

Mary Alice Varga, Ph.D.

College of Education Associate Dean & Professor

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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology and Research

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Graduate Certificate in Evaluation, Statistics, and Measurement

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research Methods in Education

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Master of Education in College Student Personnel

Western Carolina University

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Shenandoah University

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of West Georgia | 2012 – Present

Associate Dean for Education Partnerships | January 2026 - Present

Provide strategic and administrative oversight for the College of Education's internal and external innovations related to strategic education partnerships. Partnerships include those with school districts, RESAs, and professional organizations.

- Provide support to the Dean and institutional partners with the Georgia's Building Educator Success Together (BEST) program.
- Serve as the Dean's designated liaison internally and externally for strategic partnerships.
- Collaborate with college leadership, institutional departments, and external personnel on academic and programmatic operations related to partnerships and Georgia's BEST.
- Establishing new partnerships (in progress) to include the Georgia Schools Superintendents Association and Georgia Association of Educational Leaders.
- Develop college-wide partnership processes.
- Oversee the College of Education Fusion Center.
- Supervise two administrative coordinator, five graduate education program specialists, alumni relations coordinator, administrative assistant, and two graduate assistants.

Assistant Dean for Strategic Partnerships | July – December 2025

Provide strategic and administrative oversight for the College of Education's internal and external innovations related to strategic partnerships. Partnerships include those with school districts, RESAs, and professional organizations.

- Provide support to the Dean and institutional partners with the Georgia's Building Educator Success Together (BEST) program.
- Serve as the Dean's designated liaison internally and externally for strategic partnerships.
- Collaborate with college leadership, institutional departments, and external personnel on academic and programmatic operations related to partnerships and Georgia's BEST.
- Establishing new partnerships (in progress) to include the Georgia Schools Superintendents Association and Georgia Association of Educational Leaders.
- Developed college-wide partnership processes.
- Developed college-wide partnership database.
- Supervise an administrative coordinator and two graduate assistants.

Department Chair of Leadership, Research, and School Improvement | 2021 – 2025

Provide leadership for faculty teaching in five educational leadership, research, and school improvement programs, including certification programs, an Ed.S. program, and a doctoral program. I transitioned from interim chair to chair in 2023 with a vision to continue 1) strengthening internal and external partnerships; 2) increasing student enrollment while enhancing the student experience; and 3) fostering faculty excellence. Enrollment from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 across programs increased 32% (507 students to 674 students) under my leadership. We also revitalized the Data Analysis and Evaluation Post-Baccalaureate Certificate and raised enrollment from 0 to 20 students in two semesters.

- Ensure standards were met with 2 Georgia Professional Standards Commission educational leadership certificates.
- Commended for transitioning over 400 students enrolled annually from non-degree seeking status to certificate status resulting in additional formula funding from the USG.
- Responsible for developing strategic vision for the department using data-informed decision making.
- Led research team and examined market trends to re-design the Data Analysis and Evaluation Post-Baccalaureate Certificate that the UWG Department of Sociology planned to de-activate due to zero enrollment. We currently have 20 students enrolled with increasing interest in one year.
- Maintained partnerships with 115 existing partners in school districts and other state organizations, and established 20 additional partnerships during her leadership, including the Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA) and the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL).
- Collaborated with various college departments to examine external stakeholder needs (school districts) and develop new programs to meet those needs, for example, the new Ed.S. in Special Education with Tier 1 Educational Leadership to meet a need of leaders with special education experience in the school districts.
- Supervise 15 faculty members, 3 assistant chairs, and one administrative assistant prior to COE staff centralization.

Professor of Educational Research | 2022 – Present

- Serve as the second most senior tenured full professor of educational research in the College of Education.
- Taught courses primarily in statistics, program evaluation, qualitative research, school and classroom assessment.
- Engaged in program evaluation work for over 10 years that included collecting, analyzing, and presenting data to internal and external stakeholders for non-profit companies and corporate firms.
- Established over 10 years of research and practitioner published articles on various topics, with the majority of research on supporting grieving college students.
- Collaborated with and mentored students in research, presenting, and publishing data related to college student grief.
- Chair and serve as a methodologist on various dissertation committees.
- Served as co-chair of the UWG Institutional Review Board (IRB) and currently a member.
- Served as an Associate Professor from 2017 to 2022, Assistant Professor from 2013 to 2017, and Visiting Professor from 2012 to 2013.

Director of the School Improvement Doctoral Program | 2016 - 2025

- Oversee professional doctorate program that currently enrolls 120 students annually.
- Led team that collected and examined data used to implement changes to program mission, vision, and student learning outcomes.
- Removed barriers from program that was preventing students from successful program progression and completion.
- Led research team to examine innovative and relevant capstone models to replace the traditional dissertation experience as the culminating project for School Improvement Doctoral Program to better meet professional student needs.
- Responsible for establishing and maintaining internal and external partnerships (school districts) to ensure program relevance, rigor, and student success.
- Oversee a faculty team that advises doctoral students on program progression and dissertation success.
- Created and implemented the online Research and Dissertation Development Series informed by data collected from doctoral students about their program needs.
- Previously oversaw one administrative staff member and one graduate teaching assistant.

