

# 2025

SPRING COMMENCEMENT

Candidates for the  
Doctoral Degree



CONCORDIA  
UNIVERSITY  
CHICAGO

*Christ at the Center*



# **CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO**

## **SPRING COMMENCEMENT**

### **CLASS OF 2025**

#### **CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE**

##### **College of Business**

Doctor of Business Administration .....	3
Doctor of Education .....	4
Doctor of Philosophy .....	5

##### **College of Education**

Doctor of Education .....	6
Doctor of Philosophy .....	7

##### **College of Health, Science & Technology**

Doctor of Education .....	8
Doctor of Philosophy .....	8



# CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

**Brooke Carter**

Strategic Leadership & Innovation

**Dissertation Title:** *Digitalization of Legal Services and Technology Innovations*

**Committee:** John Schwarm, Laura Mays, David Petrie

**Meihan Chen**

Strategic Leadership & Innovation

**Dissertation Title:** *Effects of Transformational Leadership on Frontline Workers' Employee Turnover Intention*

**Committee:** John Hood, Daniel Mays, Laura Mays

**Stephanie Eubank**

Strategic Leadership & Innovation

**Dissertation Title:** *The Double-Edged Sword: A Study in Remote Work from the Perspectives of Leadership and Followership on the topics of Communication, Team Design, and Productivity*

**Committee:** Laura Mays, Daniel Mays, David Petrie

**Emmanuel Hounquevou**

Marketing Innovations

**Dissertation Title:** *Exploring Small Business Leaders' Perceptions of Services Innovations in the Ridesharing Industry*

**Committee:** Charlene Dunfee, Jacqueline McCoy, Daniel Mays

**Michael Jubiter**

Strategic Leadership & Innovation

**Dissertation Title:** *Minority Entrepreneurial Strategies from Successful Minority Small Business Leaders*

**Committee:** Laura Mays, Daniel Mays, Jacqueline McCoy

**Wade Lester**

Innovation Health Care Management

**Dissertation Title:** *Assessing the Intersection of Policymakers', Administrators', and Consumers' Perceptions of Healthcare Quality and Patient Satisfaction*

**Committee:** David Petrie, Daniel Mays, Christopher Ewing

**Yer Lor**

Innovation Health Care Management

**Dissertation Title:** *Leadership Strategies for the Successful Implementation of a Consistent Patient Safety Culture*

**Committee:** Jacqueline McCoy, John Schwarm, Ruba Abuhashish



## CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

### COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

#### **Ezequiel Benavides**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *From Disadvantage to Empowerment: Elementary Physical Education Teachers' Perspectives on Technology Integration and Its Impact on Students' Engagement and Motivation in Physical Education in Economically Challenged Areas*

**Committee:** Mary Ball Brant, Matthew Basham, Lin Wang

#### **William Edmunds IV**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Benchmarking Organizational Resilience: Key Indicators that Stakeholders Felt Contributed to Becoming a More Resilient University During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

**Committee:** Glenn Schlichting, Matthew Basham, Debra Bockrath

#### **Scott Hare**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Leadership Styles used by High School Football Coaches to Develop a Successful Culture*

**Committee:** Elizabeth Brennan, Mary Ball Brant, Kathryn Hollywood

#### **Michelle Laumb-Michels**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Counselors' Perceptions on the Efficacy of College Readiness Programming for High School Students*

**Committee:** Paul Sims, Mary Ball Brant, Kim Sekulich

#### **Twanta Moore**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *A Phenomenological Exploration of the Underrepresentation of Black Women in K-12 Leadership Roles*

**Committee:** Juan Vives, Mellissa Gyimah, Katherine Oldmixon

#### **Lawrence Smith**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Impact of High School Sports Participation on Academic Achievement in Urban Low-Performing School Districts: A Parental Perspective*

