

Weston Thomas Merrick

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Education

Doctor of Philosophy, University of Minnesota, Public Affairs (Anticipated graduation Dec., 2020)

Dissertation: "Using design and behavioral sciences to reduce administrative burdens: evidence from Minneapolis public housing"

Master's in Public Affairs, Indiana University, 2013

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Missouri, 2010

Employment experience

Impact Evaluation Unit Manager, Minnesota Management & Budget, May 2019 - Current

- Lead a new team of social and data scientists that conducts experimental and quasi-experimental design evaluations of state investments in human services.
- Provide decision-makers with actionable insights from high-quality research. This includes literature reviews, process evaluations, and facilitating relationships with academics.
- Promote the use of rigorous evaluations across the state. The team recently won a \$2.5M grant from Arnold Ventures to implement a substance use prevention program for 40 schools. In partnership with MDRC, our team will use a random assignment to assess its impact.

Results First Coordinator, Minnesota Management & Budget, September 2015 - May 2019

- Launched and led the Results First initiative, an effort to provide state and local policymakers with high-quality evidence on the effectiveness of Minnesota's human services investments.
- Manage a diverse set of analysts and stakeholders across agencies and units of government in designing, conducting, and promulgating research on the cost-effectiveness of state spending. For our efforts, the team won the 2018 Local Government Innovation Award.

Research Assistant, Future Services Institute, University of Minnesota, July 2018 - Present

- Conduct complex quantitative and qualitative analysis of public assistance programs and author works to share lessons with academic and practitioner audiences.
- Assist in the Pathways to Prosperity Pilot, a design-based based research approach to change manager and frontline worker practice to increase the wellbeing for families on public assistance.

Economic Analyst, Department of Employment & Economic Development, July 2013 - September 2015

Research Assistant, Indiana Nonprofit Sector Project- Indiana, University May 2012-May 2013

Consultant, Cerner Corporation, May 2009-March 2011

Book chapter

Stephanie Moulton, Jodi R. Sandfort and Weston Merrick, forthcoming, "[Enabling Social Policy Innovation: Trends and Promising Directions](#)," Oxford International Handbook of Public Administration for Social Policy: Promising Practices and Emerging Challenges, edited by Karen Baehler, et al.

Manuscripts under preparation

Are they a good bet? Experimental evidence on how street-level bureaucrats prioritize clients.

Backwards mapping from the Frontlines: A design approach to human services integration with Jodi Sandfort, Robin Phinney, and Sook Jin Ong (*Prepared for submission to Administration and Society*).

Selected conference presentations

2020 "Using behavioral and design science to reduce administrative burdens: evidence from Minneapolis public housing." *Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS)*, Virtual Conference (October, 2020).

2020 "Using behavioral and design science to reduce administrative burdens: evidence from Minneapolis public housing." *Public Management Research Association Annual Conference*, Honolulu, HI (Accepted and scheduled July, 2020; postponed due to COVID-19).

2019 "Are they a good bet? Experimental evidence on how street-level bureaucrats prioritize clients." *Public Management Research Association Annual Conference*, Chapel Hill, UNC (June, 2019).

2018 "Backwards Mapping from the Frontlines: A Design-Based Approach to Human Services Integration." *Academy of Management Annual Conference*, Chicago, IL (August, 2018).

"Using evidence to influence policy: lessons from Juvenile Justice Minnesota." *National Association of State Budget Officers*, Chicago, IL (May 2018).

2017 "Causal inference and evidence-based practices." *Minnesota Policy Analysis Conference*, Minneapolis, MN (October, 2017).

"Getting to outcomes? How to use rigorous evidence in the budgeting process." *National Conference of State Legislatures*, Williamsburg, VA (Jan, 2017).

Selected governmental or institutional reports

Administrative burden and red tape (2018) Service Organization and Data: Learnings from Workforce Development (2018) <https://bit.ly/2VYOyWy>

The Changing Composition of Minnesota's Social Safety Net (2018) with Robin Phinney, Colleen Heflin, and Yumiko Aratani <https://bit.ly/2W9JYJX>

Evidence-based practices in children's mental health (2019) with Kristina Shuey and Pete Bernardy. <https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/results-first/cmh-report.pdf>

Evidence-based approaches to Juvenile Delinquency (2018) with Kristina Shuey and Pete Bernardy. <https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/results-first/juvenile-justice-report.pdf>

Honors, awards, and service

Behavioral Interventions Scholars Fellowship, 2019-2021

MinnLink Fellowship, 2018-2019

McKnight-Salzburg Fellowship, 2015

Board Member, Think Small, 2016 – present. Chair of the Finance Committee, 2017 – 2019.