

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
PhD in Education

EDUC 876-001: Teacher Development and Education Policy
3 Credits, Spring 2021
Monday 4:30-7:10 pm (Virtual Class Meeting via Zoom¹)

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

Admission to the Ph.D. program and EDUC 870 or permission of instructor.

University Catalog Course Description

Focuses on the impact of policy actions at the local, state, and national levels on teacher preparation and continuing professional development.

Course Overview

Increased demands for accountability in U.S. public schools have inspired policy efforts at local, state and federal levels to identify ways to improve the quality of teachers and teaching. This course focuses on the policy climate and research base around teacher professional development. This course aims to identify the key issues implicit in efforts to improve teacher quality and the educational policies designed to address the supply, distribution and the development of teacher quality. Students will become sophisticated consumers and analysts of the policy and research landscape around teacher professional development.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a seminar/lecture format.

Learner Outcomes and Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Demonstrate a detailed and sophisticated understanding of major policy issues in teacher education and development.
2. Analyze and describe the legal, political, and social forces that influence decision making on these issues.
3. Understand and explain the intersection of teacher policy at various levels (local, state, federal) and research.

¹ Zoom meeting ID is: 950 9259 4414; Zoom meeting passcode is: 989277

4. Analyze existing scholarship around teacher policy and develop a new research agenda.

Required Texts

1. Donaldson, M.L. (2021). *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Teacher Evaluation: Understanding the Research and Theory*. New York, NY: Routledge.
2. All other readings, including journal articles and shorter, non-technical articles, are available through the course blackboard page. (Note: some of the journal articles may contain statistical or methodological concepts that may be unfamiliar; we will review and discuss these concepts in class). The instructor can suggest additional readings on methodological and statistical concepts and teacher policy related topics of interest.

Course Requirements and Performance Evaluation

Expectations:

1. Attend all classes. Please provide advance notice, when possible, if you must miss a class. On these occasions, please get notes and any handouts from a colleague.
2. Read all assignments carefully and thoroughly prior to class and bring copies (either hard or electronic copy) to class.
3. Actively participate in class discussions and activities and respectfully engage with one another.
4. Submit all assignments on time. All assignments are due by 4:00 p.m. on the date indicated in the *Assignments* section below and must be emailed to the instructor at msteinb6@gmu.edu. Format for in-class presentations: presentations should be prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint. Format for written assignments: Times New Roman size 12-point font, 1" page margins and 1.5" line spacing. Citations/references should adhere to the APA style guide manual.

Assignments:

1. Teacher Policy Analysis (25% of grade). Each student will identify and analyze a specific teacher policy or reform initiative of interest. In no more than 10 pages, students will describe: (i) the setting of the teacher policy (local, state, federal level); (ii) the focus and goals of the policy (e.g., compensation, evaluation, etc.); (iii) the stakeholders (i.e., who created the policy and who is the target of the policy); (iv) the design elements of the policy; (v) the debates that surround and shape the policy; and (vi) the research scholarship that informs the policy (at least six (6) scholarly, peer-reviewed articles).

Policy analysis papers are due on March 8, 2021 by 4:00 p.m., and must be emailed to the instructor at msteinb6@gmu.edu. Format: papers should be no more than 10 pages in length, using Times New Roman size 12-point font, 1" page margins and 1.5" line spacing. Citations/references should adhere to the APA style guide manual.
2. Teacher Policy Research Proposal (30% of grade). Each student will develop a research proposal to study a teacher policy issue. The aim of the research proposal is to provide students with the opportunity to broaden and deepen their reading on a topic in the teacher policy literature that is not only central to the course but also relevant to their doctoral studies. In an essay no longer than 15 pages, students will: (i) select an issue or topic in teacher policy that may also be relevant to their doctoral research (e.g., teacher

evaluation); (ii) describe in detail the state of knowledge on the selected topic (i.e., review the existing literature); (iii) describe the empirical and methodological approaches that have been taken to address this topic in the existing education policy literature; (iv) describe the proposed research setting to study this issue (i.e., specific teacher policy setting, data, and empirical methods); and (v) propose a complementary and/or alternative approach to studying this issue (i.e., a research agenda).

