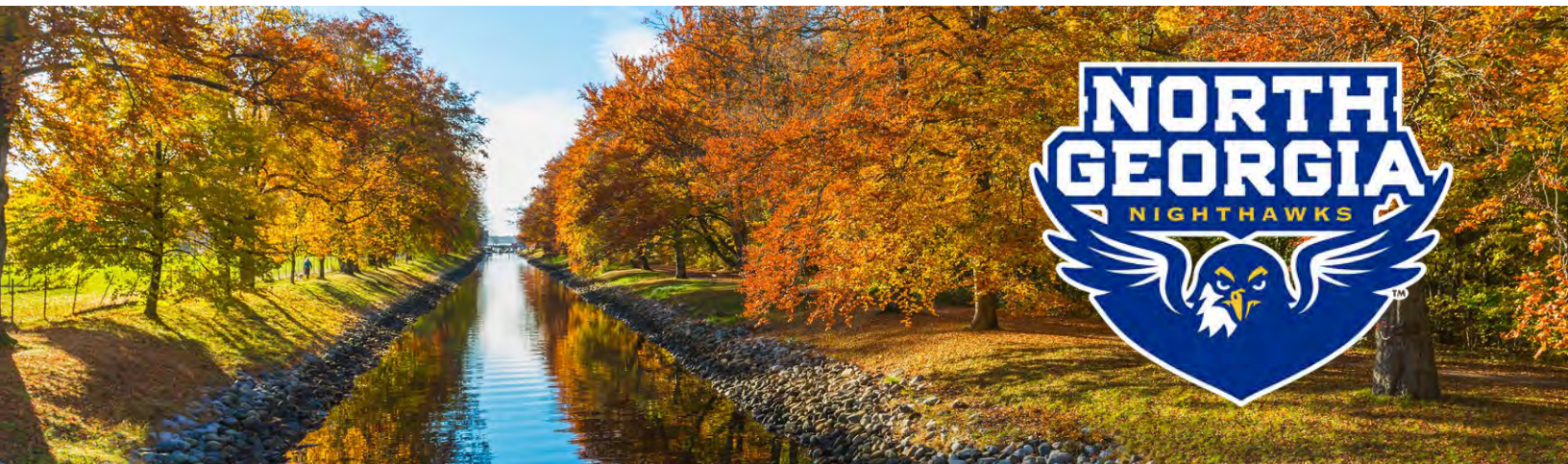


The HELP Newsletter



EDITORS' NOTES

How do you approach change? For me, I am a *slow* processor, which, for an extreme extrovert who needs to formulate everything rapidly out loud, is quite a conflicting battle. So, candidly, change is hard for me. In 2021, I proudly graduated my first doctoral advisees from our program. These were the same students who were newly entering the program when I did in 2018. Even through my excitement for their success and accomplishments upon completing their doctoral journey, I felt an initial tinge of regret that our relationship would change. But in taking time to process this newness, I realized *that is our shared goal*, for you all to transition from doctoral students into higher education leaders and our scholarly peers (and future advisory committee members!). And then I'm enthusiastically reminded that a new cohort started their doctoral journeys, and the HELP faculty get to witness the cycle all over again.

Another transition is welcoming our new HELP graduate student representative, Lenny Owens, who has also designed a new newsletter for us (and yes, it took me a minute to process!). - KRA



Life abounds with transitions. The sun sets and the moon rises, we leave home and drive to work, and, in my English courses, students frustrate themselves trying to discover perfect transition words. Of course, certain transitions carry more weight. In early 2020 I transitioned from one side of Florida to the other, from academic support to faculty, and, soon after, from being a classroom teacher to becoming a Zoom professor. Now, in fall 2021, I'm transitioning back to the classroom and also into a doctoral program. While we may define ourselves in concrete, absolute terms, it is in fact the countless transitions in our lives that incrementally redefine us day after day and from one year to the next. The challenges we all face going into another strange academic year might be complicated, stressful, and exhausting, but we will transition through them and discover the people we have yet to become. See y'all on the other side. - LFO3



Faculty Spotlight

Kelly Long, Ph.D.



