

# KALENA E. CORTES

(Updated: August 18, 2019)

THE BUSH SCHOOL  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
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1049 ALLEN BUILDING  
COLLEGE STATION, TX 77843

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## I. EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### A. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

University of California, Berkeley

Ph.D. in Economics, 2002

Fields: Economics of Education, Labor Economics, Economic Demography

Advisor: Professor David E. Card

Dissertation: "Essays on the Heterogeneity of Immigrant Groups in the United States:  
Testable Implications Using Human Capital Theory."

University of California, San Diego

B.A. in Economics, 1995

### B. CURRENT AND PRIOR APPOINTMENTS

#### POSITIONS

2015-present: Associate Professor, Texas A&M University, The Bush School

2011-2015: Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University, The Bush School

2006-2011: Assistant Professor, Syracuse University, School of Education

#### VISITING POSITIONS

2017-2018: Visiting Scholar, Stanford Graduate School of Education

2013-2014: Visiting Scholar, Stanford Graduate School of Education

2009-2010: Visiting Assistant Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education

2009-2010: Visiting Scholar, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)

2003-2006: Postdoctoral Fellow, Princeton University

2002-2003: Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania

2000-2001: Visiting Student, Princeton University

#### OTHER POSITIONS

2018-present: Network Scholar, Mindset Scholars Network

2017-present: Editorial Board, Economics of Education Review

2017-present: Committee Member, American Economic Association's  
(AEA) Committee on the Status of Minority Groups in the  
Economics Profession (CSMGEP)

2016-present: Associate Editor, AERA Open

2016-present: Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)

2016-2019: Editorial Board, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis

2014-2016: Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research

2014-2017: Board of Directors, Association for Education Finance & Policy

2013-2016: Faculty Fellow, Greater Texas Foundation

2003-present: Research Fellow, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), fellowship  
renewed until March 31, 2024

**II. ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS AND WORKING PAPERS****A. JOURNAL ARTICLES** (Available at: <https://www.nber.org/~CORTESK/research.html>)

Cortes, Kalena E. "Are Refugees Different from Economic Immigrants? Some Empirical Evidence on the Heterogeneity of Immigrant Groups in the United States." The Review of Economics and Statistics, May 2004, 86(2):465-480.

Cortes, Kalena E. "The Effects of Age at Arrival and Enclave Schools on the Academic Performance of Immigrant Children." Economics of Education Review, April 2006, 25(2): 121-132.

Tienda, Marta, Niu, Sunny, and Cortes, Kalena E. "College Selectivity and the Texas Top 10% Law: How Constrained Are the Options?" Economics of Education Review, June 2006, 25(3): 259-272.

Perreira, Krista M. and Cortes, Kalena E. "Race-Ethnicity and Nativity Differences in Alcohol and Tobacco Use During Pregnancy." American Journal of Public Health, September 2006, 96(9): 1629-1636.

Cortes, Kalena E. "Do Bans on Affirmative Action Hurt Minority Students? Evidence from the Texas Top 10% Plan." Economics of Education Review, December 2010, 29(6): 1110-1124.

Cortes, Kalena E., \*Bricker, Jesse, and Rohlfs, Christopher. "The Role of Specific Subjects in Education Production Functions: Evidence from Morning Classes in Chicago Public High Schools." The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy, June 2012 (Contributions), 12(1): 1935-1682.

Cortes, Kalena E., Goodman, Joshua, and Nomi, Takako. "A Double Dose of Algebra." Education Next, Winter 2013, 13(1): 70-76.

Cortes, Kalena E. "Achieving the DREAM: The Effect of IRCA on Immigrant Youth Postsecondary Educational Access." American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings, May 2013, 103(3): 428-432.

Cortes, Kalena E., \*Moussa, Wael, and Weinstein, Jeffrey. "Educating Bright Students in Urban Schools." Economics of Education Review, December 2013, 37: 286-297.

Cortes, Kalena E. and \*Friedson, Andrew I. "Ranking Up by Moving Out: The Effect of the Texas Top 10% Plan on Property Values." National Tax Journal, March 2014, 67(1): 51-76 (winner of the 2014 Richard Musgrave Prize for best article).

Cortes, Kalena E. and Goodman, Joshua S. "Ability-Tracking, Instructional Time and Better Pedagogy: The Effect of Double-Dose Algebra on Student Achievement." American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings, May 2014, 104(5): 400-405.

Cortes, Kalena E., Goodman, Joshua S., and Nomi, Takako. "Intensive Math Instruction and Educational Attainment: Long-Run Impacts of Double-Dose Algebra." The Journal of Human Resources, Winter 2015, 50(1): 108-158.  
(Also available: *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper No. 20211).

