

GINA ENGLISH TILLIS, Ph.D.

EDUCATION

2020	<u>Ph.D. Cultural Studies in Education</u> Department of Curriculum and Instruction The University of Texas at Austin: Austin, TX 78712
ABT	<u>M.A. Sociological Practice</u> California State University, San Marcos: San Marcos, CA 92096 33 credits earned (U.S. Navy restationed my family)
2005	M.A. Teaching Social Science Grambling State University: Grambling, LA 72145
2002	B.A. History, Minor in Sociology Grambling State University: Grambling, LA 71245

Interdisciplinary scholar-practitioner that centers identities, cultures, and histories within educational experiences, research, curriculum, and instruction and draws from community-based frameworks to engage in critical sociopolitical analysis of how knowledge is shared equitably, accessibly, and inclusively in service of our community.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: Ten years of experience directing and coordinating secondary and post-secondary educational programs; co-founded two non-profit organizations that serve the educational needs of my previous (Blackshear Bridge in Austin, TX) and current (The Memphis 13 Foundation in Memphis, TN) community.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: Fifteen years of curating educational experiences (teaching) across diverse subjects, including Sociology, African American History, Ethnic Studies, Social Psychology, Education, and more. Recognized with the 2016 American Psychological Association Innovative Teaching Award and named Favorite Professor in 2015 and 2016 at Huston-Tillotson University.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: Spearheaded curriculum development for the Education as the Practice of Freedom Project and Africana Studies (Adult Degree Program) at Huston-Tillotson University. Co-developed community-based curriculum units for Memphis-Shelby County Schools and Austin Independent School District in partnership with local non-profit organizations. Regularly contributes discussion guides for PBS Point of View documentaries.

SCHOLARSHIP & GRANTS: Interdisciplinary scholar with a record of publishing and presenting research at professional association conferences. Proven track record securing over \$2.1 million in research and program development grants, including prestigious awards from the United Negro College Fund, The Spencer Foundation, Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources, and the Tennessee Department of Education.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Chair, Division of Social & Behavioral Sciences

LeMoyne-Owen College
Memphis, TN 38125

06/2024- 08/2024

- Department Leadership: Establish a long-term vision that aligns with the department and college's mission; serve as a liaison with other institutional units; ensure compliance with relevant regulations.
- Operations Management: Oversee course scheduling, registration, and instructor assignments; manage fiscal operations, including budget development and monitoring; maintain and update departmental records and websites.
- Faculty and Staff Supervision: Recruit, appoint, evaluate, and supervise faculty and staff; handle grievances and support professional development.
- Curriculum Oversight: Manage curriculum development, assess and initiate academic programs, and ensure general education outcomes are met in core courses.
- Student Engagement: Lead student recruitment and retention; coordinate advising and degree progress reviews; evaluate transfer credits and handle student grievances.
- Evaluation and Reporting: Conduct comprehensive written and oral evaluations of student retention initiatives, educational support measures, academic advising effectiveness, and curricular and co-curricular programming, providing valuable insights for ongoing improvement.

Assistant Professor of Teaching

River City Partnership, College of Education
The University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38125

09/2019- 01/2023

- Recruitment and Outreach: Co-designed innovative recruitment and outreach strategies, encompassing a wide range of activities, to empower future teachers in Memphis with a commitment to practicing and advocating for social justice, equity, and inclusion within their roles as classroom educators, campus leaders, and community advocates.
- Curricular and Co-Curricular Program Coordination: Orchestrated the River City Teacher-Scholar program of study, community-based Urban Education seminar, co-curricular programming, and academic advising to provide a holistic educational experience for aspiring social justice teachers.
- Academic Progress Management: Managed a comprehensive student performance database, overseeing academic grades and behavioral dispositions, to guide decision-making and tailor program support to meet the unique needs of students, schools, and community stakeholders.
- Evaluation and Reporting: Conducted comprehensive written and oral evaluations of student retention initiatives, educational support measures, academic advising effectiveness, and curricular and co-curricular programming within the College of Education, providing valuable insights for ongoing improvement.
- Accreditation Support: Gathered data and played a pivotal role in developing strategic plans for the Tennessee Department of Education accreditation process, ensuring alignment with educational standards, and facilitating the organization's accreditation success.

