SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: **EDUCATION POLICY & EQUITY**	Department: **Educational Studies**
Degree or Certificate Level: **Ph.D.**	College/School: **School of Education**
Date (Month/Year): **October 15, 2021**	Primary Assessment Contact: **Jennifer Buehler, Program Director**

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? **Spring 2021**

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? **New program developed & approved Fall 2018**

1. Student Learning Outcomes
Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

The Education Policy and Equity doctoral program is currently at the start of its third year. There are six students enrolled in the first cohort, two students enrolled in the second cohort, and four students enrolled in the third cohort.

We spent the second year of the program, 2020-21, developing and administering a **research methods exam** taken by all students at the midpoint of their second year. This assessment report details the results of assessment based on results of the first iteration of the research methods exam and focused on the following two outcomes:

- Outcome #3: Students will be able to evaluate competing theoretical frameworks that are employed in the design of education policy research.

- Outcome #5: Students will be able to apply research tools and methods to analyze educational problems.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning
Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

NOTE: There are no Madrid students enrolled in our program.

See Question #1 above. The exam papers turned in by six students who comprise our first cohort served as the first artifacts that we analyzed for assessment of student learning.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process
What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

The EPE faculty group consists of seven members. This group has worked together from the beginning to build the program, recruit students, develop roadmaps for the program of study, and shape program culture.

Regarding assessment work during this cycle, the group used monthly faculty meetings during Summer and Fall 2020 to develop the **exam model**. Everyone in our faculty group contributed to this process. We kept a running record of decisions as we went along that resulted in the following:

- **Two-part model:** Part One – assess students' skill in critically evaluating research literature. Part Two – assess students' ability to respond to a problem scenario and design a research intervention.

  In **Part One**, students were tasked with analyzing the strengths, limitations, and contributions of two focal articles provided a month in advance. One article, drawn from the journal *Education Finance and Policy*, was

rooted in quantitative research methods; the other, drawn from the journal *Educational Policy*, was rooted in qualitative research methods. Each was dedicated to the issue of teacher recruitment and retention. Students also received a supplemental article, a research brief drawn from the Learning Policy Institute in Palo Alto, CA, that provided context for the issue.

In **Part Two**, students were tasked with designing a study that used either quantitative or qualitative methodology to investigate the problem of teacher turnover during the COVID pandemic and then make policy recommendations based on the findings they believed their study would provide.

- **Timing**: The research methods exam was administered from **January 12-19, 2021** (Part One) and from **January 21-23, 2021** (Part Two).

- **Assessment**: The exams were anonymized, divided into qualitative and quantitative sets based on student responses to Part Two, and assessed by two faculty teams – one that handled the qualitative set and one that handed the quantitative set. Each team used a faculty-generated assessment rubric that was shared with students in advance.

- **Report of results**: Faculty members met in teams during the first two weeks of February to evaluate the exams. After exams were de-anonymized, each student received individual feedback during a meeting with his/her adviser and one other faculty member who read the exam.

4. **Data/Results**
   What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

Result #1: Discussion of exam procedures

During the **February faculty meeting**, faculty members determined that *multiple students did not perform at a proficient level on both parts of the exam*. In order to foster student growth, faculty members agreed on a **revise and resubmit model**.

- After the one-on-one meeting where students received individual feedback from their adviser and a faculty reader, students were given three weeks to revise and resubmit the portion of the exam where their work was scored as below proficient.

- Results of the first round of evaluation were as follows:

  Student 1 (AP): revise both parts

  Student 2 (AD): revise Part Two only

  Student 3 (AS): revise Part Two only

  Student 4 (KC): revise both parts

  Student 5 (SA): received extensive feedback, not required to revise

  Student 6 (PL): received extensive feedback, not required to revise

Result #2: Discussion of changes needed in Student Learning Outcome #3

During the **March faculty meeting,** faculty members discussed alignment of the research methods exam with Student Learning Outcomes #3 and #5. We determined that the research methods exam does not align with Outcome #3; the exam focuses less on theoretical frameworks and more on qualitative and quantitative research paradigms as "modes of knowing." The exam tasked students with considering how these two modes of knowing complement each other.

More important, however, the discussion highlighted the need to change the language of Outcome #3: the EPE program

is not a theory-based program; rather, the program is focused on application – that is, application of research tools to educational problems and educational policy interventions.