Black, Sandra E., Cortes, Kalena E., and Lincove, Jane A. "Academic Undermatching of High-Achieving Minority Students: Evidence from Race-Neutral and Holistic Admissions Policies." American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings, May 2015, 105(5): 604-610.

Cortes, Kalena E., and Lincove, Jane A. “Can Admissions Percent Plans Lead to Better Collegiate Fit for Minority Students?” American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings, May 2016, 106(5): 348-54.

Black, Sandra E., Cortes, Kalena E., and Lincove, Jane A. “Efficacy vs. Equity: What Happens When States Tinker with College Admissions in a Race-Blind Era?” Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, June 2016, 38(2): 336-363.

(Also available: *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper No. 20804).

Cortes, Kalena E. and Lincove, Jane A. “Match or Mismatch? Automatic Admissions and College Preferences of Low- and High-Income Students.” Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, March 2019, 41(1): 98-123. (Also available: *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper No. 22559).

Black, Sandra E., Cortes, Kalena E., and Lincove, Jane A. “Apply Yourself: Racial and Ethnic Differences in College Application.” Education Finance and Policy, forthcoming. (Also available: *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper No. 21368).

\* indicates student co-author

## **B. OTHER PUBLICATIONS**

Tienda, Marta, Cortes, Kalena E., and Niu, Sunny. “College Attendance and the Texas Top 10 Percent Law: Permanent Contagion or Transitory Promise?” Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, Policy Brief, November 2003.

Chin, Aimee and Cortes, Kalena E. “The Refugee/Asylum Seeker.” Chapter in the *Handbook of the Economics of International Immigration, Volume 1A The Immigrants*, Barry Chiswick and Paul Miller (eds.), 2014.

Cortes, Kalena E. and Fricke, Hans. “Text Messages to Parents Can Help Boost Children’s Reading Skills,” [The Conversation](#), August 31, 2018.

## **C. WORKING PAPERS AND WORK IN PROGRESS**

“Too Little or Too Much? Actionable Advice in an Early-Childhood Text Messaging Experiment.” Revise and Resubmit at Education Finance and Policy (with Hans Fricke, Stanford University; Susanna Loeb, Brown University; and David Song, Stanford University). (Also available: *National Bureau of Economic Research*, Working Paper No. 24827).

“It’s About Timing - When Does Supporting Parents Work Best?” Working paper (with Hans Fricke, Stanford University; Susanna Loeb, Brown University; David Song, Stanford University).

“Why Does Mentoring Matter? The Effect of Non-Financial Support on College Enrollment and Persistence” Working paper (with Celeste K. Carruthers, University of Tennessee and Carolyn J. Heinrich, Vanderbilt University).

“Uniform Admissions, Unequal Access: Did the Top Ten Percent Plan Increase Access to Selective Flagship Institutions?” Working paper (with Daniel Klasik, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill).

“Publication, Compensation, and the Public Affairs Discount: Does Gender Play a Role?” Working paper (with Lori T. Taylor, Texas A&M University and Travis C. Hearn, Mosbacher Institute).

“The Long-Run Impacts of Mexican American School Desegregation in the United States.” Work in progress (with Francisca Antman, University of Colorado at Boulder).

“Affirmative Action, Mismatch, and STEM: The Effect of the Texas Top 10% Plan on STEM Major Outcomes.” Work in progress (with Anthony Lising Antonio, Stanford University and Oded Gurantz, University of Missouri).

“Encouraging Students to Take Risks: Differential Effects by Race and Gender of a First Year Grade Exclusion Policy.” Work in progress (with Rachel B. Baker, University of California, Irvine).

“The Effect of Newcomer Schools on Immigrant Students Educational Attainment.” Work in progress (with Aimee Chin, University of Houston; Brian Holzman, Rice University; and Stephanie Potochnick, University of North Carolina – Charlotte)

“Texts4Teens: The Middle School Parent Engagement Texting Study.” Work in progress (with Brian Holzman, Rice University; Macarena Santana, University of Chile; and Susanna Loeb, Brown University).

“Why Are Female Undergraduates More Risk Adverse to Bad Grades?” Work in progress (with Nina Buchmann, Stanford University; Rene Kizilcec, Cornell University; Muriel Nierderle, Stanford University; Stephanie Owens, University of Michigan; and Rose Tan, Stanford University).

“Mapping the Demography of Undergraduate Majors.” Work in progress (with Tobias Dalberg, Stanford University and Mitchell L. Stevens, Stanford University).