Tell us about yourself.

I'm an assistant professor in the Ed.D. program. I focus on teaching quantitative methods and social justice courses currently. I will be advising doctoral students through their research process as well as supporting the program in various ways. To say I love research is an understatement. Learning new things and studying phenomena that interest me has been a passion of mine since I was little. For example, I have a particular affinity for studying maps. (I was very grateful when Google Earth became widely available.) I also enjoy studying nature, particularly bugs and plants. And I love people research, especially as it relates to socially constructed identities and how those identities shape experiences in systems like higher education institutions.

Tell us about your professional activities.

Currently, I am a peer reviewer for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. I am a current peer reviewer (and former editor) for the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. I am a former co-chair of an Equity in Education committee for the Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (a professional organization for which I have a strong affinity I'm proud to mention!). I've been a conference presenter, consultant, and author on eclectic topics such as transfer, program review, faculty staffing, enrollment management, and racial justice. I also have experience with institutional service on curriculum committees, assessment committees, accreditation teams, diversity committees, and ad hoc committees tackling issues like developmental math and English education.

What are your research and/or professional interests?

My background is in survey methodology, and one survey question that has long intrigued me is the race/ethnicity question. When the U.S. first created a national population census in 1790 (the reasons for which are very fascinating), we started asking whether someone was a slave or was free. Eventually that morphed into a question about black and white status. Later, additional races/ethnicities were added, mostly in service of immigration policy. That survey question has been around longer than perhaps any in our country, and the categories we use in the Census have permeated our culture and our beliefs about certain groups. I find the evolution of that question fascinating, along with the use of it in society as well as in research today. I've personally found that the race/ethnicity question has a lot of power in our lives. My current research is primarily focused on how people interpret data that is split by the race/ethnicity self-reported survey question.



What advice do you have for EDD students?

I think the folks that can lock down a specific topic and stay focused on it but also be able to shift if they need to shift will be well-served in the program. I juggled two related topics for far too long when I was going through it. I also think students who are able to set goals and break the work up in manageable pieces fair well. If you let too much build up, it can become an overwhelming mountain. A dissertation is a marathon, as they say, so take it one step at a time. You're not completing the whole thing in one sitting, so just do the next thing you can do to get a little further. I often felt like there was no light at the end of the tunnel, but then before I knew it, I'd taken all the steps and I was defending. It will be here before you know it, so enjoy it too! This is a very amazing thing you are doing, be proud of it!

What's your ideal student?

I think what I love so much about students is how unique everyone is—I learn so much from people who think differently from me. I also love talking research with people, which is what we are doing most of the time in the doctoral program, so anyone who wants to "nerd out" and talk research is ideal in my book!

What do you enjoy doing outside of your professional roles?

In addition to loving research of all varieties, I have a creative side too—I write fiction novels and paint. I'll also try pretty much any sport—my current favorites are skiing and riding horses. I have a hound dog that demands two hearty walks a day, and I love hanging out with my spouse-slash-best friend.

What has been the most impactful book you ever read?

Assata: An Autobiography by Assata Shakur—this book literally changed my life. I read it during the time I was working on my dissertation because I wanted to understand my topic from a very holistic perspective. I laughed and sobbed during this book—it made me deeply question some of my own beliefs.

Smuggler!



Smuggler's Special Features

Tug of War Pro, Sock Thief, Dr. Long's Dog



Student Spotlight

Kelly Britsky



Tell us about yourself.

I am a teacher, a coach, and a parent. I currently serve as the head women's basketball coach at Spartanburg Methodist College. I had stepped down from coaching and was teaching until a series of events put me back in the first chair coaching basketball. I love my new position, but it does take me away from my family. I drive I-85 and I-75 quite a bit back to Georgia on open weekends. I never intended to be coaching basketball full-time while pursuing this degree, but everything happens for a reason. I am proud to say my team won the Region X championship and assisted me in getting Coach of the Year in a challenging COVID season.

