PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Doctor of Philosophy in Education (PhD) program will prepare you to excel as a scholar who conducts high quality, consequential research promoting educational excellence and social justice. Utilizing USC Rossier's mentorship model, you will collaborate closely with a faculty advisor 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.

YOUR MISSION AND OUR MISSION ALIGNED

The USC Rossier School of Education prepares leaders to advance educational equity in urban settings and beyond. Our PhD program 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.

DISTINCTIVE BENEFITS

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

ASSISTANTSHIPS: Students gain knowledge and skills in their research and teaching assistantships under the guidance of their faculty advisor.

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.

Alvin Makori is a research assistant under the mentorship of Dr. Patricia Burch at the USC EdPolicy Hub. His research focuses on how students navigate through major learning disruptions (e.g. COVID-19, gentrification).

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- Core block (all students take the same four 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 a research and teaching assistantship award for four years, which includes a $40,442 annual stipend for living expenses, up to 12 units of tuition per semester for classes that apply for your degree, payment of health and dental premiums as well as the student health center fee and professional development opportunities. Students are expected to devote 20 hours per week to their research and teaching assistantship duties. You also have the option to apply for external fellowships and grants in lieu of the USC-provided stipend.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Complete applications are due by December 1.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Online application
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
- Résumé/CV
- Personal statement
- Writing sample
- Three letters of recommendation
- Scanned copy of official transcripts from all postsecondary institutions attended
- $90 nonrefundable application fee
- TOEFL or IELTS test scores for international students

PROGRAM FACULTY

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

STEPHEN AGUILAR
Associate Professor of Education; Associate Director for the USC Center for Generative AI and Society
Role of educational technologies in promoting equity; studying the design, efficacy and motivational implications of learning analytics, examines the role self-regulated learning plays on college going outcomes

JESSICA T. DECUIR-GUNBY
Professor of Education
Race and racial identity development; critical race theory; mixed methods research; emotions and coping

MARY HELEN IMMORDINO-YANG
Fahmy and Donna Attallah Chair in Humanistic Psychology; Director of the USC Center for Affective Neuroscience, Development, Learning and Education
Neural, psychophysiological and psychological bases of social emotion; self-awareness and culture and their implications for learning; development and schools

ERIKA A. PATALL
Professor of Education
Determinants, development and function of motivation; classroom support for motivation and learning; use and development of research synthesis and meta-analytic methods

GALE SINATRA
Stephen H. Crocker Professor of Education
Understanding the cognitive and motivational processes that lead to successful learning in science

BRENDESHA TYNES
Dean's Professor of Educational Equity; Director of the Center for Empowered Learning and Development with Technology
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

TEACHER EDUCATION

YASEMIN COPUR-GENCTURK
Associate Professor of Education
Mathematics education with a focus on teacher knowledge, teaching practices and teacher development, and how these areas relate to student learning

HIGHER EDUCATION

DWUANA BRADLEY
Assistant Professor of Education; Pullias Center for Higher Education
Anti-Black sentiment across the P-20 pipeline; theories of anti-Blackness; critical socio-legal theories and critical qualitative methodologies; legislative influence on emergent tier-one universities and HBCU-HSI institutions

DARNELL COLE
Professor of Education; Co-Director of the Center for Education, Identity and Social Justice
Race/ethnicity; diversity; college student experiences; learning

SHAUN R. HARPER
Clifford H. and Betty C. Allen Chair in Urban Leadership; Executive Director of the USC Race & Equity Center; University & Provost Professor
Race and equity in education and social contexts; student success in higher education and urban high schools; boys and men of color; intercollegiate athletics

ADRIAN HUERTA
Assistant Professor of Education; Pullias Center for Higher Education; USC EdPolicy Hub
Boys and young men of color; college access and equity; gang-associated youth; socioecological factors that promote educational equity

ROYEL M. JOHNSON
Associate Professor of Education; USC Race & Equity Center; Pullias Center for Higher Education
Racial equity; education access; student success; education policy; carcerality in education; foster care; juvenile justice

ADRIANNA KEZAR
Dean's Professor of Leadership; Wilbur-Kieffer Professor of Higher Education; Director of the Pullias Center for Higher Education
Change process in higher education institutions; role of leadership in creating change

JULIE POSSELT
Professor of Education; Executive Director, Center for Enrollment Research, Policy & Practice; Pullias Center for Higher Education
Social and organizational analyses of equity, access and wellbeing in higher education; graduate education and the professoriate; research methods

K–12 EDUCATION POLICY

PATRICIA BURCH
Professor of Education; Faculty Co-Director of the USC EdPolicy Hub
Patterns and drivers of school commercialism; implications for the form and delivery of public education, with specific attention to equity and quality

HURIYA JABBAR
Associate Professor of Education; USC EdPolicy Hub
Critical policy analysis; market-based reforms and privatization in education; equity and access in school choice policy; teacher job choices, retention, and recruitment; links between systemic inequality, housing, and schools.

JULIE MARSH
Professor of Education; USC EdPolicy Hub
Implementation and effects of accountability and instructional improvement policies; school districts as central actors in educational reform; use of data to guide decision-making; politics of educational reform

PEDRO A. NOGUERA
Emery Stoops and Joyce King Stoops Dean
Sociology, race, equity, urban education; Expert on the ways in which schools are influenced by social and economic conditions, as well as by demographic trends in local, regional and global contexts

LAWRENCE O. PICUS
Richard T. Cooper and Mary Catherine Cooper Chair in Public School Administration; USC EdPolicy Hub
Adequacy and equity in school finance; efficiency and pro-ductivity in the provision of educational programs for PreK-12 school children

MORGAN POLIKOFF
Professor of Education; Faculty Co-Director of the USC EdPolicy Hub
Design, implementation and effects of standards, assessment and accountability policies