Director, Student Programs

Institute for Community, University, and School Partnerships (post/secondary) 06/2016- 06/2018
Austin, TX 78741

- Talent Acquisition and Onboarding: Effectively recruited, onboarded, and provided continuous training for a team of 8 Ethnic Studies facilitators, with a primary focus on community-building pedagogy, Freirian learning circles, social and restorative justice, anti-oppression, and conflict resolution. Ensured staff preparedness and proficiency in their respective roles.
- Staff Development and Management: Oversaw a team of 8 facilitators; conducted regular professional development check-ins and performance evaluations. Aligned professional growth opportunities with strategic progression, including the program's impact on students, schools, and community stakeholders.
- Strengthening Partnerships: Fostered partnerships with Austin Independent School District and local non-profit organizations to cultivate community-based learning initiatives within 6th-12th grade Ethnic Studies courses, aligning with our organization's educational mission.
- Evaluation and Reporting: Implemented comprehensive evaluations to assess program effectiveness and address evolving needs. Conducted thorough written and oral assessments of curriculum, instruction, and programming. Presented findings in a compelling format to program constituents and foundation funders, highlighting the program's achievements and areas of improvement.

Coordinator, First Year Experience (The Education as the Practice of Freedom Project!)

Huston-Tillotson University
900 Chicon St. Austin, TX 78702

08/2013- 08/2016

- Program Development: Collaborated closely with college executive staff to develop and implement a strategic plan to enhance the educational experience of first-year students. Implemented a comprehensive transitional support program comprised of summer bridge, orientation, first-year seminar, first-year advising, peer learning consultants, co-curricular programming, and an academic alert system.
- Leadership and Supervision: Directed and mentored a team of 25 educational professionals, fostering a collaborative and innovative work environment. Ensured staff development and performance excellence. Reduced first-year experience employee turnover by 15%.
- Community Engagement: Strengthened partnerships with local community service non-profit organizations, boosting external financial support by 15% for first-year student scholarships.
- Budget Oversight: Successfully proposed, planned, and managed budgets for first-year student activities, professional development, and outreach initiatives.
- Program Evaluation: Implemented rigorous assessment methods to measure the impact of educational programs and experiences, using data-driven insights for continuous improvement. Increased first-year student retention by 12% during tenure.
- Accreditation Support: Gathered data and played a pivotal role in developing strategic plans for the SAFRA, Title III, and SACS accreditation process, ensuring alignment with educational standards and facilitating the organization's accreditation success.
- Institutional Advancement Garnered over \$1.7 million in program development grants from UNCF Career Pathways and St. David's Foundation (renewable).

Associate Director, Student Activities (Student Leadership and Community Outreach)

Tidewater Community College
120 Campus Dr. Portsmouth, VA 23452

09/2011- 01/2013

- Strategic Planning and Program Development: Collaborated closely with college executive staff to revitalize leadership development programs, resulting in a noteworthy 15% increase in students reporting enhanced student life engagement and improved leadership skills, as evidenced in post-program assessments.
- Student Leadership Engagement: Fostered department and student activities collaboration among faculty and students, resulting in a 10% growth in student participation in campus life projects, enriching the overall educational experience, and a remarkable 17% increase in the successful execution of student-led events and initiatives.
- Community Outreach Initiatives: Conceptualized and implemented a highly effective community outreach program, which led to a substantial 20% increase in engagement with local non-profit organizations, strengthening the college's ties with the community.
- Budgeting: Worked closely with the Dean of Students to propose, plan, and manage budgets related to student activities, leadership development, and community outreach initiatives.
- Assessment and Reporting: Delivered comprehensive written and oral assessments of student leadership programs and activity evaluations, particularly focusing on the impact of student attrition, retention, and success. Reported findings to the Dean of Student Services on student club/organization matters, including disciplinary issues per college policy and procedures.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: SOCIOLOGY, ETHNIC STUDIES, AND EDUCATION

Associate Professor, Sociology

LeMoyne-Owen College
Memphis, TN 38125

07/2024- Current

Courses: Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, Africana Studies, and Social Research Methods.