### III. GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2013-2016 *“Postsecondary Educational Opportunity in Texas: Evidence from Institutional and State Policies.”* Principal Investigator. Faculty Fellowship, Greater Texas Foundation. Amount awarded \$90,000.

2012-2014: *“Doubling-Up?: The Impact of Remedial Algebra on Students’ Long-run Outcomes.”* Co-Investigator. (Josh Goodman, P.I.). Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education. Amount awarded \$291,164.

2009: Summer Proposal Development Program, School of Education, Syracuse University. Amount awarded \$1,600.

2008-2011: *“Transitions through Higher Education: Evidence on the Mismatch Hypothesis.”* Co-Investigator. (Isaac McFarlin, P.I.). Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education. Amount awarded \$638,000.

2008-2009: *“The Effects of Absenteeism on Academic Achievement: Evidence from Morning Classes in Chicago Public Schools.”* Principal Investigator. Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

2008: *“The Effect of Changes in Federal Student Aid-Packaging on the Educational Choices of Low-Income and Minority Students.”* Principal Investigator. Spencer Foundation. Amount awarded \$37,800.

- 2008: *“The Effect of Changes in Federal Student Aid-Packaging on the Educational Choices of Low-Income and Minority Students.”*  
Principal Investigator. Young Investigator Development Award, Center for Poverty Research, University of Kentucky. Amount awarded \$5,000.
- 2007-2009: *“The Effect of Changes in Federal Student Aid-Packaging on the Educational Choices of Low-Income and Minority Students.”*  
Principal Investigator. American Educational Research Association (AERA). Amount awarded \$33,942.
- 2007-2008: *“The Effects of College Quality on Student Performance and Labor Market Outcomes: A Case for Affirmative Action Policy.”*  
Principal Investigator. W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research Grant. Amount awarded \$5,000.
- 2007: Summer Proposal Development Program, School of Education, Syracuse University. Amount awarded \$1,500.
- 2007: Summer Project Assistantship Program, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University. Amount awarded \$1,500.
- 2004-2006: *“Immigrant Health and Socioeconomic Status in the U.S.”*  
Principal Investigator. Ruth L. Kirschstein National Service Award Individual Fellowship. National Institutes of Health (NIH). Amount awarded \$92,272.
- 2003-2007: *“Immigrants, Parenting, and Infant/Toddler Well-being.”*  
Co-Investigator. (Krista M. Perreira, P.I.). Foundation for Child Development Program, Changing Faces of America’s Children Young Scholars Program. Amount awarded \$150,000.

#### **IV. EXTERNAL COVERAGE OF RESEARCH**

##### **A. Media Coverage**

The Atlantic (By Adam Harris), December 11, 2018, [A Guarantee of Tuition-Free College Can Have Life-Changing Effects.](#)

Inside Higher Ed (By Scott Jaschik), December 10, 2018, [The Power of Guaranteed Admissions.](#)

Diverse Issues in Higher Education, December 10, 2018, [Report: Is Guaranteed Admissions Effective in Developing Diverse Class?.](#)

Education Week (By Catherine Gewertz), December 4, 2018, [Guaranteed Admission Helps High-Achieving Low-Income Students Make Good College Match.](#)

American Educational Research Association (By Tony Pals and Collin Boylin), December 4, 2018, [Can Guaranteed Admissions Help Reduce College Undermatching?](#)

Education Week (By Marva Hinton), July 23, 2018, [More Isn't Always Better in Texting Preschool Parents, Study Finds.](#)

The Washington Post (By Ana Swanson), September 10, 2015, [The Big Myth about Refugees - Refugees Can Be an Investment, Rather Than a Burden.](#)

The Washington Post (By Jeff Guo), January 6, 2015, [For Black Students, SAT Scores Matter a Lot – A New Study Suggests Affirmative Action Policies in College Admissions Might Be a Good Idea.](#)

Diverse Issues in Higher Education (By Jamaal Abdul-Alim), January 5, 2015, [Relying on Above-Average Scores on Entrance Exams Hinders Diversity.](#)

Atlanta Journal Constitution (By Maureen Downey), January 31, 2013, “A Double Dose of Algebra Improves Math and Verbal Skills as Well as College Enrollment.”

TAMUtimes (By Lesley Henton), December 14, 2012, “Extra Algebra Class Improves Both Math and Verbal Skills in High Schoolers.”

Education Week (By Erik Robelen), November 1, 2012, [Study Finds Benefits to a ‘Double Dose’ of Algebra.](#)

Houston Chronicle (By Rick Casey), August 17, 2010, “Sales Point: Nice House in Bad ISD.”