Why did you choose to attend the UNG EDD program?

Interestingly enough, I thought very highly of the University of North Georgia as a high school student, and I considered coming to UNG as a freshman. I decided to go elsewhere because I didn't want to take a swimming class. I am not a big fan of swimming, but I love to be on a boat or jet ski! Truthfully, I received an athletic scholarship somewhere else, but that swimming class did play a big part. When the opportunity to attend UNG in an online format became available, I knew it was my chance to attend a great school and accomplish my goal of obtaining a doctoral degree.

What is your goal upon graduation?

I am not sure where my journey is going to take me after graduation. I want to remain in higher education in a leadership position. However, I am uncertain if that will be in academics, student experience, or athletics. I feel like I have a great deal to offer with my experiences on various sides of higher education. I hope to find a great fit where I can use my strengths and experiences.

What is your area of research for your dissertation?

I am examining the role of social capital for women in college athletic administration. In other words, how does mentoring and networking affect women's ability to obtain the position of college athletic director? This research mirrors what women are facing in other areas of higher education as well. So far, I have loved the study while answering that old question of *is it who you know or what you know?*

What advice would you give to a new student or potential applicant?

Be excited, find a passion, and be open to fantastic new ideas from your peers. The process looks daunting initially, but your professors will guide you through it, and before you know it, it will almost be over.



What has been the most rewarding aspect of the EDD program thus far?

I have enjoyed what my cohort and professors have brought to the courses. The professional diversity of our cohort allows me to see so many different elements of higher education and different approaches to topics. Each of my peers is an expert in their field and serves as a valuable resource in each class. The professors are encouraging and challenge us to take our work to the next level. On a personal level, I have enjoyed the growth I feel as we progress through the program. Being allowed to pursue research that interests me and may further my career has been remarkable. I appreciate Dr. Adams, Dr. Lanford, and Dr. Michaels in the way they have assisted me in forming my research.

How do you manage the work-family-life-school balance?

Deep breath! My situation has changed from my first year to my third year. I will admit finding the balance is much more difficult. It is essential to spend time on your coursework every day and try not to do it all on the weekend. You have to find time to spend with the people that are important to you. The weekends are essential family time, so I try not to leave too much work for those days. It is a personal decision for everyone; if you need to spend weeknights with family, the weekends may be your workdays. Some weeks...well, you have to work whenever you can find the time!

What is your favorite place you have visited, and why?

As a military 'brat,' I have been fortunate to see many different places. I love Colorado, but probably my favorite place is Alaska. It is a special place, and I recommend anyone going to visit. I went to school there when I was younger and then years ago I was able to bring my volleyball team back to visit. I love the outdoors, trees and lakes!!

If you had to choose ONE superhero ability, what would it be and why?

During this program, I wish I could speed-read and retain all the information at an incredible rate for obvious reasons. But outside of this program, I have wanted two abilities—one, to speak every language in the world. Having the ability to communicate with everyone would be a unique experience. The second, to be able to magically renovate people's homes that need assistance. I drive by houses that need repair, and they can't afford it. I just want to be able to snap my fingers and fix problems.

If you were stranded on a desert island and had all the food and water you needed to survive, what additional two items would you bring with you?

A picture of my family and a way to have music. Don't get me wrong, a big machete and a hammock equipped with bug netting would be nice, too.





Meet the New HELP Cohort



Say Hello to Our Incoming Class!

Christopher Glover

English Professor/Writing Center Coordinator
El Camino College

I joined because I wanted the opportunity to study and write about current trends. I'm interested in equitable practices and anti-racist philosophy/praxis in writing centers. I like to hang out with Margaret Atwood, Ted Chiang, Colson Whitehead, and Phillip Roth. Also, watch a lot of baseball. (Go Giants!)

Lenny Owens

English Professor
Florida SouthWestern State College

I joined to develop my interests in higher ed's broader trends, and to study how those trends affect my teaching discipline and my students. I'm interested in faculty and student perceptions about standardized online master courses, especially first-year writing courses. I like to shoot hoops, take walks, and blindly pick shows from a hat to watch with my partner.

