Mabel Sanchez PhD ’21 is a research assistant under the mentorship of faculty at the USC Rossier Center for Education, Identity and Social Justice. Her research is focused on academic achievement and issues related to intersectional identities such as race, religion and gender.

The Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Education Policy (PhD) program will prepare you to excel as a scholar who conducts research to inform policies that will improve learning, equity and access for students across the nation and around the world. Utilizing USC Rossier’s mentorship model, you will work closely with a faculty adviser aligned with your research interests throughout all four years of the program. Additionally, you will benefit from the resources of a Tier 1 research university as well as a supportive student culture and school leadership that is committed to putting research into practice.
PROGRAM FACULTY

USC Rossier’s renowned faculty is committed to training the next generation of scholars and researchers to the highest standards. The school’s mission is reflected in the faculty’s varied research agendas in Education Psychology, Higher Education, K-12 Education Policy and Teacher Education.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Complete applications are due by December 1.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Online application
- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution (master’s degree preferred)
- Purpose statement
- Writing sample
- Three letters of recommendation
- Scanned copy of official transcripts from all postsecondary institutions attended
- $90 nonrefundable application fee
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score (optional and not expected)

RESEARCH CENTERS

- Core block (all cohort students take the same five core courses)
- Concentration block (education courses)
- Research block (methods courses)
- Cognate block (courses outside school of education)
- Dissertation block

COMPETITIVE FUNDING AND BENEFITS

All students admitted to the PhD program receive generous financial assistance for four years, including tuition, $32,000 annual stipend for work as a research or teaching assistant for 20 hours per week, health and dental insurance premium coverage, access to USC’s student health center and professional development opportunities. You have the option to apply for external fellowships and grants in lieu of the USC-provided stipend.

DEPARTMENTAL FACULTY

- Stephen Aguilar
  - Educational Psychology
  - Role of educational technologies in promoting equity; studying the design, efficacy and motivational implications of learning analytics
- Mary Helen (Mhordino-Yang
  - Education Policy and Leadership
  - Examining the role of cultural capital in educational attainment
  - Exploring the educational experiences of students from low-income backgrounds
- Erika A. Patall
  - Educational Research
  - Determinants, development and function of motivation; classroom support for motivation and learning; use and development of research synthesis and meta-analytic methods
- Gae Sinatra
  - Higher Education
  - Understanding the cognitive and motivational processes that lead to successful learning in science
- Brendha Tyres
  - Human Development
  - Role of the internet in child and adolescent development with special attention to academic performance, including STEM, mental health and behavior; digital and media literacy interventions

HIGHER EDUCATION

- Darnell Cole
  - Education Policy and Leadership
  - Race/ethnicity; diversity; college student experiences; learning
- Shaun N. Harper
  - Education Policy and Leadership
  - Race and equity in education and social contexts; student success in higher education; urban high schools; boys and men of color; intercollegiate athletics
- Adrian H. Huerta
  - Education Policy and Leadership
  - Boys and young men of color; college access and equity; gang-associated youth; sociocultural factors that promote educational equity
- Adrianna Kezar
  - Higher Education
  - Change process in higher education institutions; role of leadership in creating change
- Tatiana Melguizo
  - Education Policy and Leadership
  - Association of student trajectories and specific institutional characteristics on the persistence and educational outcomes of minority and low-income students

TEACHER EDUCATION

- Yasemin Copur-Gencturk
  - Mathematics Education
  - Mathematics education with a focus on teacher knowledge, teaching practices and teacher development, and how these areas relate to student learning

FACULTY

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

- Stephen Aguilar
  - Educational Psychology
  - Role of educational technologies in promoting equity; studying the design, efficacy and motivational implications of learning analytics
- Mary Helen (Mhordino-Yang
  - Education Policy and Leadership
  - Examining the role of cultural capital in educational attainment
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What sets the USC Rossier PhD program apart?

**WORLD-RENOVATED FACULTY:** Receive mentorship and support from leading faculty as you collaborate in interdisciplinary endeavors with major impact.

**PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANTSHIPS:** Earn a stipend while conducting experience-building work as a research or teaching assistant.

**INDIVIDUALIZED PROGRAM OF STUDY:** Choose courses in the second year that reflect your research interests, provide interdisciplinary perspectives and incorporate diverse methodologies.

**DIVERSE STUDENT BODY:** Benefit from the varied educational, cultural and professional experiences of your peers—many of whom have previous experience as classroom teachers, student affairs professionals, researchers and education leaders.

**COHORT MODEL:** Develop close bonds with your cohort as you take all classes together during your first year and then provide mutual support that will last throughout the program and beyond.

**YOUR MISSION AND OUR MISSION ALIGNED**

The USC Rossier School of Education prepares leaders to advance educational equity in urban settings and beyond. Ranked as one of the nation's premier education schools by *U.S. News and World Report*, USC Rossier draws on innovative thinking and collaborative research to improve learning opportunities and outcomes, address disparities, challenge inequitable systems of power and solve the most intractable problems in education.

**LEARN MORE**

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