



## ***Pre-Conference Seminar for Early Career Scholars with Disabilities/Disabled Scholars\****

The American Educational Research Association invites applications for the Pre-Conference Seminar for Early Career Scholars with Disabilities/Disabled Scholars. Sponsored by the Spencer Foundation and AERA, this program was developed to meet the long-standing underrepresentation of disabled scholars in the academy. The pre-conference seminar will also include a virtual mentoring component to allow for sustained professional development and networking.

Over the past several decades there has been an increased recognition of the need for diversity within the professoriate. Multiple programs have been created to address this need as early career scholars transition from graduate student to faculty member. While these programs have opened substantial opportunities to many highly qualified scholars, scholars with disabilities remain underrepresented within the professoriate and at present lack opportunities to learn how to navigate this transition as a disabled scholar, to network in accessible environments, and to develop relationships with their disabled colleagues.

Scholars with disabilities bring a unique perspective to research, scholarship, and teaching; however, individuals with disabilities continue to be underrepresented at all level of postsecondary education, including undergraduate and graduate studies, and in tenure-track faculty positions. Limited in scope, the only available data suggests that the number of faculty members with disabilities is far under-representative of the number of scholars with disabilities around the country actively seeking employment ([Grigely, 2017](#); [Faculty Coalition, 2017](#)). Although qualified and capable of making significant contributions to their fields, scholars with disabilities continue to lack equal access to academia, and lack the opportunity to develop relationships with other disabled scholars. There is a great need for mentorship and professional guidance to allow disabled scholars equal opportunity to pursue tenure-track research and teaching positions.

### ***Program Description***

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The Pre-Conference Seminar for Early Career Scholars with Disabilities/Disabled Scholars will take place the afternoon of Thursday, April 4th and the morning of Friday, April 5th, 2019. Open to disabled early career scholars in all Divisions and SIGs within the AERA, the program will provide formal mentoring and professional development experiences specifically addressing the unique challenges faced by scholars with disabilities/disabled scholars seeking to become tenure-track faculty members.

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\* The AERA, Spencer Foundation, and seminar planning committee recognize that using person-first (e.g., people with disabilities) or identity-first (e.g., disabled) language is a continuous debate in the disability community so we acknowledge both forms of identification throughout the call.

Selected participants will work with established scholars with disabilities to learn how to navigate the culture of the academy as disabled scholars. Invited speakers will share strategies with participants to negotiate the application and interview process, in addition to establishing their identity as scholars in their field of study. Participants will meet with an ADA expert and university-based Equal Opportunity Employment professional staff members to discuss accommodations for their specific disabilities and their legal rights as employee. Postdoctoral opportunities sponsored by Spencer and AERA will be discussed. Participants will also participate in networking opportunities during the seminar.

The pre-conference workshop will be structured around presentations and conversations related to six themes:

1. Applying for jobs,
2. Requesting accommodations for a job interview,
3. When and how to disclose a disability,
4. Balancing personal and professional life with self-care,
5. Developing a research identity, and
6. The American with Disabilities Act and one's rights as an employee.

Each theme will be addressed by a short presentation with a senior scholar or legal specialist, whole group discussion, and opportunity for questions. The seminar will also provide opportunities to socialize and network with other scholars with disabilities. Following the seminar, participants will create or revise an application portfolio that includes common documents required for applying to many faculty positions (e.g., cover letter, curriculum vitae, research statement, teaching philosophy, diversity statement) which they will discuss with a virtual mentor who will provide general feedback on their materials.

Please note that due to the nature of this program involving disability, the utmost care has been taken to safeguard participants' disability status. Names and personal information will not be shared or published in any public forum. There will be no official photography and participants will be asked to refrain from posting pictures of fellow attendees and presenters without their explicit permission. Participants will have the option to disclose their participation and will receive a formal letter recognizing their participation once all components have been completed.

### ***Selection Criteria and Award***

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The pre-conference seminar will be open to all doctoral students with candidacy (i.e., students must have their dissertation proposal approved) and early career scholars who are in the first five years in a non-tenure-track academic position who self-identify as a person with a disability. The pre-conference seminar will admit a maximum of 20 participants. Participants will receive a \$300 travel reimbursement and a letter confirming participation once all program components have been completed. Meals are included in seminar activities.

