



Vanderbilt University

EDUCATION EXPERTS

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• Admissions • Tuition • Financial Aid • Higher Education Policy



Doug Christiansen, associate provost for enrollment; dean of admissions and assistant professor of public policy and higher education

Christiansen can discuss college admissions, tuition, financial aid and higher education policy. Christiansen has spent the last 20 years in admissions leadership roles in top-tier public and private universities. Christiansen thinks there are a lot of misconceptions about the admissions process and who is actually deciding if a student gets in or not, and that the process is far more personal for universities than parents and students believe. Christiansen consults with universities throughout the United States on enrollment management and revenue generation and has conducted more than 60 consulting engagements working directly with presidents, trustees, enrollment professionals and faculty on enrollment-related issues.

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• Immigration • Race and Higher Education



Stella Flores, assistant professor of public policy and education

Flores can discuss the impact admissions and financial aid policies have on immigrant students, demographic changes in higher education, Latino students and community colleges, and how current immigrant migration patterns are affecting the education system. She is the author of numerous papers on Latino educational opportunity and racial shifts in higher education. Her work was cited in the 2003 U.S. Supreme Court *Gratz v. Bollinger* decision on affirmative action in higher education admissions.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

- **Higher Education Finance and Reform**



Michael McLendon, associate professor of public policy and higher education

McLendon can discuss college tuition patterns, the shift toward more accountability mandates at the state and federal level for higher education institutions and the role of political institutions in shaping policy at the state level and on campus. He can also discuss the transition from high school to college and what school administrators should do to prepare students for this step. McLendon directs the Peabody College Program in Higher Education Leadership and Policy.

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- **No Child Left Behind • Education Public Policy • Administration • Reform • Finance**



James W. Guthrie, professor of public policy and education; director, Center for Education Policy at Vanderbilt's Peabody College

Guthrie is a widely published authority on education policy, finance and governance. He is concerned with school finance, both K-12 and higher education; legal issues of equity and adequacy; education reform strategies; educational accountability; political processes and education; and No Child Left Behind. He is the executive director of the National Center on Performance Incentives at Peabody. He has been a high school science teacher and administrator, and was twice publicly elected to the board of education in

Berkeley, Calif. He was employed by the California and New York state education departments, served as an education specialist for the U.S. Senate and was a special assistant to the assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He is author or co-author of 10 books and more than 200 professional and scholarly articles.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

• Gifted Children • Improving America's Competitiveness In Math and Science



Camilla Benbow, Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development; professor of psychology; investigator, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development

Benbow is a nationally recognized expert on gifted children. She is in the third decade of a 50-year study of 5,000 gifted students that tracks their development and the impact of educational interventions over their life-span. She recently served as vice chair of President Bush's National Mathematics Advisory Panel and is a member of the National Science Foundation Board.

She has led Vanderbilt's Peabody College, ranked as the nation's No. 2 education school by *U.S. News and World Report* in 2008, since 1998.

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• Performance Incentives For Teachers



Matthew Springer, research assistant professor of public policy and education; director of the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt's Peabody College

Springer is a frequently quoted expert on the topic of paying teachers based on their performance. With colleague James Guthrie he is leading a \$10 million federally funded study to determine the impact, if any, financial incentives for teachers have on student achievement. He has served on several advisory committees charged with designing performance-based compensation systems for

teachers and/or principals at the state and district level, and conducted analyses of school finance systems in Alaska, Kentucky and South Carolina.

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• Underperforming Teachers And Teacher Qualifications



Thomas Smith, assistant professor of public policy and education

Smith can discuss the options available to schools when dealing with underperforming teachers and what strategies work best to boost teacher performance. He can also discuss his and his colleagues' findings that alternative certification, often touted as a way to bring non-teachers with professional experience into teaching to improve quality and boost teacher

ranks, does not generally achieve those goals.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

• **No Child Left Behind and Testing** • **Students' Social Skills**



Stephen Elliott professor of special education; Dunn Family Professor of Education and Psychological Assessment

Elliott is an international expert on large-scale testing and the interplay between social behavior and academic performance. He is the author of a 2007 book on the on the top 10 social skills for students.

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• **Children of the Military** • **Desegregation** • **School Choice** • **Magnet Schools**



Claire Smrekar, associate professor of public policy and education

Smrekar can discuss how children of American military cope when their mothers and fathers are deployed. Not only do the children cope, but schools operated by the DOD score higher on national reading and writing tests than public schools, according to Smrekar's research. Her current research involves a study of school choice policy in the post-busing era. She is the author of two books: *The Impact of School Choice and Community: In the Interest of Families and Schools* and *School Choice in Urban America: Magnet Schools and the Pursuit of Equity* with

Vanderbilt professor Ellen Goldring.

