



The Urban Education Collaborative UNC CHARLOTTE

STUDENT DISCIPLINE JOINT TASK FORCE

Reforming School Discipline in Classrooms through Advocacy and Research

SDJTF Director: Bettie Ray Butler, PhD

2016-2017 SDTF APPLICATION PACKET

The *Student Discipline Joint Task Force* (SDJTF) and the Urban Education Collaborative at the University of North Carolina Charlotte has partnered with surrounding school districts to form a data clearinghouse dedicated to gathering, evaluating, and disseminating high quality, interdisciplinary research that informs student discipline practices, standards and/or policies in urban schools in North Carolina and nationally.

Our mission is to work collaboratively with practitioners (teachers), policymakers (school boards members) and educational stakeholders (community) to provide actionable recommendations and sustainable interventions that support alternative discipline strategies that reduce disparities in school discipline and improve educational outcomes.

The *Student Discipline Joint Task Force* employs a mixed methods approach to data collection and synthesis; combining both inductive (quantitative) and deductive (qualitative) reasoning to inform best practices in school discipline. SDJTF is unique in that it utilizes, alongside traditional quantitative analyses, participatory action research (PAR)¹ which fosters collaborations (participation) between researchers, educators, political officials, and the larger community² as a means of co-constructing knowledge about more effective disciplinary remedies (change) that promote equity and social justice (action).

Vision

The *Student Discipline Joint Task Force* will be a national model of equity, engagement, and reform in urban education. SDJTF is committed to working with practitioners, policymakers, and educational stakeholders who have a vested interest in the practice and study of effective school discipline strategies. SDJTF is also dedicated to developing and adapting innovative solutions/interventions for *teaching* (developing culturally responsive classroom management), *research* (examining alternatives for exclusionary discipline practices), *advocacy* (implementing social justice initiatives), and *service* (promoting reciprocity through volunteerism), which moderate and offset the unintended consequences of exclusionary discipline and promote educational sustainability.

Background

SDJTF was designed in 2014, and officially established in fall of 2015, under the direction of Dr. Bettie Ray Butler. The creation of SDJTF grew in response to the ubiquitous, and often differential, use of exclusionary school discipline practices in urban schools. However, unlike many task forces, SDJTF seeks to use data not only to report disproportional trends, but also to heighten awareness, identify, and share/disseminate *effective solutions* that reduce discipline disparities and improve educational outcomes.

SDJTF is an extension of the Urban Education Collaborative at the University of North Carolina Charlotte and operates in partnership with surrounding school districts. Through this partnership SDJTF

¹ PAR is a specific type of collaborative research that incorporates *participation* and *action* components to ultimately understand and improve (in this case) school discipline in urban schools by *changing* how it is practiced/ administered.

² The larger community is inclusive of parents, community and business leaders, etc.

aims to serve as a research repository and resource center for urban schools in the state and nationally. School discipline and social justice are SDJTF's central focus.



Leadership

Bettie Ray Butler, PhD is the Director of the Student Discipline Joint Task Force and an Assistant Professor of Urban Education at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. She is also a faculty affiliate of the Urban Education Collaborative also at the University of North Carolina Charlotte.

Dr. Butler's research focuses on school discipline and social justice with a concentration on racial/ethnic/gender disparities in the administration of school discipline. To date, she has led and co-authored book chapters, *Challenging middle class notions of femininity: The cause of Black females' disproportionate suspension rate* (2015); *A perfect storm: How pose, perception and threat converge to perpetuate discriminatory discipline practices* (2014); and journal articles, *Assessing the odds: Disproportional discipline practices and implications for educational stakeholders* (2012); *Unmasking the inequitable discipline experiences of urban Black girls* (2011); *African American male discipline patterns and school district responses resulting impact on academic achievement: Implications for urban educators and policy makers* (2010); and *Who's really disrupting the classroom: An examination of African American male students and their disciplinary roles* (2010). Her publications have appeared in nationally recognized publishing outlets such as *Teachers College Press*, *Emerald Group Publishing*, *Peter Lang Publishers*, and *Routledge*; and her work featured in journals, such as, *Journal of Negro Education*, *The Urban Review*, *The National Journal of Urban Education and Practice*, *Multicultural Perspectives*, and *The Journal of Progressive Policy and Practice*.