### ***Universal Design and Accessibility***

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The pre-conference workshop will include accessibility and universal design principles so that all participants will be able to participate to the fullest extent possible. The physical space layout will ensure that all participants are able to navigate the space. Additionally, several breaks and meals have

been incorporated into the schedule. Furthermore, there will be a second space adjacent to the main seminar space to allow participants to take quiet breaks as needed.

As part of the application, applicants will indicate necessary accommodations to access written and oral language communications (e.g., braille, large print, ASL interpreter). To the greatest extent possible, each participant will receive conference documents in the manner indicated their application. ASL interpreters will be available during every seminar component. Funds permitting, each participant utilizing ASL interpreters for oral communication will have an individual interpreter assigned to them during meals and breaks to allow for networking and discussion. The application will also ask about any food allergies and intolerances. This is a fragrance-free workshop.

### ***Participant Eligibility***

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Individuals meeting the following program requirements are encouraged to apply:

1. Participants must be doctoral candidates or recent graduates with a terminal degree in an education-related field. This includes:
  - a. Doctoral students who have candidacy status at the time of application,
  - b. Faculty who have graduated with their terminal degree within the previous five years and who do not currently hold a tenure-track position, or
  - c. Individuals who have earned a terminal degree within the last five years and who are interested in the professoriate, including pursuing a tenure-track position.
2. Participants must have a disability or chronic health condition.
3. Participants must demonstrate future potential as an educational research scholar based on their submitted application materials.
4. Participants must commit to attending the entire program, including completing the virtual mentoring component and developing their application portfolio.

### ***Application Requirements***

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Applicants whose materials are received by 11:59 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) on February 11, 2019 will receive full consideration. Applications received after the deadline will be reviewed if space permits. All materials must be uploaded as PDF files. Applicants will complete an online application including the following information:

1. Submit an [online application](#).
2. Curriculum Vitae, maximum of five pages (File name format: “Last Name, First Name\_CV”)
3. Personal statement of no more than 500 words (File name format: “Last Name, First Name\_PS”). This includes a summary of your career goals, an explanation of how your disability has impacted your work as a scholar, challenges have you faced related to your disability, and what you expect to learn from the workshop and how you feel this will benefit your development as a scholar.
4. A letter of support from your dissertation advisor or department supervisor. This individual will receive an email from the application committee to submit a letter of reference directly. Their letter should be in PDF format (File name format: “Applicant Last Name, Applicant First Name\_REC”)

## ***Pre-Conference Seminar Schedule***

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Note: This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

### ***Thursday, April 4, 2019 – Day 1***

- 11:30 Buffet Lunch: Welcome and Participant Introductions (45 min)
- 12:15 Keynote and Discussion (45 min)
- 1:00 Applying for a Job (75 min)
- 2:20 Interviews: Expectations, Etiquette, and Accommodations (75 min)
- 3:35 Break (30 min)
- 4:05 New Faculty Experiences (45 min)
- 4:50 Developing a Scholarly Identity (40 min)
- 5:30 Takeaways from Day 1 (30 min)
- 6:00 Break (60 min)
- 7:00 Dinner Reception (90 min)

### ***Friday, April 5, 2019 – Day 2***

- 8:00 Continental Breakfast (Optional)
- 8:30 The ADA and the Legalities of Disability (90 min)
- 10:00 Break (30 min)
- 10:30 Spencer and AERA Postdoctoral Opportunities and Funding (60 min)
- 11:30 Closing and Next Steps (30 min)

## ***Planning Committee***

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Keri L. Rodgers, Ball State University (Co-Chair)  
Federico R. Waitoller, University of Illinois at Chicago (Co-Chair)  
Mercedes Cannon, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis  
David Hernández-Saca, University of Northern Iowa  
Carlyn Mueller, University of Washington  
Holly Pearson, Framingham State University  
Veronica Smith, Ball State University

## ***Questions***

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Please contact Keri L. Rodgers ([klrodgers@bsu.edu](mailto:klrodgers@bsu.edu)) for additional information regarding this program and/or if you require assistance with the application process.