



HIED News

UALR Higher Education

December 2011

Upcoming Events

- **HIED Quals Orientation** The orientation meeting for the Spring, 2012 HIED Qualifying Examinations will be held on **Friday, December 2** from 3-5 in DH 408
- **Spring, 2012 HIED written qualifying exams** will be held on **Saturday, February 11**, **Friday, February 17** and **Saturday, February 18**
- The **2012 NASPA Annual Conference** will be held in Phoenix **March 10-14**
- The **2012 ACPA Convention** will be held in Louisville **March 24-28**
- The **2012 AERA Annual Meeting** will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada **April 13-17**

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Complete College America's Completion Innovation Challenge

Arkansas has been awarded \$1 million to fund efforts to increase college completion. The grant, financed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is part of Complete College America's Completion Innovation Challenge.

Thirty-three states competed for 10 grants. As a winning state, Arkansas will have 18 months to implement innovative, high-impact, college-completion initiatives to enhance student success and close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented

populations.

ADHE will lead Arkansas' involvement in the Completion Innovation Challenge, working to transform remediation and accelerate some certificate-and-degree programs. Participating institutions in the Challenge include Arkansas State University-Beebe, Arkansas Northeastern College in Blytheville, North Arkansas College in Harrison, Southern Arkansas University-Tech in East Camden, Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas Tech Uni-

versity in Russellville, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff and the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

Explore detailed summaries of the 10 states' (Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia) winning proposals

[http://
www.completecollege.org
/path_forward/
innovation_challenge/](http://www.completecollege.org/path_forward/innovation_challenge/)

Get Involved in the Graduate Student Association!

The Graduate Student Association includes every graduate student who is currently enrolled at UALR. The Association represents the ideas, issues, and needs of the graduate students and works together to institute change to improve the life-

style and graduate experience of the students who attend UALR.

The GSA is having an informational meeting on December 6th in DSC Ledbetter Room A from 3:00- 5:00pm. The agenda includes speakers from the UALR graduate school,

upcoming events, and a chance to sign up for the GSA council. Everyone is invited and there will be prizes and free food for those who attend.

If you are interested or would like to attend please RSVP to MrCox2@ualr.edu

Finishing a BIG Academic Project

The end of the semester is just a couple of weeks away, and while some have already registered for Spring 2012 courses, a select few are graduating. First of all, congratulations, but I also have a question—How are you celebrating? A blog post from the Chronicle of Higher Education compares graduation to a wedding. Something that took a lot of time to plan, and when it was over, there was a possibility of post project depression. While the blog post was interesting, it was the comment section that was a real learning experience. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/brainstorm/how-did-you-celebrate-completing-your-dissertation/22156>

So how did respondents celebrate? *lauracbird* celebrated with decongestants rather than champagne since she had the worst cold of her life after finishing. Illness seemed to be a common theme, along other stress inducing activities like moving or starting a new job. For those of us still looking forward to graduation, maybe now is the time to plan the celebration whether it's a well timed thank you to the makers of Mountain Dew or the purchase of a new kayak. For our newest graduates this semester, put away the caffeine and relax.

If you intend to enroll in HIED 8399: Dissertation Seminar in the Spring, please note that your chair's approval of a dissertation prospectus is a condition of obtaining permission to enroll in the course.

*Friday, December 2 is the deadline for your chair's ***approval*** (not submission) of a dissertation prospectus.*

Doctoral Qualifying Exams— Spring 2012

The Orientation meeting for the HIED Spring, 2012 Doctoral Qualifying Examinations will be held on Friday, December 2 from 3-5pm in Dickinson Hall, Room 408.

If you're planning to sit for Qualifying Exams in the Spring (scheduled for Saturday, February 11 from 1-5pm, Friday, February 17 from 1-5pm, and Saturday, February 18 during 9am-12noon and 1-4pm, location TBA), or if you'd like to gain insights into the process for a future exam administration, it is strongly recommended that you attend this meeting. It will address the scope, nature, and direction of the Written and Oral Qualifying Exams, and general expectations for student performance.

In order to sit for Quals in the Spring, you will need to submit both the 'Application for Qualifying Examination' form and 'Appointment of Supervisory or Examining Committee' form for review and approval. Completed forms are due by 5pm, Friday, December 2. If you plan to attend the organizational meeting, it is most convenient for you to submit the forms at the meeting. After the meeting, information letters will be mailed to all students who have been approved to sit for Quals in February.

If you have questions about the Quals process, please attend the Orientation meeting. If you would like to receive a copy of the 2011-2012 Student Guide to Qualifying Exams, please e-mail Dr. Jim Vander Putten at jvputten@ualr.edu.

Influences on the commitment to and focus of community engagement at colleges and universities : a multiple-case study

Author: **Melissa M. Hawkins**

Chair: T. Gregory Barrett, Committee Members: Diane Gilleland, Michael Hemphill, and Andrew Hunt.