**Committee:** Andrea Silverstein, Matthew Basham, Alison Clark

#### **Sarah Solomon**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Professional Development of Women's Volleyball in the United States: An Examination of the Barriers, Opportunities, and Sustainability from Past to Present*

**Committee:** Mary Ball Brant, Alison Clark, Sandra Svoboda





## CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

### COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

#### **Terry Glanton**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Effective Crisis Management Communication: Leadership and Organizational Elements Essential for Success*

**Committee:** Elizabeth Brennan, Tamara Korenman, Kathryn Hollywood

#### **Karen Grant**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *A Science Dilemma: Comparing STEM Campus versus Non-STEM Campus Approaches to Learning*

**Committee:** Joan McGarry, John Schwartz, Ann Lane

#### **Reginald Moore**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Understanding Strategies for Prevention and Reduction of Youth Violence: A Case Study in Baltimore, Maryland*

**Committee:** Elena Lyutykh, Hayal Kackar-Cam, James Rost

#### **Samantha Pass-Redmond**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Experiences of Black Entrepreneurs Overcoming Racial Barriers in the Pursuit of Intergenerational Wealth*

**Committee:** Cheli Thomas, Pamela Konkol, Sarah Militz-Frielink

#### **Cameron Ringstead**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Silos and the Impact on Communication and Collaboration in Division I College Athletic Departments*

**Committee:** Katherine Green, Julie Davis, Scott Barnicle

#### **Brandy Runyan**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *What Motivates Undrafted Football Players to Pursue Careers in the NFL Five or More Years Beyond Their Draft Class?*

**Committee:** Craig Schilling, Jie Lin, Mark Gordon

#### **Sala Sims**

Leadership: Early Childhood Education

**Dissertation Title:** *Creating Opportunities for the Development of Student Agency in Grades K-3: Perspectives of School Leaders and Teachers at Two Social Justice Focused Private Schools*

**Committee:** Katherine Green, Mixon Ware, Julie Davis

#### **Samuel Vogel-Seidenberg**

Leadership: Sports Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Role of Physicality in Professional Hockey: Examining the Impact of Fighting and Hitting on Gameplay, Team Dynamics, and Success*

**Committee:** William Spears, Alison Clark, Sandra Svoboda

#### **Anesu Williams**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Experiences and Perceptions of Black Women in their Pursuit for Senior Leadership Positions in the Pharmaceutical Industry*

**Committee:** Elizabeth Brennan, Katherine Green, Juliette Christie

#### **Jessica Zaluzec**

Leadership: Organizational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Unlocking the Next Generation's Legacy: Deciphering Motivational and Leadership Patterns For Long-Term Community Engagement Among Young Professionals*

**Committee:** Denise Glasgow, Ann Frkovich, Arthur Safer



# CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

### **Elisabeth Ambroiggio**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Teachers' Perceptions on Biliteracy Curriculum Mapping*

**Committee:** Sarah Militz-Frielink, Pamela Konkol, Ann Lane

### **Stephanie Carr**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *Teacher Perceptions of Social Emotional Learning in Support of English Language Learners (ELL) in General Education Classrooms*

**Committee:** Margaret Trybus, Mark Gordon, Nicole Ortegon

### **Elvira Concepcion Soriano**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *The Factors that Influence the Acquisition of Foreign Language at District XX Implementing a Competency-Based Curriculum*

**Committee:** William Spears, Mary Ball Brant, Arthur Safer

### **Reuben Cooper**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Parental Technological Communication Experiences when Communicating with Teachers*

**Committee:** Peter Sullivan, Pamela Konkol, Geraldine Crider

### **Leidy Carolina De La Cruz Franco**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *Exploring English Language Instruction through the Competency-Based Curriculum: Insights from High School Teachers in the Dominican Republic*

**Committee:** Margaret Trybus, Ann Frkovich, Kim Sekulich

### **Rachel Feld**

Leadership: Educational Technology

**Dissertation Title:** *Digital Badges in LMS-Focused Professional Development for Higher Education Faculty*

**Committee:** Kathryn Wozniak, Mary Crabtree, Samuel Kwon

### **Christopher Geocarls**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Understanding Educators' Perceptions of the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, and Teacher Churn*