Asst. Professor of Teaching, Instruction and Curriculum Leadership (River City Partnership)

The University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38125

09/2019- 01/2023

Seminar in Urban Education, Hip Hop in Education, Methods of Social Studies.

Instructor of Sociology, Africana Studies, and Education

Huston-Tillotson University
Austin, TX 78702

08/2013- 05/2019

African and African American Studies, Introduction to Sociology, Cultural Anthropology, Contemporary Social Problems, Race and Ethnicity, Conflict Resolution, Social and Behavioral Research Methods, Social Psychology, Methods of Teaching Social Studies.

Assistant Instructor of Curriculum and Instruction

The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX 78702

08/2017- 08/2018

Sociocultural Influences on Learning

Adj. Instructor of Sociology
Tidewater Community College
Portsmouth, VA 23701
01/2010- 01/2013
Introduction to Sociology I, Introduction to Sociology II, Social Problems, Cultural Anthropology, Death and Society, Sociology of the Family.

Assistant Instructor of Sociology
Mira Costa Community College
1 Barnard Drive. Oceanside, CA 92056
01/2009- 12/2009
Research Methods in Behavior Sciences, Introduction to Sociology, and Social Problems.

Graduate Teaching Assistant in Sociology
California State University of San Marcos
333 S. Twin Oaks Valley Rd. San Marcos, CA 92096-0001
05/2007- 05/2008
Quantitative Research Methods, Work, Gender, and Race Seminar, Critical Race Theory Seminar, White Privilege Seminar.

Adj. Instructor of Sociology
Central Texas College
Camp Pendleton, California
08/2008-12/2009
Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, Minority Studies, Marriage and the Family.

Paid Curriculum Consultations, Key Notes, and Discussion Guide Development

Memphis Teacher Residency Winter Conference Keynote Speaker: Honoring Social Justice Action in Memphis Schools. <https://memphistr.org/winterconference>

National Civil Rights Museum, Teaching with Primary Sources, Tennesseans Who Shaped American Democracy. <https://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/teacher-workshop>

University of Memphis, School of Law, The History of Blackface in America

PBS-Point of View, Discussion guides pertaining to international social justice issues.
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/>

History of Black Education in Memphis
Director, Curricular & Co-Curricular Programming
The Memphis 13 Foundation <https://www.m13f.org/>

HBCU Truth and Reconciliation Social Justice Curriculum (Supplementary Curriculum)
<https://hbcuoralhistoryvideoproject.org>

African Diaspora Studies (3-12th Grade) Lesson Plans
Black Leadership Institute. Austin, TX 78702
<https://breakthepipeline.org/programs/black-leadership-academy/>

Continued Professional Development Certificates

Data Analytics: Introduction to SQL and PowerBI
Provider: Tech 901

Moving Beyond the Master Narrative in Social Studies
Provider: National Civil Rights Museum Workshop for Educators

Teaching the Civil Rights Movement
Provider: National Civil Rights Museum Workshop for Educators

Inclusive Classrooms Leadership Certificate
Provider: Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, University of Texas at Austin,

Teaching Mexican American Studies through Local Archives and Community-Based Pedagogy
Provider # 227501: Teresa Lozano Long Institute for Latin American Studies

Are Your Students Global Citizens? How to Teach Diversity to the Leaders of Tomorrow
Provider: National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD)

GRANTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Grants

(PI): Teaching Local History and Civics Education. Tennessee Humanities. May 2024. Pursuing \$10,000