University of Tennessee, Knoxville | 2008 – 2012

Graduate Research Assistant, Institute for Assessment and Evaluation | 2012

- Accompanied Director and Associates to stakeholder meetings to initiate partnerships, design projects, and present data and recommendations.
- Assisted Institute Director and Associates with quantitative and qualitative data analysis for assessment and evaluation reports.
- Assisted Institute Director and Associates with writing data findings and evaluation reports.

Program Specialist, Undergraduate Admissions | 2008 – 2009

- Worked directly with the Director of Undergraduate Admissions to assist with special projects autonomously, which were often related to recruitment and application management.
- Assisted with monitoring inquires and submitted application numbers.

Western Carolina University | 2006 – 2008

Graduate Assistant, Student Support Services | 2007 – 2008

- Assisted the Director with enhancing the support services students in the TRIO program.
- Oversaw services specifically provided for students with disabilities.
- Responsible for monitoring resources needed for students with disabilities.
- Partnered with other campus offices, such as the Catamount Academic Tutoring Center and the Advising Center to ensure student support and success.

Intern, Catamount Academic Tutoring Center | 2007 – 2008

Graduate Instructor and Intern, Academic Advising Center | 2006

- Assisted with advising students in undeclared majors.
- Worked with the Associate Director on Early Alert System Task Force to actively identify students needing additional support for successful degree progression and completion.
- Presented on “Early alert system: Catching high-risk students before they slip through the cracks” at the Regional 3 National Academic Advising Association Conference

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Leadership	Program Evaluation	Collaboration
Leadership Development	Data-Informed Decision-Making	Relationship Building
Strategic Planning	Research Methods	Implementing Change
Organizational Leadership	Data Sources, Reporting, & Analytics	Curricular Development
Collaboration	Autonomous Project Management	Enrollment Management
Data Visualization		

FUNDED GRANTS

The impact of a living learning community token economy system on student engagement	2021
A mixed-methods study on international student grief experiences	2021
Textbook Transformation Grant EDRS 4042-6342	2021
A mixed-methods study on international student grief experiences	2020
International student grief experiences	2020
The role of gender on holistic grief effects experienced by college students	2019
The unique grieving experiences of female African-American Students	2016
iCARE: Instruction of children at risk and with exceptionalities	2014 & 2015
Building pre-service teacher and SLP interest in STEM-C through mentoring experiences in EDUC 2110	2015
Research on Supporting Grieving Students at the University of West Georgia.	2014
Developing Multimedia Applications to Engage Grieving Children	2011
Research to successfully expand services provided to children in the community coping with grief, loss or trauma.	2010

SELECTED COURSES TAUGHT

Program Evaluation | Doctoral Seminar | Designing Effective Programs | Advanced Research Seminar | Mixed Methods Analysis | Quantitative Data Analysis | Quantitative Analysis | Research Seminar I in Counseling | Research Seminar II in Counseling | Research Seminar I in Speech Language Pathology | Qualitative Research Methods | School and Classroom Assessment | Research Design | School Improvement Through Data Driven Decision-Making | Research in Education | Educational Research Fundamentals | The First Year Experience | Career and Personal Development | First Year Studies

SELECTED DESIGNED COURSES

Program Evaluation for Community Settings | Doctoral Seminar | Advanced Research Design | Program Evaluation I: Introduction to Program Evaluation | Mixed Methods Analysis | Quantitative Analysis | Research Design

PROGRAMS REDESIGNED

Doctor of School Improvement, 2019
Program Evaluation Certificate, 2017

REFERRED JOURNALS

Varga, M. A., & Green, K. B. (Under review). The impact of a district-wide character development curriculum on academic success and school climate. *Learning Environments Research*.

Olaleye, C. *, & **Varga, M. A.** (2022). The role of gender on holistic grief effects experienced by college students. *Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs*.

Varga, M. A., Green, K. B., & Lindsey, J. G.* (2022). Professional and practical considerations for the program evaluation dissertation. *Impacting Education Journal on Transforming Professional Practice*, 7(1), 16-19.
<https://doi.org/10.5195/ie.2022.226>

Varga, M. A., & Denniston, N. J., (2022). Engagement in recovery experiences from work among post-secondary full-time online faculty. *Journal of Educators Online*, 19(1).

Varga, M. A., & Balk, D. E. (2021). Development and validation of the holistic grief effects instrument for bereaved college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 62(5), 607-613. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2021.0056>

Green, K. B., Griffin, R. A., Morris, C. T., & Varga, M. A. (2021). Early childhood family education: Language and pre-academic skills for Latinx dual language learners. *Journal of English Learner Education*, 13(1), Article 3. <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/jele/vol13/iss1/3/>

Varga, M. A., Lanier, B. A., Biber, D., & Stewart, B. (2021). Holistic grief effects, mental health, and counseling support in bereaved college students. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 39(1) – 1-13. <https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/44196> .