The Chronicle of Higher Education (By Peter Schmidt), August 9, 2010, The Ticker, [Texas Admissions-Policy Shift Hurt Lower-Ranked Minority Students.](#)

Inside Higher Ed (By Scott Jaschik), January 12, 2009, [The 10% Fight Is Back.](#)

## **B. Textbook Inclusions**

Laing, Derek. Principles of Modern Labor Economics, 2011, Norton & Co., New York, NY. Chapter 21 Immigration and Outsourcing, Economic Application 21.2: Language Acquisition, pg. 588.

Ehrenberg, Ronald G. and Robert S. Smith. Modern Labor Economics: Theory and Public Policy. (8th Edition, 2003). (9th Edition, 2006). (10th Edition, 2009). (11th Edition, 2012) Addison-Wesley, New York, NY. Chapter 10 Worker Mobility: Migration, Immigration, and Turnover, Example 10.3: Economic vs. Political Immigrants, pg. 318.

## **V. OTHER AWARDS AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

### **A. OTHER AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

- 2009-2010: Emerging Scholars Program, University of Kentucky, Center for Poverty Research
- 2008: Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Fellow – Data Policy Institute, Institute of Education Sciences (IES), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
- 2001-2002: Graduate Opportunity Program Dissertation-Year Award, U.C. Berkeley
- 2000-2001: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Grant for Interdisciplinary Training in Demography, renewed
- 2000: Society of Woman Geographers Fellowship
- 1999-2000: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Grant for Interdisciplinary Training in Demography
- 1999-2000: Lloyd Ulman Graduate Student Fellowship in Labor Economics, awarded by the Institute of Industrial Relations (IIR), U.C. Berkeley

- 1997-1998: Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP) Fellowship, renewed  
 1996-1997: Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP) Fellowship, U.C. Berkeley

## **B. OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND AFFILIATIONS**

- 2011-2015: Adjunct Assistant Professor of Economics by Courtesy Appointment, Economics Department, Texas A&M University  
 2009-present: Senior Associate, Education Finance and Accountability Program, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University  
 2006-2011: Assistant Professor of Economics by Courtesy Appointment, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University  
 2006-2011: Senior Research Associate, Center for Policy Research, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University  
 2005: Panelist, Texas Higher Educational Opportunity Project (THEOP) Summer Workshop, Princeton University.

## **VI. INVITED SEMINARS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. INVITED SEMINARS**

- 2018-2019: University of Michigan, The Ford School.  
 2017-2018: USC Rossier School of Education; Vanderbilt University Peabody College.  
 2014-2015: New York University-Steinhardt School.  
 2013-2014: Stanford Graduate School of Education.  
 2012-2013: University of Texas at Austin, Economics Department; University of Southern California, Sol Price School of Public Policy and Rossier School of Education.  
 2010-2011: Texas A&M University, The Bush School of Government and Public Service; University of Texas at Dallas; Teachers College Columbia University; MIT, Economics Department; University of Wisconsin; Vanderbilt University Peabody College; W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research; Congressional Budget Office; University of Connecticut.  
 2009-2010: University of Kentucky, Center for Poverty Research; Harvard University Graduate School of Education; Tufts University, Economics Department; Harvard University, Economics Department.  
 2008-2009: Urban Institute; Syracuse University, Center for Policy Research.  
 2007-2008: Teachers College Columbia University; Harvard University Graduate School of Education; The Ohio State University; University of Kentucky, Center for Poverty Research.  
 2006-2007: Syracuse University, Center for Policy Research; State University of New York at Binghamton; Teachers College Columbia University.  
 2005-2006: MIT, Inter-University Committee on International Migration; Swarthmore College; Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia; Kansas State University; Baruch College – CUNY; CNA Corporation; Federal Trade Commission; RAND Corporation; Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC); Syracuse University, School of Education.  
 2003-2004: Harvard University, The Civil Rights Project.

### **B. CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- 2018-2019: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; American Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.  
 2017-2018: Association for Education Finance and Policy.  
 2016-2017: American Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.