Result #3: Discussion of weaknesses in student work

During the **March faculty meeting,** faculty members discussed the *nature of the weaknesses* in students' work on the research methods exam.

- One weakness that showed up repeatedly in Part One was students' inability to "tell a story" about a body of research literature. Essentially, students were unable to compose a coherent narrative about an educational problem – specifically, teacher recruitment, retention, and turnover – and how that problem has been treated in the research literature. Students' ability to "apply research tools and methods to analyze educational problems" is hindered by their ***inability to think holistically about research literature***.

- A second weakness that showed up repeatedly in Part Two was students' inability to embed specific research methods into an overall coherent research design. As one faculty member said, ***"The design side was weak."*** It was not that students lacked knowledge of research tools and methods; instead they were unable to use the research literature to generate research questions, justify the questions, and match the questions with appropriate research methods.

- A third weakness that showed up in Part Two was students' inability to ***justify their design choices*** – that is, to provide explanatory detail for the logic behind design elements. This is the culmination of weakness in Part One, which was a lack of synthesis around a central theme or argument in the research literature, which led to a lack of a strong foundation for Part Two. Weaknesses in writing also play a part here: students lack skill in building a strong argument for the work they propose to do.

In light of these weaknesses, however, faculty members noted that **our exam model is working** – especially as it surfaces strengths and weaknesses in students' research preparation and provides subsequent space for one-on-one discussion and intervention. One faculty member noted that in his meeting with Student 4 and her adviser, the student said that the gaps identified in her work were areas where she knew she had been struggling. The student said she needs additional support and feedback. This led to discussion of changes needed in the exam, in coursework, and in the program.

Result #3: Discussion of improvements in student work

During the **April faculty meeting**, faculty members shared the results of students' work during the revise and resubmit phase.

- Results of the second round of evaluation were as follows:

    Student 1 (AP): passed both parts – "abundantly clear he did not spend enough time on the exam the first time"

    Student 2 (AD): revise Part Two only – "completely revised Part Two and did better"

    Student 3 (AS): revise Part Two only – "strongest student in the program; want her to be able to apply what she learned to something new, be creative, not follow the rubric rules"

    Student 4 (KC): revise both parts – "trying to guide her on structure of academic writing; provided reading recommendations as models; when she finds something she wants to do, she will excel"

    Student 5 (SA): received extensive feedback, not required to revise

    Student 6 (PL): received extensive feedback, not required to revise

One additional note: Faculty are still working to make use of the space of the **PRiME Center** (Policy Research in Missouri Education) as a space for students to develop research skills beyond the work they do in research methods courses. This is an ongoing conversation.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions
   What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

Change #1: New areas of emphasis in EDR 5000 General Research Methods

The faculty member who teaches General Research Methods recognized the need to teach students how to think holistically about research design. To that end, during Spring 2021 he revised the course he will offer in Fall 2021 as follows: "Over the semester, students [will] engage with a range of different research outlets, including peer-reviewed journal articles. Building on their training to consume and evaluate research, students [will be] required to complete two detailed article reviews, one which employs qualitative methods and one which employs quantitative methods … these assignments serve, in part, as the beginning of the foundation for students to become active consumers of rigorous research as they grow in their abilities to conduct their own original research."

This change is in keeping with our intention to align assignments in research methods coursework with the major program assessment milestones for EPE students, the first of which is the Research Methods exam.

Change #2: New areas of emphasis in EDR 5400 Qualitative Research Methods

The faculty member who teaches qualitative methods recognized the need to teach students how to "justify, justify, justify" their research design choices. Since validity in qualitative research arises from the ability to justifying these choices, our students need more practice in articulating *why* they make the design choices they do.

This change is in keeping with work underway in the School of Education as a whole, where a qualitative research subcommittee spent 2020-21 and the first part of the Fall 2021 semester examining the design and sequence of qualitative courses. Insights from the EPE assessment process have informed changes to qualitative methods coursework across the school. Those school-wide changes are still in development.

