoming a defense attorney in the Southern Poverty Law Center after completing her term of service.

Dale's research interests include Veterans Affairs and Higher Education Teaching and Administration. Dale is interested in the perceptions and interactions of tenured and tenure-track faculty in higher education, and effective mentorship programs for women and people of color. After dissertation defense, he hopes to find a tenure-track position that provides an opportunity to conduct high-quality research that makes an impact on the next generation.

In his spare time, Dale enjoys listening to vinyl, culinary tourism, and jumping out of perfectly good airplanes.

## JOE PALMER



Joe Palmer is a second-year doctoral student in the Leadership, Research, and Foundations Department. Joe works as a Senior Instructor and the Assistant Director of Clinical Education the University of Colorado's Doctor of Physical Therapy (PT) program at the Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora, CO. His primary role in the PT program is coordinating and supervising two of three full time clinical experiences students are required to complete during the 2 and half years of their full-time program. Joe also teaches in the Anschutz campus interprofessional education program, PT professional development course work, and in the PT students' capstone clinical reasoning course. Joe serves on the admissions committee for the program and is the coordinator of early admission pipeline programs as part of that service.

Joe received his B.S. in Therapeutic Recreation from the University of Northern Colorado and his Doctor of Physical Therapy from Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock, PA. Joe applied to LEAD program for a number of reasons: the strong emphasis on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the strong faculty support, and perhaps most importantly, the cohort model of the program. Joe's primary research interest surround better understanding of the academic-clinical partnership between universities and clinical sites for student field work. His synthesis one project sought to understand whether or not on-site visits by a representative of the academic PT program had an effect on the clinical preceptor perceptions of partnership. Joe had two research platform abstracts accepted for the American Physical Therapy Association's annual Combined Sections Meeting based on this synthesis one study and has completed a manuscript currently in review. Joe hopes to expand this exploration of academic-clinical partnerships into better understanding what academic program interventions, such as site visits, as well as what specific preceptor characteristics best contribute to perceptions of partnership.

Joe is a native of Colorado Springs (GO Doherty Spartans!!) but currently lives in the southern portion of the Denver Metro area. Joe enjoys reading fiction, staying fit, and participating in all four seasons of mountain activities. Joe's wife, Natalie is a Senior IT Trainer for UCHHealth and they have two daughters. Libby, 21, is a senior at the University of Colorado – Boulder graduating with a degree in Chinese Language and Literature. Genna, 17, is a Junior at Grandview High School and loves choir, theater, and her job at Dutch Bros coffee.

## ALUMNI PROFILE

Brian Burnett, PhD, is a Colorado Springs native and 2010 graduate of the College of Education's LDRP PhD program. He was a member of the first cohort in 2007 and completed his work while serving as Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance at UCCS. He has held several public service leadership roles over 33 years in state government and as a financial and operations leader for flagship universities and systems in Colorado, Missouri, Minnesota and currently as Interim AVP and Chief Financial Officer of the University of Maryland, College Park.

### Dr. Brian Burnett



Dr. Burnett was recently named the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, a position he will enter later this spring. UAB is Alabama's only Level I trauma center and combined with the UAB Health System, is the state's largest single-site employer with 26,000 employees.

He has taught graduate courses in higher education finance at both UCCS and the University of Missouri and taught undergraduates as well at UCCS after completing his doctorate. He is grateful to the faculty, staff and leadership of UCCS's College of Education for their dedication and support as he completed his doctoral studies while maintaining a full time position as the campus' CFO. "I would not have had the professional opportunities that I have had over the course of my career if I did not put in the work and have the guidance as a doctoral student at COE - I am forever grateful for the program."

Here is the hyperlink to the announcement.

## "Four Ways to Handle Workplace Stress"



ELRP PhD Alum Dr. Amanda Allee recently published a series of articles on practicing healthful habits in the workplace. These articles appear in the UCCS Communique. The first in her series of articles can be found [HERE](#).

