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## Southern Educator

July 2014

Volume 3 Issue 6

### Upcoming Events

- August 7 COE Assessment Retreat
- August 13 COE Annual Fall Faculty & Staff Meeting
- August 13 University Fall Convocation
- August 15 New Student Teacher Orientation

[More announcements](#)

### Upcoming Conferences

[Rural HIV Research and Training Conference, September 12-13](#)

[International Conference on Information Literacy, October 9-11](#)

[National Youth-At-Risk Conference, Las Vegas, November 6-8](#)

### Faculty News

Associate Professor Brenda Marina, Department of Leadership, Technology and Human Development, published a chapter in a new book with former COE faculty Arline Edwards-Joseph, now faculty at Albany State University:  
Marina, B., & Edwards-Joseph, A. (2014). "Religiosity and

### Georgia Moves to New Teacher Certification System

Beginning with the new fiscal year on July 1, Georgia teachers now work under a 4-tiered certification system that the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) says will "offer increased opportunities for professional growth to teachers who remain in the classroom." The state will continue to use certification levels to determine placement on the salary schedule.



GaPSC says the tiered certification also ensures that new teachers enter the profession better prepared and will enable the identification of excellent teachers and recognize their accomplishments. The most significant change is that teacher candidates enrolled in an educator preparation program at Georgia colleges or universities will be in an initial certification tier called **Pre-Service**. In addition to successfully completing student teaching or other field experiences, teacher candidates must pass federal and state background checks and complete the new Georgia Educator Ethics Exam. The other tiers are (2) **Induction**, (3) **Professional** and (4) **Advanced/Lead Professional**.

"The state's movement to a tiered certification system is one of the most significant and far-reaching changes GaPSC has made in many years," said Thomas R. Koballa, dean of the College of Education. "It may be in response to the federal Race-to-the-Top grant to the state which requires the implementation of a teacher certification system that is different from what it had been using," Koballa continued. "That in itself is not a problem; the issue is whether this particular system, which is untested and lacks a basis in research, will address some of the biggest issues facing Georgia teachers," Koballa added, "which include teacher induction and retention."



COE Dean Thomas Koballa

According to GaPSC, about 40 percent of new teachers leave the profession within five years.

spirituality in educational leadership programs: Perspectives and reflections from Black educators." In N. W. Arnold, M. C. Brooks, & B. M. Arnold (Eds.), *Critical Perspectives on Black Education: Spirituality, Religion, and Social Justice*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.



**Associate Professor Fayth Parks,**  
Department of Leadership, Technology and Human

Development, published: Parks, F.M., Zea, M.C., & Mason, M.A. (2014). "Psychotherapy with members of Latino/Latina religious and spiritual traditions." In P. S. Richards, A.E. Bergin (Eds.), *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Religious Diversity* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.



COE's 4th Annual Southeast

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Support Conference** last month attracted more than 215 participants from 12 states, said Associate Professor Eric Landers, Department of Teaching and Learning, and director of the conference. Click here for an article from the [Savannah Morning News](#).



## Student News

More than 40 students participated in **COE's annual graduate research workshop** last

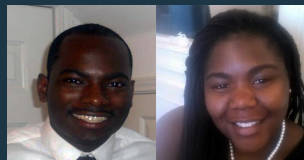


month. The two-day workshop for Ed.D. and Ed.S. students covered such topics as research methods, Institutional Review Board (IRB) processes and guidelines, and time

management. For some, especially those in on-line programs, it also was an opportunity to meet fellow students.

Two College of Education graduate students were recently elected to leadership positions in the **National Black Graduate Student Association (NBGSA)**. John Nwosu, who is in the master's in counselor education program, was elected president. Jessica James, a higher education administration master's student, was elected treasurer.

NBGSA is a non-profit, student-run organization that works to increase the number of minority students in higher education. The group raises awareness on campuses and within communities, and serves as a support group and platform for



COE graduate students John Nwosu and Jessica James

Koballa said that it is difficult to determine the effects the new certification system will have on teacher salaries and on pursuing higher education. GaPSC has said the state will continue to use certification levels to determine placement on the salary schedule. "We don't know how long this will continue," Koballa said.

The new certification rules were developed over a 12 month period by a task force representing educators, the board of regents and government agencies. GaPSC published the new rules earlier this spring. After a comment period, a revised version was adopted which became effective July 1.