Varga, M. A. (2021). Holistically identifying and supporting college student grief and trauma during a global pandemic and beyond. *Developments*.

Varga, M. A., Bordere, T. C., & Varga, M. D. (2020). The holistic grief effects of bereaved Black female college students. *OMEGA Journal of Death and Dying*. doi: 10.1177/0030222820976298

Dilling, J. L., **Varga, M. A.**, & Mandernach, B. J. (2020). Comparing teaching presence and social presence in traditional and online learning environments. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2020.1752852>

Kimbrel, L., & **Varga, M. A.** (2020). Predicting Ed.D. applicant potential using structured behavioral interviews during the application process. *Impacting Education: Journal on Transforming Professional Practice*.
<https://doi.org/10.5195/ie.2020.109>

Varga, M. A., Varga, M. D., *Balentyne, P., & Lanier, B. A. (2020). Holistically understanding and supporting bereaved emerging adults. *Mortality*, 26(1), 36-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2020.1732315>

Green, K. B., Robbins, S. H., **Varga, M. A.**, Head, C. N., *Davis, E., & *Houze, W. (2019). Individualised professional development using the Pyramid Model with Head Start teachers. *International Journal of Disability, Development, and*

Education. doi: 10.1080.1034912X.2019.1681376

Robbins, S. H., Bucholz, J., **Varga, M. A.**, & Green, K. (2019). Promoting inclusion in preschool with program-wide positive behavior supports. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. doi: 1080/13603116.2019.1666169

Varga, M. A. (2019). Reflections on grief research interview participation. *Death Studies*. Available online at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07481187.2019.1648334>
doi: [10.1080/07481187.2019.1648334](https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2019.1648334)

Varga, M. A., & Varga, M. D. (2019). Grieving college students use of social media. *Illness, Crisis, and Loss*, 29(4), 290-300. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1054137319827426>

Pollard, B. L., **Varga, M. A.**, Wheat, L. S., McClam, T., & *Balentyne, P. (2017). Characteristics of graduate counseling student grief experiences. *Illness, Crisis, and Loss*, 28(3), 255-274. doi: 10.1177/1054137317730525

Balentyne, P., & **Varga, M. A.** (2017). Attitudes and achievement in a self-paced blended learning mathematics course. *Journal of Online Learning Research*, 3(1), 55-72. Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). Retrieved from <http://www.learntechlib.org/p/173313>.

Balentyne, P., & **Varga, M. A.** (2016). The effects of self-paced blended learning of mathematics. *Journal of Computers in Mathematics and Science Teaching*, 35(3), 201-223.

Varga, M. D., & **Varga, M. A.** (2015). Prescription stimulant use by graduate students. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 33(1), 124-145. doi: [10.1353/csaj.2015.0004](https://doi.org/10.1353/csaj.2015.0004)

Paulus, T. M., & **Varga, M. A.** (2015). "Please know you are not alone with your pain": Responses to newcomer posts in an online grief support group. *Death Studies*, 39(10), 633-640. doi: 10.1080/07481187.2015.1047060

Varga, M. A. (2015). A quantitative study of graduate student grief experiences. *Illness, Crisis, & Loss*, 24(3). doi: 10.1177/1054137315589700

Varga, M. A., McClam, T. M., & Hassane, S. H. (2015). Grief experiences among female American and Arab college students. *OMEGA Journal of Death and Dying*, 72(2), 165-183. doi: 10.1177/0030222815574834

McClam, T., & **Varga, M. A.** (2014). Grieving students in helping professions. *Journal of Human Service Education*, 34(1), 94-99.

Davis, C. A., & **Varga, M. A.** (2014). Performing professor. *Polymath: Special Issue, On Being a Professor*, 1(14). Available at <https://ojcs.siue.edu/ojs/index.php/polymath/article/viewFile/2908/929>

Varga, M. A., & Paulus, T. M. (2014). Grieving online: Newcomers' constructions of grief in an online support group. *Death Studies*, 38(7), 443-449. doi: 10.1080/07481187.2013.780112

Paulus, T., Phipps, G., Harrison, J., & **Varga, M. A.** (2012). Re-envisioning instructional technology research in higher education environments: A content analysis of a grant program. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 24(3), 164-181. doi: 10.1007/s12528-012-9062-2

Woodside, M., McClam, T., Diambra, J., & **Varga, M. A.** (2012). The meaning of time for human service professionals. *Journal of Human Service Education*, 32(1), 4-20.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Varga, M. A. (In press.). Trauma and loss embedded in severe betrayal. In D. Balk (Ed.) *Trauma and loss: Counselors and therapists*. Cambridge Scholars.

Whisenhunt, J. L., & **Varga, M. A.** (In press.). Methodological issues. In C. J. Sheperis, J. S. Young, & M. H. Daniels (Eds.), *Counseling Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods* (3rd Ed.).

