

LITERACY STUDIES PH.D. PROGRAM

Summer 2023

Volume 12, Issue 1

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Janna Brown McClain **Assistant Professor**



Dr. Janna McClain serves as an Assistant Professor at Middle Tennessee State University, and is an advisor to students in the Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program. Dr. McClain's current research project attends to ways teachers collectively interpret data during data team meetings that take place as part of RTI frameworks in Tennessee. She was recently awarded the Womack Fund Excellence in Research Award for MTSU's College of Education, as well as the June Anderson C.A.R.E. Award for her teaching. In 2021, she received the Dissertation Award by Division E of the American Educational Research Association. An article she co-authored with Dr. Katie Schrodtt was recognized for being one of the top cited articles in the Reading Teacher for 2021.

She majored in German with a minor in anthropology and concentration in education as an undergraduate, then taught high school German for three years after graduating from college. During that time, she added a master's degree and endorsement to teach English as a Second Language at Middle Tennessee State University. She also taught as an English Learner Specialist in Murfreesboro City Schools for six years and had leadership roles in professional development with the district. She received her PhD in Language, Literacy and Culture from the Department of Diversity, Teaching, and Learning at Vanderbilt University.

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Janna Brown McClain

Assistant Professor

While attending Vanderbilt University, she worked alongside two mentors, Jeannette Mancilla-Martinez and Emily Phillips Galloway. The focus of their research was on more equitable vocabulary instruction for Spanish-English bilingual elementary students. The research team conducted longitudinal studies as part of a research-practice partnership to explore relationships between conceptually-scored vocabulary assessments and other component skills of literacy, such as executive functioning, decoding, and reading comprehension and a conducted mixed-methods analysis on classroom language environments for pre-school contexts where the language of instruction was predominantly in English and the students were primarily Spanish-English bilingual students. Her work with Emily was focused on Academic Language development in intermediate grades (i.e. 3-8th grade). She also worked with a team that focused specifically on academic discourse: interviewing teachers about how they facilitate academic conversations in their classrooms and analyzing discourse features from recorded classroom conversations. In addition, she coached teachers and collected data as part of a Design Based Research study to implement a literacy intervention designed to leverage the linguistic strengths of multilingual learners.

Her dissertation research was a multi-method analysis of teachers' academic language ideologies. Dr. McClain created, piloted, and did initial validation of a survey for the quantitative analysis, and then conducted phenomenological interviews for the qualitative analysis.

Dr. McClain's spouse is Charlie. He is an Episcopal Priest at St. Matthews' Church in McMinnville, Tennessee. They have a son, Samson, who is 13 years old and a daughter, Vera, who is 10 years old. As a family they love hiking and kayaking. Some of her favorite individual hobbies include reading, weightlifting, crocheting, and singing.

Conferences

Society for the Scientific Study of Reading	July 20-22, 2023
International Dyslexia Association's DyslexiaCon	October 12-14, 2023
Council for Learning Disabilities 45th International Conference	October 12-13, 2023
Mid-South Educational Research Association	November 8-11, 2023
National Elementary and Secondary Education Act	February 7-10, 2024
American Association for Applied Linguistics	March 16-19, 2024
American Education Research Association	April 11-14, 2024

Practicum - Completed

Angelica DaSilva - Summer 2022
 Thankful Davis - Fall 2022
 Gabrielle Rainbolt - Fall 2022
 Tohib Adejumo - Spring 2023
 Kristin Davis - Spring 2023
 Melania Khan - Spring 2023
 Kristen Sisco - Spring 2023
 Stephanie Wolfe - Spring 2023

LITS Studies Outstanding Student 2022-2023



Congratulations, Stephanie Wolfe, LITS Studies Outstanding Student for 2022-2023

Ethel Bowden Stricklin Scholarship Recipients Spring 2023

Holly Cunningham
 Kristen Sisco
 Stephanie Wolfe

Preliminary Exam - Completed

Pam Shewalter - Fall 2022
 Angelica DaSilva - Spring 2023
 Ife Popoola - Spring 2023

Sawyer-Rudler Research Fellowship in Literacy Recipient

Pam Shewalter

Dissertation Defenses

Summer 2022

Kimberly S. Bell

"Examining the Relationships Among Teacher Mindset, Knowledge of Text Complexity, and Text Selection"

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Amy M. Elleman, Chair

Dr. Eric L. Oslund

Dr. Terri J. Tharp

Tamera L. Hutchings

"The Influence of Motivational Factors on Reading Comprehension for Elementary School Students with Dyslexia"

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Timothy N. Odegard, Chair

Dr. Amy M. Elleman

Dr. Eric L. Oslund

Dr. Emily Farris

Bingshi Zhang

"Differential Influences of Contextual and Affective Factors on Young Adolescent Reading Performance"

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Amy M. Elleman, Chair

Dr. Jwa K. Kim

Dr. Dana Fuller

Dissertation Defenses

Fall 2022

Jessica Dainty

"Effects of a Morphological Intervention on the Ability of 9th and 10th Graders With Disabilities to Read Multisyllabic Derived Words"

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Timothy N. Odegard, Chair

Dr. Amy M. Elleman

Dr. Eric L. Oslund

Dr. Stuart Bernstein

Susan B. Porter

"The Diagnostic Accuracy of Three Computer-Adaptive Screening Measures of Reading"

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Timothy N. Odegard, Chair

Dr. Amy M. Elleman

Dr. Eric L. Oslund

Dr. Emily Farris

Spring 2023

Collin S. Olson

"Do Symbolic Gestures Improve Novel Vocabulary Acquisition for Second Language Learners?"