(Co-PI): Look Back, Launch Forward: Community Forums on Education Equity and Inclusion. Shelby County Commission. January 2024. Procured \$35,000

(Co-PI): The Memphis 13 Foundation Educational Initiatives. Tennessee Department of Education, September 2023. Procured \$250,000

(Co-PI): Building Extended Learning Programs through the Cypher Code Collective: Communities of Research Scholars (CoRS). The University of Memphis. December 2022. Procured \$2,500

(Co-PI): Teaching Memphis School History. The Library of Congress, Teaching with Primary Sources, May 2022. Procured \$30,000

(Co-PI): A Difference of Degree: Considering the Capacity of an Afro-Latinidades framework in Preserving the Institutional Identity of Hispanic-serving HBCUs. Spencer Foundation Research Grant, September 2021. Procured \$50,000

(P.I.): Preserving our campus-community culture: Urban HBCU responses to gentrification. Spencer Foundation Racial Equity Special Research Grant, January 2021. Pursued \$75,000

(P.I.): Career Pathways Initiative, Faculty Research Grant, United Negro College Foundation, Huston-Tillotson University, January 2019. Procured \$6,805

(Co-PI): A Difference of Degree: Considering the Capacity of an Afro-Latinidades framework in Preserving the Institutional Identity of Hispanic-serving HBCUs. Spencer Foundation Research Grant, September 2021. Procured \$50,000

(P.I.): Preserving our campus-community culture: Urban HBCU responses to gentrification. Spencer Foundation Racial Equity Special Research Grant, January 2021. Pursued \$75,000

(P.I.): Career Pathways Initiative, Faculty Research Grant, United Negro College Foundation, Huston-Tillotson University, January 2019. Procured \$6,805

(Co-PI): Career Pathways Grant, United Negro College Foundation, Huston-Tillotson University, October 2016. Procured \$1,250,000

(P.I.): MLK Spread the Service HBCU Grant. Corporation for National and Community Service. Huston-Tillotson University, October 2016 Procured \$5,340

(P.I.): First in the World Grant. U.S. Department of Education. Education as the Practice of Freedom Project (Program Development) Huston-Tillotson University. June 2015 Pursued \$850,000

(Co-PI): St. David's Foundation Grant Scholarships awarded to participants of the Education as the Practice of Freedom Project pursuing Allied Health. Huston-Tillotson University. April 2015. Procured \$300,000 (* plus annual renewal funds)

(P.I.): MLK Spread the Service HBCU Grant. Corporation for National and Community Service. Huston-Tillotson University October 2015. Procured \$4,200.

(P.I.): Tidewater Community College Grant Responsive Inspirational Student Empowerment – RISE Program (Pilot-Program Development). Tidewater Community College, Portsmouth VA 23701 March 2012 Procured \$3,500

(Co-PI): U.S. Department of Education Title III Federal Grant. Upward Bound Tidewater Community College (Program Development) Tidewater Community College, Portsmouth, VA 23701. Pursued \$1,450,000

(P.I.): Institutional and Community Constituents. Summer Bridge (Program Evaluation and Development) Mira Costa Community College. Oceanside, CA 23701 Jan 2010. Procured \$7,500

Publications

Bradley., **Tillis, G.** (accepted, under review) Hispanic-serving HBCUs?: Towards an Anti-Colonial Meso-relevant Theory of Organizational Identity in Sacred Spaces of Black Education. *Frontiers in Education*.

Nelson, S., Davenport, S., **Tillis, G.** (accepted, under review) Steal Away: Toward a Theory of Educational Marronage. *Journal of Black Studies*.

