Name of Center: **Alonzo A. Crim Center for Urban Educational Excellence (Crim Center)**

Center Director: **Gwendolyn Benson, Ph.D.**

Associate Director: **Susan C. McClendon, Ph.D.**

### A. General Information

1. When was the center created and to which department/college/office was it originally designated? If the designation has changed, in which department/college/office does the center currently reside?

   The Crim Center was created in 1996 by the Benjamin E. Mays Chair in order to create a city-wide laboratory for the development of excellence in urban education. In 2000, upon his passing the center was renamed after the first Mays chair holder, Dr. Alonzo A. Crim. The center was initially housed in the Department of Educational Policy Studies. The Crim Center is currently housed in the Dean's Offices in the College of Education.

2. To whom does the center’s director report? **The reporting and evaluation of the Crim Center's director is managed by the Dean, Dr. Ron Colarusso. The reporting and evaluation of the Crim Center's associate director is managed by Dr. Gwen Benson.**

3. If there is an advisory board to this center, describe its function and composition. **There are two advisory boards that work with the Crim Center. The original advisory board was comprised of 15 individuals. This board consisted of one-third national participants and two-thirds local participants. Of the local participants on the original advisory board, five were external to Georgia State University and five were internal to Georgia State University.**

   The current Center has an advisory board (Board of Directors) which is composed of representatives from departments and centers in the College of Education. There are also self-identified faculty affiliated with the Crim Center that have interests in service and/or research in urban schools and communities. This Board of Directors supports the Center in its research and grant writing efforts. It also supports and guides the center’s implementation of the University’s and College of Education's strategic action plans.

4. If the center is considered interdisciplinary, describe the interdisciplinary focus. **The Crim Center is interdisciplinary. The projects that are housed in the center bring together faculty members from every department in the College of Education and several departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. The purposeful intent of the Crim Center is to bring together faculty who are interested in conducting research and providing services to schools in urban school systems. Many of the RFP’s that the center responds require interdisciplinary resources to adequately meet the requirements for funding.**

5. Describe in detail the amount of start-up support available. **A grant from the United Parcel Service (UPS) Foundation funded much of the initial work of the center. Also funding the initial work of the center was an Annenberg grant. The project funded by the $1.5 million grant (that was to be matched 2:1) from the Annenberg Foundation was a collaborative effort between three school districts (Atlanta Public Schools, City of Decatur Schools and Fulton County Schools and five universities that aimed to create seven schools that provided excellent education for low-income African-American children.**
B. Goals and Objectives

1. Please enumerate the initial goals and objectives and describe the current goals and objectives if they have changed. Units will indicate how their goals are consistent with the strategic plans of the University and their college, citing the relevant documents (the college and University strategic plans) as necessary.

At its inception, the goals of the center in 1996 complemented the goals of the Educational Policy Studies (EPS) department where it was originally housed. The initial goals of the center were:

1. To provide background research for the development of leadership programs for teachers and middle-level personnel of urban schools.
2. To provide opportunities for collaboration and service to other educational institutions as well as public and private entities.
3. To provide a direct link between the university and the urban populations through programs that involves all levels of the community.
4. To emphasize urban educational models and to fully integrate these educational approaches into research with direct implementation to urban children and their families.

The mission of Georgia State University, as stated in the University Strategic Plan is to “become one of the nation’s premiere research universities located in an urban setting.” It is a multi-faceted mission, which includes “through a close collaboration between the professional education facilities in the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences and partner schools in the Atlanta Metropolitan area, the University develops strategies for public education reform and models K-12 learning.”

All Crim Center programs align with the mission of the Crim Center, which links directly to the College of Education Strategic Action Plan and then to the University Strategic Plan. The Crim Center provides a direct link between the university and the urban populations through programs that involve all levels of the community. The Crim Center integrates and complements the mission and goals of the College of Education, Georgia State University as well as the goals of the State of Georgia initiatives in support of the P-16 Co-Reform.

The Crim Center was refocused by the College of Education’s Strategic Action Plan of 2002, in direct support of the University’s mission. Goal I of the Strategic Action Plan is “to increase efforts of the college toward the improvement of life-long learning and development for members of urban areas.”