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• **SAT Essay** • **Handwriting in School**



Steve Graham, Currey Ingram Professor of Special Education

Graham's research shows that 10 to 20 percent of children have trouble with handwriting and that few teachers receive training in how to teach the skill to their students. Graham's research shows that poor handwriting can influence how much text students produce as well as their ability to plan and write coherent sentences. He is the co-author of *Writing Next*, a meta-analysis of writing instruction released by the Carnegie Foundation in October 2006, which identifies effective strategies for teaching writing. Graham is the editor of *Exceptional Children* and the former editor of *Contemporary Educational*

Psychology. He is author or co-author of two books and more than 135 articles, many of which reflect his scholarship in learning disabilities and the writing process. In 2001, Graham was elected a fellow of the International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

• **Learning Disabilities** • **Student Learning** • **Peer-Assisted Learning**



Douglas Fuchs, Nicholas Hobbs Chair of Special Education and Human Development; co-director, National Research Center on Learning Disabilities

Fuchs' areas of specialization include instruction for students at risk because of low income or disability, peer-to-peer learning strategies for students, testing, test bias and special education policy. He is co-director of a center devoted to the study of learning disabilities, which is supported by the U.S. Department of Education.

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• **Videos and Young Children**



Georgene Troseth, assistant professor of psychology

Troseth studies toddlers' and infants' use of video, and can tell parents what they need to know about exposing their young children to videos. Troseth provided input to Sesame Workshop on the infant DVD series. Her articles on this subject include "Young Children's Use of Video as a Source of Socially Relevant Information," published in May 2006; "TV Guide: 2-year-olds Learn to Use Video as a Source of Information" and "Getting a Clearer Picture: Young Children's Understanding of a Televised Image."

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• **Bullies**



Maury Nation, assistant professor of human and organizational development

Nation's clinical research focuses on understanding and preventing violence and bullying among school-aged children. He can discuss the characteristics of bullies and victims and the short- and long-term consequences of peer harassment. The Centers for Disease Control is currently using principles that Nation developed to evaluate all grants related to intimate partner and sexual violence. He has written or co-authored numerous articles on adolescent behavior touching on topics such as empowering victims of bullies, the community's role in preventing adolescent drug abuse, predictors of adolescent substance abuse, and gun ownership among middle school students.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

- **Classroom “Troublemakers”**



Kathleen Lane, assistant professor of special education; investigator, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development

Lane studies the connection between academic underachievement and emotional and behavioral disorders. Her work in classrooms has helped teachers to reduce the impact “troublemaking” kids have on other students, while helping those troubled children focus and learn by addressing their emotional and/or behavioral disorders. Lane is the co-author of three books on this topic: *School-based Interventions: The Tools You Need to Succeed*; *Interventions for Children with or At Risk for Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*; and *Functional Behavioral Assessment and Function-based Intervention: An Effective, Practical Approach*.

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- **High School Dropout Rate**



Carolyn Hughes, professor of special education; investigator, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development

Hughes, appointed in May 2006 to former Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell’s Task Force on Dropout and High School Restructuring, can discuss critical interventions needed to reduce the dropout rate in U.S. schools. As part of her work on this issue, Hughes manages a program that pairs Vanderbilt undergraduates with youth in high-poverty high schools to encourage those students to complete high school and go on to college. In addition to working with at-risk youth, Hughes is an expert on helping students in special education classrooms achieve at the highest level possible. She is the co-author of three books: *Success for All Students: Promoting Inclusion in Secondary Schools Through Peer Buddy Programs*; *The Transition Handbook: Strategies High School Teachers Use that Work*; and *Supports Intensity Scale: Standardization and Users Manual*.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

• **Children's Perception of Violence and Anger** • **Violence Prevention**



Jessica Giles, assistant professor of psychology

Giles studies children's early perception and understanding of violence, anger and aggression, how this development differs between boys and girls, and how a better understanding of how children perceive violence can lead to the development of better violence prevention strategies. Giles is the author of several articles on this topic, including "Source Monitoring Reduces the Suggestibility of Preschool Children;" "Children's Essentialist Beliefs about Aggression," and "Young Children's Beliefs about the Relationship between Gender and Aggressive Behavior."

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• **Study Habits** • **Homeschooling**



Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey, associate professor of psychology

Hoover-Dempsey can discuss the role and influence of parents in children and adolescents' education and development, and can provide tips for parents to help their children develop strong study habits. She and her students study both why parents become involved and the impact this has on the children's work habits, behavior and school engagement. Hoover-Dempsey is chair of the Department of Psychology and Human Development.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS, cont.

• “Acting Black” and Gifted Minority Students • Achievement Gap



Donna Ford, Betts Professor of Education and Human Development

Ford can discuss the under-representation of minority students in gifted classrooms, the challenges these students face in terms of peer-pressure, and the impact the idea of ‘acting black’ has on their performance. In 2006, Ford and Vanderbilt colleague Gilman Whiting founded the Vanderbilt Achievement Gap Project to address systematic problems of racial inequity in education. Ford is a board member of the National Association for Gifted Children, and has served on numerous editorial boards, such as *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *Exceptional Children*, and *Roeper Review*. She is the recipient of the Early Career Award and the Career

Award from The American Educational Research Association; Early Scholar Award from The National Association for Gifted Children; and the Esteemed Scholarship Award from The National Association of Black Psychologists.

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