

DENISA GÁNDARA

Southern Methodist University
Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development
The Department of Education Policy & Leadership
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EDUCATION

PhD, 2016 Higher Education University of Georgia

Constructing “winners and losers:” An analysis of higher education performance funding policy designs in Colorado and Texas

Committee: Erik C. Ness (Chair), James C. Hearn, Sheila Slaughter, Manuel González Canché

BA, 2011 Philosophy, Psychology Minor The University of Texas at Austin

BA, 2011 Spanish, Linguistics Minor The University of Texas at Austin

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2016-present **Assistant Professor of Education Policy & Leadership**

2015-2016 **Clinical Assistant Professor of Education Policy & Leadership**

Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development
Southern Methodist University

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS

2017 AERA Research Grant; with Amy Li (\$35,000)

2016 Latino Center for Leadership Development / Tower Center Research Grants (\$10,000)

2016 SMU University Research Council Grant (\$3,240)

2015 AERA Minority Dissertation Fellowship-Travel Award

2015 Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship (\$25,000)

2013 Zell and Shirley Miller Graduate Fellow, Institute of Higher Education, University of Georgia; Competitive Award

2011-2013 Graduate School Recruitment Opportunity Fellow, University of Georgia; Competitive Award; \$40,000

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

Gándara, D. & Hearn, J.C. (Accepted). College Completion, the Texas Way: An Examination of the Development of College Completion Policy in a Distinctive Political Culture. *Teachers College Record*.

Li, A., **Gándara, D.**, & Assalone, A. (Accepted). Do Performance-Funding Policies Disadvantage Two-Year Minority-Serving Institutions? *Community College Review*.

Gándara, D. (Accepted). Does Evidence Matter? An Analysis of Evidence Use in Performance-Funding Policy Designs in Two States. *Review of Higher Education*.

Gándara, D., Ness, E.C., & Rippner, J. (2017). Exploring the “How” in Policy Diffusion: A National Intermediary Organization’s Role in Facilitating the Spread of Performance Funding Policies in the States. *Journal of Higher Education*.

Gándara, D. & Toutkoushian, R. (2017). Updated Estimates of the Average Financial Return on Master’s Degree Programs in the United States. *Journal of Education Finance*.

Gándara, D. & Rutherford, A. (2017). Mitigating unintended impacts? The effects of premiums for underserved populations in performance-funding policies for higher education. *Research in Higher Education*.

Ness, E.C. & **Gándara, D.** (2014). Ideological Think Tanks in the States: An Inventory of their Prevalence, Networks, and Higher Education Policy Activity. *Educational Policy*, 28(2), 258-280.

BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Jones, T., Jones, S., Owens, L., Assalone, A. Elliott, K., & **Gándara, D.** (2017). *Outcomes Based Funding and Race in Higher Education*. Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gándara, D. (2016). College Students, State Policies, and Undocumented Status. In Lomotey, K., Jackson, P.B., Adem, M., Ruf, P.X., Copeland, V.C., Huerta, A., Iglesias-Prieto, N.V., & Brown, D.L. (Eds.), *People of Color in the United States: Contemporary Issues in Education, Work, Communities, Health, and Immigration*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

POLICY REPORTS

Ness, E.C., Milan, M. & **Gándara, D.** (2015). Campus Responses to Outcomes-Based Funding in Tennessee: Robust, Aligned, and Contested. Nashville: Tennessee Higher Education Commission. <https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/thec/attachments/FordFoundationPaper.pdf>

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Gándara, D. & Ness, E.C. (In preparation for journal submission). Ideological Think Tank Activity and the Politics of College Affordability in the States.

Rutherford, A. & **Gándara, D.** (In preparation for journal submission). Completion at the expense of access? The Effects of Performance-Funding Policies on Access to Public Four-Year Universities.

Gándara, D. (In preparation for journal submission). Constructing Winners and Losers in Higher Education Performance-Funding Models.

Gándara, D. & Li, A. (In progress). The “promise” of free tuition at two-year colleges: Impacts on total and low-income student enrollment.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Invited Presentation

Gándara, D. (August 2017). Higher Education in a Changing Political Climate. Panel at the Texas Higher Education Symposium. Austin, TX.

Gándara, D. (June 2017). Federal panel on Latino education. Panel at The State of Latino Education - A Policy Conference on Statewide and National Opportunities and Challenges. Dallas, TX.

Gándara, D., Rutherford, A. (November 2015). Performance-based Accountability for Higher Education: How’s It Measuring Up? Presented at the Graduate Student Policy Seminar at Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. Denver, CO.

Peer-reviewed Presentations

Rutherford, A. & **Gándara, D.** (November 2017). Completion at the expense of access? Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Houston, TX.

Gándara, D. & Ness, E. (November 2017). Framing college affordability across the ideological divide. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Houston, TX.

Gándara, D. & Li, A. (October 2017). The “promise” of free tuition at two-year colleges: Impacts on total and low-income student enrollment. Paper presented at the College Promise Research Conference. Philadelphia, PA.

