

## Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC)

**Position:** Graduate Research Assistant (Doctoral)

**Appointment:** 12-month, half-time (20 hours/week); up to 4 years; starting Fall 2021

**Description:** The Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) within the Department of Education Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is accepting applications for the position of graduate research assistant. The PERC team seeks a policy focused scholar who is self-motivated, can work effectively with a research group, and is familiar with or willing to learn quantitative methodologies. The graduate research assistant will collaborate with PERC staff and ELPS faculty on existing projects, and assist or lead the identification and development of new research projects which examine postsecondary policies and practices. Preferred candidates will have a research record or strong interest in research concerning the access and success of students in minoritized communities.

### Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Contribute to the dissemination of research results by creating materials published on the PERC webpage, submitting to peer-reviewed academic journals and conferences, and identifying other dissemination strategies
- Assist with the development, implementation, and analysis of research projects exploring education policy; specifically researching policies which impact student success for minoritized student communities.
- Assist with identifying and formulating grant proposals aligned with PERC's policy research agenda
- Provide research support as needed to PERC staff, affiliated ELPS faculty, and research interns

**About the Center:** The mission of the Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) is to identify, conduct, and coordinate research on initiatives and ideas designed to enhance higher education at the institutional, state, and national levels to enhance policy and practice. PERC was founded in July 2017 as part of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. While PERC's research spans a wide range of topics, the center's highest priority is the completion agenda, or how postsecondary institutions (inclusive of technical colleges, community colleges, and universities) can retain and graduate more students in a timely manner. To this effect, PERC specializes in evaluating and recommending effective strategies to improve graduation rates, student outcomes, reduce student debt, and encourage retention of low-income students.

**Qualifications:** Earned master's degree in higher education, economics, social work, counseling, educational psychology, or a closely related field. Interest in conducting rigorous research related to postsecondary education policy. A strong ability or interest in learning quantitative methodologies. Must also be admitted to the PhD program in Higher Education Administration at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville prior to the position start date.

**Benefits and Compensation:** This position includes a nationally competitive yearly stipend (\$25,000), tuition waiver, healthcare coverage, optional dental/vision coverage, and professional development support.

**Application Process:** Interested applicants are encouraged to reach out to Jimmy G. Cheek (Director - [jcheek@utk.edu](mailto:jcheek@utk.edu)) or Patrick Biddix (Associate Director & Interim Department Chair - [pbiddix@utk.edu](mailto:pbiddix@utk.edu)) for further information.

To apply, please email a cover letter, current CV or resume, and a list of three references with contact information to Wade McGarity ([wade@utk.edu](mailto:wade@utk.edu)). Priority will be given to applications received by January 1, 2021. Applicants must submit a separate application for admission to the Higher Education Administration PhD program.

For further information on PERC: <https://perc.utk.edu/about-perc/strategic-plan/>

For further information on the Higher Education Administration PhD: <https://elps.utk.edu/beam/>