Change #3: Clearer articulation of the nature of proficiency expected in the Research Methods Exam

The majority of our effort as a faculty team in 2020-21 went into conceptualizing, communicating, and executing the first iteration of the Research Methods Exam. The process involved all program faculty members; it began in June 2020 and continued in monthly meetings through April 2021. As a result of our assessment of student work in the first year, we have drafted new language to explain the nature of the exam and what, precisely, it assesses. That language is as follows:

> "*The Education Policy and Equity Research Methods Qualifying Exam* is a required examination for students entering their fourth semester (or equivalent for part-time students). The exam builds upon skills taught in prior coursework, including courses focused on general research methods, applied statistics, and qualitative research methods. In Part One of the exam we assess student abilities to critically evaluate research literature by asking students to review two focal research articles, one with a qualitative focus and one with a quantitative focus, on a common theme in the literature. Students must situate the articles in the literature and demonstrate general knowledge of the relevant issue (i.e., teacher turnover) as well as knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative research methods employed in the literature. Part Two of the exam assesses student ability to design a research study that responds to a problem scenario related to the same issue identified in Part One (i.e., teacher turnover).
>
> **In this manner, the Research Methods Qualifying Exam attempts to assess two critical elements of EPE student progress**: 1) Their ability to *thoroughly and accurately consume research and convey their understanding, both of critical content areas and of research methods*; and 2) Demonstrate a growing ability to *identify original research approaches to address similarly critical content areas*. In this process, students are asked to demonstrate minimum competencies in research methods prior to progressing to more advanced coursework and the dissertation proposal phase of the program. The exam information sheet and rubrics for both parts are included as artifacts demonstrating the requirements and expectations of the exam.

> **Change #4: Revise the rubric for the Research Methods Exam**
>
> While one-on-one meetings with students emphasized oral feedback on the content of their exam rather than points on the rubric, faculty members did identify a problem with the rubric that we will change for the second iteration of the exam. We realized we need clearer differentiation in the way we evaluate Part Two. We need to specify different expectations for qualitative and quantitative research design. This change will be put in place before January 2022 when we administer the exam to students in the second cohort.

6. **Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of <u>Current</u> Assessment Findings**
   A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

   > See #4 above: we dedicated the **February**, **March**, and **April** faculty meetings to discussion of assessment results and generating plans for the next iteration of the research methods exam.

   B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies	• Course content • Teaching techniques • Improvements in technology • Prerequisites	• Course sequence • New courses • Deletion of courses • Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings
Changes to the Assessment Plan	• Student learning outcomes • Artifacts of student learning • Evaluation process	• Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics) • Data collection methods • Frequency of data collection

   Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

   > See #5 above.
   >
   > In summary, we will 1) continue to make adjustments to assignments given in **EDR 5000 and EDR 5400**; 2) coordinate with the **qualitative research committee in the School of Education** as we revise these courses for students throughout the school; 3) revise the language on the **information sheet** we provide to students in the second cohort to more clearly communicate what the research methods exam assesses; 4) revise the **rubric** for the second iteration of the exam in January 2022.
   >
   > See #4 above.
   >
   > In addition to these four action items described here, as students progress to the next phase of the program, which is the written comprehensive exam (to be completed at the end of Year 3) and the dissertation proposal (to be completed at the start of Year 4), we will likely need to revise Student Learning Outcome #3 to account for the role of theory and theoretical frameworks in our program, or the lack thereof in light of the program's emphasis on research application.

   If no changes are being made, please explain why.

   > N/A

7. **Closing the Loop: Review of <u>Previous</u> Assessment Findings and Changes**
   A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

   > Our work in EPE is intentional and iterative. Each component part of our still very new program is designed to

build on the component parts already in place.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

N/A

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

N/A

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We will continue to make intentional decisions linked to assessment work as we build the EPE program.

Next steps in program development will include the following: a) developing expectations and a process for **written comprehensive exams**; c) developing expectations and a process for **dissertation proposals and defenses**; d) developing expectations and a process for **dissertations** themselves as well as **dissertation defenses**.

Regarding **assessment**, as we take stock of what student work on the research methods exam tells us, we will circle back to make **changes at the coursework level** of the program to improve student learning related to Outcomes #3 and #5.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.