Gándara, D. (November 2016). Policy Actors' Use of Evidence to Inform Performance Funding Policy Designs in Two States. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Columbus, OH.

Gándara, D. (November 2016). “Under the Guise of Performance Funding:” An Analysis of Higher Education Funding Model Design in Colorado. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Columbus, OH.

Assalone, A., **Gándara, D.**, Elliott, K., Jones, S., Jones, T., Li, A., Russell Owens, L. (November 2016). Can Equity Be Bought? Performance Based Funding and Racial Equity. Panel at the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Columbus, OH.

Ness, E.C., Hearn, J.C., **Gándara, D.**, Tandberg, D., Longanecker, D., Sponsler, B. (November 2015). Scholars, Intermediaries, and State College Completion Policy: An Interactive Discussion of Research-Policy Connections. Panel at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. Denver, CO.

Gándara, D. & Hillman, N. (April 2015). Recycling Policy Ideas: The Case of Performance Funding in Higher Education. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.

Gándara, D., Ness, E.C., & Rippner, J. (April 2015). Exploring the “How” in Policy Diffusion: A National Intermediary Organization’s Role in Facilitating the Spread of College Completion Policies in the States. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.

Ness, E.C., **Gándara, D.**, & Deupree, M.M. (April 2015). Inputs Matter: An Exploration of Outcomes Funding Impacts on Two Community Colleges. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL.

Gándara, D. & Hearn, J.C. (November 2014). College Completion, the Texas Way: An Examination of the Development of College Completion Policy in a Distinctive Political Culture. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. Washington, D.C.

Dougherty K., **Gándara D.**, Hillman N., Kinne A., Li, A., Miller T., Ness, E.C., Reindl T., & Tandberg, D. (*panelists listed in alphabetical order*). The State of Performance Funding in the States: Origin, Design, Implementation, and Effects (November 2014). Panel at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Public Policy Preconference. Washington, D.C.

Gándara, D. & Toutkoushian, R. (April 2014). What’s it worth?: A Nuanced Evaluation of the Pecuniary Value of Graduate Degrees. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.

Gándara, D. & Ness, E.C. (April 2014). Ideological Think Tanks and the Politics of College Affordability in the States. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.

González-Canché, M., **Gándara, D.**, Brajkovic, L., Harding, J., & Turk, J. (April 2014). State Retention of the “Best and Brightest”?: An Examination of the Variation in Mobility Tendencies for College Students by Academic Profiles. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.

Gándara, D. & Byars, J.C. (November 2013). Who's Next? Estimating the Predictors of Adoption of Undocumented Student Policies. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. St. Louis, MO.

Gándara, D. (November 2012). Non-pecuniary Capital Characteristics and Perceptions of Family Ability to Pay for College. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. Las Vegas, NV.

Ness, E.C. & **Gándara, D.** (November 2012). Ideological Think Tanks in the States: An Inventory of their Prevalence, Networks, and Higher Education Policy Activity. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. Las Vegas, NV.

Other Conference Participation

- 2016** University of Houston Law Center's Institute for Higher Education Law and Governance
Houston Higher Education Finance Roundtable (presentation and fellowship)
- 2015** William T. Grant Foundation's Mentoring Meeting
- 2015** Institutional Design Frontiers Summit, Arizona State University (presentation)
- 2013** AERA Emerging Scholars Workshop

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses Taught, Southern Methodist University

Public Policy and Higher Education (MEd Level)	EPL 6396	Fall 2017
PreK-16 Comparative International Policy (EdD/MEd)	EPL 7354/ EPL 6373	Summer2017 Spring 2018
Higher Education Finance (MEd Level)	EPL 6396	Spring 2016 Spring 2017 Spring 2018
Financial Strategy and Management (EdD Level)	EPL 7383	Spring 2016 Fall 2016
Contemporary Issue in Higher Education	EPL 7382	Fall 2017

SERVICE

Leadership

- 2018** Co-Chair, Public Policy Forum (Section: The Role of Intermediary Public Policy Organizations in Education)
- 2018** Member, The Education Trust Working Group on Equity-Focused Accountability Policy
- 2016-2019** Member-At-Large, ASHE Council for Public Policy in Higher Education (Elected)
- 2016-2017** Member, Texas Higher Education Symposium, Pre-Symposium Committee
- 2013-2015** Graduate Student Representative, AERA Division J

2013-2014 Member, ASHE Community Service Ad-Hoc Committee

Other Professional Service

2017 Faculty mentor, McNair Scholars Program (SMU)
2017 Reviewer, *Berkeley Review of Education*
2016 Member, Faculty Learning Community: Creating Inclusive Classrooms
2016 Reviewer, *Higher Education Policy*
2016-2017 Reviewer, *The Journal of Higher Education*
2016-2018 Reviewer, *Community College Review*
2015-2017 Proposal reviewer, AERA Annual Conference
2014-2015,
2017 Proposal reviewer, ASHE Annual Conference
2013 Application reviewer, AERA Graduate Student Travel Grant

LANGUAGES

Spanish, Native