Holly Alderman

Assistant Director of International Business Programs
University of Georgia

I am committed to a career in higher education, and I believe the HELP program will advance my understanding of and contributions to the field. I plan to study leadership and sustainability in international business education. I enjoy outdoor recreation and gardening.

Lauren Sciocchetti

Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions
Neumann University

I am interested in researching something related to athletic recruitment and retention. I like to take my little pup Hazel to the dog park, and go to Philadelphia Union Soccer Games.

Kandyce A'see

Associate Professor of Dental Hygiene
Augusta University

I joined the HELP program to gain the knowledge, skills, and leadership qualities I need to become a better educator and future administrator. I am considering researching whether or not dental hygiene students' didactic performance is affected by their prerequisite class load. I love to swim, spend time with my family, and watch Netflix while eating warm chocolate chip cookies...with pecans!

Elnora Farmer

Lecturer and Bachelor of Applied Science Program
Coordinator, Clayton State University

I joined the HELP Program to gain more research knowledge and leadership skills in higher education so I can contribute to instructional strategies and policies to support students. I am interested in student engagement, motivation, active learning, relationships with psychosocial factors, the faculty role in student learning, and workforce/career preparedness. I enjoy time with my children, music, exercise, historical documentaries, movies, cooking and baking, trying new restaurants and relaxing beaches.

Alyona Yazykova

Lecturer of Russian
University of North Georgia

I joined the HELP program for professional and personal development. I plan to study student cultural competence in the field of foreign language education. I enjoy outdoor recreation and gardening. I like to listen to music, walk a lot, watch TV shows, read, and talk to friends and family in Russia.

Laurely Caycho

Assistant Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs
Georgia Southern University

I joined for professional development and personal growth. I would like to focus on the barriers of retention for Hispanic/Latinx students in the state of Georgia. I love crafting, listening to music, and going to the beach.

Ragh Singh

Program Manager for Strategic Global Initiatives
Northern Arizona University

I came to the United States as an international student in 2006, and I have worked in higher education for the last 12 years. I am pursuing this doctorate program at UNG to develop my research skills but also to grow further as a higher education professional. I am interested in international student mobility and the factors that influence international students in choosing their destination and institution. I enjoy cooking and baking, but travel has become a bit limited.

Anna Holcomb

Lecturer & Assistant Director, Undergraduate
Professional Communication Program, Georgia Tech

I was attracted to the HELP Program because of the cross-disciplinary plan of study, wrap-around dissertation development, and consideration of work-life balance for mid-career professionals. I hope to research the impact discipline-specific first-year interventions have on equity in college engineering programs. When I'm not teaching or studying, you can find me cheering on the Five Stripes (Atlanta United), biking around the city, or strolling along the Beltline.

Cesar Flores

Interim Dean of Enrollment
College of DuPage

I joined the HELP program because I felt it was time to pursue a terminal degree. I plan to explore the academic impact of co-curricular supports in community colleges for first-generation students. I enjoy traveling around the country, wine-tasting, and trying new food.

Anna Brown

Executive Director of University Events
University of North Georgia

I have been in Higher Education for almost 15 years, and I joined the HELP program to advance my overall knowledge, research abilities, and leadership skills. I am interested in business and academic continuity planning for recovery and resiliency after a crisis, leadership styles and their effects on crisis management in higher ed, and the factors that contribute to decision-making by leadership when organizational changes are being implemented. I enjoy going out somewhere for dinner and drinks with family and friends, or throwing on comfy clothes to watch some dramatic (not really) reality TV with my husband and solve other people's problems as if they asked for our advice.

Camille Cook

Program Specialist, GEAR UP
Savannah State University

I joined the HELP Program to become the effective and efficient leader I needed in higher education. I am interested in holistic student development, leadership, and dual-enrollment programs. I enjoy axe throwing, bowling, and painting.

