



A First Look: Examining Information Processing Skill Proficiencies Among
Black Adults in the U.S. Using the PIAAC Data

Dr. Leah Katherine Saal (presenter), Associate Professor of Literacy, Loyola University Maryland

Dr. Leah Katherine Saal is an Associate Professor of Literacy at Loyola University Maryland and an adolescent and adult education/literacy teacher and researcher. Dr. Saal's scholarship explores adult, family, and community literacies as a social determinant of public health with a specific focus on risk literacies. Passionate about life-long learning, she has over 17 years of experience teaching, designing, researching, and evaluating educational and training programs for adolescents and adults with and without disabilities. She is a founder and co-owner of [LeadAbility, LLC](#) which offers distinct services for clients seeking assistance in designing, operating, and evaluating programs and curricula that train people to effectively and respectfully work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and neurodiverse people.

Dr. Takashi Yamashita (presenter), Professor of Sociology & Gerontology at University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Dr. Takashi Yamashita is a professor of sociology and gerontology at UMBC. His primary research areas are wider benefits of lifelong learning, social determinants of health and well-being over the life course, health literacy, and gerontology education. Yamashita has a PhD in Social Gerontology from Miami University. He teaches social gerontology, sociology of aging, quantitative methods, and demography both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He has been the principal investigator of two education research projects funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education, and co-investigator of the community-based health literacy intervention project funded by the Office of Minority Health, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He is a fellow of the advanced research methods for the STEM education research program at the University of Chicago. He is an editorial board member of the Journal of Gerontology Social Science.

Dr. Ramon B. Goings (presenter), Associate Professor, Language, Literacy, & Culture at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Dr. Ramon Goings is an Associate Professor in the Language, Literacy, and Culture interdisciplinary doctoral program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and founder of Done Dissertation® (www.thedonedissertation.com) a dissertation consulting organization that helps doctoral students, doctoral programs, and graduate student organizations break down the dissertation process into manageable pieces so that doctoral students can finish their dissertations in one year (or less). Author of over 60 scholarly publications, Dr. Goings is an expert on Black male student success in PK-20 settings, Black adult learner success, and diversifying the teacher and school leader workforce. Dr. Goings has also served as principal and co-principal investigator on research projects funded by the National Science Foundation and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

**Dr. Geleana D. Alston (discussant), Associate Professor and Program Coordinator,
Department of Leadership Studies and Adult Education, North Carolina A&T State
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Dr. Geleana Alston is Associate Professor and Coordinator for the MS in Adult Education program in the Department of Leadership Studies and Adult Education at North Carolina A&T State University and CEO of [Alston Educational Group](#), LLC, a company that helps individuals, organizations and communities of practice push through tensions to seek prosperous and sustainable solutions on their unique journeys of development. Dr. Alston's scholarly engagement focuses on the sociocultural intricacies of women, minorities, and disenfranchised groups as adult learners, adult educators, and leaders. She is the Co-Editor in Chief for *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* and has more than ten years experience with academic journal editorship. Dr. Alston has collaborated on research projects as principal investigator, co-principal investigators, or evaluator, and collectively these research teams have successfully secured more than 11 million dollars in funding from various federal and state agencies, and corporate foundations. Most recently, as principal investigator, Dr. Alston and her team was awarded \$250,000 for a project that seeks to understand barriers to success for adult learners from minority communities through building institutional data capacity and structures.