Research Methods Qualifying Examination: Part I Evaluation Rubric

Domain	Distinguished (A Level)	Proficient (B Level)	Basic (C Level)	Unsatisfactory (D Level)
Summary of Policy Issue & Context (/5 Points)	Policy issue and potential solutions are clearly described and articulated, with no important omissions	Policy issue and potential solutions are mostly clearly described and articulated, with some important omissions	Policy issue and solutions are communicated in a confusing manner with many omissions	Policy issue and solutions are not articulated
Synthesis of Relevant Research Evidence & Concepts (/10 Points)	Major studies and concepts are included Research findings are accurately summarized	Most major studies and concepts are included with a few key omissions Research findings are summarized with some error	Many major studies and concepts are missing Research findings are summarized with many errors	No research findings are included
Identification & Explanation of Research Approaches (/15 Points)	Empirical approaches are described in depth with minimal error Quantitative and qualitative approaches are accurately explained and critically analyzed. This includes discussing how they complement one another, their strengths, and their weaknesses.	Empirical approaches are described with moderate error. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are discussed, with some consideration of complementarity	Empirical approaches are discussed in insufficient depth with significant error Quantitative and qualitative approaches are considered without reference to their strengths and weaknesses	Empirical approaches are not discussed
Policy Conclusions, Opposing Findings, & Areas of Future Research (/10 Points)	Major conclusions identified and clearly described Policy recommendations / areas of further research are logical and well described Opposing findings are identified; possible reconciliation is considered	Major conclusions identified and described with some error Policy recommendations / areas of further research are discussed Opposing findings are broached	Major conclusions are not clearly described Policy recommendations / areas of further research are described with major omissions Opposing findings are unclear	Major conclusions are not described Policy recommendations / areas of further research are not described Opposing findings are not described
Clarity of Writing (/5 Points)	Language is clear and free of grammatical errors and/or typos Writing is well-structured and flows logically	Language is clear with minimal grammatical errors and/or typos Writing structure could use minor improvements	Language requires improvement, including grammatical errors and/or typos Writing structure requires substantial attention	Language lacks clarity and contains significant grammatical errors and/or typos No clear writing structure is evident

References **(/5 Points)**	Research evidence is cited sufficiently and correctly	References and citations include minor mistakes and/or omissions	References and citations include substantial mistakes and/or omissions	References and citations are not included

Total: /50 Points

Comments:

Research Methods Qualifying Examination: Part II Evaluation Rubric

Domain	Distinguished (A Level)	Proficient (B Level)	Basic (C Level)	Unsatisfactory (D Level)
Introduction & Literature Review (/5 Points)	Policy concern is clearly identified and contextualized within the extant literature	Policy concern and key literature are addressed with minor omissions	Policy concern and relevant literature are identified in an insufficient manner	Policy concern and relevant literature are not addressed
Identification of the Problem & Context (/5 Points)	Specific policy problem and context are detailed thoroughly Equity considerations are well-articulated	Specific policy problem and context are discussed with some omission Equity considerations are discussed in an incomplete manner	Policy problem, context, and equity considerations are addressed with major omissions	Policy problem, context, and equity considerations are not broached
Empirical Approach (/15 Points)	Empirical strategy is clearly articulated, including relevant models / protocols, identification strategies, and analysis procedures Methodological assumptions are clearly articulated; This includes discussions about how to improve validity and trustworthiness of findings Empirical approach is justified within the extant literature; Strengths and weaknesses are considered	Empirical strategy, including relevant models / protocols, identification strategies, and analysis procedures, and methodological assumptions, is described with some error Empirical approach is adequately situated within the literature; Strengths/weaknesses are broached	Empirical strategy is explained poorly; models / protocols contain significant errors Empirical approach is not situated within the existing literature	Empirical strategy does not address the relevant problem and does not consider relevant examples in the literature
Data & Sample (/10 Points)	Data and sample are clearly identified If original data are collected, sampling strategies / data collection methods are explained thoroughly; For secondary data, data sources are explained thoroughly Construct is clearly defined Relevant variables are enumerated exhaustively	Data and sample are considered, with some omissions Sampling strategies / data collection methods for original data/data sources for secondary data / relevant variables / construct are considered, though additional explanation is necessary	Data and sample (and associated sampling / data collection methods / construct) are discussed inadequately	Data and sample do not address the issue at hand and/or are not considered

Implications & Limitations (/5 Points)	Implications are communicated clearly Limitations and areas for future analysis are well-defined	Implications are communicated with some omissions Limitations and areas for future analysis are voiced insufficiently	Implications are ambiguous Limitations and areas for future analysis are unclear	Implications, limitations, and areas for future analysis are not considered
Clarity of Writing (/5 Points)	Language is clear and free of grammatical errors and/or typos Writing is well-structured and flows logically	Language is clear with minimal grammatical errors and/or typos Writing structure could use minor improvements	Language requires improvement, including grammatical errors and/or typos Writing structure requires substantial attention	Language lacks clarity and contains significant grammatical errors and/or typos No clear writing structure is evident
References (/5 Points)	Research evidence is cited sufficiently and correctly	References and citations include minor mistakes and/or omissions	References and citations include substantial mistakes and/or omissions	References and citations are not included