**Committee:** Glenn Schlichting, Tamara Korenman, Kevin O'Mara

### **Xica Henley**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *Not Quite Like the Beforetimes: An Exploration of Pandemic Instruction*

**Committee:** Pamela Konkol, Cheli Thomas, Amy Varchmin

### **Elizabeth Kawa**

Leadership: Reading, Language & Literacy

**Dissertation Title:** *Supporting Teaching Literacy at Home: A Parent Perspective*

**Committee:** Alyssa Shapiro, Ann Frkovich, Denise Glasgow

### **Anthony Kuzera**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Elementary Teachers' Perceptions of a Newly Implemented Mentor Program*

**Committee:** Mary Zaharis, Mary Ball Brant, Eric Apgar

### **Zackary Livingston**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Equity Effect: The Lived Experiences of Black Certified Staff Encountering Diversity and Equity Initiatives in P-12 Schools*

**Committee:** Mary Zaharis, Victoria Stockton, Maurice Byrd

### **Aurora Lucas**

Leadership: Special Education Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Reclaiming Our Voices: The Lived Experiences of Young Women of Color Diagnosed with Lung Cancer, and Determining Relevant K-12 Connections*

**Committee:** Andrea Dinaro, Pamela Konkol, Nancy Cavaretta

### **Alisha Porter**

Leadership: Educational Technology

**Dissertation Title:** *Bridging Digital and Emotional Worlds: A Qualitative Exploration of Elementary Teachers' Experiences with SEL Implementation Barriers and Technology Integration*

**Committee:** Katherine Green, Ann Frkovich, Mary Zaharis

### **Jonathan Silkowitz**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Elementary Teachers' Perceptions of Pandemic's Impact on Instruction Related to Student Engagement*

**Committee:** Craig Schilling, Tamara Korenman, Arthur Safer

### **Daniel Stoller**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Student Relationships on Learning*

**Committee:** Denise Glasgow, Tamara Korenman, Arthur Safer

### **Debra Witmer**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *An Exploratory Study of the Academic and Social/Behavioral Factors Influencing Student Engagement in Independent Day and Boarding Schools*

**Committee:** Margaret Trybus, Hayal Kackar-Cam, Kim Sekulich

# CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

### **Asma Abuhashish**

Leadership: Reading, Language & Literacy

**Dissertation Title:** *Teachers' Perception Regarding Students' Engagement and Literacy During COVID-19*

**Committee:** Elizabeth Brennan, Hayal Kackar-Cam, Arthur Safer

### **Diane Allen**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Teachers' Perceptions of the MTSS Process*

**Committee:** Denise Glasgow, Ann Frkovich, Julie Davis

### **Anna Bernstein**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *Artificial Intelligence (AI) in K-8 Education: Understanding Teachers' Perceptions and District Leader Readiness While Preparing for AI Adoption*

**Committee:** Joan McGarry, Lynne Herr, Arthur Safer

### **Patrice Cogar**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *Teacher Attitudes Towards Inclusion in the Regular Educational Classroom*

**Committee:** Katherine Green, Mixon Ware, Arthur Safer

### **Kevin Denis**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *School Administrator Perspectives on the Usefulness of Technology Resources to Address Chronic Absenteeism in a PK-12 Context*

**Committee:** Adam Hiebel, Sandra Spickard Prettyman, Manfred Boos

### **Andrea Ezell-Stoiljkovic**

Leadership: Special Education Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Experience of Middle School Reading Teachers Who Teach Students With Specific Learning Disabilities*

**Committee:** Andrea Dinaro, Mark Gordon, Bridgett Henry

### **Kasia Glancy**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *An Exploration of Teachers as Servant Leaders in a Rural Midwest School District*