- White, C., Hilliard, L., **Tillis, G.** (2023) What's the 411: Black women unpack lessons learned while navigating their graduate programs in the ivory tower. In *Chutes and Ladders: The Hidden Curriculum that Makes or Breaks Academic Careers*.
- Tillis, G.**, Hunter, W., Barnes, K., & Derrick, R. (2022) The message: Critical hip-hop pedagogy as the message and the method. In *The mixtape volume 1: Culturally sustaining practices within MTSS featuring the everlasting mission of student engagement*.
<https://exceptionalchildren.org/store/books/mixtape-volume-1-culturally-sustaining-practices-within-mtss-featuring-everlasting>
- Nelson, S., Davenport, S., **Tillis, G.** (2021) Black student resistance to white schooling as educational marronage. In the *Encyclopedia of Social Justice in Education*
- Salem, W. & **Tillis, G.** (2021). Moving the needle: (Re)imagining antiracist education for our children. In *Multicultural Perspectives* 23(3) 1–7 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2021.1982365>
- Tillis, G.** (2020). *Cultivating a community, curating a legacy: Re/orienting student development in first-year seminars at HBCUs*. [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Tillis, G.** (2019). Toward a transformative transition: A critical pedagogical approach to social-psychological interventions in first-year seminar. In *Strategies for Fostering Inclusive Classrooms in Higher Education: International Perspectives on Equity and Inclusion* (Vol. 16, pp. 138–196). Emerald Publishing.
- Bradley, D. **Tillis, G. E.** (2018) Black intellectuals in the form of university pedagogues: A review of the literature on black epistemology in white spaces. Conference Proceedings *Association for the Study of Higher Education* (ASHE). Tampa, FL.
- Tillis, G.** (2018). Antiracism, Black suffering, and the future of first-year seminars at historically Black colleges and universities. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 87(3), 16.
<https://doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.87.3.0311> .
- Tillis, G.**, & Yan, X. S. (2016). Transformative pedagogy: Serving underserved and underprepared students in transition. In S. Whalen (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 12th National Symposium on Student Retention*, Norfolk, Virginia. (pp. 465-476). Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma.
- Tillis, G.** (2008) Decolonizing discourse: Youth social consciousness and the Americanization of high school social studies curriculum. <https://youtu.be/KZDYg6O6R4>

Professional Conference Presentations (last 10 yrs.)

- Falkner, A., Tillis, G. (2024, April) “The South Has a Gravity”: Teaching Social Studies in the Soul of America, Teaching Desegregation Stories. AERA Annual Conference. Philadelphia, PA.
- Tillis, G. E., Falkner, A. (2023, Nov.) Black Historical Consciousness Through Community Created Curriculum. College University Faculty Associate (CUFA/NCSS) Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.

- Tillis, G. E., Falkner, A. (2023, April) On Co-developing Curriculum with and for Our Community: A Shared Narrative from the Field. American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.
- Tillis, G. E., Bradley, D. (2023, April) Revisioning Radically Inclusive Organizational Frameworks: And instrumental case study of emerging Hispanic-Serving HBCUs. American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.
- Robinson, D., Hunter W., Tillis G. E., & Barnes, K. (2022, April) Educational Cyphers: The Promise of Hip-Hop Pedagogy in Teacher Preparation [Paper Session]. American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference, San Diego, CA.
- Barnes K., Robinson D., Tillis G., and Hunter W. (2021, October) Classroom disruption: Hip-hop education in colleges of education. Critical Race Studies in Education Association (CRSEA) Annual Conference (Virtual Conference).
- Tillis, G. E. (2021, April) How historically Black college/university faculty draw from humanizing critical sociocultural knowledge to inform how why they teach, what they teach. AERA Annual Virtual Conference
- Robinson. D., Tillis G., Hunter W., and Barnes K. (2020, October) The Revolution cannot be colonized: Hip-Hop in Teacher Education. AESA Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX.
- Tillis, G. E. (2020, April) To know me is to love me: How historically Black college and university faculty are reorienting student development in their first-year seminars. AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA.
- Tillis, G. E. (2019, October) E(race)-ing Black Space: The historic and contemporary dynamics of racial displacement and dispossession of the HBCU Community. Association for the Study of African American Life and History Conference (ASALH) Charleston, SC.
- Tillis, G. E., (2019, March) Reclaiming our space: The antiblack displacement of urban HBCU communities. Black Studies @ 50 1968/1969. The University of Texas at Austin. Austin, TX.
- Bradley, D. Tillis, G. (2018, November) Black intellectuals in the form of university pedagogues: A review of the literature on black epistemology in white spaces. Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE). Tampa, FL.
- Tillis, G. E. (2018, June) Between balance and barter: Mentoring first-generation BIPOC students, Keynote, Faculty of Color Uniting for Success (FOCUS) Summer 2018 Institute. Georgetown, TX.
- Tillis, G. E. (2017, June) Social justice for science majors: Incorporating critical pedagogy into a freshman seminar for prospective natural science majors. National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education (NCORE). Dallas, TX.
- Tillis, G. E. (2017, March) Black Lives Matters, Does Black Curriculum? SXSW EDU Austin, TX
- Tillis, G. E. (2017, April) A Transformative First-Year Experience at an HBCU. Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education. Austin, TX