Colleges and universities have embraced the importance of community engagement, not only as a tool for student development but also, as a responsibility of the institution to address societal needs and problems. Research is lacking, however, on how institutions with varying missions, histories and cultures perceive their role in the community, what motivates an institution's commitment to community engagement and what influences the focus of those initiatives. The qualitative study investigates the external and internal influences that may impact an institution's commitment to community engagement, particularly why and how a college or university responds to community needs.

The comparative study juxtaposes community engagement in four very distinct institutions within the state of Arkansas. It is the first known qualitative study that examined community engagement from the perspective of campus leadership, faculty, staff and students from a diverse sample of institutions including historically Black, religiously affiliated, state supported, private, selective, open-enrollment, rural and urban. The researcher conducted both structured and semi-

structured interviews with campus administrators, faculty, staff and students; observed community engagement activities; and, reviewed institutional materials to better understand the history, culture and mission of each institution as well as identify influences on the commitment to and focus of community engagement.

The primary research question that guided the study was: *What influences a college's or a university's commitment to and focus of community engagement?*

The study found that there are multiple influences on an institution's commitment to and focus of community engagement. The student demographic and interests of the campus leader were found to play important roles in determining an institution's commitment to and focus of community engagement. The importance of recognition of community engagement efforts by outside professional organizations did not seem to be an influence when determining how and why an institution engages in the community. Recognition by the community that a need was being met, as well as evidence of developing student awareness of community needs, seemed to have a stronger impact on how and why an institution engages in the community.

Did you know?

The HIED faculty has an updated guide for HIED dissertations. Contact your advisor for a copy.

Conference Presentations

Fincher, M., Muhammed, A., Wayland, R. Brandford, A., Johnson, C. May, A., Rashad, D., Sansom, M., Ward, J., & Wilson, V. (2011). Developmental education and financial aid: Advising toward failure. *Council for the Study of Community Colleges: 2011 Conference*, New Orleans, LA.

White, P. J., & Barrett, T. G. (2011). The decision to stay: A qualitative multiple-case study exploring college choice and persistence factors of second-year students at religiously affiliated institutions. Research Panel Presentation at the meeting of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Vander Putten, J. (2011). Faculty social origins, productivity, and institutional type: Reexamining historical data. AERA, 2011. New Orleans, LA.

Vander Putten, J., & Wilkinson, L. (2011). Senior humanities faculty at comprehensive institutions: Maintaining vitality over the career span. AERA, 2011. New Orleans, LA.

Nolen, A., & Vander Putten, J. (2011). Qualitative data analysis: Comparing results from constant comparative and two computer software methods. AERA, 2011. New Orleans, LA.

Ellis, S., Vander Putten, J., & Nolen, A. (2011). The talented tenth revisited: Socialization and retention for black junior faculty at HBCUs. ASHE, 2011. Charlotte, NC.

HIED Student Highlights

Brad Patterson, Ed.D. student, accepted the position of Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life Research, Evaluation, and Assessment at UALR.

Stan Ellis, Ed.D. student, presented his doctoral research at ASHE in Charlotte, NC. The title of the presentation was "The talented tenth revisited: Socialization and retention for black junior faculty at HBCUs." Stan co-presented with Dr. Jim Vander Putten and Dr. Amanda Nolen.

Job Search Resources:

Chronicle of Higher Education

<http://chronicle.com/>

Higher Ed Jobs

<http://www.higheredjobs.com/>

HIED Alumni Highlights

Dr. Jan Austin, Ed.D., received a promotion recently from Director of UALR's Office of Campus Life to UALR Assistant Vice-Chancellor, Student Life and Leadership Development.

Brittany Mathews, M.A. College Student Affairs, has accepted the position of Student Development Specialist in the Office of Campus Life at UALR

Dr. Patti Jo White, Ed.D. in Student Affairs Administration, 2009, accepted a position as Director of the Harding University North Little Rock Professional Center, and also became an Assistant Professor in the Harding University College of Education.

We are interested in your success! Please e-mail Willa Williams at wwilliams@ualr.edu with details about your new job, promotion, or conference presentations.

HIED Grants and Fellowships

Spend some time on the Internet and you can find HIED financial opportunities such as grants, internships or fellowships. For students in M.A. Student Affairs, there are graduate internships available at SUNY-Brockport <http://www.brockport.edu/ems/interns>.

You can donate to the Campaign for the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Check out the website for details on how to donate to HIED at

<http://ualr.edu/campaign>

AIR has posted dissertation grant proposals at www.airweb.org/grants, so has AERA <http://www.aera.net/grantsprogram/>. These funding opportunities can range from over \$20,000 to the \$300 grant from the Standing Committee for Multicultural Affairs (CMA) of the American College Personnel Association.

Keep on reading e-mails on GREENPEN for updates on new grants and do some searching at local, regional, and national grant sites and professional organizations.