Total: /50 Points

Comments:

Exam topic

Teacher turnover has long been a problem in education. Issues of teacher recruitment, retention, and attrition have been historically laced with equity issues. Given schools' varying approaches to educating students during the pandemic, along with students' dramatically different levels of access to educational resources while learning from home, equity issues as they affect teachers' lives and students' learning have become newly relevant in the moment of COVID-19.

Over the past twenty years, educational researchers have produced a wealth of literature on the topic of teacher turnover. One portion of the literature has focused on understanding why teachers stay or leave, while another body of work has tested policy interventions designed to improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, particularly in high-need communities.

Your task in the EPE research methods exam will be twofold. In Part One, you will consider the literature on teacher turnover broadly and, within the context of that literature, evaluate the methodological rigor, the strengths and limitations, and the contributions of two focal articles on the topic, one quantitative and the other qualitative. In Part Two, you will design an original research study that is focused on investigating the problem of teacher turnover in the current moment of coronavirus.

Introductory resource:

Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

How to prepare
- Begin building your knowledge of the topic of the teacher turnover by reading the introductory resource listed above. The policy report by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond presents a conceptual overview of the topic. You will not be asked to write about this policy report on the methods exam.
- Working from the policy report's list of references as well as your own search of education research databases, find and read other articles on teacher turnover in order to develop an informed understanding of the problem and knowledge of how it has been previously addressed in the research literature.
- You are welcome to discuss the introductory policy report and additional articles you find with your classmates.
- Prepare notes to bring with you to the exam. These may include annotations on the focal articles themselves, lists of key points, comparative charts or tables, etc. You will be allowed unlimited, unrestricted access to resources during the entire exam period.
- Consider how you will design a research study that is informed by the current research base and intended to assess the effect of COVID-19 on teacher turnover.

Logistics

- **Time frame for Part One.** Your work on Part One of the research methods exam will begin on Tuesday morning, January 12. You will receive an email at 9 a.m. that includes the prompt for Part One, the rubric for Part One, and the two focal articles that will be the basis for your analysis. You will have eight days to complete your work on Part One. All papers are due at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19.
- **Time frame for Part Two.** Your work on Part Two of the research methods exam will take place on Thursday, January 21. You will receive an email at 9 a.m. that includes the prompt for Part Two and the rubric for Part Two. You will have 48 hours, or two full days, to write up your study design. All papers are due at 9 a.m. on Saturday, January 23. Part-time students will have the option of completing Part Two over the weekend on Saturday, January 23 and Sunday, January 24.
- **Resources**. As noted above in "how to prepare," during the exam you will be free to consult any resources that will inform your thinking on Part One as well as Part Two. However, once the exam period begins, we expect you to work independently from your classmates.
- **Turn in procedures**. You will email each exam document as an attachment to Elizabeth Nutt in the SOE Dean's Suite. You will do this at the end of Part One and again at the end of Part Two.
- **Format.** Your papers for Part One and Part Two should be formatted as Microsoft Word documents, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- **All work will be anonymized**. You should not include identifying information anywhere on your exam document or in the file name. Similar to blind review of journal articles, your work will be anonymized by Elizabeth before it is shared with faculty for grading.
- **If you have questions**. After you receive the materials for Part One on Tuesday, January 12, EPE faculty members will be available to answer questions that afternoon on a Zoom call that will be held at 4 p.m. Once this live question and answer period has ended, any further questions should be posed publicly to the entire group by using "reply all" in response to the email that introduces Part One.
- **Scoring**. Your work on Part One and Part Two will be scored by a team of EPE faculty members using rubrics you will receive with other exam materials on the morning when you begin your work. You will receive the rubric for Part One on Tuesday, January 12. You will receive the rubric for Part Two on Thursday, January 21. Each rubric consists of a series of evaluative categories that add up to a total of 50 points. A score of 40 points out of 50 is considered minimum for passing each part of the exam.
- **Results**. You will receive your exam results from your adviser two weeks after you complete the work on Part Two. You will receive written feedback in the form of track changes comments on the papers themselves, a scored rubric for Part One and Part Two, and summary comments on each rubric. If you fail either part of the methods exam, you will be required to take that part, and only that part, over again in May.

