



EDUC 711: Education Policy Research Practicum

Course Overview:

Education policy and practice increasingly rely on empirical evidence to inform state and local decision-making. With the widespread availability of educational data, there is an increasing need for the timely generation of empirical evidence to support the work of policymakers and practitioners. The Education Policy Research Practicum is designed to address this information gap.

Course Description:

This course partners current students with educational leaders to conduct client-based, applied education research projects. The clients are drawn from GSE's Mid-Career Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership, the School District of Philadelphia (SDP), and other schools, districts, and education-related organizations across the country. Applied research teams are comprised of GSE M.S.Ed. students. Student participants will engage in original empirical analysis, complete written policy reports, and present their findings to clients in end-of-semester formal client briefings.

This course provides direct benefits to the client as well as to the student research teams. On the client side, the findings provide immediate, actionable guidance around an issue related to program implementation, educational practice or other questions of educational significance. For the student researchers, this course enhances both their human capital through real-world training in applied education research as well their social capital through their partnership with high-level education policymakers and practitioners. Moreover, the key findings from these studies will be circulated throughout the Mid-Career, GSE and Penn community to enhance knowledge about important educational issues.

Former clients include district and state education agencies; private and independent schools; and non-profit educational organizations. Examples of previous projects include:

- Assessing Measures of Teaching Practice in an Urban Teacher Preparation Program
 - Do Students with Autism Benefit from Inclusion in General Education Classes?
 - Examining the Role of a Summer Enrichment Program in Improving Student Achievement
 - A Longitudinal Analysis of School Budget Allotments and Expenditures
 - Understanding the Impact of Teacher Hiring Policies on Teacher Retention and the Distribution of Teacher Performance
 - Ninth Grade Math Course Taking and Student Academic Trajectories
 - The Long Term Impact of Head Start on Student Achievement and Grade Promotion
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