

Elise Christopher, PhD

RESEARCH DIRECTOR AND PROGRAM MANAGER

Professional summary

Managed six simultaneous large, nationally representative longitudinal studies of high schoolers into adulthood, resulting in the release of over 10 national-level datasets of survey and administrative data with supporting documentation and supplementary tables. Every release was on-budget and on-schedule, meeting Congressional mandates for NCES data release and NCES Standards for high data quality.

Professional experience

Agora Education Research

08/2025 – present

Publications Lead

- Leads publications team for Agora and runs weekly meetings
- Writes, edits, reviews research briefs and blogs written by Agora associates
- Collaborates on social media team efforts, blogs and outreach

National Center for Education Statistics, IES, U.S. Department of Education

07/2012 – 08/2025

Education Statistician and Study Director, High School Longitudinal Studies

09/2010 - 07/2012

Associate Research Scientist

- Designed research for each round of NCES high school longitudinal study collection to enable rigorous mixed-methods examination by scholarly and policymaking communities.
- Developed the 6th study in the series from its inception, engaging research stakeholders and education practitioners in needs-sensing and literature review, preparing the project budget, conducting market research, authoring procurement documentation, and evaluating technical and cost proposals. Used thorough knowledge of the structural organization of LEA and SEAs to redesign study to best enable comparative analyses between students attending schools of different types, in different locales, and across different types of achievement measures. Extended studies from high school into higher education and career content areas.
- Analyzed complex probability-based study data, including statistical tabulations, inferential statistics, and regressions, to ensure data files and documentation met accessibility needs for the maximum number of data users and stakeholders.
- Managed development of web questionnaires, standardized assessments and data collection systems for 10+ rounds of data from diverse study populations. Used qualitative methods (i.e., cognitive testing, focus groups) to ensure equity of research methods and data collection instruments, particularly with high school dropouts and early graduates, career and technical education participants, and K-12 teachers and postsecondary students.
- Evaluated nonresponse bias analyses across federal statistical agencies as part of FCSM working group to address consequences of falling response rates. Produced meta-analyses with findings and expert recommendations to be used by federal and state researchers.
- Designed and implemented an innovative way that NCES interacts with the public and provides technical assistance to data users. Beginning in 2010, began transformation of in-person trainings into the NCES online training system (Distance Learning Data System, or DLDT), reducing user confusion and questions, saving travel budgets for NCES and hundreds of researchers yearly.
- Provided ongoing technical support and outreach to data users and stakeholders of all six studies/projects and the overarching NCES Longitudinal Surveys program. Answered all questions from data users, decision-makers and media within 48 hours (<https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/hsls09/tables.asp>).

- Presented data and research at conferences (AERA, AAPOR, FCSM) and briefed senior Department leadership, White House, and Congressional staff on study results. Authored blog posts and infographics for NCES.

University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT

06/2009 – 12/2011 **Adjunct Faculty**, Master of Science in Informational Technology program

- Instructed graduate-level virtual courses in Cognitive Foundations of Education.

Yale University, New Haven, CT

08/2006 – 05/2009 **Teaching Fellow**, Psychology Department

- Courses including Abnormal Psychology (Writing Intensive designation; managed gradebook for hundreds of students); Cognitive Science; Cognitive Neuroscience; Sex, Evolution & Human Nature
- Proctor for undergraduate exams (students with accommodations)

Education

	Yale University , New Haven, CT
2010	Doctor of Philosophy , Cognitive and Developmental Psychology
2008	Master of Science , Cognitive and Developmental Psychology
	<i>Relevant coursework: Developmental Psychology, Statistics, Research Methods, Clinical Psychology, Cognitive Neuroscience, English, Computer programming, Fundamentals of Teaching</i>
	University of Florida , Gainesville, FL
2004	Bachelor of Science , Psychology, <i>Summa Cum Laude</i> .
2004	Bachelor of Arts , English. <i>Cum Laude</i>
	<i>Awards and honors: Phi Beta Kappa, Golden Key National Honor Society, National Merit Scholar</i>

Strengths & Skills

Statistical packages, programming languages	SPSS, Stata, R, SAS, SQL
Applications	MS Office suite, especially Excel, PowerPoint and Forms; MS Teams
Abilities	Team leadership, Project management, Oral and written presentation, Recruitment and outreach
Research design and methods	Mixed-methods data analysis, Quantitative data analysis, Qualitative data analysis, Survey methodology, Questionnaire design, Experimental design, Data dissemination
	<i>Coursework in Survey Methodology from the Joint Program in Statistical Methodology (JPSM) at the University of Maryland/University of Michigan</i>
Project and program management certifications	Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) – Level II; Federal Acquisition Certification – Project/Program Management (FAC-P/PM) – Level II