Katie Fisher

Adjunct Biology Professor
HACC and RACC, Central Pennsylvania

To say I joined to "to change the world" seems a little cliché, but it is sometimes how I feel. I want to ensure that students of all demographics have an equal opportunity to succeed in their educational pursuits and improve their lives. I am very interested in student retention. Yes, we can get students in the door, but how do we make sure they are set up for success? I enjoy outdoor recreation and gardening. I like to climb, hike, bike, read science fiction, do yoga, cook, take photos, discuss philosophical overtones of cinema, and handle my [dogs' Instagram account](#).



Sree Chakraborty

Assistant Primary Teacher
Stepping Stone Montessori

A formal terminal degree in leadership was my main impetus to join the HELP EDD program. I see myself getting actively involved and leading in the following areas: career counseling, admission process support, enrollment procedures, and administration. Traveling with family is always a breather. Sometimes, a Starbucks vanilla latte works best. Fun time with kids and cooking, listening to music are my all-time mood boosters.

Kira Jatoft

Leadership Educator
Georgia Southern University

I love research and consider myself a lifelong learner—I like to challenge myself and knew this program was the next step for me. I am excited to hopefully contribute to the research field and sponge up all the knowledge I can! I want to analyze the leadership development of fraternity and sorority life members. I love to run and read. I also enjoy facetime with my family and significant other in California by watching movies together.

Manda Sexton

Assessment and User Experience Librarian/Assistant Professor, Kennesaw State University

The HELP EDD Program fits my full lifestyle. As a working professional and functioning human, I tend to be very busy and this program allows me to fit my schoolwork into those little moments I have. My research will be exploring the perceived professionalism of leaders with visible body modifications, including tattoos, multiple piercings, and dyed hair. With the general rise of visible tattoos among the next generation, and with my basic knowledge of linear time, a wider spread of the tatted-admin is inevitable. I like a live band, late night, new friends from the next table over, and a stiff drink.

Johnny Kahn

Associate Director of Academic Advising
University of North Georgia

I joined to further my knowledge of leadership in higher education to combine with 15+ years of work experience. I am interested in the national trend to use more professional academic advisors from acceptance to graduation in order to reduce the amount of excess credits at graduation. I enjoy spending time with my wife and kids by either playing outside (at the pool or on a hike), having a movie night at home, or going to a great new place for food and drinks.

Lakeita Servance

Educational Outreach Manager II
Georgia Tech

I joined the HELP Program to better understand what it means to be an effective researcher and become more visionary in developing programs that will help students. I plan to research the impact of pre-college programs on first-generation college students after they have completed their undergraduate studies at a four-year institution. To unwind I exercise, listen to music, and dance! I love a good spa day. I also enjoy traveling, trying new restaurants, and spending time with close friends and family.

Iyonka Strawn-Valec

Director, International Operations & GT Lorraine
Georgia Tech

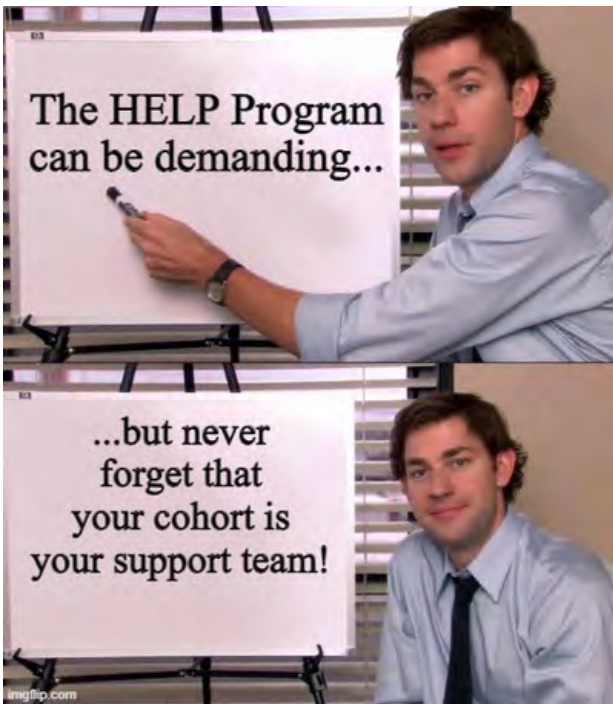
I joined this program to foster my passion for student success, international education, and further develop my research skills to continue the leadership trajectory in my field. I hope to research how higher education institutions are addressing global engagement and international collaborations in the context of global unrest. I enjoy traveling, spending time with my family, musical theatre (performing arts in general), and long-distance running.