Varga, M. A. (2020). The impact of loss characteristics on grief effects in bereaved college students. In S. Lee (Ed.), *Exploring the opportunities and challenges of college students* (pp. 321-337) Nova Science Publishers.

Balk, D. E., & **Varga, M. A.** (2018). Attachment bonds and social media in the lives of bereaved college students. In D.

Klass & E. Steffen (Eds.), *Continuing Bonds* (2nd ed., pp. 303-316) New York, NY: Routledge.

Paulus, T., & Varga, M.A. (2017). The construction of grief in an online support group: A case illustration of a discourse analysis study. In N. Woolf & C. Silver (Eds.) *Five-Level QDA: A method for harnessing CAQDAS powerfully*. London, UK: Sage Publications.

Varga, M. A. (2017). Grief Interactions Among Emerging Adults on College Campuses. In A. Copone & V. Parvaresh (Eds.), *The pragmeme of accommodation in connection with interaction around the event of death* (pp. 83-94). Springer Publications. Available at <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-55759-5/page/1>

Whisenhunt, J. L., & Varga, M. A. (2017). Methodological issues. In C. J. Sheperis, J. S. Young, & M. H. Daniels (Eds.), *Counseling Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods* (2nd Ed., pp. 58-75). Boston, Ma: Pearson.

Varga, M. A., & Paletti, R. (2013). Life span issues and dying. In D. K. Meagher & D. E. Balk (Eds.), *Handbook of Thanatology: The Essential Body of Knowledge for the Study of Death, Dying, and Bereavement* (2nd Ed., pp. 25-31). New York, NY: Routledge.

BOOK REVIEWS

Varga, M. A. (2015). The Evolution of thanatology: Past, present, and future contributions to the field. *Death Studies*, 39(7), 451-452. doi: 10.1080/07481187.2015.1041843

Varga, M. A. (2015). Helping adolescents cope with loss: A comprehensive text. *Death Studies*, 39(4), 252-253, doi:10.1080/07481187.2014.944476

Varga, M. A. (2014). Helping the bereaved college student. 69(2), 217-218, doi: 10.2190/OM.69.2.g

Varga, M. A. (2014). Why funerals matter: Death rituals across cultures. *Death Studies*, 38(8), 546-547. doi: 10.1080/07481187.2013.869467

ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRY

Varga, M. A. (2015). Death and dying, Psychology of. In: James D. Wright (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd edition, Vol 5. Oxford: Elsevier. pp. 860-864. Available at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780080970868340090>

NON-REFERRED PUBLICATIONS

Varga, M. A. (2021). Conducting paperless literature reviews using Mendeley. In T. Paulus & J. Lester (Eds.) *Digital tools for qualitative research*. New York, NY: Sage.

Varga, M. A. (2015). The Nicholas effect: The boy who saved thousands of lives. ADEC Forum: The quarterly publication of the Association for Death Education and Counseling.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Bridging research and practice: DSM-5 and bereavement. ADEC Forum: The quarterly publication of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, 40(3), 10.

Varga, M. A. (2013). Helping children after traumatic loss. ADEC Forum: The quarterly publication of the Association for Death Education and Counseling, 39(3), 13.

Varga, M. A. (2012). Ethics and reflexivity in online research. *AERA Qualitative Research Special Interest Group Newsletter*, Summer, 2012.

McClam, T., & Varga, M. A. (2012). The grief outreach initiative: University students help grieving children in the community. *Community Works Journal*, April, 2012.

McClam, T., & Varga, M. A. (2011). Connecting college students and grieving children. *ADEC Forum: The quarterly publication of the Association for Death Education and Counseling*, 37(4), 31-33.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Huett, K. C., & Varga, M. A. (2016). Building pre-service teacher interest in computer science education through mentoring experiences. In *Proceedings of Special Interest Group on Computer Science Education*, Memphis, Tennessee.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Harper, M., **Varga, M. A.**, Green, K., & McGuire, D. (2019). *Effects of a Head Start Family Day experience on undergraduate student perspectives*. Poster presented at the Council for Exceptional Children, Division of Early Childhood Conference, Dallas, Texas.

Varga, M. A., & Kawulich, B. B. (2014). Interviews as validation. Paper presented at the 13th Annual Advances in Qualitative Methods Conference. Alberta, Canada.

Kawulich, B. B., & **Varga, M. A.** (2014). Qualitative research leading to social change. Poster presented at the 13th Annual Advances in Qualitative Methods Conference. Alberta, Canada.

Varga, M. A., & McClam, T. (2014). Evaluating mentor development in grief work. Paper presented at the 2014 Australian Grief and Bereavement Conference. Melbourne, Victoria.

McClam, T., & **Varga, M. A.** (2012). Enhancing service-learning and character development using case studies. Paper presented at the 2012 International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement Annual Conference. Baltimore, Maryland.

NATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Varga, M. A., Green, K. B., & Grant, P. D. (2020). The program evaluation dissertation for practitioner doctoral students. Presented at the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate 2020 October Virtual Convening.

Varga, M. A., & Balk, D. E. (2020). Psychometric properties of two new grief instruments: Attachment scale and Holistic grief effects scale. Paper presentation accepted to present at the 2020 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Columbus, Ohio. [Note: This conference was canceled due to public health concerns related to COVID-19.]

Wong, T., Balk, J. R., Harris, D., **Varga, M. A.**, Cupit, I. N., & Balk, D. E. (2020). Teaching that Matters: Online thanatology education. Panel presentation accepted to present at the 2020 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Columbus, Ohio. [Note: This conference was canceled due to public health concerns related to COVID-19.]

Cupit, I. N., Neimeyer, R., Harris, D., Balk, D. E., **Varga, M. A.**, & Arnold, C. (2019). Teaching that matters: The goals of death education circa 2019. Paper presented at the 2019 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.

Bordere, T. C., & **Varga, M. A.** (2019). African American female youth and grief support. Paper presented at the 2019 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.

Balk, D. B., Cupit, I. N., Servaty-Seib, H. L., **Varga, M. A.**, & de St. Aubin, M. (2018). Research that matters 2018: College student bereavement. Panel discussion presented at the 2018 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Bordere, T. C., & **Varga, M. A.** (2018). Grief and coping among African American female college students. Paper presented at the 2018 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Cupit, I. N., Servaty-Seib, H. L., Wheat, L., & **Varga, M. A.** (2018). Teaching that matters. Paper presented at the 2018 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Varga, M. A., Wheat, L.S., & Pollard, B. L. (2017). The grief experiences of graduate counseling students. Paper presented at the 2017 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Portland, Oregon.

Varga, M. A., & Balk, D. E. (2017). The bereavement and social media use continuum. Poster presented at the 2017 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Portland, Oregon.

Balk, D. E., **Varga, M. A.**, Sofka, C., & Cupit, I. (2016). Research that matters: Social media and bereavement. Paper presented at the 2016 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Varga, M. A. (2016). Conducting ethical grief research in the online world. Paper presented at the 2016 Association for

Death Education and Counseling Conference, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Varga, M. A., & Paulus, T. M. (2015). "Welcome to the club nobody wanted to join": Understanding online grief support forums. Poster presented at the 2015 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. San Antonio, Texas.

Varga, M. A., & Bordere, T. C. (2015). The grief experiences of African American female college students. Paper presented at the 2015 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. San Antonio, Texas.

Cupit, I. N., Bordere, T. C., **Varga, M. A.**, de St. Aubin, M., & Thompson, K. E. (2015). Teaching that matters: Pedagogical approaches to issues of diversity. Paper presented at the 2015 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. San Antonio, Texas.

Green, K. B., Wingate, K. O., **Varga, M. A.**, & Lu, M. D. (2014). Effects of early childhood family education for at risk preschoolers and their families. Poster presented at the Institute Designed for Educating All Students (IDEAS) Conference, St. Simon's Island, Georgia.

Balk, D. E., Harris, D. L., Papa, A., & **Varga, M. A.** (2014). Research that matters 2014: Non-death losses. Paper presented at the 2014 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. Baltimore, Maryland.

Varga, M. A., McClam, T. M., & Hassane, S. H. (2014). Grief experiences among American and Arab college students. Poster presented at the 2014 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. Baltimore, Maryland.

Varga, M. A. & McClam, T. M. (2014). Boundary issues in grief work: A case study analysis. Poster presented at the 2014 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. Baltimore, Maryland.

Pollard, B., **Varga, M. A.**, & McClam, T. M. (2014). Grief experiences of graduate counseling students and mentors. Poster presented at the 2014 Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. Baltimore, Maryland.

McClam, T., & **Varga, M. A.** (2013). Assessing the development of grief mentors. Paper presented at the 2013 Association for Death Education and Counseling Annual Conference. Hollywood, California.

Paulus, T. M., & **Varga, M. A.** (2013). Online groups as research context: Ethical dilemmas. Paper presented at the 4th Annual Qualitative Report Conference. Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Varga, M. A., & Mynatt, B. S. (2012). How online grief support forum research impacts practice. Paper presented at the 2012 Association for Death Education and Counseling Annual Conference. Atlanta, Georgia.

Varga, M. A., (2012). College students becoming grief mentors: A study of motivational factors. Paper presented at the 2012 College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences Graduate Student Colloquium at The University of Tennessee. Knoxville, Tennessee.

Varga, M. A., & McClam, T. (2012). Using focus groups to enhance the grief volunteer experience. Paper presented at the 2012 Association for Death Education and Counseling Annual Conference. Atlanta, Georgia.

Catalana, M., **Varga, M. A.**, & McClam, T. (2011). Aiding mentors in shaping the futures of grieving at-risk youth. Paper presented at the 2011 Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Annual Conference. Nashville, Tennessee.

