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Elise Swanson

EDUCATION

PhD Education Policy; Graduate Certificate in Educational Psychology, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, College of Education and Health Professions, 2019

BA Political Science and English Language and Linguistics, University of Wisconsin-Madison, College of Letters & Science, 2013

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2021-Present Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University
Director of Research Initiatives for College and Career Success, Nov 2025- Present
Associate Director of Research, May 2024-Nov 2025
Senior Research Manager, July 2021-April 2024

- Direct complex grant-funded projects across multiple institutions to deliver high quality deliverables, including analytic reports, publications, and presentations
- Manage project budget, grant reporting requirements, subaward and data use agreements, and external relationships
- Development of new projects, including program development, analysis plans, grant writing, recruitment materials, and project ideation
- Recruit, review, and hire staff for projects, analytic team, and CEPR-wide positions
- Direct the Leveraging Technology and Engaging Students: Evaluating Covid-19 Recovery Efforts in the Los Angeles Community College District (IES grant number R305X220018 to Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College) aimed at documenting and evaluating community college Covid-recovery efforts using mixed and quantitative methods
- Direct the National Center for Rural Education Research Networks (IES grant number R305C190004 to Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College) working with rural districts to pilot and test interventions aimed at improving student attendance, postsecondary readiness, and postsecondary entry as well as develop a model for rigorously evaluating education intervention in rural areas
- Direct the Examining Enabling Policies and the Impact of Rural Collaboratives led by Empower Schools funded by the ECMC Foundation to develop a logic model of the Rural Schools Innovation Zone, examine the factors associated with Rural Collaborative expansion, and explore the relationship between Rural Collaboratives and student outcomes
- Lead multiple analytic lines of inquiry for the States Leading States project to study implementation, descriptive data trends, and retrospective analyses of state initiatives to extend time spent learning in K-12 settings
- Support the Strategic Data Project by facilitating quantitative and mixed methods training, advising and mentoring Fellows, and reviewing and selecting Fellows

2019-2021 Pullias Center for Higher Education, University of Southern California
Senior Postdoctoral Research Associate, 2020-2021
Postdoctoral Research Associate, 2019-2020

2015-2019 Graduate Assistant, Department of Education Reform, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville

2013-2015 Secondary English Language Arts Teacher, Pine Bluff School District; Department Chair 2014-2015

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND BRIEFS

- **Swanson, E.,** Thompson, S., Ash, J., Didriksen, H., Kane, T.J., Staiger, D.O., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2026). Lifting up attendance in rural districts: A multi-site trial of a personalized messaging campaign. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* (Online First).
- **Swanson, E.** (2026). *Building college and career readiness: A cross-state policy landscape analysis in Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University [Research brief]
- Cummings, K & **Swanson, E.** (2026). *A model of rural collaboration: Strengthening college and career pathways through the Rural Schools Innovation Zone.* Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University [Research brief]
- Edgecombe, N., **Swanson, E.**, Brock, T., Cormier, M., Avery, C., & Huynh, C. (2026). Financing community colleges: Current landscape and future directions. In Campbell, J. Y., & Husbands Fealing, K. (Eds). *Financing Institutions of Higher Education*. National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Worsham, R. & **Swanson, E**. (2025). *Delivering at scale: Implementation integrity of enhanced success coaching in a community college promise program.* Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Worsham, R., **Swanson, E.**, & Avery, C. (2025). *Going the distance or growing more remote? The academic impacts of course modality following pandemic-era investments.* EdWorking Paper 25-1183. https://doi.org/10.26300/rtgz-6g36
- **Swanson, E.**, Harrington, D., & Zimring Towne, J. (2025). *The Los Angeles College Promise*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Worsham, R., Mishra, S., & Swanson, E. (2025). *Navigating the path to success or drifting off course? Analyzing the impacts of online course formats in LACCD*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Worsham, R. & Swanson, E. (2025). *How remote is success? The impact of course modality on community college student success*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Edgecombe, N., **Swanson, E.,** Brock, Thomas, Cormier, M., Avery, C., & Huynh, C. (2024). *Financing community colleges: Current landscape and future directions*. NBER Financing Higher Education, Spring 2024.
- **Swanson, E.** & Thomspon, S. (2024). *Improving postsecondary readiness in rural districts: experimental evidence from two pilots in a rural research network*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- **Swanson, E.** (2024). *Insights into college access from a rural research network.* Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- **Swanson, E.** (2024). *Insights into workforce entry from a rural research network.* Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- **Swanson, E.** (2024). *Insights into military service from a rural research network.* Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Johnson, B. & **Swanson, E**. (2024). *Labor market opportunities and declining community college enrollment in the pandemic era*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Mishra, S. & **Swanson, E.** (2024). *Regaining ground: Enrollment trends in the Los Angeles Community College District in the wake of COVID-19*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- **Swanson, E.**, Worsham, R., & Mishra, S. (2023). *"We will not go back to what we had:" Faculty's efforts to deliver effective distance education in the LACCD*. ARCC Network Brief, Community College Research Center. [Research brief]