Research Methods Qualifying Exam
Part One: Article Analysis
Education Policy and Equity Ph.D. Program
Spring 2021

Part One of the research methods exam will assess your skill in critically evaluating research literature. Your discussion of the focal articles presented below will reveal your general knowledge of the issue of teacher turnover as well as your knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

First, read the two focal articles you received today:

Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. L. (2011). Teacher mobility, school segregation, and pay-based policies to level the playing field. *Education Finance and Policy 6*(3), 399-438.

Barnatt, J., Terrell, D. G., D'Souza, L. A., Jong, C., Cochran-Smith, M., Viesca, K. M., Gleeson, A. M., McQuillan, P., & Shakman, K. (2017). Interpreting early career trajectories. *Educational Policy 31*(7), 992-1032.

Consider these two articles in relation to the broader body of literature you have been reviewing on teacher turnover. With this literature in mind, write an analysis of the two focal articles that addresses their methodological rigor, strengths and limitations, and contributions to our understanding of the topic of teacher turnover.

In your analysis, you should be prepared to do the following: explain the context for the problem of teacher turnover; summarize the policy issues involved; situate the two focal articles within a larger body of research on the topic; identify, explain, evaluate, and critique the research methods used in each article; summarize the findings as well as the limitations of each article; and, finally, discuss the major conclusions, contributions, and policy implications of each article, paying particular attention to how the articles complement one another, how one evaluates the strengths and limitations of contrasting approaches to studying the problem, and how one reconciles discrepant and/or divergent findings.

Logistics
- **Due date.** Your work on Part One begins at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, January 12. It is due at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19.
- **Format.** Your paper should be written as a Microsoft Word document, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- **Resources**. You are free to consult any resources that will inform your thinking on the exam. Once the exam period begins, we expect you to work independently.
- **All work is anonymized**. Do not include identifying information anywhere on the document or in the file name. Similar to blind review of journal articles, your work will be anonymized by Elizabeth before it is shared with faculty for grading.
- **Turn in procedures**. Email your document as an attachment to Elizabeth Nutt in the SOE Dean's Suite.

- **Questions.** EPE faculty members will be available to answer questions about Part One on a Zoom call that will be held on Tuesday afternoon, January 12, at 4 p.m. After this live question and answer period, any further questions should be posed publicly to the entire group by using "reply all" in response to the email that introduced Part One.

Part Two: Study Design
Education Policy and Equity Ph.D. Program
Spring 2021

Part Two of the research methods exam will assess your ability to design a research study that responds to a problem scenario related to teacher turnover. The problem scenario is described below.

Given the strain that COVID-19 has placed on educators, and given the possibility that many educators may depart the profession in response to the challenges of this moment, your task is to design a study that utilizes either quantitative or qualitative methodology to investigate the problem of teacher turnover during the pandemic and discuss policy implications based on the findings you believe your study will provide.

Broadly, your study should seek to understand the effects of COVID-19 on teacher turnover in a specific context. In your study design, you should be prepared to do the following: identify a context for the study you propose; explain your research design, including the conceptual and/or theoretical frameworks and methodological tools you will use to carry out the study; outline your plan for data collection and analysis; discuss the strengths and limitations of your study design; discuss policy implications for the work you propose; and identify areas for future research.

Logistics
- **Due date.** Your work on Part Two begins at 9 a.m. on Thursday, January 21. It is due at 9 a.m. on Saturday, January 23. NOTE: Part-time students will have the option of completing Part Two over the weekend on Saturday, January 23 and Sunday, January 24.
- **Format.** Your paper should be written as a Microsoft Word document, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins.
- **Resources**. You are free to consult any resources that will inform your thinking on the exam. Once the exam period begins, we expect you to work independently.
- **All work is anonymized**. Do not include identifying information anywhere on the document or in the file name. Similar to blind review of journal articles, your work will be anonymized by Elizabeth before it is shared with faculty for grading.
- **Turn in procedures**. Email your document as an attachment to Elizabeth Nutt in the SOE Dean's Suite.
- **Questions.** If you have questions about Part Two, you should pose them publicly to the entire group by using "reply all" in response to the email that introduced Part Two.