

Dr. Emily Payne



Dr. Emily Miller Payne is one of our country's leading experts within the fields of adult education, developmental education (DE), and literacy. As a treasured member of our faculty, we honor her long-lasting contributions and celebrate her accomplishments. Her life's work truly represents educating the minds and hearts of students through her dedicated teaching, service, scholarship, and leadership. Her remarkable career has spanned nearly 50 years, having entered the field in 1971 as a TRIO Student Support Services program tutor coordinator at Wayne Community College, then with the New Mexico State University Drop-In Lab, and at Austin Community College as a reading and writing instructor. In 1998, she joined our Texas State University community, first as the assistant director of the Student Learning Assistance Center, and then as assistant professor, and subsequently a tenured associate professor within the College of Education.

Dr. Payne co-created and taught in our M.A. program in developmental and adult education and Ph.D. program in adult, professional, and community education (CLAS); she then co-created our M.A., Ed.D., and Ph.D. programs in DE (C&I). She specialized in teaching graduate courses in qualitative research, developmental and adult literacy, program development, administration and management, policy and politics, and grant development. Over her career, she has served on 66 master thesis and dissertation committees, having chaired 22 of them.

Dr. Payne created and served as director of The Education Institute since 2001, having secured millions of grant dollars with such funded projects as The TEA Adult Education GREAT Center, the THECB Transition from Adult to DE Project, the Adult Education Credential Project, and multiple iterations of the THECB DE Professional Development Project. Additionally, she was the principle investigator for Texas's Adult Education and Literacy Standards revision, updating the Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Language Acquisition (ELA) levels of the Texas Adult Education Content Standards and Benchmarks (TAECSB), and aligned them with the Texas College & Career Readiness Standards (TCCRS), the Texas Certification of High School Equivalency and the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA).

Dr. Payne's scholarly pursuits have focused on adult student transitions to postsecondary models, developmental and basic literacy instruction, and the impact of DE professional development on instruction. She has published over 60 scholarly works in top journals within our field as well as various outlets aimed at influencing policy makers and practitioners.

Examples of Dr. Payne's many service endeavors include editor of the Journal of College Reading and Learning; co-founder and editorial advisor for the Journal of College Academic Support Programs; faculty senator; and chair or member of a plethora of senate, university, college, department, program, and search committees. She also served a year as director of our DE doctoral program and coordinated our DE reading program, supervising doctoral students teaching both co-requisite and traditional reading classes.

Dr. Payne was the recipient of the College Reading and Learning Association's Karen G. Smith Special Recognition Award for Outstanding Service, the Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education's Administrator of the Year Award, and College Academic Support Programs' Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Payne will retire in August 2020 after 32 years at Texas State University. She will be deeply missed for her unmatched wisdom, and the foundations she laid allowing our college and program to carry our venerable culture and tradition of excellence into the future.

Perhaps this sampling of student sentiments expresses our gratitude best:

Dr. Payne not only instilled a love of learning but a lifelong intellectual curiosity that has served me well personally and professionally. She made a huge impact in my career modeling what a professional scholar looks like in practice.

—Dr. Mary Helen Martinez

Dr. Payne has been an indispensable part of my academic career...by encouraging me to explore my scholastic options and paths, recognizing and nurturing my professional strengths, and serving as a paramount example of professionalism, tutelage, and compassion. —Michael McConnell