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Georgia Southern researcher in search of identifying best classroom practices through empirical data

April 14, 2021



Antonio Gutierrez de Blume, Ph.D.

Georgia Southern University's Antonio Gutierrez de Blume, Ph.D., associate professor of educational research in the College of Education, began his most recent research efforts to determine the learning strategies that would lead to significant gains in metacognitive monitoring for students and, ultimately, uncover the most effective learning strategies to inform teacher practice.

Metacognition in the classroom assesses students' ability to understand how they best learn and assist with development of self-awareness. Metacognitive monitoring, a critical component of metacognition, evaluates the accuracy of students' confidence in what they know and do not know about a topic when this confidence is compared to their actual performance on an assessment related to the topic.

Gutierrez de Blume, who specializes in learning and cognition, research methodologies, and statistics, set out first to provide empirical evidence by systematically exploring learning strategies' effect on monitoring when compared to a control. To complete this, he conducted a meta-analysis, a sophisticated statistical analysis that combines the effects of multiple studies on a topic to look at overall results and whether certain other factors affect the overall effect.

"The literature on the topic ran the gamut from minimal or no effects to larger effect sizes," said Gutierrez de Blume. "My question was why was there such variability in what learning strategies are effective when studies are supposedly evaluating similar learning strategies, while holding all other things constant, like research design and other methodological artifacts. The best way to go about finding an answer was a meta-analysis."

The process was no easy feat and took Gutierrez de Blume nearly nine years to complete from inception of the idea to actual publication of the meta-analysis. Identifying more than 100 relevant articles, he then narrowed down the analysis to 56 articles that met very specific criteria for inclusion.

"I kept putting it off because it was a monumental task," said Gutierrez de Blume. "What really jump-started the process again was the death of my doctoral advisor Gregg Schraw, Ph.D., a close friend and mentor who helped me flesh out this idea, and I owed it to him to get this out there."

The analysis provided empirical data showing the most effective learning interventions to be deep learning strategies such as paraphrasing learned information, diagramming and inferencing.

"While it seems logical that deep learning strategies would lead to more enduring learning, we now have empirical evidence that shows that is what is happening," Gutierrez de Blume said.

However, he noted mixed approaches to learning, which included both shallow and deep learning strategies, are also successful. Shallow learning strategies include techniques like highlighting, underlining and memorizing.

"Students often try shallow learning strategies as trial and error more so than strategically," explained Gutierrez de Blume. "If you highlight over half of a page, what is the purpose? But if taught to strategically use these

tactics, then these strategies can be used more successfully. For instance, you should, theoretically, only highlight 10% of a page or less to capture the most important information on the page.”

While it may have taken Gutierrez de Blume a considerable amount of time to complete the first step of this process, he only intends to keep going.

“The main purpose was to find out what are the types of learning strategies that are most effective in a classroom setting so that I could then turn those around and directly inform teachers’ practice,” he explained.

The next step will be to systematically review the literature to determine what specific strategies within deep and mixed learning strategies prove to be the most effective. Gutierrez de Blume plans to provide free professional development to schools and school districts in the form of a series of short videos that can be shown over several weeks to engage in long-lasting learning.

An article detailing Gutierrez de Blume’s meta-analysis is currently in press in the *Journal of Educational Psychology* (JEP). “Calibrating Calibrating: A Meta-Analysis of Learning Strategy Instruction Interventions to Improve Metacognitive Monitoring Accuracy” is now available in JEP’s OnlineFirst platform at <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000674>.

Posted in [Faculty Highlights](#)

Tags: [Antonio Gutierrez de Blume](#), [CFR Department](#)

COE faculty, staff recognized for years of service

April 14, 2021

The College of Education (COE) had several members included in the University’s recent release of Years of Service Awards. Members of the COE team included:

30 Years

- **Elizabeth Downs, Ph.D.**, Professor, Department of Leadership, Technology & Human Development

25 Years

- **Kathleen Crawford, Ed.D.**, Assistant Professor, Department of Elementary & Special Education

20 Years

- **Scott Beck, Ph.D.**, Professor, Department of Middle Grades & Secondary Education
- **Marla Morris, Ph.D.**, Professor, Department of Curriculum, Foundations & Reading
- **Meca Williams-Johnson, Ph.D.**, Professor, Department of Curriculum, Foundations & Reading

15 Years

- **Kelly Tharp**, Instructor, Department of Curriculum, Foundations & Reading

10 Years

- **Nancy Arrington, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor, Department of Elementary & Special Education
- **Jennifer Stocking**, Budget Manager, College of Education
- **Elizabeth Williams**, Lecturer, Department of Elementary & Special Education

5 Years

- **Tonya Cooper**, Instructor, Department of Elementary & Special Education
- **Kristen Dickens, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor, Department of Leadership, Technology & Human Development
- **Lacey Huffling, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor, Department of Middle Grades & Secondary Education
- **Heather Huling**, Instructor, Department of Elementary & Special Education
- **Lucas Jensen**, Assistant Professor, Department of Leadership, Technology & Human Development
- **K. Brooke Slone**, Education Field Experience Coordinator, College of Education
- **Janel Smith**, Lecturer, Department of Middle Grades & Secondary Education

For more information on the Georgia Southern University Years of Service Awards, visit: <https://www.georgiasouthern.edu/gsawards/#service>

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Georgia Southern touted for ‘Best MAT Degree’ in nation

April 14, 2021

Intelligent.com recently announced its “[Top 50 Master’s Education Degree Programs for 2021](#),” ranking Georgia Southern University as No. 3 in the nation and adding the distinction of “Best MAT Degree” to the University’s profile.

The Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree program at Georgia Southern has six available concentrations — elementary education, health and physical education, middle grades education, secondary education, Spanish education and special education. All of the concentrations with the exception of Spanish education are offered online. Each program requires field experience components, which can either be completed as a teacher of record (if already working in a classroom), or the College of Education will assist with field placements for students within schools near their place of residence in Georgia.

“For many, the MAT degree is optimal for career changers who hold a bachelor’s degree and would like the opportunity to work as a teacher while earning their degree,” said Deborah Thomas, Ph.D., associate dean for

curriculum, instruction and initial educator preparation. “We also have students who complete undergraduate degrees in a content area such as English or history, and wish to teach but need to become certified. This master’s program is designed to prepare effective teachers through a sequence of courses and field and clinical experiences with the support of faculty and school-based mentors.”

Intelligent.com’s comprehensive research guide is based on an assessment of 195 accredited colleges and universities in the nation. Each program is evaluated based on curriculum quality, graduation rate, reputation and post-graduate employment.

For more information on the Georgia Southern MAT program and concentrations, visit coe.GeorgiaSouthern.edu/MAT.

Posted in [Degree Programs](#)

Tags: [Deborah Thomas](#), [Master of Arts in Teaching](#)