

# DR. MADHUNIKA SURESH MUELLER

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[Google Scholar](#)

## Professional Summary

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Dr. Madhunika Suresh Mueller is an emerging scholar specializing in higher education policy, international student success, and Queer transnational feminist research. As a critical qualitative scholar, Dr. Mueller's research examines how power, identity, and belonging shape the experiences of queer, transnational, and racially marginalized graduate students in U.S. higher education. Grounded in de/colonizing, contemplative, and arts-based methodologies, her work advances institutional responsibility, narrative repair, and creative pathways to educational equity. Her dissertation work offers theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to belonging and leadership development in global academic contexts. Her scholarship is guided by collaborative, community-accountable approaches that honor diverse knowledge traditions and reimagine higher education as a space where all scholars can thrive. Dr. Mueller also has teaching experience as an Adjunct and Graduate Teaching Assistant, designing and delivering undergraduate and graduate-level courses on human relations and educational policy. She has contributed to multiple publications in peer-reviewed journals, serves as Book Reviews Editor for *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research*, and presented research at national conferences including ASHE and NCORE. Her work is further distinguished by leadership roles in graduate student governance and involvement in grant-funded projects supporting international student well-being.

## Research & Policy Interests

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International Student Success, Queer Transnational Feminism, DEI & Belongingness, Higher-Ed Policy & Legislation, Intersectional Feminism, De/colonizing Qualitative Research Methodologies, Par/Des(i), Mental Health & Student Success, Creative & Contemplative Arts Based Qualitative Research, AI Integration in HEI

## Education

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### University of Oklahoma

2020-2025

Ph.D. in Education Leadership & Policy Studies, Adult & Higher

Education *Dissertation Title*- "Kataika!: Navigating Home and Sense of Belonging as Queer Desi/South Asian Transnational Graduate Students in Higher Education"

Committee- Dr Jenny Sperling (Chair), Dr. Natalie Youngbull, Dr. Hyunju Lee, Dr. Shannon Bert, and Dr. Kakali Bhattacharya (External)

### University of Oklahoma

2019-2020

M.A. Human Relations

*Thesis Title*- "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education: A Reality or a Façade?"

**University of Oklahoma**

2014-2018

B.A. Human Relations

**Indian Language School, Lagos, Nigeria**

2002-2014

P-12 Education, C.B.S.E

**Bhisma Indic School of Studies**

2021

Certificate in Ancient Indian Art and Architecture

**Work Experience**

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**RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

2021-2025

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of Oklahoma

Supervising Faculty: Drs. Jenny Sperling, Doo Hun Lim, Siduri Haslerig

Supervising Faculty: Drs. Siduri Haslerig & Kirsten Hextrum (2022)

*Grant: Spencer Research Foundation*

*Duties-*

- Conducted qualitative research on international student success, belonging, and DEI policy.
- Collected and analyzed data using thematic and narrative analysis.
- Reviewed literature to support research design and manuscript preparation.
- Assisted with developing departmental manual development for PhD milestones.
- Assisted with the grant-funded College Sport Colloquium, contributing to planning, data collection, and dissemination.
- Coordinated participant engagement, managed all logistics, and served as the primary point of contact for colloquium participants
- Collaborated on publications and presentations in interdisciplinary teams.
- Assisted with course development and management for graduate level courses on AI and Higher Education, Research Method for Ed.D students, and Financial Management in HE.

**ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR**

2021-2023

Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma

HR 3013: Introduction to Human Relations (2021–2023)

*Duties-*

- Designed and delivered asynchronous undergraduate instruction integrating multimedia and experiential assignments.
- Developed syllabus, modules, and assessments promoting critical engagement and learning outcomes.
- Received consistently positive student evaluations highlighting clear communication, effective pacing, and supportive teaching.

**GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT**

2019-2021

Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma

HR 3013: Introduction to Human Relations

Supervising Faculty: Dr. Wesley Long

*Duties-*

- Designed and delivered asynchronous undergraduate instruction integrating

multimedia and experiential assignments.

- Developed syllabus, modules, and assessments promoting critical engagement and learning outcomes.
- Received consistently positive student evaluations highlighting clear communication, effective pacing, and supportive teaching.
- Graded assignments and provided individualized feedback for large cohorts (100–150 students).
- Delivered guest lectures and held office hours for student mentorship.

## Professional Appointments & Membership

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<b>Book Reviews Editor</b> , Departures in Critical Qualitative Research, UC Press	2023 - Present
<b>President</b> , University of Oklahoma International Graduate Student Alliance	2022 - 2025
<b>Vice President</b> , University of Oklahoma International Graduate Student Alliance	2020-2021
<b>Member</b> , JRCOE Graduate Student Advising & Organizing Committee (GSAOC)	2022-2024
<b>Co-Founding Member</b> , University of Oklahoma Student Solidarity Coalition	2019-2020
<b>President</b> , University of Oklahoma Pan-American Student Association	2015-2018
<b>Co-Founding Member</b> , Norman Food Rescue & Humans of Norman Program (Capstone)	2018

Professional Memberships-

- **Association for the Study of Higher Education**
- **American Educational Studies Association**
- **American Educational Research Association**
- **International Congress of Qualitative Research**
- **National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education**
- **Phi Kappa Phi**

## Dissertation

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**Suresh Mueller, M. S.** (2025). *Kataikal!: Navigating Home and Sense of Belonging as Queer Desi/South Asian Transnational Graduate Students in Higher Education*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (3201274782).