**Committee:** Adam Hiebel, Peter Sullivan, Susan Kramer

### **Najwa Jones**

Leadership: Teacher Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Understanding the Lived Experience of Former International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Students: A Qualitative Investigation*

**Committee:** Mary Crabtree, Ann Frkovich, Christopher Esposito

### **Samuel Lawrence**

Leadership: School Leadership - Initial Leader

**Dissertation Title:** *Teacher Perceptions of Professional Development for School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports*

**Committee:** Denise Glasgow, Mary Ball Brant, Dennis Kowalski

### **Richard Magazine**

Leadership: Educational Technology

**Dissertation Title:** *Teachers' Perceptions on The Use of Technology with Deaf Students to Improve Language Acquisition and Academic Learning*

**Committee:** Rebecca Hornberger, Hayal Kackar-Cam, Kim Sekulich

### **Julie Majzel**

Leadership: Reading, Language & Literacy

**Dissertation Title:** *The Literacy Content Knowledge and Perceptions of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments*

**Committee:** Samantha Caesar, Hayal Kackar-Cam, Kari Pawl

### **Thomas Ratledge**

Leadership: Educational Technology

**Dissertation Title:** *K-12 Teachers' Perceptions of Online/Virtual Training in Teacher Education Programs*

**Committee:** Katherine Green, Julie Davis, Devin Arms

### **Jacob Shafer**

Leadership: School Leadership - Initial Leader

**Dissertation Title:** *The Impact of Distributed Leadership on the Job Satisfaction of High School Teachers in the Midwestern United States*

**Committee:** Ellen Cahill, Adam Hiebel, Rebecca Hornberger

### **Pamella Terry**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Perceptions of Middle School Administrators and Middle School Teachers Regarding the Effectiveness of Independent African-Centered Schools*

**Committee:** Paul Sims, Angela Tagaris, William Spears

### **Josephine Tucker**

School Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *The Perspective of How Educators View the Black Male Student's Education and Their Completion of High School in a Northeast Urban High School District*

**Committee:** Alison Clark, Tamara Korenman, John Schwartz

### **Keith Turner**

Leadership: Educational Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** *Tenured Teachers' Perspective of Teacher Retention and its Impact on Student Achievement in Schools Taken Over by the Illinois Board of Education*

**Committee:** Mary Zaharis, Peter Sullivan, William Spears

### **Willie Williams Jr.**

Leadership: Curriculum & Instruction

**Dissertation Title:** *Why Might Black Teachers Leave or Remain in the Education Profession?*

**Committee:** Jamie Kowalczyk, Victoria Stockton, Carolyn Theard-Griggs

## CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

COLLEGE OF HEALTH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Amy Young

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *A Descriptive Study: An Examination of Physical Activity Levels in Fifth Grade Youth Using the Youth Activity Profile*

**Committee:** Nicole Smith, Christopher Clements, Kim Johnson

## CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Tammy Arreola

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Socio-ecological Predictors of Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior Among University Students*

**Committee:** Nicole Smith, Helen Bland, Kathleen Fritch

### Michelle Brehm

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Barriers and Facilitators to Successful Weight Management in Active Duty Army Soldiers*

**Committee:** Kathryn Fritch, Elena Lyutykh, Amy Jo Riggs

### Emily Davis

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Exploring the Relationship Between Core Stability and Physical Activity Participation in Women*

**Committee:** Nicole Smith, Kristen Snyman, Kathleen Fritch

### Nicholas Dimarco

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Priming Effects on Counter Movement Jump Performance in NCAA Division 1 Football Athletes*

**Committee:** Jeffrey McBride, Vanessa Moreno, Eric Hall

### Jennifer Ellis

Leadership: Gerontology

**Dissertation Title:** *Building the Gerontological Career Lattice in Wisconsin*

**Committee:** Mixon Ware, Pamela Konkol, Lauren Bouchard

### Ka'Leisha Evans

Leadership: Gerontology

**Dissertation Title:** *Understanding The Gap of Communication Disconnection For Terminally and Chronically Ill Older Veterans*