Selected Publications and Presentations

Research reports & Journal articles

Simone, SA, Christopher, EM (2025). *Future Education Expectations of High School Students Decline to the Lowest Level in 20 Years for Both First-Generation and Continuing Generation Students*. Washington, DC: Pell Institute. <https://www.pellinstitute.org/resources/future-ed-expectations-2022>

Warner-Griffin, C, Christopher, EM (January 2024). *How Often Do High School Students Meet with Counselors About College? Differences by Parental Education and Counselor Caseload*. NCES Blog Post. <https://ies.ed.gov/learn/blog/how-often-do-high-school-students-meet-counselors-about-college-differences-parental-education-and>

Christopher, EM, Daniel, B (2022). *Early postsecondary education and work outcome differences by high school credential type*. (2022-053) U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Christopher, EM, Daniel, B (2021). *Arts credits earned in high school and postsecondary enrollment: Differences by background characteristics*. (2021-006) U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Christopher, EM (2017). *College Applications by 2009 High School Freshmen: Differences by Race/Ethnicity*. (NCES 2017-013) U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Hanebutt, R, Christopher, EM (2016). *Student Self-Assessment of Math and Science Ability in High School*. (NCES 2016-164) U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

LoGerfo, L, Christopher, EM, and Flanagan, KD (2011). *High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLS:09). A First Look at Fall 2009 Ninth-Graders' Parents, Teachers, School Counselors, and School Administrators* (NCES 2011-355). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Kaufman, SB, Christopher, E & Kaufman, J (2008). *The Genius Portfolio: How Do Poets Earn Their Creative Reputations from Multiple Products?* *Empirical Studies of the Arts*, 26, 181-196.

Evaluation reports

Madans JH, Earp MS, Blumberg SJ, Christopher EM, Thompson KJ, Sivinski RG, Frenk SM, Fakhouri TH, Piscopo KD (2023). *Best Practices for Nonresponse Bias Reporting*, FCSM-23-01 Nonresponse Bias Subcommittee, Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology. June 2023.

Miller, P, Fakhouri, TH, Earp, M, Piscopo, KD, Frenk, SM, Christopher, E, and Madans, J (2020). *A Systematic Review of Nonresponse Bias Studies in Federally Sponsored Surveys*. FCSM 20-02. Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology. March 2020.

Infographics

Christopher, EM, Daniel, B, and Brooke, A (2018). *College readiness: Math coursetaking in public high schools and college remediation*. Infographic. https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/hsls09/pdf/college_readiness_508compliant.pdf

Conference presentations & Symposia

Christopher, EM, Simone, SA (October 2024). *Do Microsurveys get respondents in the door?* 2024 Research and Policy Conference of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM), College Park, MD.

Christopher, EM. (April 2024) AERA Research and Science Policy Forum: *Advancing Data Infrastructures to Support LGBTQ+ Students & Scholars*.

Christopher, EM. (April 2024) *Disparities in STEM Degree Earning for LGBTQ+ Individuals: New Evidence From the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009* AERA 2024 Annual Meeting: Philadelphia, PA.

Christopher, EM. (February 2023). *Invited International Event: Data for Retention: Addressing underrepresentation of LGBTQ+ minorities in STEM*.

<https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/event/data-for-retention-addressing-under-representation-of-lgbtq-minorities-in-stem/> . Wilton Park, Sussex, UK.

Christopher, E. (2015, December). *Adaptive Design Experimentation in the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 Second Follow-up Field Test: Investigating Incentive Treatments*. 2015 Research and Policy Conference of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology.

Crissey, S., Christopher, E., and Socha, T. (2015, March). *Adaptive Design Strategies for Addressing Nonresponse Error in NCES Longitudinal Surveys*. 2015 Federal Computer Assisted Survey Information Collection (FedCASIC) Workshops.

Socha, T., and Christopher, E. (2013, March). *Responsive Design Using Mahalanobis Distancing: Application on Two National Center for Education Statistics Longitudinal Surveys*. 2013 Federal Computer Assisted Survey Information Collection (FedCASIC) Workshops.