Here are a few of the highlights from the article, "Four Ways to Handle Workplace Stress:"

- 1). Distinguish between stress and stressors
- 2). Explore the underlying cause of the stressor
- 3). Develop workplace coping strategies – or switch up your existing ones
- 4). Get familiar with campus resources.

Check out the article for full discussion of these strategies.

## ELRP PhD PEER MENTORING

In fall 2021, the PhD program launched a Peer Mentoring Program where interested first-year students were paired with volunteer second-year student mentors. The program was designed to bolster “near-peer” student connections, increase first-year doctoral student success, and improve the mentoring capacity among all who chose to participate.

**Inaugural Mentee Cohort:** Patience Agana, Jeff Deickman, Ike Hubbard, Emily Kulakowski, Kari McIntyre, Danny Morales, Elizabeth Peterson, Valerie Roberts, Kate Watson, and Dale Willson

**Inaugural Mentor Cohort:** Misty DeHerrera, Jeanette Dias, Lamech Mbise, Kristi McCann, and Joe Palmer

Thank you to the mentees and mentors who have made this a successful new initiative in the Department and College of Education!



## **UCCS Mountain Lion Research Day**

Several ELRP PhD students participated in Mountain Lion Research Day this year.  
Congratulations!

### **MOUNTAIN LION RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**

Jeanette Dias: "The Impact of Delivery Mode on Student Evaluations of Teaching"

Jonathan Hood: "Student-Athlete Career Readiness"

Kristi McCann: "A Mixed Methods Study of Science Motivation and Pre-Nursing Students Success in First-year Chemistry"

Kathryn Starkey: "Policy Interpretation and Implementation: An Investigation of the Second Chance Pell Program"

## **UCCS Mountain Lion Grad Slam**

Congratulations to second year PhD student Joe Palmer, who participated in the UCCS Mountain Lion Grad Slam. The Grad Slam is a graduate student research presentation competition where students must present their research on one slide in under 3 minutes to a layperson audience. Joe's presentation was titled "Using the Partnership Success Theory to Explore Site Visits on the Academic-Clinical Partnership from the Physical Therapy Clinical Instructor Perspective." Joe says that he would recommend the experience, and explained that the process "really forced me to distill down to what is the most salient and develop that 'elevator speech.'"

# IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

(updated: July 2020)

	<b>Spring Grads 2021</b> Commencement May 2021	<b>Summer Grads 2021</b> Commencement Dec 2021
Student submit Completed Application for Admission to Candidacy forms to Department/Program	<b>Due to Program by February 5<sup>th</sup></b> (unless your program specifies an EARLIER deadline)	<b>Due to Program by June 18<sup>th</sup></b> (unless your program specifies an EARLIER deadline)
Programs Submit Application for Admission to Candidacy, along with any necessary additional forms to Graduate School: <i>(Transfer of Credit, Unclassified Credit, Unofficial Transcript)</i>	<b>Due to the Graduate School by February 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Due to the Graduate School by June 25<sup>th</sup></b>
<i>Student submit online Diploma Card</i>	<b>Through Student Portal by February 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Through Student Portal by June 18<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Last day for Final Thesis/Dissertation Defense*</b>	<b>No later than April 16<sup>th</sup></b> (Friday)	<b>No later than July 9<sup>th</sup></b> (Friday)
<b>Thesis/Dissertation to the Graduate School*</b> Electronic copy accepted; submit hard copy, binding fee, approval of format form, Signature and Agreement form to Graduate School	<b>May 13<sup>th</sup> by 5:00 pm.</b> all items must be submitted and approved by that time to be eligible for graduation	<b>August 6<sup>th</sup> by 5:00 pm.</b> all items must be submitted and approved by that time to be eligible for graduation
Program approved Candidacy Forms due to the Graduate School Dean for Final Audit to include all necessary forms: <i>(Transfer of Credit, Unclassified Credit, Unofficial Transcript)</i>	<b>By May 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>By Aug. 13<sup>th</sup></b>
Program Department Confirmed Lists due to the Dean of the Graduate School	<b>By May 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>By Aug. 13<sup>th</sup></b>