**Committee:** Mellissa Gyimah, Jie Lin, Olabisi Adenekan

### Gregory Gibbons

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Exploring the Relationship Between Burnout, Physical Activity, and Quality of Life in Emergency Medicine Physicians*

**Committee:** Bridget Melton, Helen Bland, Aaron Aslakson

### Sarah Gordon

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Exploring the Exercise Motivations and Perspectives of Successful Aging with Older Triathletes*

**Committee:** Kathleen Fritch, Kathleen Hibbert, James Rost

### Deborah Kenner

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *A Narrative Inquiry into Exploring a Neurodivergent Child's Experience in a Creative Movement Dance Class Through a Parent's Perceptions: A Qualitative Study*

**Committee:** Kathleen Hibbert, Ann Frkovich, Molly Faulkner

### Genny Komar

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *The Effect of Self-Efficacy on Nutritional Behaviors in Collegiate Student Athletes*

**Committee:** Kathleen Fritch, James Rost, Amy Jo Riggs

### Michael Lawrence

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Trunk Extensor Musculature Activation during Resistance and Rehabilitation Exercises*

**Committee:** Jason Winchester, Brian Swanson, Sheri Silfies

### Michelle Loy

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Impact of Nutrition Education on Nutrition Knowledge and Competency among Mental Health Professionals*

**Committee:** Kathleen Fritch, James Rost, Amy Jo Riggs

### Melissa Mansfield

Leadership: Gerontology

**Dissertation Title:** *The Impact of Pet Ownership on Older Single Expatriate Females in Panamá*

**Committee:** Mixon Ware, Katherine Green, Margaret Perkinson



## CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

### COLLEGE OF HEALTH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (CONTINUED)

#### **Yvette McCoy**

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *The Relationship Between Measures of Physical Performance and Swallowing Related Measures in Community Dwelling Elderly*

**Committee:** Jason Winchester, Sonja Molfenter, Debra Suiter

#### **Clive Mitchell**

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *The Uncommon Becoming Common: The Rise of Cardiovascular Disease Among Young Adults*

**Committee:** Jason Winchester, Pamela Konkol, Leah Neubauer

#### **Jeromea Pollock**

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Muscle Damage Across Menstrual Cycle Phase*

**Committee:** Kristen Snyman, Vanessa Moreno, Anthony Hackney

#### **Joseph Sallaj**

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *The Effects of Exercise with InfraRed Light Exposure Among Sedentary Indoor Day Employees with Sleep Disturbances*

**Committee:** Mary Ball Brant, Georgia Belesis, Lauren Gross

#### **Rebecca Savage**

Leadership: Gerontology

**Dissertation Title:** *Death Talk: Transgender Older Adults' Aging Experience and their Preparations for End-of-Life and Death*

**Committee:** Mellissa Gyimah, Joseph Rumenapp, Amy Lock

#### **Anthony Wall**

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *An Exploration of How Motivation to Compete Influences Quality of Life of Masters Track Athletes*

**Committee:** Kathleen Fritch, Pamela Konkol, James Rost

#### **Jessica Watson**

Leadership: Health & Human Performance

**Dissertation Title:** *Physical Activity Behaviors Among Pediatric Cardiology Patients*

**Committee:** Nicole Smith, Kristen Snyman, Fredrick Peters



## OUR MISSION

Steadfast in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, Concordia University Chicago promotes academic rigor in its liberal arts and professional programs; grounds students in objective truth, integrity, and excellence; and practices faithfulness to the Confessional teachings of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as it forms students for vocations in church, family, and the world.



CONCORDIA  
UNIVERSITY  
CHICAGO

*Christ at the Center*

7400 Augusta Street | River Forest, Illinois 60305 | 708-771-8300 | [CUChicago.edu](https://CUChicago.edu)