FACULTY RESEARCH GRANTS
RELATED TO POVERTY AND THE ECONOMY
(Sponsored by the University of Georgia Research Foundation)

2007 Grant Award Summaries

1. The Impact of Poverty Simulations on Attitudes about and Perceptions of Poverty

**Proposers:** R. Clark, S. Gibson, S. Chapman, and L. Nackerud

**Summary:** R. Clark, S. Gibson, S. Chapman, and L. Nackerud were granted funding to research the effectiveness of simulations on people’s views of poverty. Participants’ attitudes were gauged through focus groups and observation both preceding and following the simulation. The researchers amended an existing measurement tool to determine whether people’s perceptions were more individual or more systemic related. That is, do people view poverty as the individual’s personal fault or is it a consequence of their general surroundings? It was concluded that the simulations did have an emotional effect on people’s opinions; however, no significant attitude changes were noted. Due to the fact that many of the members of the focus group were more educated than the ordinary citizen, this may have lead to the ultimate result. The researchers hope to continue testing by using a different instrument that may measure more accurately their findings.

2. Manufactured Housing: Expanding Housing Options for Georgia’s Families

**Proposer:** Anee L. Sweaney, Karen Tinsley, and Thomas F. Rodgers

**Summary:** Anee L. Sweaney, Karen Tinsley, and Thomas F. Rodgers collected data by conducting interviews and locating secondary data on the housing sector in order to compile a list of best practices that professionals in the local government, community, and housing sectors may review to improve their local housing situations. Furthermore, this list will assist in the preparation and implementation of codes and standards in regards to zoning, financing, ordinances, etc. Through this study, the researchers also desired to create a profile of the housing sector in the state of Georgia as well as the purchasers of those homes. Such a profile and a compilation of best practices will be very beneficial to local agencies as they strive to improve the affordability of housing in their communities.

3. The Effectiveness of Life Skills Literacy: A Pilot Study

**Grant Proposer:** Lee N. Johnson, Karen K. Leonas, Rebecca M. Mullis, Andrew T. Carswell, Joan Koonce Moss, Don Bower, Lance Palmer, and Teresa Mauldin

**Abstract:** The researchers are collecting information on participating families to determine whether their pilot program involving life skills literacy is beneficial and effective. They have encountered problems due to organizational changes within DFCS and will present their initial findings later in August. However, thus far they have received positive feedback and feel that the program to date has been beneficial.
4. Why Gifted Students Drop Out: School Related Factors

Proposers: Bonnie Cramond

Summary: After compiling an experimental group of persons dropping out of high school and a control group of students about to graduate, the researchers compared the students’ scores between groups on tests taken in creativity and abstractness. They have initially determined that those who drop out of school score in the higher percentiles within the area of creativity than those in the control group. Most graduating students were concerned about their future and felt that the completion of high school would increase their opportunities in life; they also felt accountable to their parents. The researchers also note that the students who dropped out of school felt no need to stay and complete it; furthermore, they felt a sense of “global rather than familial responsibility.”

5. Creating a Conjoint Financial Counseling and Couple Counseling Treatment Model for Couples on the Threshold of Poverty

Proposers: Jerry Gale, Joseph Goetz, Maria Bermudez, and Stephanie Burwell

Summary: Jerry Gale, Joseph Goetz, Maria Bermudez, and Stephanie Burwell introduced a counseling program consisting of financial as well as relationship assistance to nearly impoverished couples. Despite initial recruitment problems, they have had positive findings and reports thus far from the couples. Shortly, they will perform their statistical analysis to present their findings with quantitative data. As a result of their research grant, they were able to introduce this treatment model, train multiple graduate students for counseling work, and develop various packets and code books for assessment and analysis.