## Publications

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1. **Suresh-Mueller, M.** (2025). Editorial & Introductions. *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research*, 14(2)
2. Bhattacharya, K., Girardeau, K., Maxey, M. & **Suresh-Mueller, M.** (2025) Book Conversations: Introduction to Intersectional Qualitative Research. *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research*, 14(2)
3. **Suresh-Mueller, M.** (2024). Inaugural Book Circle. *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research*, 13(3), 101-126. <https://doi.org/10.1525/dcqr.2024.13.3.101>
4. **Suresh, M.S.**, Wagon, J.D., Campos, R., Hall, T.N., Wakio, S., Sperling, J. & Virguez, E.(2024). “Reframing international students’ success: Emphasizing institutional responsibility for international student well-being and belongingness.” [Cambridge Press](#).
5. Wagon, J.D., **Suresh, M.S.**, Hextrum, K. (2022). “Honoring TribalCrit in Higher Education: Survival and Sovereignty in the Wake of Anti-CRT Bills”. *Philosophy and Theory in Higher Education*, 4(3), 29-48.

<https://doi.org/10.3726/ptihe.032022.0003>

6. **Suresh, M.S.** (2020). *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: A Reality or a Façade?* [Master's Thesis, University of Oklahoma, Norman] ShareOK Publishing.  
<https://shareok.org/handle/11244/326817>

## Working Papers

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1. **Faculty Perceptions of AI Integration in Higher Education: A Global Perspective.** (With Dr. Doo Hun Lim)
2. **Anti-DEIB Legislation in Higher Education: Where Do We Go from Here?** (with James Wagnon)
3. **Transnational Voices of Defiance and Resilience: Women of Color Navigating Anti-DEI and Anti-CRT Legislation in a Red State.** (with Adisha Waghmarae)
4. **Reimagining Educational Research: A Kitchen-Table Talk on Collective Dreaming and the Pursuit of Methodological Freedoms** (with Jenny Sperling, Quan Phan, James Wagnon, Ayanna Wheeler & Dene Roseburr- Olotu)
5. **South Asian/Desi Diasporic Experiences in HESA Doctoral Programs** (with Neeraja Panchapakesan & Ravi Bhatt)
6. **Breaking Roti & Rice: A Journey of South Asian Transnational Queer Resistance & Joy** (with Sadiq Mohammed)

## Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

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Dr. John Jefferson Seaberg, Jr. Graduate Assistantship Endowed  
Scholarship Dr. Herbert R. Hengst Scholarship Fund in Higher  
Education Administration  
Audience Choice Award, Graduate and Post-doctoral Research Symposium at the University of  
Oklahoma NCORE Student Scholar  
Anna and Harold Paige Scholarship  
Shirley Biggs Crews Education Scholarship  
Irvin Lee "Bobby" Wright Dissertation of the Year (Nominated, under consideration)  
AERA Division J 2025-2026 Outstanding Dissertation of the Year Award (Nominated)

## Conferences and Invited Panels

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**Let There Be Light: Using a Critically Empathetic Lens to Examine Race, Class, Sex, Gender, Religion, and Social Justice in a Predominantly White Classroom.**

33rd Annual National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education, May 26-30, 2020, New York City, New York. \*

**Anti-CRT Legislation and TribalCrit in Higher Education.**

Graduate and Post-doctoral Research Symposium at the University of Oklahoma. March 4th, 2022, Norman, Oklahoma. [Virtual]

**Honoring TribalCrit in Higher Education: Survival and Sovereignty in the Wake of AntiCRT Bills** 47th Annual Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference, November 16-19, 2022, Las Vegas, Nevada.

**Desi Transnational Scholars: Navigating Belonginess through Kataikal.**

35th Annual National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education, May 30th - June 3rd, 2023, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**Anti-CRT Legislation and TribalCrit in Oklahoma**

35th Annual National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education, May 30th - June 3rd, 2023, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**Desi Queer Transnational Scholars: Navigating Belonginess through Kataikal.**

Graduate Student Symposium at the University of Oklahoma. March 3rd, 2023, Norman, Oklahoma.

**Reframing International Students' Success: Emphasizing Institutional Responsibility for International Student Well-being and Belonginess**

48th Annual Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference, November 15-18, 2023, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**South Asian/Desi Diasporic Experiences in HESA Doctoral Programs**

49th Annual Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference, November 20-23, 2024, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Cartographic Contours of Par/Desi Ontoepistemologies: Expanding the Underpinnings of South Asian Scholarship in Higher Education.**

49th Annual Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference, November 20-23, 2024, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**De/colonize Your Dinner: Stories and Spices.**

Invited Lecture & Workshop, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, DMC, Purgatory Resort, Durango, Colorado.

**Skill s**

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- DEI Strategy & Leadership
  - Qualitative & Arts-Based Research
  - Program & Grant Management
  - Policy Development & Analysis
  - Stakeholder & Community Engagement
  - Higher Education & Equity Pedagogies
  - Public Speaking & Workshop Facilitation
  - Curriculum & Professional Development Design
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**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