The mission of the Crim Center is to ensure the availability of a prosperous and equitable school environment for children who are least served by urban schools” by developing educational leaders, scholarly theory, and innovative strategies with a foundation built upon relevant knowledge and effective practice. The research of the center is to inform the policy making process of diverse constituencies. Its leadership programs and policy analyses are characterized by the linking of theory, research, and practice that was evident in the publications, teaching and services to educational institutions and other public and private entities. This is directly linked to Goal 1, Objective 2 of the College of Education’s Strategic Action Plan which is “to transform the Alonzo Crim Center for Excellence in Urban Education into a research center with continuing outreach efforts.” The goals of the center remain the same and are accomplished by focusing on the following activities:
1. Providing focused initiation, coordination and support for funding of individual, group, and interdepartmental research efforts.
2. Establishing a clearinghouse function for the dissemination of scholarly information and a bank of experts available for provision of technical assistance.
3. Securing sponsorship for the Crim Center
4. Hosting a biennial conference focusing on issues of students in urban education.

Goal 1, Objective 2 is measured by the following outcomes:
- Inclusion in the College of Education's budget
- Number of external research dollars obtained
- Number and type of research projects:
  - Proposals submitted, funded, completed, published, presented
  - Number of faculty involved
  - Number of schools and their faculty involved in studies
- Obtaining sponsorship
- Increase of sponsorship funding and conference funds generated
- Extent of publicity received
- Prominent keynote speakers
- Conference attendance trends

2. What are the major institutional, administrative, and/or financial resources that facilitate achieving the center's goals and objectives?

The major institutional resources from Georgia State University that have facilitated achieving the Crim Center's goals and objectives are human resources and facilities. Faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences are integrated into the projects that are housed in the center and bring their areas of expertise to schools and teachers in urban schools. The university has also provided facilities to be used for some projects. Classroom South is made available every Saturday for use by the Atlanta Housing Authority project. Administrative support has been generously provided by the administrators in the College of Education. The Dean's Offices personnel provides support in creating reports and accounting. Georgia State University and the College of Education administration has contributed greatly to the success of the center by its financial support of the center and its encouraging faculty to conduct research in urban schools connected to the Crim Center.

3. What are the major institutional, administrative, and/or financial constraints that interfere with achieving the center's goals and objectives?

Not being designated as an academic department or unit limits the centrality of faculty research, teaching and service interested in the children, teachers, administrators and schools located in urban school systems. During the transition of refocusing the Crim Center from a center focused on outreach/service to a research center, faculty is not fully aware of the center's clearinghouse function.

4. What is your assessment of your achievement of your goals?

The goals related to external funding are being achieved. Under the director’s authorship and leadership, the Crim Center and the College of Education has secured external funding for several programs that are acutely focused on urban schools and urban education in amounts that exceed 10 million dollars. The most difficult issue has been securing sponsorship for the center.
5. What steps can be taken to increase the research/scholarly productivity of the center faculty (e.g. evaluation studies, scholarship of teaching)?

Conduct qualitative and/or quantitative evaluations of all projects/programs that are housed in the Crim Center. Two dissertation studies reviewed one of the programs housed in the center and offered recommendations that were very insightful and are currently being implemented.

C. Service/Education Efforts

1. Describe the major areas/topics of the center. How has the center promoted the mission of the University?

The mission of Georgia State University, as stated in the University Strategic Plan is to “become one of the nation’s premiere research universities located in an urban setting.” It is a multi-faceted mission, which includes “through a close collaboration between the professional education facilities in the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences and partner schools in the Atlanta Metropolitan area, the University develops strategies for public education reform and models K-12 learning.”

The Crim Center works in partnership with other universities, school systems, parents, students and community organizations to create and sustain excellence in urban educational environments. Its vision is to insure the availability of a prosperous and equitable school environment for our children who are least-served by children and their families. This is done by conducting research that informs practice to make the vision a reality.

