



BAKER SCHOOL *of* EDUCATION

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, DC

Call for Proposals



Scholarly Institute on Education Equity and Justice (SIEEJ) 2027

Confronting Educational Censorship and Defending the Freedom to Learn

February 18–20, 2027
Baker School of Education
American University
Washington, DC

The Scholarly Institute on Education Equity and Justice (SIEEJ) at the Baker School of Education at American University invites educational researchers, practitioners, graduate students, librarians, school and district leaders, higher education faculty, policymakers, community organizations, and advocates to submit proposals for the 2027 institute.

Across the United States, educational censorship has emerged as one of the defining issues shaping contemporary education. Efforts to remove books from classrooms and libraries, restrict curriculum, limit classroom discussions, and constrain academic freedom have significant implications for educational equity, democratic participation, intellectual freedom, and students' right to learn. These efforts raise important questions about whose histories are taught, whose voices are heard, and whose knowledge is valued within educational spaces.

The 2027 institute seeks to bring together scholars and practitioners committed to examining educational censorship through research, policy, practice, and advocacy. Through interdisciplinary dialogue and collaborative learning, participants will explore strategies that protect the freedom to learn while advancing educational equity and justice for all students.

We welcome proposals representing diverse theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, educational settings, and lived experiences.

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Presentation Formats

The institute will feature a variety of presentation formats designed to encourage scholarly exchange and professional collaboration.

Research Presentations

Individual presentations highlighting completed studies, works in progress, conceptual papers, or innovative research.

Panel Presentations

Sessions featuring multiple presenters examining a common issue from different perspectives.

Interactive Workshops

Practice-oriented sessions that engage participants through demonstrations, discussion, collaborative learning, and applied strategies.

Poster Presentations

Visual presentations highlighting research, innovative practices, emerging projects, or graduate student scholarship.

Presentation Tracks

Presenters should select the track that best aligns with their proposal.

Track 1: Educational Leadership, Policy, and Governance

This track examines the role of educational leaders and policymakers in responding to educational censorship while advancing equitable and democratic educational systems.

Possible topics include:

- Educational leadership
- School board governance
- Superintendent leadership
- Principal leadership
- Educational policy
- Legal issues

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- Academic freedom
- Educational governance

Track 2: Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education

This track explores how censorship influences curriculum development, instructional practice, teacher preparation, and professional learning.

Possible topics include:

- Curriculum development
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Teacher education
- Professional development
- Instructional innovation
- Classroom practice

Track 3: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Disability, and Human Rights

This track centers scholarship examining how educational censorship affects historically marginalized communities and explores approaches that promote educational justice.

Possible topics include:

- Disability studies
- DisCrit
- Black education
- LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Indigenous education
- Multilingual education
- Educational equity
- Human rights

Track 4: Libraries, Literacy, and the Freedom to Read

This track focuses on intellectual freedom, literacy, libraries, literature, and equitable access to information.

Possible topics include:

- Book bans
- Intellectual freedom

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- School libraries
- Public libraries
- Children's literature
- Young adult literature
- Information literacy
- Media literacy

Track 5: Higher Education and Academic Freedom

This track examines issues affecting colleges and universities, including academic freedom, institutional governance, faculty rights, and student activism.

Possible topics include:

- Higher education leadership
- Faculty governance
- Academic freedom
- Campus climate
- Student advocacy
- University policy

Track 6: Youth Voice, Community Engagement, and Democratic Education

This track highlights the power of students, families, educators, and communities to advance educational justice through civic engagement and collective action.

Possible topics include:

- Youth participatory action research
- Student activism
- Family engagement
- Community partnerships
- Civic education
- Democratic participation

Track 7: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Educational Censorship

This track explores historical and contemporary struggles over knowledge, curriculum, and educational freedom.

Possible topics include:



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- History of book bans
- Educational historiography
- Black educational history
- Curriculum controversies
- Historical memory
- Educational movements

Track 8: Innovative Practices and Promising Solutions

This practice-oriented track highlights effective strategies, programs, partnerships, and innovations that promote educational freedom and equitable learning opportunities.

Possible topics include:

- School improvement
- Innovative instructional practices
- Community advocacy
- Restorative educational practices
- Professional learning models
- Emerging best practices

Proposal Requirements

Research Proposals

Research proposals should report empirical, theoretical, conceptual, historical, or methodological scholarship.

Submissions must include:

- Paper title (15 words or fewer)
- Abstract (120 words or fewer)
- Proposal (1,000 words or fewer) addressing:
 - Objectives or purposes
 - Perspective(s) or theoretical framework
 - Methods
 - Data sources
 - Results
 - Scholarly significance

Workshop Proposals

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Workshop proposals should provide interactive learning experiences that equip participants with practical knowledge, tools, and strategies.

Submissions must include:

- Compelling workshop title
- Learning objectives
- Target audience
- Detailed session outline
- Facilitator credentials

Session Length

Research presentations and workshops will each be scheduled for **90-minute sessions**, including participant engagement, discussion, questions and answers, and collaborative learning opportunities.

Panel presentations, roundtable discussions, and poster presentations will be scheduled according to the institute's program.

Institute Registration

Accepted presenters are required to register for the institute.

Presenter Registration: \$100

Registration includes:

- Admission to all sessions
- Program materials
- Light refreshments
- Networking opportunities
- Access to keynote presentations and special events

Optional Peer-Reviewed Book Chapter Opportunity

Accepted presenters may elect to expand their presentation into a chapter for a peer-reviewed edited scholarly book.

The optional publication fee is **\$200** and includes:

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- Professional manuscript editing
- Double-blind peer review
- Editorial feedback
- Consideration for publication in the edited volume

Participation in the publication opportunity is **optional** and will be offered on a **first-come, first-served basis**. Because of the intensive editorial process, **space is limited**.

Important Dates

Date	Milestone
August 20, 2026	Call for Proposals Released
October 15, 2026	Proposal Submission Deadline
November 15, 2026	Proposal Decisions Sent
January 15, 2027	Presenter Registration Deadline
February 18–20, 2027	SIEEJ Takes Place

Proposal Submission

Please email proposals and inquiries to:

equityandjustice@american.edu

Explicitly state the thematic track you selected.

Join Us

The Scholarly Institute on Education Equity and Justice believes that the freedom to learn is fundamental to educational excellence, democratic engagement, and social justice. As educational censorship continues to shape classrooms, libraries, and communities across the nation, this event will provide an important forum for advancing research, sharing innovative practices, informing policy, and building partnerships that protect intellectual freedom and expand equitable access to knowledge.

We invite you to join us at American University for three days of scholarship, dialogue, collaboration, and action as we collectively confront educational censorship and defend the freedom to learn.

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