- **Swanson, E.** (2022). *Results from six pilots in NCRERN's New York and Ohio Rural Research Network.* Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- Kieninger, K., Ash, J., Solowski, K., & **Swanson, E.** (2022). *Trends in student absenteeism in NCRERN's New York and Ohio Rural Research Network*. Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. [Research brief]
- **Swanson, E.**, & Cole, D. (2022). The role of academic validation in developing mattering and academic success. *Research in Higher Education, 63,* 1368-1393.
- Melguizo, T., Martorell, P., **Swanson, E.**, Chi, E., Park, E., & Kezar, A. (2021). Expanding student success: The impact of a comprehensive college transition program on psychosocial outcomes. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 14*(4), 835-860.
- **Swanson, E.**, Kopotic, K., Mills, J., Zamarro, G., Ritter, G., & Greene, J. (2021). An evaluation of the educational impact of college campus visits on 8th grade students. *AERA Open, 7*(1), 1-18.
- Ash, J., **Swanson, E.**, & Ritter, G. (2020). A promise kept? The impact of the El Dorado Promise Scholarship on student achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 43*(1), 83-107.
- **Swanson, E.** & Ritter, G. (2020). Start to Finish: Examining the Impact of the El Dorado Promise on Postsecondary Outcomes. *Journal of Student Financial Aid, 49*(3).
- **Swanson, E.**, Watson, A., & Ritter, G. (2020). The Impact of Promise Programs: A Systematic Review. *Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs* (L. Perna, Ed.). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Ritter, G. & **Swanson, E.** (2020). The Effect of the El Dorado Promise Scholarship on Higher Education, K12, and Community Outcomes. *Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs* (L. Perna, Ed.). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Worsham, R. & **Swanson, E.** (2025). *A scalable solution for student success: Evaluating a medium-touch coaching enhancement in community colleges*. Association for Public Policy and Management. Seattle, WA.
- **Swanson, E.** (2025). *College and career readiness: Identifying effective strategies for your district*. National Forum to Advance Rural Education. Salt Lake City, UT.
- Harrington, D., Zimring Towne, J., & **Swanson, E.** (2025). *Why they stay: Second year persistence in a LA College Promise.* Strengthening Student Success Conference. San Francisco, CA
- **Swanson, E.** (2025). *Supporting rural workforce and postsecondary readiness.* Education Alliance for New Hampshire. Concord, NH. (Invited talk)
- **Swanson, E.** Zimring Towne, J., & Harrington, D. (2025). *Enhancing student persistence: Innovative coaching strategies and evaluation for the LA College Promise program.* Strategic Data Project Convening 2025. Boston, MA.
- Worsham, R. **Swanson, E.,** & Avery, C. (2025). *Navigating the path to success or drifting off course? Analyzing the impacts of online course formats in community colleges.* AEFP 2025. Washington, D.C.
- Johnson, B., Bald, A., Avery, C., & **Swanson, E.** (2024). *Labor earnings and community college enrollment since COVID: Evidence from California.* APPAM 2024. Washington, D.C.
- Ash, J. & **Swanson, E.** (2024). *Developing and managing research projects: Perspectives from the field.* Department of Education Reform, University of Arkansas. (Invited talk)
- **Swanson, E.**, Thompson, S., Ash, J., Didriksen, H., Sanbonmatsu, L., Staiger, D. O., & Kane, T. J. (2024). *The effects of automated personalized messages on rural student attendance: Evidence from a student-level randomized control trial*. SREE 2024. Baltimore, MD.
- **Swanson, E.**, Worsham, R., Giannoulis, C., & Fehrenbach, N. (2023). *Designing and leveraging analytic toolkits for strategic decision-making*. Achieving the Dream DREAM 2023. Chicago, IL.
- **Swanson, E.**, Solowski, K., Ash, J., Kaplan, D., Sanbonmatsu, L., Staiger, D., & Kane, T. (2022). *Estimating the effectiveness of personalized messages at reducing student absences: Experimental*

evidence from a rural school research network. Association of Public Policy and Management 2022 Fall Conference. Washington, D.C.

- Cunningham, J., **Swanson, E.**, & Berry, M. (2022). *Understanding patterns of success among postsecondary CTE students: A flexible diagnostic & a case application*. AIR Forum. Phoenix, AZ.

POSTSECONDARY TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

- Instructor, Strategic Data Project (Recurring)
  - Designing Mixed Methods Studies for Postsecondary Education
  - Using Mixed Methods to Strengthen Your Research
  - Methods for Causal Inference in Postsecondary Education Program Evaluation
  - Quantitative Program Evaluation Tools for Educational Contexts
  - Cleaning and Preparing Data
  - Starting the Research Process: From Research Question to Analysis Plan
  - Fundamentals of Regression
  - Sourcing Data and Measuring Concepts
  - Entering Your Survey Era: Your Complete Guide from Collection to Conclusions
- Instructor, Research Methods and Applied Educational Ethnography (Master's), University of Southern California, Spring 2021
- Instructor, Equity in College and Career Access (Master's), University of Southern California, Fall 2020
- Participant, Future Faculty Teaching Institute, Center for Excellent Teaching, University of Southern California, Spring 2020
- Instructor, Issues in Education Policy (Graduate), University of Arkansas, Summer 2018
- Teaching Assistant for Dr. Gema Zamarro and Dr. Jon Mills, Quantitative Analytical Techniques for Education Policy (Doctoral), University of Arkansas, Fall 2017
- Teaching Assistant for Dr. Gary Ritter, Measurement of Educational Outcomes (Doctoral), University of Arkansas, Fall 2017
- Lead Instructor, Mathematics Boot Camp (Doctoral), University of Arkansas, Summer 2017
- Teaching Assistant for Dr. Gary Ritter, Issues in Education Policy (Doctoral), University of Arkansas, Spring 2017

OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

- Editorial Board Member, Research in Higher Education, 2023-Present
- Referee, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis; AERA Open; Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness; Educational Policy; Education Finance and Policy; Community College Review; Journal of General Education; Studies in Educational Evaluation*