Final papers are due on April 26, 2021 by 4:00 p.m., and must be (i) emailed to the instructor at msteinb6@gmu.edu. Format: papers should be no more than 15 pages in length, using Times New Roman size 12-point font, 1” page margins and 1.5” line spacing. Citations/references should adhere to the APA style guide manual.

By March 15, 2021, please email the instructor a description of the topic you plan to examine in the teacher policy research proposal and why this topic is of interest. The description should be no longer than 1-2 paragraphs in length.

3. Presentation of Teacher Policy Research Proposal (20% of grade). Each student will present their teacher policy research proposal in a final presentation. Students will present their work on either April 12, 19 or 26. Students will have 25-30 minutes each to present their final paper. All presentations should be prepared in Microsoft PowerPoint (and should be emailed to the instructor prior to the individual’s presentation – no later than 4pm on the day of the individual presentation). Each individual student presentation will be followed by 20-30 minutes of class discussion and feedback. The structure of the presentation should follow that of the teacher policy research proposal (see *Assignments #2*, above).
4. In-Class Discussion/Participation (25% of grade). The success of any doctoral course depends on the active and persistent engagement of all members of the class. As a seminar, this course requires that students complete all readings prior to class and are prepared to substantively and actively participate in class discussions. Each student’s discussion/participation grade is based on attendance and participation in all scheduled class meetings. Students should be prepared to offer comments, questions and/or observations about each of the scheduled and assigned readings and the in-class team/individual presentations. Each week, students will email the instructor (msteinb6@gmu.edu) 1-2 questions about the week’s readings by 12 pm (noon) on the day of class.

Grading:

This course is graded on the Graduate Regular scale (see: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/>). Cumulative points corresponding to each grade are as follows:

A+ 97-100	A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 70-79
A 93-96	B+ 87-89	B- 80-82	F ≤ 69

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy

Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

CLASS SCHEDULE

Dates and topics are tentative. The instructor will notify students of any changes to the class schedule prior to each session. Readings and assignments for each topic are listed below and should be completed prior to the class in which the topic is discussed. * indicates suggested (though not required) readings.

JANUARY 25 (Session 1)

Topic: Introduction to the Course / Overview of Teacher Policy & Research

Readings for this class:

- No readings

Assignments for this class:

- No assignments due
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FEBRUARY 1 (Session 2)

Topic: The Impact and Distribution of Teachers

Readings for this class:

- Goldhaber (2002). The mystery of good teaching. *Education Next*, 2(1), 50-55.
 - Kalogrides, D., Loeb, S., & Beteille, T. (2013). Systematic sorting: Teacher characteristics and class assignments. *Sociology of Education*, 86(2), 103–123.
 - Kraft, M. A. (2019). Teacher effects on complex cognitive skills and social-emotional competencies. *Journal of Human Resources*, 54(1), 1-36.
 - Murnane, R. J., & Steele, J. L. (2007). What is the problem? The challenge of providing effective teachers for all children. *The Future of Children*, 15-43.
 - *Aaronson, D., Barrow, L., & Sander, W. (2007). Teachers and student achievement in the Chicago public high schools. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 25(1), 95-135.
 - *Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., & Rockoff, J. E. (2014). Measuring the impacts of teachers II: Teacher value-added and student outcomes in adulthood. *American Economic Review*, 104(9), 2633-79.
 - *Goldhaber, D., Lavery, L., & Theobald, R. (2015). Uneven playing field? Assessing the teacher quality gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. *Educational Researcher*, 44(5), 293-307.
 - *Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A., & Kain, J. F. (2005). Teachers, schools, and academic achievement. *Econometrica*, 73(2), 417-458.
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FEBRUARY 8 (Session 3)

Topic: Pathways into Teaching

Readings for this class:

