

USC Postdoctoral Scholar: Supporting Collaborative Learning about LAUSD Students' Secondary and College Math Pathways

The University of Southern California's Pullias Center for Higher Education is seeking a postdoctoral scholar to work in collaboration with the UCLA Luskin School and the Claremont Graduate University School of Educational Studies on a research-practice partnership project of the Los Angeles Education Research Institute (LAERI). This project focuses on collaborating with practitioners at the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to describe students' secondary and postsecondary math and science pathways. The postdoctoral scholar will collaborate with the co-principal investigators of the project (Tatiana Melguizo, USC; Meredith Phillips, UCLA; Kyo Yamashiro, CGU) and graduate and undergraduate students at the three universities, and with practitioners from both the secondary and post-secondary sectors, to create and analyze a longitudinal dataset to assist LAUSD in increasing its knowledge of students' most common math and science pathways and how those are distributed among students and schools. The postdoctoral scholar will also have the opportunity to collaborate with Tatiana Melguizo on a research-practice partnership between LAUSD, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), and USC, that is exploring factors associated with postsecondary outcomes. The postdoctoral scholar will also help secure data agreements with postsecondary institutions and help develop a research design intended to contribute to knowledge about the multiple factors that contribute to students' success in college math and science. The postdoctoral fellow will also contribute to grant proposals to raise funds to continue the project beyond its planning phase.

The postdoctoral scholar will manage the project team across institutions; coordinate the partnership activities; lead post-secondary data agreement discussions; lead the literature review, course-coding, and descriptive course analysis efforts; lead the data management and analysis efforts; and supervise a part-time undergraduate student researcher at UCLA who will assist with the course coding and coordination activities. Specifically, project activities will involve communicating with LAUSD and postsecondary staff; reviewing course catalogues, websites, and other documents to develop a detailed coding scheme for the large number of math and science courses offered by LAUSD; creating data dictionaries and codebooks; creating cross-walk documents; coding, merging, and managing large, complex, longitudinal data sets; analyzing and graphing data; writing about results for both practitioner and research audiences; drafting plans and grant proposals for subsequent studies; and regularly attending planning and project meetings. Long-term, the goal of the project is to create a multi-sector dataset to describe the multiple factors, including secondary coursework, that contribute to students' success in college math and science.

We are particularly interested in applicants who have:

1. experience coding, merging, and managing complex longitudinal datasets in education, ideally from both the K-12 and postsecondary sectors and ideally involving administrative data,
2. experience using Stata to manage, analyze, and display data,
3. the inter-personal skills needed for participating successfully in a collaborative research-practice partnership,

4. experience and/or training in math/science education in the U.S. and/or in the postsecondary success of historically underserved students in the U.S. (e.g., first generation, English learners, and low-income students),
5. a doctoral degree in education or the social and behavioral sciences,
6. experience conducting rigorous, high quality, and meaningful research, and publishing academic articles, and
7. experience translating research findings into materials and presentations useful for practitioner audiences.

The mission of the Pullias Center for Higher Education is to support the access and success of first generation and low-income students. The Center is located within the Rossier School of Education at USC. Since 1996 the Center has engaged in action-oriented research projects regarding successful college outreach programs, financial aid and access for low- to moderate-income students of color, use of technology to supplement college counseling services, effective postsecondary governance, emerging organizational forms such as for-profit institutions, and the retention of doctoral students of color. We seek individuals who are not only interested in conducting rigorous research but also intent on having their research translated in a way that enables multiple constituencies (e.g. policy-makers, administrators and teachers, parents and students) to make use of research findings.

LAERI aims to bring researchers and practitioners together to use high quality research for improvement and problem-solving efforts. As part of the existing research-practice partnership work with LAUSD, this project contributes to a larger set of studies aimed at learning about LAUSD students' college readiness and post-secondary success. Researchers across USC, UCLA, CGU, and LAERI will collaborate with district practitioners on this study.

The postdoctoral position will begin in August 2018. It is a temporary, fixed-term, one-year position. If additional funds are raised, it may be possible to extend the position for another year. The candidate should have a PhD by the time of employment. The candidate will have active mentoring opportunities from the School and the University through workshops and conferences.

Applicants should include a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, one sample publication, an excerpt of code written for statistical software, and contact information for three references. **Please send materials to Monica Raad (raad@usc.edu). We will begin reviewing applications as soon as possible.**

Please address the following questions when submitting your letter of interest:

1. What is your research agenda?
2. How does your research tie into the mission of the *Math Pathways Project*?
3. How will your expertise enhance the project team's expertise?
4. How will this position further your research and career goals?

The University of Southern California strongly values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity in employment. Women and men, and members of all racial and ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply. Salary and benefits are competitive. For additional information about a specific position please go to: <https://policy.usc.edu/equal-opportunities/>