Mental Health Corner

"I would suggest graduate students seek out community in a variety of ways," says Dr. Delia Fernandez, assistant professor of History at Michigan State University. "Graduate students should build social networks of other graduate students who can understand the very unique challenges they face."

Want more tips about about navigating graduate school? Check out "[Academia and mental health: A social scientist's tips for graduate students](#)," published by Michigan State University's College of Social Science.



Mark Your Calendar!

Fall Dates

- Fall Break:** Nov. 22-27, 2021
- Fall Classes/Finals End:** Dec. 17, 2021
- Fall Graduation Application Deadline:** Sept. 18, 2021
- Fall Graduation Date:** Dec. 17-19, 2021
- HELP Dissertation Defense Submission Deadline:** Dec. 23, 2021

Spring Registration Dates

- Spring Registration:** Oct. 26, 2021
- Spring TAP Application Deadline:** Nov. 15, 2021
- Spring TAP Registration:** Jan. 4, 2022
- Spring Classes Begin:** Jan. 10, 2022

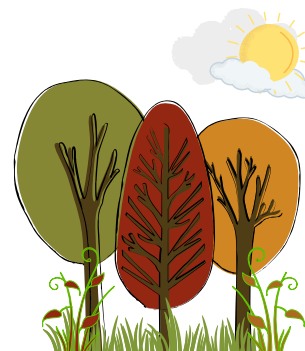
Need Research Help?

We all know we can contact our major advisors for help with a pesky research question or to get advice on our dissertation, but remember that the UNG Library is there to help, too!

The UNG Library has created LibGuide resources specifically for students in the College of Education. Check 'em out!

- [Articles, Databases, and News Sources](#)
- [Journals and Websites](#)
- [Writing the Literature Review](#)
- [Researching Learning Theorists](#)

You can also email [UNG Librarian Barbara Petersohn](#) to schedule an appointment for help with your research.





HELP Accomplishments



James Blackburn

Currently, I am working on a project to improve student's economic and financial literacy (EFL) by embedding a stock market simulation game in our Freshman Seminar Course. In five seminar courses, students will learn how to invest in stock, conduct narrative analysis on financial data, and calculate key financial ratios used in investing. This gamification approach to teaching EFL allows each student to gain insights into the economy, business, and financial wealth creation.

Anna Gibbs

First Publication!!! Akella, D., Gibbs, A., Gilbert, B., Henry, B., Lee, V., Mathis, D., & Williams, V. (2021). Critical reflection and communities of practice as professional development strategies for educators. *International journal for cross-disciplinary subjects in education*. 12(1). <https://www.doi.org/10.20533/ijcdse.2042.6364.2021.0532>

Erika Gravett

After a successful move back home to California so, in August I took on the role of Associate Vice President of Human Resources at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM). CSUSM is the newest university in the California State University system and is located in North San Diego County.

Yizhe Huang

I won the Travel Award sponsored by the Department of Defense to attend the Tech Center Project-Based Language Learning Summer Institute on August 4-11, 2021, at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. And I will be presenting the preliminary results of my dissertation, titled *Examining Intercultural Communication Competence Development through a China-U.S. Collaborative Online International Learning Project*, in December at the China and Higher Education 2021 Conference.