- Boyd, D. J., Grossman, P. L., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2009). Teacher preparation and student achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 31(4), 416-440.
 - Dee, T., & Goldhaber, D. (2017). Understanding and addressing teacher shortages in the United States. *The Hamilton Project*.
 - Glazerman, S., Mayer, D., & Decker, P. (2006). Alternative routes to teaching: The impacts of Teach for America on student achievement and other outcomes. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25(1), 75-96.
 - Von Hippel, P.T., & Bellows, L. (2018). Rating teacher-preparation programs: Can value-added make useful distinctions? *Education Next*, 18(3), 34-42.
 - * Koedel, C., Parsons, E., Podgursky, M., & Ehlert, M. (2015). Teacher preparation programs and teacher quality: Are there real differences across programs? *Education Finance and Policy*, 10(4), 508-534.
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FEBRUARY 15 (Session 4)

Topic: Teacher Recruitment and Hiring

Readings for this class:

- Goldhaber, D., Grout, C., & Huntington-Klein, Nick. (2017). Screen twice, cut once: Assessing the predictive validity of applicant selection tools. *Education Finance and Policy*, 12(2), 197-223.
 - Jacob, B.A., Rockoff J.E., Taylor, E. S., Lindy, B. & Rosen, R. (2018). Teacher applicant hiring and teacher performance: Evidence from DC public schools. *Journal of Public Economics*, 166, 81-97.
 - Lindsay, C.A., Blom, E., & Tilsley, A. (2017). Diversifying the classroom: Examining the teacher pipeline. Retrieved from the Urban Institute:
<https://www.urban.org/features/diversifying-classroom-examining-teacher-pipeline>
 - Rockoff, J., Jacob, B.A., Kane, T.J., & Staiger, D.O. (2011). Can you recognize an effective teacher when you recruit one? *Education Finance and Policy*, 6(1), 43-74.
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FEBRUARY 22 (Session 5)

Topic: Teacher Professional Development

Readings for this class:

- Kraft, M., Blazar, D., & Hogan, D. (2018). The effect of teacher coaching on instruction and achievement: A meta-analysis of the causal evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 88(4), 547-588.
 - Papay, J.P., & Kraft, M. (2014). Can professional environments in schools promote teacher development? Explaining heterogeneity in returns to teaching experience. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 36(4), 476-500.
 - Steinberg, M. & Sartain, L. (2015). Does teacher evaluation improve school performance? Experimental evidence from Chicago's Excellence in Teaching Project. *Education Finance and Policy*, 10(4), 535- 572.
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- * Ronfeldt, M., Brockman, S.L., & Campbell, S.L. (2018). Does cooperating teachers' instructional effectiveness improve preservice teachers' future performance? *Educational Researcher*, 47(7), 405-418.
 - *Jackson, K., & Bruegmann, E. (2009). Teaching students and teaching each other: The importance of peer learning for teachers. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 1(4), 85-108.
 - *Papay, J.P., Taylor, E.S., Tyler, J.H., & Laski, M. (2020). Learning job skills from colleagues at work: Evidence from a field experience using teacher performance data. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 12(1), 359-388.
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MARCH 1 (Session 6)

Topic: Incentivizing Teacher Performance

Readings for this class:

- Allegretto, S., & Mishel, L. (2020, September 17). Teacher pay penalty dips but persists in 2019. *Economic Policy Institute*.
 - Fulbeck, E.S. (2014). Teacher mobility and financial incentives: A descriptive analysis of Denver's ProComp. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 36(1), 67-82.
 - Lam, P.D., Tuan, N.D., & Springer, M.G. (2020). Teacher merit pay: A meta-analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*.
 - Will, M., & Sawchuck, S. (2018, March 30). Teacher pay: How salaries, pensions, and benefits work in schools. *Education Week*. Retrieved from: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/teacher-pay/>
 - *Temin, P. (2003). Low Pay, Low Quality. *Education Next*, 3(3), pp. 8-13.
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MARCH 8 (Session 7)

Topic: Teacher Performance Evaluation I

Readings for this class:

- *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Teacher Evaluation*, Chp# 1, 3
- Steinberg, M.P., & Donaldson, M.L. (2016). The new educational accountability: Understanding the landscape of teacher evaluation in the post-NCLB era. *Education Finance and Policy*, 11(3), 340-359.
- Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., & Keeling, D. (2009). *The widget effect: Our national failure to acknowledge and act on differences in teacher effectiveness*. The New Teacher Project.
- * Cantrell, S., & Kane, T.J. (2013). Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project's three-year study. *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*.

