

Soojeong Jeong Received AERA Award | ITLS

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Dr. Soojeong Jeong, a postdoctoral research associate in ITLS received the Outstanding Paper Award from the American Educational Research Association (AERA) with her colleagues, Dr. Kaylee Litson (ITLS), Dr. Jennifer Blaney (Northern Arizona University), and [Dr. David Feldon](#) (ITLS). The article, "Shifting gears: Characteristics and consequences of latent class transitions in doctoral socialization", was published in the prestigious journal, *Research in Higher Education*. Dr. Jeong received her PhD from the department of Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences here at Utah State University.

Dr. Jeong and her team's research directly tested hypotheses associated with Weidman's socialization theory, which discusses the relationship between the extent of doctoral students' socialization experiences and their professional and academic growth. Their study began in 2014 with the recruitment of over 300 Cellular and Molecular Biology PhD students from 53 institutions across the United States. Over the course of seven years, they have gathered data annually through web-based surveys and sole-authored writing samples. They analyzed several variables to determine the level of socialization a student received, how much the student felt like they belonged within their cohort, and how much growth and development their research skills had over time.

"Examining year-to-year changes in students' socialization experiences, beliefs, and scholarly productivity identifies

a disconnect between socialization and the outcomes historically attributed to it," Dr. Feldon stated. He explained that the analysis suggests that changes in level of socialization are not associated with changes in sense of belonging or publication output, raising questions about the effectiveness of the socialization framework in explaining doctoral student development and success.

[AERA](#) is a national research society that "strives to advance knowledge about education, encourage scholarly inquiry related to education, and promote the use of research to improve education and serve the public good." The society has more than 25,000 diverse members of faculty, researchers, graduate students, and other distinguished professionals with varying specializations in research in education. Members belong to one or more of the society's special interest groups, providing them an opportunity to collaborate with other professionals in a particular field of study, teaching, or research.

The Outstanding Paper Award recognizes substantial contributions to the literature on or practice of graduate education. The award is competitive in nature and given on a biannual basis to research that extensively revises current knowledge or provides new perspective on a particular problem in the study of graduation education. Qualifying articles may also be interdisciplinary efforts that identify problems new to the community of scholars in higher education. To be considered for the award, a work must first be nominated within a special interest group. The article is then reviewed by a board of committee members for significance, clarity, quality, originality, and presentation.

To learn more about Dr. Jeong and her team's research, [read the full article](#).