The intent of the new tiered certification, according to GaPSC, is to bring together a number of system innovations at one time. The organization says innovations include development of induction standards, changes that will professionalize professional learning, create a tie-in to the new statewide teacher evaluation system (TKES) and finally include measures to strengthen teacher preparation. "Bringing together multiple system innovations at one time is indeed a worthy goal," according to Koballa. "But time will tell if the new tiered certification makes a positive difference in student learning."

Here is a brief description of the new tiers from GaPSC. [Click here for a more detailed explanation of the new system as well as other rule changes.](#)

**1. Pre-Service:** This tier is intended for educator candidates completing field experiences or student teaching in Georgia schools. It will require enrollment in an initial certification preparation program, successful federal and state background checks, and completion of the new Georgia Educator Ethics Exam.

**2. Induction:** This tier is intended for teachers with fewer than 3 years of experience within the last 5 years. It is also issued in some service certificate fields, such as Media Specialist and School Counseling. There are multiple pathways to Induction certification, and each has specific qualifications. The pathways are designed to address the needs of those completing a traditional educator preparation program in Georgia, those completing an educator preparation program in another state, early career educators who are certified in another state and those who have begun teaching before completing an educator preparation program. The Induction certificate replaces the formerly used Non-Renewable Non-Professional and GaTAPP certificates. It is also issued to many people who would have qualified for an initial Clear Renewable or Technical Specialist certificate under the former system.

**3. Professional:** The new Professional certificates are either Performance-Based or Standard. Both types of Professional certificate require at least 3 years of experience within the last 5 years and a Professional level passing score on the GACE content exam. Performance-Based Professional certificates are for those teachers who have been evaluated for at least two years on the statewide Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) and for leaders who have completed a Georgia performance-based certification program. Standard Professional certificates are issued in all service fields, as well as to leaders who have not completed a performance-based program (those who hold field 704) and to teachers who do not have the TKES evaluations required for the Performance-Based Professional certificate. For example, teachers working in private schools or in positions outside of the classroom are not evaluated on TKES and therefore will be issued a Standard Professional certificate.

**4. Advanced/Lead Professional:** The fourth tier includes two different certificates: Advanced Professional and Lead Professional. Both of these certificates are designed for classroom teachers, and both require a minimum of 5 years of experience, with 3 years on the TKES system. The Advanced Professional certificate is for teachers who

students "to excel socially and academically."  
 "Joining NBGSA was one of the best experiences of my life," said James. "I have been able to network with people all over the country and represent Georgia Southern and the College of Education. But most importantly, I was able to see people who look like me excelling in what they do," James added. For more information on NBGSA, e-mail [thegsubgsa@gmail.com](mailto:thegsubgsa@gmail.com) or go to [NBGSA.org](http://NBGSA.org)

demonstrate expert classroom practice, evidenced by Exemplary performance ratings and advanced education or NBPTS certification. The Lead Professional certificate is for teachers who are leaders of their peers. It will also require Exemplary performance ratings; other qualifications include holding certification in Teacher Leadership or an endorsement in Teacher Leader, Coaching, or Teacher Support Specialist and a passing score on the GACE Teacher Leadership content assessment. These certificates will not be issued until July 1, 2015, or later.

**On July 1, 2014, all valid Clear Renewable teaching and service certificates were converted to Standard Professional certificates. Non-Renewable certificates remained unchanged.**



## Southern Educator

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- Middle Grades Education Grades 4-8
- Special Education Grades P-12 (ONLINE)
- P-12 Education with Teaching Field in Spanish

#### Master of Education (M.Ed.)

- Special Education (ONLINE)
- Early Childhood Education (ONLINE)
- Secondary Education (ONLINE)
- Middle Grades (ONLINE)
- Curriculum & Instruction Accomplished Teaching (ONLINE)
- Higher Education Administration (ONLINE OPTION)
- Educational Leadership (ONLINE)
- Instructional Technology (ONLINE)
- Reading Education (ONLINE)
- Special Education (ONLINE)
- Counselor Education

#### Education Specialist (Ed.S.)

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- Instructional Technology (ONLINE)
- Early Childhood Education (ONLINE)
- Middle Grades Education (ONLINE)
- Secondary Education (ONLINE)
- Special Education (ONLINE)
- School Psychology
- Educational Leadership


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