Dr. Butler scholarship on school discipline has been presented at regional, national and international research conferences (North Carolina Association for Research in Education- NCARE, American Educational Research Association- AERA, International Conference on Urban Education- ICUE, and Paris International Conference on Education, Economy, and Society). She has also received invitations to speak about her research at the University of Pittsburgh (Center for Urban Education), The University of Connecticut (Department of Public Policy) and Columbia University (Law School Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies).

As an educator, Dr. Butler has taught classes and facilitated seminars for both undergraduates (Diversity and Inclusion) and doctoral students (Social Deviance, Delinquency, and Education, Urban Educational Reform, and Power, Privilege and Education) addressing school discipline in urban schools.

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RESEARCH POSITIONS

All SDJTF research positions will be based on a competitive application and selection process. The Director will review all application materials and select the most qualified applicant[s]. Students are eligible to receive one (1) of two (2) research positions: Doctoral Junior Research Assistant and Doctoral Senior Research Associate. All positions are for one calendar year. Students must reapply annually. All renewed appointments are contingent upon prior performance. The eligibility and expectations for each position are provided below:

Doctoral Junior Research Assistant

Eligibility: All prospective applicants must be doctoral *students* presently enrolled in the Curriculum and Instruction PhD program at UNCC. Applicants must also have completed their 1st /2nd year of graduate course work. Students are required to be in good academic standing with both the department and university. Preference will be given to those students that have exhibited an interest in school discipline and social justice. Applicants who have administrative experience, knowledge of alternative education, or whom have worked directly with youth offenders are also strongly encouraged to apply. Minimal research skills are desired, but not necessary. Proficiency in Microsoft Office (i.e., Excel and Word) is required.

Expectations: Data collection and input; survey administration; co-design interdisciplinary research projects; publications (co-authorship); build and foster outreach and engagement with school partners and the community; grant preparation; research dissemination (joint conference presentations); attendance at scheduled monthly meetings; and host/participate in professional development trainings (as needed).

Doctoral Senior Research Associate

Eligibility: All prospective applicants must be doctoral *candidates* presently enrolled in the Curriculum and Instruction PhD program at UNCC. Applicants must also have either passed their comprehensive exams and/or successfully defended their dissertation prospectus. Students are required to be in good academic standing with both the department and university. Preference will be given to those students that have exhibited an interest in school discipline and social justice. Applicants who have administrative experience, knowledge of alternative education, or whom have worked directly with youth offenders are also strongly encouraged to apply. Advanced research skills (a high-level of understanding regarding quantitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies) are required; proficiency in SPSS, STATA, or a comparable statistical analysis software package is highly desirable.

Expectations: Oversight and management of research team (senior research mentor); data collection, input, and analysis; survey development and administration, design interdisciplinary research projects (project leader); publications (lead author); build, foster, and coordinate outreach and engagement with school partners and the community; spearhead grant writing and development; research dissemination (lead conference presentations); attendance at scheduled monthly meetings, and co-facilitate professional development trainings.

Selection Criteria

- ❖ Must have successfully completed or currently registered for EDCI 8320 ³
- ❖ Must have successfully completed or currently registered for EDCI 8314 ⁴
- ❖ Evidence of scholarly promise and distinction
- ❖ Indication of interest in school discipline (research/practice/policy)
- ❖ Dissertation topic aligned with school discipline (Senior Research Associate only)
- ❖ Availability to volunteer at Turning Point Academy (TPA)
- ❖ Good standing with the department and university

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BENEFITS

Financial Support

Financial support is awarded through a conference travel stipend and dependent upon funds available. Priority is given to new applicants.