Woodside, M., McClam, T., Diambra, J., & **Varga, M.A.** (2011). The meaning of time for professional counselors. Paper presented at the 2011 Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Annual Conference. Nashville, Tennessee.

McClam, T., & **Varga, M. A.** (2011). Connecting college students and grieving kids. Paper presented at the 2011 International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society and the Association for Death Education and Counseling Conference. Miami, Florida.

Varga, M. A. (2011). Developing multimedia applications to engage grieving children. Paper presented at the 2011 Teachers College Educational Technology Conference. Columbia University, New York City, New York.

Sands, T.L., Raucci, M., & **Varga, M. A.** (2011). I am not who you think: Identity of first-generation white women. Paper presented at the 2011 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Annual Conference. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Woodside, M., McClam, T., Diambra, J., & **Varga, M. A.** (2010). The meaning of time in human services. Paper presented at the 2010 National Organization for Human Services Annual Conference. Portland, Maine.

Taylor, A., & **Varga, M. A.** (2007). Early alert system: Catching at-risk students before they slip through the cracks. Paper presented at the Regional 3 National Academic Advising Association Conference. Asheville, North Carolina.

Boyer, B., & **Varga, M. A.** (2007). Diamonds in the rough: A unique approach to unearthing students with leadership potential. Paper presented at the 2007 Western Carolina University Faculty Enrichment and Education Conference. Cullowhee, North Carolina.

REGIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Miller, R. & **Varga, M. A.** (2022). Opportunities for publication and practice with the *College Student Affairs Journal*. Paper under review to present at the 2022 Southern Association for College Student Affairs Annual Conference. Birmingham, Alabama.

Varga, M. A., Kniess, D. R., Council III, M., & Seaman-Tullis, R. L. (2021). The Impact of a Living Learning Community Token Economy System on Student Engagement. Presentation proposal submitted to present at the 2021 Southern Association for College Student Affairs Conference. Norfolk, VA.

Boettcher, M., Kniess, D., **Varga, M. A.**, & Miller, R. (2021). Opportunities for publication and practice with the *College Student Affairs Journal*. Paper under review to present at the 2021 Southern Association for College Student Affairs Annual Conference. Norfolk, Virginia.

Varga, M. A., & Olaleye, C. (2019). The role of gender on holistic grief effects experienced by college students. Presented at the 2019 Undergraduate Research Conference at the University of North Georgia.

Boettcher, M., Bourke, B., Kniess, D., & **Varga, M. A.** (2018). Taking your research to a new direction: From Dissertation to Manuscript. Paper accepted to present at the 2018 Southern Association for College Student Affairs Annual Conference. Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Carney, J., Kawulich, B., Miller, M., Packard, A., Ross, M., Smith, M. C., & **Varga, M. A.** (2015). Writing for publication: Tips for academic publishing. Panel presentation at the 2015 Annual Eastern Educational Research Association Conference. Sarasota, Florida.

Varga, M. A., & Adams, A. (2010). CEA: Helping students learn for the future. Paper presented at the 2010 Southern Association for College Student Affairs Annual Conference. Panama City, Florida.

UNIVERSITY PRESENTATIONS

Varga, M. A. (2021). Leading through grief and trauma. Presented at University of West Georgia Lead West Series, Carrollton, Georgia.

Olaleye, C., & **Varga, M. A.** (2020). The role of gender on holistic grief effects experienced by college students. Accepted to present at the 2020 University of West Georgia Scholars' Day Undergraduate Research Conference, Carrollton, Georgia. [Note: This conference was canceled due to public health concerns related to COVID-19.]

Olaleye, C., & **Varga, M. A.** (2019). The role of gender on holistic grief effects experienced by college students. Presented at the 2019 University of West Georgia College of Education Research, Diversity, and Study Abroad Showcase, Carrollton, Georgia.

Kimbrel, L., & **Varga, M. A.** (2019). Implementation of the Leadership Behavior Assessment for School Improvement Doctoral Students. Accepted to present at the 2019 University of West Georgia College of Education Research, Diversity, and Study Abroad Showcase, Carrollton, Georgia.

McGuire, D., Green, K. B., & **Varga, M. A.** (2019). *Effects of a Head Start Family Day Experience on College Student Perspectives*. Poster presented at the 2019 University of West Georgia College of Education Research, Diversity, and Study Abroad Showcase.

Varga, M. A., & Bordere, T. C. (2018). Grieving Experiences of African American Female College Students: A Mixed Methods Study. Paper presented at the 2018 University of West Georgia College of Education Research, Diversity, and Study Abroad Showcase.

Green, K. B., Robbins, S. H., Bucholz, J., & **Varga, M. A.** (2016). Managing challenging behaviors in Head Start inclusive and diverse classrooms: A professional development model for The Teaching Pyramid. Poster presented at the Second Annual COE Diversity Research Symposium, University of West Georgia. Carrollton, Georgia.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Heidorn, B., **Varga, M. A.**, & Yang, Y. (2020). Creating Your Research Agenda. Invited to present to faculty in the College of Education at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2019). Introduction to Mendeley reference management. Presented through the Research and Dissertation Development Series to doctoral students enrolled at the College of Education at the University of West Georgia.