The Crim Center has eight projects/programs currently being conducted.
• The Urban Teacher Leadership Masters’ Degree Program-A program designed to facilitate the development of teachers in urban settings who will remain in their classrooms and assume leadership roles in schools and in the larger context of the school community.
• Benjamin E. Mays Annual Lecture Series- An annual lecture series that brings nationally prominent educators to Atlanta to address critical issues facing urban educational leaders.
• Jumpstart-A program that engages college student-mentors, called Corps members in service to preschool children in the community
• Professional Development Schools- Partnerships that offer opportunities for Georgia State University and pre K-12 schools to join together to foster the evolution of unique sites where school and university have the shared goal of enhancing the education of professionals through a serious commitment to collaboration.
• Atlanta Housing Authority’s Good Neighbor Program- A program designed to educate families on issues related to living in market-rate, mixed-income communities.
• DREAMS- A program that will help a cohort of Atlanta-area African-American male high school students, with the support of their families and community organizations, complete their high school education, attend, matriculate and graduate from college.
• Turner Urban Teacher Scholars-This grant was made possible by Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. awards scholarship to encourage and support continuing education for teachers who are enrolled in the Urban Teacher Leadership Masters of Science Degree Program at Georgia State University.
• Martin Luther King, Jr. Curriculum-Provides appropriate grade-level material across disciplines for use prior to visitation, during visitation and post visitation to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.

2. What are the major opportunities/impediments for doing service and/or education in the center?

The Crim Center focuses energies and resources of the College of Education on developing, implementing and assessing models promoting excellence in urban educational settings so as to optimize the life chances of urban children and their families. The work of the Center also proceeds in partnership with the larger GSU community, school systems, other universities, social agencies and community organizations. This is a major opportunity for faculty who provide service through the Crim Center.

A major impediment for doing service in the center is that not all service endeavors are valued by the tenure and promotion committee.

3. What percentage of the center’s funding has been paid out of Fund Code 10? List amounts for the last five years.

The Crim Center has been included in the College of Education’s budget for four years. 100% of the Crim Center’s operating budget has been provided by Fund Code 10.

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<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Amount of Budget</th>
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Research Center Review- Alonzo A. Crim Center for Urban Educational Excellence
The Crim Center has received several contributions. Many have been given by individual donors. One corporate donor, Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. gave a one time contribution to the center in the amount of $300,000.00 to support the tuition cost for teachers matriculating through the Urban Teacher Leadership Masters’ Program. All donations are placed into foundation (Georgia State University Foundation) accounts.

4. Attach a list of all activities (e.g. workshops/research programs/conferences/seminars/symposia/etc.) of the center.

- The Benjamin E. Mays Annual Lecture (November 1, 2005 marked the 17th Annual Lecture- Dr. Beverly Hall, Superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools)
- National Board Certification Knowledgeable Teacher Seminars (Training and support for teachers who teach in high-needs schools going through the national board certification process)
- Professor B Math Training Sessions for Administrators in Atlanta Public Schools
- Professor B Math Training Sessions for Teachers in Atlanta Public Schools
- Retired Teachers Seminars
- Creating Urban Educational Excellence Conference/Expo – Spring, 2006

5. Attach separate bibliographies of refereed and nonrefereed publications, if any, which have resulted from research activities of the center. List publications from the last three years only.


McClendon, S. (Dissertation-2003). Is caring enough? Pre-service teachers’ experiences and practices in an urban middle school. Georgia State University, Atlanta,GA.

Yarbrough, G., (Dissertation-2005). Our souls look back and wonder: Two urban teachers’ educational beliefs and practices. Georgia State University, Atlanta,GA.

5. Attach a list of grants submitted in the last three academic years and list all sources of funding. Click here for the format to use. For funded grants, give title, funding source, amount, type of grant (research or instruction), GSU project number, and period funded. Specify the amount of funds received from each category (research, service or instruction) for each of the last three years.
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D. Center Personnel

List all personnel funded through the center for the prior fiscal year. Use this format. Faculty who receive course releases or full or partial summer pay should be counted as center members.

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<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<td>James Taylor</td>
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