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Eric L. Oslund, Chair

Dr. Amy M. Elleman

Dr. Aleka Blackwell

Dissertation Defenses

Leticia E. Skae

“Can Collaborative Professional Development Impact Teachers’ Perceptions of their Self-Efficacy Beliefs Regarding Vocabulary Instruction?”

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Eric L. Oslund, Chair

Dr. Amy M. Elleman

Dr. Karen Reed

Barbara L. Adams

“Inference Making Skills in Young Learners and Educator Knowledge: Connecting Research to Practice”

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Eric L. Oslund, Chair

Dr. Amy M. Elleman

Dr. Natalie Griffin

Publications

Barnes, Z. T., Fields, R. S., Strachota, S., & Mangione, K. A. (2023). Effective disciplinary literacy strategies for students with disabilities in middle and high school science classrooms. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*.

Coggins, J., & Briggs, L. (2023). Reading on the ropes: A pilot study of an accelerated remediation program with alternative high school students. *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*, 38(1). doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.2352

Coggins, J. (2023). Using readable english leads to reading gains for rural elementary students: An experimental study. *Plos One*. [10.20944/preprints202301.0082.v2](https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202301.0082.v2)

Publications

Fields, R. S., Elleman, A. M., Oslund, E. L., Clark, L. B., & Olson, C. (2023). Effects of adapted self-regulated strategy development for second language adolescents. *Reading Psychology, 44*(5), 543–562.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2023.2169798>

Jones, R., Chevrette, R., McClain, J.B., McCluney, P., & Richey, P. (accepted). White fragility and the importance of discussing racism in higher education: A cooperative inquiry into using intergroup dialogue for faculty growth.

Departures in Critical Qualitative Research.

Nayak, S., Coleman, P. L., Ladanyi, E., Nitin, R., Gustavson, D. E., Fisher, S., Magne, C. L., & Gordon, R. L. (2022). The musical abilities, pleiotropy, language, and environment (MAPLE) framework for understanding musicality–language links across the lifespan. *Neurobiology of Language, 3*(4), 615–664.

https://doi.org/10.1162/nol_a_00079

Marshall, S.P., McClain, J.B., & McBride, A. (2023) Reframing translanguaging practices to shift mathematics teachers' language ideologies. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education. 10.1080/09518398.2023.2178683*

Schrodt, K., Fitzpatrick, E., & McClain, J.B. (2023). Supporting emergent writing with oral storytelling strategies. *The Reading Teacher, 76*(4), 511–517.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2170>

Schrodt, K. M., FitzPatrick, E., Reddig, K., Smith, E. P., Grow, J. (2022). #TextMeetsTech: Navigating meaning and identity through transliteracy practice. 10.4018/978-1-7998-0000-2.ch013

Schrodt, K. M., FitzPatrick, E., Brown, Hover, A. (2022). Examining the validity of the writing challenge task: An assessment tool for measuring writing motivation in kindergarteners. *Reading and Writing Quarterly, 39*(4), 334–349. [10.1080/10573569.2022.2109227](https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2022.2109227)

Schrodt, K. M., Hasty, M., Hauptman, A. (2022). Planning, Co-Construction, Action: A Framework for Critical Literacy Instruction. *The Dragon Lode, 40*(2), 37–46.

Publications

FitzPatrick, E., McKeown, D., Schrodt, K. M. (2022). Digital tools. E. Baumgartner, R. Kaplan-Rakowski, R. E. Ferdig, R. Hartshorne, C. Mouza (Eds.), *A tale of two outcomes: Time- and space-flexible revision instruction for preservice and in-service teachers during the COVID pandemic*. LearnTechLib.

Schrodt, K. M., FitzPatrick, E., McKeown, D. (2022). Digital tools. E. Baumgartner, R. Kaplan-Rakowski, R. E. Ferdig, R. Hartshorne, C. Mouza (Eds.), *Adapting in-service professional development to meet the needs of preservice teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic through design-based research*. LearnTechLib.

Presentations

Coggins, J. (2022, November). *Middle school pandemic reading gains using readable english across the curriculum* [Conference presentation]. International Dyslexia Association Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX, United States.

Coggins, J. (2022, October). *Righting reading fluency and comprehension for students in grades 3-8* [Conference presentation]. International Council on Learning Disabilities 44th Annual Conference, Richmond, VA, United States.

