

# DIÁLOGOS VIRTUALES

A Lecture-Discussion Series on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & the Global Dimensions of Education

## Understanding the Opportunities and Challenges of Teaching Ethnic Studies

Monday, March 21 • 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. PST • [Zoom Registration](#) 

Increased interest in anti-racist education has motivated the rapidly growing but politically contentious adoption of ethnic-studies (ES) courses in U.S. public schools. A long-standing rationale for ES courses is that their emphasis on culturally relevant and critically engaged content (e.g., social justice, anti-racism, stereotypes, contemporary social movements) has potent effects on student engagement and outcomes. Our research examining the San Francisco Unified School District's (SFUSD) 9th grade pilot ES course provides the first causal evidence of the positive short- and longer-term effects of ES on student's academic outcomes. In this session we will discuss the contextual and conceptual background for the development of SFUSD's ES course and its continued growth. We will also discuss the genesis and evolution of our ES research through a robust Research Practice Partnership (RPP) with the SFUSD. This session will include key insights about the instructional evolution of the ES course and challenges relevant to the successful scale-up and replication in other contexts. We will conclude with a framework for integrating an improvement science mindset (i.e., a supported and recursive cycle of development, implementation, and evaluation) into the expansion of ES in other locations across the country and situating ES in a space of practice rather than as a "culture war" political battle.



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**Sade Bonilla, Ph.D.**, is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She was the Institute for Education Sciences Outstanding Predoctoral Fellow in 2019. Her research uses quasi-experimental methods to understand the effects of local and state educational policies aimed at ameliorating structural inequality. Specifically, she examines K-12 educational policies with a particular emphasis on how these contemporary reforms impact high school to college transitions and career and technical education. Prior to her doctoral studies she was a Harvard Strategic Data Project (SDP) fellow with Albuquerque Public Schools. Sade has a Ph.D. in the Economics of Education from Stanford University. Additionally, she holds an M.A. degree in Urban Education Policy from Brown University and an M.A. in Economics from Stanford University.



**Thomas S. Dee, Ph.D.**, is the Barnett Family Professor at Stanford University's Graduate School of Education (GSE), a Research Associate with the programs on education, children, and health at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), a Senior Fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR) and the Faculty Director of the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities. His research focuses largely on the use of quantitative methods to inform contemporary issues of policy and practice. Recent examples include studies of curricular innovations in Bay Area school districts, studies of accountability policies, and research on the educational impact of school re-opening policies on public-school disenrollment. The Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) awarded his collaborative research the Raymond Vernon Memorial Award in 2015 and again in 2019. He currently serves on the editorial boards of the *American Educational Research Journal*, the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, and *Education Finance and Policy*.



**Emily K. Penner, Ph.D.**, is Assistant Professor of Education Policy and Social Context in the School of Education at the University of California, Irvine. Penner is a William T. Grant Scholar and formerly a Jacobs Foundation Young Scholar and National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow. Her research focuses on K-12 education policy, and considers the ways that districts, schools, teachers, and families contribute to and ameliorate educational inequality. Penner received her Ph.D. and M.A. in Education from the University of California, Irvine and her B.A. in Economics and International Relations from Claremont McKenna College. Prior to beginning her Ph.D., Penner taught in Oakland and Vista, California.