Data Access

All Junior Research Assistants and Senior Research Associates (who remain in good standing with the task force) will have lifetime access to data collected by SDJTF for individual research projects (including, but not limited to dissertation studies and manuscripts).

Publishing Network

All past and current Junior Research Assistants and Senior Research Associates will have the opportunity to co-publish research/practitioner-based journal articles, book chapters, policy reports and briefs, etc. with members of the task force.

³ Social Deviance, Delinquency and Urban Education

⁴ Urban Education Reform

Reciprocity

All SDJTF researchers will have access to volunteer opportunities.

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APPLICATION PROCEDURE

New Applicants: To be considered for review, the following materials must be assembled by all new applicants and hand delivered (see mailing address below) or emailed (bettie.butler@uncc.edu) to the Director as a package by the identified target date:

1. Complete application form (see next page)
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. One (1) Letter of Recommendation⁵
4. One (1) Essay

Applicants should prepare a 300 word essay describing their graduate research (or anticipated research area of interest). It should offer a rationale about why they selected this field of study and how they believe participation in the SDJTF can advance their research/professional agenda.

Renewing Applicants: Current Research Junior Assistants or Senior Associates interested in continuing participation in the SDJTF are encouraged to resubmit the following materials by the identified target date:

1. Complete application form (see next page)
2. Updated Curriculum Vitae
3. SDJTF Performance Evaluation
4. One (1) Essay

Renewing applicants should prepare a 300 word essay describing their experience/involvement with SDJTF. It should address how they have benefited from the program and what they hope to achieve by continuing their participation in the task force.

Well qualified candidates will be interviewed by the Director. It is the applicant's responsibility to check on the completeness of their application. Selection will be based on applicant's research interest, motivation, ability to work independently, leadership and communication skills, and level of interest working with educators, policy makers, and the larger community (parents, community and business leaders, etc.)

Application Submission

Applications are due on or before **September 30, 2016** and can be submitted online, hand delivered or transmitted via a single e-mail message with the following subject headings: SDTF Application | (Applicant's Full Name). If hand delivered, application materials should be compiled and sealed in a manila envelope and placed in the Director's mailbox. If emailed, multiple attachments should be collapsed into a single PDF document prior to transmission.

Deliver Application Materials to: University of North Carolina Charlotte
c/o Bettie Ray Butler, Ph.D. (SDTF)
Department of Middle, Secondary, and K-12 Education
3rd Floor College of Education, Room 324
9201 University City Blvd.
Charlotte, North Carolina 28223-0001

For further information please contact Dr. Bettie Ray Butler. She can be reached by email at bettie.butler@uncc.edu or by phone at (704) 687-7098.

⁵ The letter of recommendation should be written by an individual that can speak to the applicant's interest in school discipline.

Essay

Select one of the two essays listed below:

New Applicants: Write a 300 word essay describing your graduate research (or anticipated research area of interest). Provide a rationale about why you selected this field of study and you believe participation in the SDJTF can advance your research/professional agenda.

Or

Renewing Applicants: Write a 300 word essay describing their experience/ involvement with SDJTF. Address how you have benefited from the program and what you hope to achieve by continuing your participation in the task force.

Attachment Checklist:

- Application Form
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Letter of Recommendation (1) (New Applicants Only)
- Evaluation of Performant (Renewing Applicants Only)
- Essay

I hereby confirm receipt (via hard copy or electronic version) of the above *SDJTF Application Packet*. By providing my signature below I fully understand and agree to submit all required documentation necessary for consideration before the deadline. Should I neglect to submit all of the required materials needed to assess my eligibility on or before September 1, 2016 (all application materials must be time stamped before the deadline) I acknowledge that my application will default to an incomplete status and will subsequently be withdrawn from consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns **ALL** inquiries can be directed to the Director, Dr. Bettie Ray Butler at bettie.butler@uncc.edu

Applicant Signed (REQUIRED): _____ Date: _____
Print Signature

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 Like us at *Under Construction*