

DENISA GÁNDARA

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EDUCATION

2015 (expected)	Ph.D.	Higher Education	University of Georgia
2011	B.A.	Philosophy, Psychology Minor	The University of Texas at Austin
2011	B.A.	Spanish, Linguistics Minor	The University of Texas at Austin

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2011-present **Project Manager and Lead Graduate Student Researcher** “The Distinct Role of Intermediary Organizations in Fostering Research Utilization for State College Completion Policy” project funded by WT Grant Foundation

Responsibilities: collaboratively develop grant proposal with Erik Ness, Principal Investigator (PI), and James Hearn, Co-PI; design interview and observation protocols for five states; iteratively produce a coding scheme for qualitative data analysis; manage a six-member team in the data collection, data analysis, and presentation of findings from Phase 1 of the project

2011-present **Graduate Student Research Assistant**

“Ideological think tanks in higher education”; with Erik Ness.
Responsibilities: Build database for content analysis using archived data from 99 ideological think tanks’ websites; conduct qualitative analyses; write papers; guest lecture in Policy Studies course

“Private Financial Returns on Graduate Education”; with Robert Toutkoushian. Responsibilities: Construct dataset using data on financing of graduate education and labor market returns; conduct quantitative analyses; write papers; guest lecture in Economics of Higher Education course

2013-2014 **Consultant** “Campus Responses to Tennessee’s Complete College Tennessee Act and Outcomes-Based Funding Formula” project supported by the Ford Foundation and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC)

Responsibilities: collaboratively design ethnographic case study interview and observation protocols; conduct over 40 interviews with officials from two campuses and the University of Tennessee System; conduct observations; analyze qualitative data for two campuses; collaboratively write papers, including final report to THEC and the Ford Foundation

2010-2011 Policy Intern, Texas Senate Higher Education Committee

Responsibilities: write policy memos; research and prepare materials, including bill analyses and “talking points”, for higher education bills for use by Senate Higher Education Committee Chair, Judith Zaffirini, Ph.D.

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2014** Scholars Strategy Network; Invited Member
- 2013-2014** AERA Division J Graduate Student Representative
- 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
- 2011** College of Liberal Arts Dean’s Distinguished Graduate, The University of Texas at Austin; Awarded to 12 graduates in 2011
- 2009-2011** Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program Scholar
- 2008-2011** National Society of Collegiate Scholars, The University of Texas at Austin
- 2010** Council for Opportunity in Education Global Leaders’ Semester, Scholarship and Internship in the Office of Congressman Luis Gutiérrez (D-IL-4); \$23,000

PUBLICATIONS

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.

Ness, E.C., Milan, M. & **Gándara, D.** (forthcoming). Campus Responses to Tennessee’s 2010 Complete College Tennessee Act and Outcomes-Based Funding Formula. Final report to THEC and the Ford Foundation.

Gándara, D. & Toutkoushian, R. The Value of Postbaccalaureate Academic Pursuits: An Analysis of the Private Financial Value of Graduate Degrees by Fields of Study. In preparation for *Economics of Education Review*.

Gándara, D. & Ness, E.C. Ideological Think Tank Activity and the Politics of College Affordability in the States. In preparation for *American Educational Research Journal*.

Gándara, D. Non-pecuniary Capital Characteristics and Perceptions of Family Ability to Pay for College. In preparation for *The Review of Higher Education*.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

Keynote Address

Gándara, D. (December 2012). “A Holistic Approach to Opportunity.” Keynote given at the National Head Start Association 29th Annual Parent Conference. Dallas, TX.

Peer-reviewed Presentations

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.

Conference Participation

2013 AERA Emerging Scholars Workshop

- 2009** Espacio 2009- Vanguardia Latina International Policy Conference Participant
- 2008** Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (National Association of Postsecondary Institutions) Conference Participant

SERVICE

Leadership

- 2013-present** ASHE Community Service Ad-Hoc Committee Member
- 2013-2014** AERA Division J Graduate Student Representative

Panels Organized

- 2014** Gildersleeve, R., Harper, S., Hillman, N., & Rios-Aguilar, C. Alleviating “Teamwork” Anxieties: How to Establish and Sustain Successful Collaborative Publication-Oriented Relationships. Annual AERA Division J Fireside Chat. Philadelphia, PA, *with Blanca Rincón and Catherine Johnson.*
- 2014** Castro, E., Gasman, M., Garces, L., & Rhoades, G. Beyond Academia: Reaching a Broader Audience. AERA Division J Graduate Student Seminar. Philadelphia, PA, *with Blanca Rincón and Catherine Johnson.*
- 2014** Gasman, M., Bowman, N. Philanthropy at Minority Serving Institutions. #DivJChat, Twitter, *with Luis Leyva and Demetri Morgan*
- 2014** Munoz, S., Bohórquez, L. Undocumented Students and Higher Education. #DivJChat, Twitter, *with Luis Leyva and Demetri Morgan*

Other Service

- 2014** Proposal reviewer, ASHE Annual Conference
- 2013** Application reviewer, AERA Graduate Student Travel Grant
- 2012** Treasurer, Higher Education Student Society, Institute of Higher Education, University of Georgia
- 2012** GED Instructor, Athens Latino Center for Education Services

RESEARCH TRAINING

Experience

- 2013** Lab leader, Quantitative Methods I
- 2013** Guest lecture, Qualitative Methods
- 2012** Association for Institutional Research (AIR)/ ASHE IPEDS Workshop Participant
- 2012** University of Georgia, College of Education, Social Network Analysis Workshop

Relevant Research Methods Courses

Qualitative Research: Collection and analysis of data from documents, observations, and interviews

Social and Statistical Network Analysis (*audit*): Measures of centrality, visual representation of networks, key actor analysis, ego networks, text network analysis, two-mode networks, QAP, and dynamic network analysis

Social Network Theories and Methods Workshop, University of Georgia (by Kenneth Frank): Selection, influence, causality, graphical representations, and centrality

Statistics for Econometrics: Probability, sampling, expectation, distribution functions, parametric and conditional distributions, independence, functions of random variables, and maximum likelihood

Linear Models: Ordinary least squares, violations of the underlying assumptions of multiple regression, instrumental variables estimation, simultaneous equations, propensity score matching, and panel data techniques

Advanced Topics in Statistical Modeling: Logit/probit, selection models, ordered logit/probit, nested logit, poisson regression, multinomial logit, panel data estimation, and time-series econometrics

Multilevel Modeling: Estimation, reliability, model-building, intra-class correlation, fixed and random effects

LANGUAGES

Spanish, Native