Assignments for this class:

- Teacher Policy Analysis Due
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MARCH 15 (Session 8)

Topic: Teacher Performance Evaluation II

Readings for this class:

- *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Teacher Evaluation*, Chp# 5, 6
- Dee, T.S., & Wyckoff, J. (2017) A lasting impact. *Education Next*, 17(4).
- Sartain, L., & Steinberg, M.P. (2016). Teachers' labor market responses to performance evaluation reform: Experimental evidence from Chicago Public Schools. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 51(3), 615-655.
- Steinberg, M.P., & Garrett, R. (2016). Classroom composition and measured teacher performance: What do teacher observation scores really measure? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 38(2), 293-317.
- *Cullen, J.B., Koedel, C., & Parson, E. (2021). The compositional effect of rigorous teacher evaluation on workforce quality. *Education Finance and Policy*, 16(1), 7-41.
- *Dee, T., & Wyckoff, J. (2015). Incentives, selection, and teacher performance: Evidence from IMPACT. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 34(2), 267-297.
- *Garrett, R. & Steinberg, M.P. (2015). Examining teacher effectiveness using classroom observation scores: Evidence from the randomization of teachers to students. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 37(2), 224-242.
- *Steinberg, MP., & Sartain, L. (2021) What explains the race gap in teacher performance ratings? Evidence from Chicago Public Schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.
- *Steinberg, M.P., & Sartain, L. (2015). Does better observation make better teachers? *Education Next*, 15(1).
- *Taylor, E., and Tyler, J. (2012). The effect of evaluation on teacher performance. *American Economic Review*, 102(7), 3628-3651.

Assignments for this class:

- Description of teacher policy research proposal topic due
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MARCH 22 (Session 9)

Topic: Teacher Labor Markets: Mobility & Retention

Readings for this class:

- Atteberry, A., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2017). Teacher churning: Reassignment rates and implications for student achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 39(1), 3-30.
 - Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2005). Explaining the short careers of high-achieving teachers in schools with low-performing students. *The American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings*, 95(2), 166-171.
 - Garcia, E., & Weiss, E. (2019, April 16). U.S. schools struggle to hire and retain teachers. *Economic Policy Institute*.
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- Strauss, V. (2017, November 27). Why it's a big problem that so many teachers quit – and what to do about it. *Washington Post*.
 - * Ronfeldt, M., Loeb., S., & Wyckoff, J. (2013). How teacher turnover harms student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(1), 4-36.
 - *Steinberg, M.P., & Yang, H. (2020, December). *Teacher effectiveness and improvement in charter and traditional public schools*. Washington D.C.: Thomas B. Fordham Institute.
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MARCH 29 (Session 10)

Topic: Accountability Policy and Teacher Response

Readings for this class:

- Feng, L., Figlio, D., & Sass, T. (2010). School accountability and teacher mobility. CALDER Working Paper (No. 47).
 - Ingersol, R., Merrill, L., & May, H. (2016). Do accountability policies push teachers out? *Educational Leadership*, 73(8), 44-49.
 - Neal, D. & Schanzenbach, D. (2010). Left behind by design: Proficiency counts and test-based accountability. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 92(2), 263-283.
 - Clotfelter, C.T., Ladd, H.F., Vigdor, J.L., & Diaz, R.A. (2004). Do school accountability systems make it more difficult for low-performing schools to attract and retain high-quality teachers? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 23(2), 251-271.
 - *Jacob, B., & Levitt, S. (2003). Rotten apples: An investigation of the prevalence and predictors of teacher cheating. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 118(3), 843-877.
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APRIL 5 (Session 11)

Topic: TBD

APRIL 12 (Session 12)

Topic: Student Presentations of Teacher Policy Research Proposal

APRIL 19 (Session 13)

Topic: Student Presentations of Teacher Policy Research Proposal

APRIL 26 (Session 14)

Topic: Student Presentations of Teacher Policy Research Proposal

Assignments for this class:

- Teacher Policy Research Proposal Due
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