Nayak, S., Gustavson, D., Eising, E., Nitin, R., Coleman, P.L., Wang, Y., Liu, J., Polikowski, H., Lui, K., McBride, C., Below, J., Fisher, S., Magne, C., & Gordon, R. (Sept 2022). *The genetics of speech prosody perception: genetic associations with communication-related traits* [Poster presentation]. World Congress of Psychiatric Genetics. Florence, Italy.

Presentations

Nayak, S., Gustavson, D.E., Anglada-Tort, M., Wang, Y., Bush, C., Liu, J.Z., Ladanyi, E., Bryan, K.M., Nitin, R., Ullen, F., Mosing, M., Magne C.L., Lui, K.F.H., McBride, C., Jacoby, N., & Gordon, R.L. (Aug 2022). Covariation between musical rhythm and speech-language and reading traits in the general population: Converging evidence from five large adult cohorts [Conference presentation]. Society for Music Perception and Cognition, Portland, Oregon, United States.

Schrodt, K. M., Barksdale, B., McClain, J., Fields, R. S. (2022, December 2). *Examining the affordances of assignments intended to cultivate criticality among preservice literacy teachers* [Conference presentation]. Literacy Research Association, Phoenix, AZ, United States.

Wolfe, S. J., Nayak, S., & Magne, C. L. (2022, October 11-14). *Examining the relationship between visual word recognition and implicit prosody using ERPs* [Conference presentation]. International Conference on the Mental Lexicon 2022, Ontario, Canada. <https://mentalexicon.artsrn.ualberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ML-Abstract-Booklet-v3.pdf>

Media Spotlight

[Dr. Katie Schrodt on Out of the Blue TV: National Banned Books Week](#)

[Dr. Jessica Abarquez-New \(LITS Ph.D. Alumni\) responded to a FoxNews article about her school.](#)

[MTSU COE's Dr. Katie Schrodt Optimizes Math Literacy Teacher Training for MCS](#)



Baby Elliot and Dr. Zachary Barnes,
LITS Ph.D. Alumni

Alumni News

Dr. Rachel Gott – Montana Comprehensive Literacy Coordinator – Dr. Gott leads the Montana Comprehensive Literacy Grant Project at the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Gott and team support numerous schools implementing evidence based literacy practices across Montana.

Dr. Danielle 'Nell' Thompson – President and Founder of The Transformative Reading Teacher Group, The Big Sky Literacy Summit, and The Reading League Montana has

- Presented *Language, the Critical Foundation of Reading* at The World Literacy Summit 2023 with Charles Hulme, PhD at Oxford University, April 2-4, 2023.

- Presented at Plain Talk for Literacy, Language and Learning in New Orleans, LA, March 9-11, 2023

- Presented and taught with Dr. Tim Odegard at the Montana Summer Institute, June 19-23, 2023

Dr. Penny Thompson was awarded the Tennessee State Supervisor of the Year award. Dr. Thompson engaged a year-long process of competitions beginning at the district level, region level, grand division level, and state finalists level. The award was presented on Dec. 6 at the Loveless Barn with a dinner and awards ceremony.

Dr. Joanna Coggins has received a \$5,000 grant from the Predators for an adult literacy program in Coffee and Bedford Counties she is starting with the Literacy Council. The *Journal of Education for Students Placed At-Risk* has published Dr. Coggins' article, "Righting Reading in Middle School: Readable English Helps Underperforming Adolescent Readers" in their July 2023 issue.



Congratulations, Dr.
Jessica Dainty, Dyslexia
Coordinator for TDOE!

Dr. Davonna Thomas produced Coastal Carolina Community College's 7th Annual Storytelling Showcase, an event she founded. The students who participated in this event are nominated by their developmental writing instructors. The stories they share are often about the many obstacles they have overcome to attend college. See photographs of the event below.



LITS Faculty News

Funded Grant:

McClain, J. B. (2022). Disentangling Disproportionality: A Qualitative Exploration of Collaborative Decision-Making in the Referral and Identification of Elementary-Aged Students Designated English Learner in Middle Tennessee. Sponsored by MT-IGO, Middle Tennessee State University, \$7,647.00.

Dr. Janna McClain was the recipient of the MTSU June Anderson Center for Women and Non-Traditional Students *Concern for Adults Returning to Education Award*, 2022-2023.

Reading Teacher's Top Cited Article for 2021-2022:

McClain, J.B. & Schrod, K. (2021). Making space for multilingualism: Using translanguaging pedagogies to disrupt monolingual language ideologies within a culturally responsive kindergarten curriculum. *The Reading Teacher*, 75(3), 385-388.

Student Reminders!

- Mark your calendars! LITS Orientation will be on Saturday, August 26th from 9:30–2:00. All Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program students are required to attend.
- Students wanting to complete the preliminary exam must complete the registration form during the first two weeks of the semester.
- Students planning to graduate must file their Intent to Graduate during the first two weeks of the semester they plan to graduate.
- Fall semester begins August 28, 2023.

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**

STATE UNIVERSITY.

Literacy Studies Ph.D.