Varga, M. A., & Kniess, D. (2018). Dissertation to publication. Invited to present to faculty in the College of Education at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2017). Pathway to successful promotion and tenure. Presented to faculty in the Department of Leadership, Research, and School Improvement at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2017). Grief in the workplace. Presented for the Continuing Education Department at the University of West Georgia, Newnan, Georgia.

Varga, M. D., & Varga, M. A. (2017). Values Congruence. Presented to employees of Grey Stone in Douglasville, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2016). The fundamentals of survey research. Presented to doctoral students enrolled in the School Improvement program at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2015). Establishing and advancing your research agenda. Presented to faculty in the College of Education at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2015). The fundamentals of survey research. Presented to doctoral students enrolled in the School Improvement program at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2015). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Varga, M. A. (2015). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students enrolled in Instructional Technology Digital Tools Course at the University of Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Understanding and supporting the grieving college student: A holistic approach. Presented to attendants of the 2014 National Conference on College Student Grief in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Building a comprehensive research agenda. Presented as a panel member to faculty in the College of Education at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Survey design. Presented to doctoral students enrolled in the School Improvement program at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Mixed methods research designs. Presented to doctoral students enrolled in the School Improvement program at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Qualitative research designs. Presented to doctoral students enrolled in the School Improvement program at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2014). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students enrolled in a Strategies for Educational Inquiry course at Indiana University.

Varga, M. A. (2013). Introduction to quantitative analysis in survey research. Presented to graduate students enrolled in a

Research Program Evaluation course at the University of West Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2013). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students enrolled in a Strategies for Educational Inquiry course at Indiana University.

Varga, M. A. (2013). Survey design. Presented to doctoral students enrolled in the School Improvement program at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia.

Varga, M. A. (2013). College and the grieving student: Recent Research. Presented to attendants of the 2013 National Conference on College Student Grief in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Varga, M. A. (2013). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students enrolled in Instructional Technology Digital Tools Course at the University of Tennessee.

Varga, M. A. (2012). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students in Educational Psychology at Washington State University.

Varga, M. A. (2012). College students and grief. Presented to graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in a Counselor Education course at the University of Tennessee.

Varga, M. A. (2012). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students enrolled in Instructional Technology Digital Tools Course at the University of Tennessee.

Varga, M. A. (2011). The Grief outreach initiative at the University of Tennessee. Presented to graduate students enrolled in Counselor Education Cross-Cultural Theory and Research Course at the University of Tennessee.

Varga, M. A. (2011). Introduction to Mendeley research management. Presented to graduate students enrolled in Instructional Technology Digital Tools Course at the University of Tennessee.

Varga, M. A. (2008). Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility. Presented at the 2008 Western Carolina University Women's Center Reception. Cullowhee, North Carolina.

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

Review, Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant Committee 2019

UNIVERSITY

Committee Member, Institutional Review Board	2023-Present
Co-chair, Institutional Review Board	2021-2023
Chair, College of Education, Associate Dean Search Committee	2023
Committee Member, College of Education Dean Search Committee	2021
Research Faculty Fellow, University of West Georgia Center for Research	2021-2022
Committee Member, Budget Committee	2021-2022
Judge, Fulbright Mock Interview Judge Panel	2020-2022
Committee Member, Graduate Programs Committee	2019-2021
Reviewer, ORSP Faculty Research Grant Committee	2018-2019
Committee Member, Graduate School Advisory Committee	2016-2022
Committee Member, Rules Committee	2016-2018
Faculty Advisor, Students of AMF Grief Support Group	2016
Committee Member, Online Advisory Group	2016
Committee Member, Engage West Survey Committee, University of West Georgia	2014-2018
Committee Member, Academic Policies Committee, Committee Member	2013 – 2015
Grant Reviewer, Academic Outreach and Engagement Council	2014

COLLEGE

Committee Member, College of Education Faculty Governance Council	2022-2023
Promotion & Tenure Committee, Department of Literacy and Special Education	2020

Facilitator, Research Design Speed Center, College of Education	2019
Committee Member, Promotion & Tenure Third Year Review Committee	
Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling	2019
Coordinator, Research and Dissertation Development Series for Doctoral Students	2019
Committee Member, Post-Tenure Review Committee, College of Education	2019
Committee Member, College of Education Faculty Governance Council	2016-2019
Committee Member, School Improvement Orientation Planning Committee	2015-2016
Committee Member, School Improvement Admissions Committee	2014-2016
Chair, School Improvement Advisory Research Subcommittee	2013–2015
Committee Member, School Improvement Advisory Committee	2013–2016
Panel Member, School Improvement Doctoral Program Orientation Faculty Panel	2013
Committee Member, College of Education Strategic Planning Committee	2013
Committee Member, College of Education Convocation Committee	2012-2014

