

Scholarship in the Graduate School

By Dr. Cecelia Traugh,
Dean, Bank Street Graduate School of Education
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Since its earliest days as a leader in teacher preparation, faculty and staff from the Graduate School of Education have held a longstanding commitment to the pursuit of academic writing, publication, and research. Scholarship materials across a range of topics and platforms share a singular goal: to share a deeper look at the Bank Street approach to teaching and learning amongst a widespread community of educators and leaders both within Bank Street and beyond.

Outlined below are several categories that help to capture the full range of scholarly work in the Bank Street Graduate School of Education. These categories are not differentiated by hard and fast differences; there is overlap. However, the headings are useful as they point to the various ways graduate faculty are contributing to the field and some of the facets of the Graduate School's intellectual life.

The first cluster of work defines an area to which Bank Street can make/is making a particularly strong contribution, that is, ***scholarship of practice***. This work is about the bringing forward and making visible the deep thinking of the practitioner. The work we do in the Graduate School has been fertile ground for exploring the ways practice and idea are tightly woven together. We can make strong contributions to the field and deepen our confidence in our work by recognizing the deep importance of practitioners' thought.

We have prioritized opportunities for faculty to make their practice visible. One important way we have done this is to create the position of Director of Scholarship on Educator Practice. Alongside this, we have created several opportunities for faculty to develop their scholarship, including a writing group to provide peer feedback and support for faculty writing, and we have provided the generative project option available to faculty with three-year contracts.

There is variety in the ways we have made this work available publicly:

- **Snapshots of Practice** are short illustrations and analysis of practice for a practitioner audience, including films, that are available on the Bank Street website (some of these are also published on the [Educator Preparation Laboratory website](#));
- Book chapters, books, and journal articles are published traditionally and can be found on our [Faculty Scholarship](#) page.
- Bank Street publications are also available and searchable in [Educate](#).

We have also been engaged in an ongoing longitudinal study of the second cohort of students in the [Early Childhood Urban Education Initiative](#). Material has been gathered over a three-year period and includes videos of class sessions, interviews of course instructors, focus groups of students, and case studies of students. Study of these materials is underway with the aim of culminating and presenting this work in several forms: scholarly articles published in academic journals, snapshots of practice, and a book based on the case studies.

Finally, several faculty members are engaged in multi-year contract generative projects. These projects are the result of a faculty opportunity to apply for a three-year contract, which includes one course release to work on a piece of generative work. Part of the application includes the description of a project that the faculty member wants to include in their work at Bank Street. The first set of projects is coming to a close.

Another major thread is ***pursuit of social justice***. Bank Street faculty have recently published or are working on two research studies described below:

- Park, S., Lee, S., Alonzo, M., & Adair, J. K. (2021). **Reconceptualizing assistance for young children of color with disabilities in an inclusion classroom**. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 1-12. Drawing on DisCrit (Disability Critical Race Theory), the authors critically analyze how a group of early childhood educators approached assistance with young children of color with disabilities in a Head Start inclusion classroom. The authors re-conceptualize assistance as a practice that can support young children of color with disabilities to be more fully themselves.
- Bisola Neil is currently revising a piece for journal publication with the working title: "Using QuantCrit to Analyze the Margins and Disrupt the Silence about the Experiences of African American Math Teachers."

A third category of work is that of research done to ***critique and/or support the development of strong policy***. This is largely the focus of work of the **National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)**. NCCP aims to improve the lives of low-income children and their families by delivering their research to advocates and policymakers seeking to craft effective policies that promote healthy child development, and strong, nurturing families that are economically secure. They delve into issues that contribute to child poverty and make sure their ideas reach those in a position to make meaningful change that reduces the number of families experiencing hardship.

The work of **Straus Center for Young Children and Families** ***blends our emphases on practice-oriented and policy relevant work***. The Straus Center was initially founded in 2015 and reconstituted in the fall of 2019. The first half of school year 2020 resulted in a strategic plan focused on three broad goals: integration with the college; research generation; and external visibility and connections.

The center's associate director, Alexandra Figueras-Daniel, has been awarded a \$225,000 Foundation for Child Development (FCD) Young Scholars Grant to study early childhood teachers' use of research-based dual-language instructional practices. Additionally, in 2020, the center's director, Mark Nagasawa, collaborated with the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute at the City University of New York to conduct a statewide survey of how COVID-19 was affecting New York's early childhood educators. The most notable finding was that the stress and strain respondents were experiencing in the absence of coherent public health and ECE systems responses. This study has resulted in **three reports**, which have been downloaded from Bank Street's institutional repository 1,075 times, across 50 countries (between September 2020 - February 2021).

This year, the center's staff has published two peer reviewed scientific articles and one book chapter, given seven presentations at major research conferences, and presented their work at six professional conferences. An additional dimension of raising both the center's and Bank Street's external visibility, the Straus Center has developed significant scholarly partnerships with the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, NYC Early Childhood Research Network, National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University, Boston University's Wheelock College, and the Center for the Study of the Child Care Workforce at the University of California, Berkeley.

A final aspect of this picture of scholarship in the graduate school is the ***"Research in the Graduate School" inquiry group*** started this fall. This group includes the Directors of NCCP, the Directors of the Straus Center, the Director of Scholarship on Educator Practice, and the Dean of the Graduate School. So far this year we have explored the various projects of each group member. Examples of our focus questions are:

- What is the stance we each take to our scholarly work and how did that stance develop over time?
- What in our projects is the relationship between the researcher and researched?
- How do we develop meaning in our work? Who is included in that process?

The larger purpose of the group's work is to clarify the values underlying our work and how those values speak to the Bank Street context.

QUICK LINKS

Educate—Houses digital publications, artifacts, and other materials and resources authored or produced by the Bank Street community.

Educator Preparation Lab (EdPrepLab)—Network of leading preparation programs that work together to create effective models for teacher and principal preparation so that educators can design more meaningful learning experiences for the children they work with.

Faculty Scholarship—A selection of faculty and staff scholarship that includes recent published work and presentations.

National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)—Conducts research and makes policy recommendations that advocates, policymakers, and community leaders use to improve the lives of low-income families.

Occasional Paper Series—Forum for newly published work from authors within and beyond Bank Street that promotes a dialogue about teaching and learning in a democracy.

Snapshots of Practice—A collection of written summaries, videos, audio files, and other materials that show a closer look at how Bank Street engages with educators, families, students, and children.

Straus Center for Young Children & Families—Produces and disseminates new scholarship and research-based recommendations to help practitioners and policymakers effect meaningful change in the many settings where young children ages 0 to 8 learn.



Cecelia Traugh is Dean of the Graduate School of Education at Bank Street College. Prior to coming to Bank Street in September 2015 Dr. Traugh was Dean of the School of Education at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus and the director of its Center for Urban Educators (CUE). Throughout her career, she has combined her roles as a teacher, administrator, and researcher in pursuit of the kind of education that grows out of a valuing of the capacities of children, parents, and teachers, working collaboratively to make classrooms and schools more supportive of children's and teachers' growth, thinking, and learning. Some of her areas of concentration are descriptive school-based inquiry, curriculum development and evaluation, including qualitative evaluation, and the preparation of teachers for urban schools. Dr. Traugh's current work includes school-wide inquiry groups in small schools across Manhattan and a Descriptive Inquiry Group

of teachers and teacher educators held at Bank Street. These inquiry groups use the descriptive processes developed at the Prospect Center in North Bennington, Vermont to investigate issues important to the inclusive education of all children and to the ongoing development of the schools themselves.