- 2015-2016: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; Southern Economic Association; American Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.
- 2014-2015: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; Southern Economic Association; American Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.
- 2013-2014: American Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.
- 2012-2013: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; American Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.
- 2011-2012: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; Association for Education Finance and Policy; NBER Education Program; The Ohio State University (The Second Wave, Economics Department).
- 2010-2011: American Economic Association, Association for Education Finance and Policy, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (Paper Discussant).
- 2009-2010: National Tax Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy.
- 2008-2009: American Economic Association.
- 2007-2008: Association for Education Finance and Policy; NBER Higher Education Working Group Meeting.
- 2006-2007: American Economic Association (Paper Discussant); Eastern Economic Association; Association for Education Finance and Policy; Society of Labor Economists.
- 2005-2006: Society of Labor Economists (Chaired Session).
- 2004-2005: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management.
- 2003-2004: Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management; Eastern Economic Association; Population Association of America; Society of Labor Economists.
- 2002-2003: Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs; Population Association of America; European Society of Population Economics.
- 2001-2002: Population Association of America; Society of Labor Economists.
- 2000-2001: Population Association of America.

## VII. TEACHING AND ADVISING

### A. TEACHING SUMMARY AND COURSE EVALUATIONS RESULTS

#### **Texas A&M University** (*scale of 1 to 5*) \*

- Graduate: Policy Analysis (PSAA 615):  
     Fa 2011: Course average 4.01  
     Fa 2012: Course average 4.40
- Quantitative Methods II (PSAA 635):  
     Sp 2012: Course average 4.60  
     Sp 2013: Course average 4.59
- Quantitative Methods I (PSAA 631):  
     Fa 2012: Course average 4.59  
     Fa 2014: Course average 4.29 (section 602); 4.28 (section 603)
- Immigrant Youth & U.S. Education Policy (PSAA 613):  
     Sp 2013: Course average 4.75



Sp 2015: Course average 4.64

**Syracuse University** (*scale of 1 to 5*) \*

Graduate: Statistical Thinking and Applications (EDU/EDP 647)

Fa 2006: Course Average 4.52

Sp 2007: Course Average 4.43

Fa 2007: Course Average 4.77

Fa 2008: Course Average 4.47

Economics of Higher Education (HED 800)

Fa 2006: Course Average 4.63

Affirmative Action Policy in Higher Education (HED 801)

Fa 2007: Course Average 4.55

Methods and Databases for Educational Policy (EDU 600)

Fa 2008: Course Average 4.98

Advanced Multivariate Research Methods (EDU 791)

Sp 2009: Course Average 4.84

*\*Student's average course evaluations are from a 5-point agreement scale with:*

1=Bad, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4=Good, 5=Excellent.

**Princeton University**

Graduate: Microeconomic Analysis, Summer 2005

**B. SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH.**

**MEMBER OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

Wael S. Moussa, Ph.D. in Economics (2013), employed at the New York State Education Department.

Monica Young, Ph.D. in Science Education (2012), employed at the New York State Education Department.

Andrew I. Friedson, Ph.D. in Economics (2012), employed at the University of Colorado Denver, Economics Department.

Jesse Bricker, Ph.D. in Economics (2009), employed at the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

**VIII. SERVICE**

**A. ACADEMIC JOURNAL REFEREE**

American Economic Journal; Applied Economics; Economics of Education Review; Education Finance and Policy; Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis; Economic Inquiry; International Migration Review; IZA Journal of Migration, Journal of Health Economics; Journal of Policy Analysis and Management; Journal of Political Economy; Journal of Labor Research; Journal of Urban Economics; Labour Economics; Southern Economic Journal; The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy; The Journal of Human Resources; Journal of Population Economics, Journal of Public Economics, The Review of Economics and Statistics, The Quarterly Journal of Economics.

**B. The BUSH SCHOOL AND TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

2019 (spring): MPSA Admissions Committee, The Bush School  
2016-2017: I-School Task Force, A&M University Committee  
2016 (spring): MPSA Admissions Committee, The Bush School  
2015 (spring): MPSA Admissions Committee, The Bush School  
2013 (spring): Merit Fellowship Reviewer, A&M University Committee  
2012-2013: MPSA Curriculum Committee, The Bush School  
2012-2013: MPSA Search Committee, The Bush School  
2012 (spring): MPSA Admissions Committee, The Bush School

**C. SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (SOE) AND SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY**

2009 (spring): SOE Scholarship Committee  
2009 (spring): University Fellowship Committee  
2008 (fall): Evaluation Committee, Burstyn Collaborative Grant Competition  
2008 (spring): SOE Scholarship Committee  
2008 (spring): University Fellowship Committee  
2007 (fall): Evaluation Committee, Burstyn Collaborative Grant Competition  
2007 (spring): University Fellowship Committee  
2007 (spring): Research Committee, SOE Research & Creative Grant Competition  
2006-2009: Committee on Policies, Standards, and Scholarship (CSS)  
2006 (fall): Evaluation Committee, Burstyn Collaborative Grant Competition