DEPARTMENT

Departmental Representative, College of Education Scholarship Committee	2022
Committee Member, Promotion & Tenure Third Year Review Committee	
Department of Leadership, Research, and School Improvement	2021
Committee Member, Promotion & Tenure Third Year Review Committee	
Department of Leadership, Research, and School Improvement	2019
Committee Member, Promotion & Tenure Third Year Review Committee	
Department of Leadership, Research, and School Improvement	2018
Committee Member, Educational Research Faculty Search	2018
Committee Member, Departmental Associate Staff Search	2017
Committee Member, Educational Research Faculty Search	2017
Committee Member, Educational Research Faculty Search	2016 – 2017
Committee Member, Educational Research Faculty Search	2014
Committee Member, Departmental Chair Search, University of West Georgia	2012
Committee Member, Educational Research Faculty Search	2012

PROFESSIONAL

Member, Georgia Educational Leadership Faculty Association (GELFA),	2021-Present
Associate Editor, College Student Affairs Journal	2024-Present
Co-Editor, College Student Affairs Journal	2021-2024
Reviewer, Death Studies, Manuscript Reviewer	2015-Present
Associate Editor, College Student Affairs Journal	2016-2021
Editorial Board Member, Illness, Crisis, & Loss	2020-Present
Reviewer, Journal of American College Health	2020
Convening Submission Reviewer, Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate	2020
Convening Submission Chair, Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate	2020
Submission Reviewer, Georgia Undergraduate Research Conference	2020
Reviewer, Frontiers in Psychology	2019
Reviewer, Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning	2019
Elected Board Member, Board of Directors, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2017 – 2018
Reviewer, Research Grants, National Association for Student Personnel Administrators Region III	2017- 2018
Member, Reference Task Committee, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2017-2018
Chair, Awards Committee, Association for Death Education and Counseling,	2016-2018
Member, Distance Education Committee, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2014-2018
Chair, Research & Assessment Committee, Southern Association for College Student Affairs	2014-2015
Reviewer, Conference Proposal Reviewer, Southern Association for College Student Affairs	2015-2016
Chair, Student Scholarship Committee, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2014-2016

Reviewer, Student Paper Award Reviewer, Eastern Educational Research Association	2013-2016
Reviewer, Journal of Research on Leadership Education	2016
Reviewer, Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy	2016
Co-Editor, Journal of Research in Education, Eastern Educational Research Association	2015
Co-Editor, The Forum, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2014
Reviewer, Conference Proposal Reviewer, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2014
Judge, Graduate Student Case Study Competition, Southern Association for College Student Affairs	2014
Manuscript Reviewer, Journal of Research in Education	2012-2014
New Professional Intern, The Forum, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2012-2014
Student Intern, The Forum, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2011-2012
Co-chair, Student Initiative Committee, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2011-2013
Committee Member	Mendeley,
Advisor & Advisor Task Force, Committee Member	2010-Present

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Georgia Educational Leadership Association Professional Learning Series	2022
Georgia Professionals Standards Commission Annual Certification and Program Officials Series	2022
Georgia Educational Leadership Association Professional Learning Series	2021
Georgia Professionals Standards Commission Annual Certification and Program Officials Series	2021
Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate	2017
College of Education Leadership Development Retreat	2015
Quality Matters Rubric Update	2015
Quality Matters Peer Review Course	2014
Quality Matters Applying the QM Rubric in Online Courses	2014
Quality Matters Designing Your Online Course	2013
College of Education Leadership Development Initiative	2013
Certified Online Instructor Training	2013
Writing Successful Grants, Part I	2010
Writing Successful Grants, Part II	2010
Finding Funding, Office of Research	2010

AWARDS

The Southern Association for College Student Affairs and Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education Ted K. Miller Award for Excellence	2023
University of West Georgia College of Education Program of the Year Award	2019
Ron Barrett Award, Association for Death Education and Counseling	2018
University of West Georgia College of Education Outstanding Research Award	2016
Association of Death Education and Counseling Student Initiative Conference Scholarship	2013
Graduate Student Advisory Board Dean's Professional Development Award	2012
Association of Death Education and Counseling Student Initiative Conference Scholarship	2012
University of Tennessee Office of Research Summer Graduate Research Assistantship Award	2011
Association of Death Education and Counseling Student Initiative Conference Scholarship	2011
Western Carolina University Woman Inspiring Hope and Possibility Award	2008
National Academic Advising Association Region 3 Graduate Student Award	2007

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL)
Georgia Educational Leadership Association (GELFA)
Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA)

COMPUTER PROFICIENCIES

Office 365
Acrobat
Banner
Microsoft Teams
Qualtrics
Atlas.ti
Slate
Power BI

Dreamweaver
Banner
Mendeley Reference Manager
Bright Space
Survey Monkey
HTML
Recruit
EAB Navigate

Photoshop
SmartSheets
Google Suite
Desire2Learn
Centra
SPSS
Canva
Xtender