- Tillis, G. E. (2015, March) From Critical Pedagogy to Praxis: Restructuring Curriculum to Cultivate Curiosity, Creativity and Community. Cultural Studies in Education Conference. Austin, TX
- Tillis, G. E. (2015, February) Culturally Relevant and Critically Responsive Project that Enlightens, Engages, and Empowers Our Students, College, and Community. 34th Annual National First-Year Experience (FYE) Conference. Dallas, TX.
- Tillis, G. E. (2015, January) Re-Imagining First-Year Seminar: Culturally Relevant and Critically Responsive Curriculum. Texas State University Student Success Symposium: Research to Practice. San Marcos
- Tillis, G. E. (2014, February) Who's Gett'n Schooled: Systemic Whitewashing of the K-12 School Curriculum. Dispelling Myths That Hamper Black Student Success Summit. Austin, TX.

SERVICE, MEDIA FEATURES, AND HONORS (LAST 10 YEARS)

- 2024 Media Feature in Chalkbeat: [New Curriculum on Desegregation Teaches...](#)
- 2024 Media Feature in Education Week: [Oral History Offers a Model for Complex Topics](#)
- 2024 Dissertation Committee, Kimberly Pearson in Instruction and Curriculum Leadership
- 2024 Preserving Black Education Institutions Award, [Edwards Association](#)
- 2023 Media Feature PBS American Experience. [Pain & Promise: Remembering Fight for School](#)
- 2022 Manuscript Reviewer, *Journal of Applied Social Sciences*
- 2022-2023 Award Committee AERA DIV B: [Ella Baker Septima Clark Human Rights Award](#)
- 2021- Co-Founding Board Member, [The Memphis 13 Foundation Non-Profit. 501c3](#)
- 2019-2022 Manuscript Reviewer, *Journal of Negro Education*
- 2022 Dissertation Committee, Michelle Armstrong in Instruction and Curriculum Leadership
- 2020-2022 Committee, College of Education Student Retention at the University of Memphis
- 2017-2019 Endowed Scholarship, [Teresa Lozano Long Foundation, University of Texas at Austin](#)
- 2013-2019 Co-Founding Board Member, President of [Blackshear Bridge Non-Profit. 501c3](#)
- 2016-2017 Coordinator, [Martin Luther King HBCU Spread the Service Campaign](#)
- 2016 Innovative Teaching Award, [APA Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues](#)
- 2016 Professor of the Year, Huston-Tillotson University (student body vote)
- 2016 Media Feature APA Monitor on Psychology: [Seeing Injustices, Making Them Right](#)
- 2014-2016 Committee, Enrollment and Retention Management at Huston-Tillotson University
- 2014-2016 Committee, Student Adjudication Huston-Tillotson University
- 2016 Grand Marshall [Annual B.L. Joyce Community Parade in East Austin, TX](#)

2015 Professor of the Year, Huston-Tillotson University (student body vote)
2015 Staff of the Year, Huston-Huston University (staff vote)