Ragh Singh

In June 2021, I presented at the Scuola Democratica Journal International conference on international student recruitment and in-bound mobility in the post-pandemic world order. In July 2021, I co-presented *Understanding India's National Education Policy of 2020: The Blueprint of Democratization & Internationalization of Education* at the International Association for College Admissions Counseling annual conference. In July 2021 I also facilitated a thematic networking session at the Education USA 2021 Forum on Virtual Recruitment.

Holly Alderman

I received the UGA Office of International Education's Excellence Award in Study Abroad as well as awards for Achievement and Community Building at the Terry College of Business. I served three terms on the Athens Cultural Affairs Commission and helped to found our local public art program.

Bob Myers

Awarded Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt in April 2021.



Anna Brown

I was recently honored with The Eleanor Crawford Award for the University of North Georgia at our Faculty & Staff Convocation. The Eleanor Crawford Award is named for the first staff member employed when Gainesville Junior College was founded in 1964. This award recognizes staff members for their extraordinary loyalty, dedication, and service to UNG. Travis Burdick, my hardworking Director of Audio Visual Event Services, won the Presidential Excellence Award, and is also pictured.

Brooklyn Herrera

I was awarded the Fall 2021 College Access Grant by the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. This grant will go toward providing programming in Northwest Georgia to increase college access for low-income and underrepresented populations. Dalton State College and the Believe Greater Dalton Education Partnership will work to address budgeting and financial emergency education that often leads to student withdrawals. Another focus of the grant will be addressing gaps in knowledge concerning funding college. Community FAFSA nights with parent/student receptions, workshops, and a bilingual finance education library will be accomplished through the grant. All services will be offered in both English and Spanish.



Imani Cabell

I was promoted to Assistant Director of Dual Enrollment here at UNG. Also, in conjunction with Hall County Dual Enrollment partners, we have secured the growth opportunity and expansion of our Ivester Early College program to bring in a Research 1 institution that will be partnering with us for dual enrollment purposes starting in spring 2022.





Fall 2021 HELP Workshop Series Events

What is the race variable and how can I use it in research?

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kelly Long
Date & Time: Oct. 11, 6pm EST
Format: Teams Meeting

Earning the UNG Diversity Certificate while in the HELP Program

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kelly McFaden
Date & Time: Nov. 8, 6pm EST
Format: Zoom Meeting

Higher Ed Podcasts

Classes not enough for ya? Hungry for even more higher-ed goodness?! Then check out these education podcasts!



[dotEDU](#)
[Future U Podcast](#)
[Educate](#)



Know any other great podcasts, videos, or resources about education? Let us know!

Email us and we might share your recommendation in upcoming newsletters!



HELP Newsletter Feedback?



Tell us what you think! We welcome you to complete the **HELP Newsletter Feedback survey**. Your suggestions will help us better communicate with students and faculty in the HELP Program.



Have a great fall semester!!!

Successful HELP Milestone Defense Announcements

Congratulations to those who have successfully completed your prospectus or dissertation defenses! Good luck on the rest of your research and future endeavors!

Prospectus Defenses

Sabrina Ross-Griffin: *Transformational Leadership Practices of Chief Diversity Officers*

Juman Al Bukhari: *The Evolution of Internationalization Theory in the U.S. Institutions of Higher Education: Creating a More Internationalized Environment via the Virtual Space in Small Public Institutions*

Dissertation Defenses

Haley Worst: *Perfectionism, Coping, and Anxiety in Doctor of Physical Therapy Students*

Keith Luoma: *Stakeholder Mindset of Faculty in Higher Education*

Crystal Nikki Simpson: *The Impact of an Appreciative Education Approach on Burnout Levels in Academic Advisors*

Ariel Turner: *The Lived Experiences of Women Presidents within the Boundaryless Career Framework*

Jennifer Roberts: *The Perceived Impact of Early College on Students' Self-Efficacy and Transition Post-University Matriculation*

If you need this document in an alternate format for accessibility purposes (e.g. Braille, large print, audio, etc.), please contact the Social Foundations and Leadership Education department at kathy.moody@ung.edu or 706-864-1757.