

College of Education News

February 13, 2018

College of Education, Georgia Southern University

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Special education undergraduates travel to Harvard University to share research

February 13, 2018

Georgia Southern University special education majors Kylie Brady and Rebecca Hinrichs are passionate about helping students with disabilities, as well as the studied benefits of appropriate classroom management. Their passions led to a presentation at Harvard University's annual National Collegiate Research Conference (NCRC), the largest student-run research conference in the country, in January with College of Education faculty mentor Kymberly Harris, Ph.D.

Brady and Hinrichs presented information on their seven-week observations of partnering with K-12 schools, in which they examined the effectiveness of positive and negative behavior management techniques. Specifically, their focus was on students with disabilities who are taught within inclusion classrooms, or general education courses with peers, outfitted with certified teachers who assist with differentiated learning.

"Within the realm of our research, the positive behavior management system included more positive redirections," said Brady. "Instead of telling a student not to do something, the teacher would tell them what they should be doing and why. Teachers would also verbally praise students when they were doing the right thing."

Positive behavior management also incorporates a philosophy of teaching expected behaviors. Brady used the example of teaching students how to properly walk in a hallway at school.

"It may seem silly to teach them how to walk down the hallway, but it is a behavior that you expect students know when really they may not," she said. "It is important to teach those expected behaviors to ensure that students are aware and have been exposed to the behavior you would like for them to display."

Negative behavior management often includes repercussions for not following rules or expected behaviors.

"Instead of rewarding the students for showing good behavior you want them to display, the teachers practicing the negative management approach would punish students for undesirable or unruly behavior," Hinrichs explained.

During their observations, Brady and Hinrichs agreed that students within an inclusion classroom frequently remained on task when they were being praised, given incentives and redirected in a positive manner in comparison to students who were punished, reprimanded or had privileges taken away.

"The students all loved the reward systems in place, and they enjoyed the positive encouragement, regardless of whether they had a disability or not," said Hinrichs. "Yet, most students would shut down after being reprimanded or experiencing negative management."

The use of a positive behavior management system becomes more vital when working with students with disabilities.

"Often these students struggle and may get discouraged because they think they cannot do something," said Hinrichs. "It is important to show them they can accomplish their goals, and even if they are just taking small steps, it is important to reward and show them that their progress is celebrated."



Rebecca Hinrichs (left) and Kylie Brady

Noting that their research provided qualitative support for positive behavior management systems, Brady and Hinrichs said that they were excited to share their experiences and observations with students, faculty and administrators from around the nation during the conference. They both hope to continue conducting research while working in their careers.

“I think many teachers complete this form of research without even realizing it,” said Brady. “For me, I think positive behavior management is something I will want to model in my own classroom and keep data on the reactions students are having. I can use that data to compare year after year and review my notes if I feel like reactions are changing. That’s a part of being a teacher—constantly growing and researching to meet the needs of your students.”

Brady and Hinrichs are both seniors and are scheduled to graduate in May.

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College of Education professor awarded summer fellowship

February 13, 2018



Jackie Kim, Ed.D.

Georgia Southern University College of Education (COE) Associate Professor Jackie Kim, Ed.D., was recently awarded an Arthur M. Gignilliat Jr. Research 2018 Fellowship. The fund supports a full-time faculty member based on the Armstrong Campus in Savannah to conduct research while advancing scholarly activities and enhancing professional development.

Over the summer Kim will apply the fund toward her research project, “Flipping the Classroom Using Instructional Technology in Teacher Education,” which will compare how two different learning techniques impact the experiences of pre-service education students, or teacher candidates, in the flipped learning context.

The flipped classroom model reverses the traditional learning environment by delivering instructional content outside of the classroom, often using technologies such as online lectures and discussions. Kim’s research will compare the differences between pre-service teachers who utilize course readings and those who incorporate video lectures for learning effectiveness.

“The flipped classroom promotes a student-centered learning environment in which students are actively engaging themselves in higher-order thinking and taking charge of their own learning,” said Kim. “This research will help me to gain insight on how to increase students’ engagement and ownership of learning in the classroom.”

To gather data, Kim will survey current undergraduate and graduate students and create a case study of each experience. The project will serve as an extension of a pilot study she completed on flipped learning, in which teacher candidates utilized only readings from course textbooks to provide an opportunity for students to gain exposure to the material prior to class activities. The results from the pilot study will serve as a basis for her summer research.

“I believe that reflecting upon and assessing one’s own teaching methods are key to becoming a better teacher,” said Kim. “This research will broaden my area of expertise in designing the flipped classroom model in different contexts, such as pre-service teacher education and higher education.”

Kim anticipates finalizing research by the end of 2018, and sharing her insights with the Georgia Southern community during the 2019 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons Conference and the University System of Georgia Teaching and Learning Conference.

The Arthur M. Gignilliat Jr. Research Fellowship was established on the Armstrong Campus in 1997 in honor of the Distinguished Alumni Award recipient who aimed to maintain a tradition of excellence by attracting and honoring outstanding faculty members who, in turn, attract outstanding students. Kim is the first COE faculty to receive the fellowship since its inception.

“In addition to being humbled by my fellowship selection, I am motivated to work harder as a scholar and support my colleagues so we can grow together as a productive, scholarly community,” said Kim.

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Volunteers needed for reading bowl

February 13, 2018

The annual Division II [Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl](#) (HRRB) is quickly approaching and organizers are looking for volunteers to make this annual event a success.

Students in grades 4-12 from across the South HRRB region (which includes Chatham and Liberty Counties), as well as coaches and parents, will be in the College of Education (COE) building on Statesboro Campus on Saturday, March 3 from 12-4 p.m. to participate in a quiz-bowl style competition over their knowledge of a selected list of books.

“This is a fun, high-energy event with hundreds of attendees,” said organizer and COE professor Julie Garlen, Ed.D.

Volunteers will be asked to attend a one-hour volunteer training session the morning of the event. Additional information will be provided prior to the bowl.

If you would be willing to assist with this event, please complete the form at the link below as soon as possible so that we can finalize our volunteer list.

Volunteer now → <https://goo.gl/forms/aWQqR3cM0e1v0RZf2>

For additional questions or concerns, please contact Garlen at jgarlen@georgiasouthern.edu