



FLORIDA STATE
UNIVERSITY

The COLLEGE of EDUCATION

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FSU NAMES TOP LITERACY RESEARCHER EPPES PROFESSOR

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—An internationally recognized scholar in the areas of reading and language development will join Florida State University’s College of Education, the Learning Systems Institute (LSI) and the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) in the fall as the university’s newest Francis Eppes Professor.

Barbara Foorman comes from the University of Texas Houston Health Science Center, where she served as professor of pediatrics and the Director of the Center for Academic and Reading Skills. She also served as the nation’s first commissioner for education research at the Institute of Education Sciences from 2005 to 2006.



“To have someone on-board with the experience, knowledge, and leadership vision of Dr. Foorman will only enhance FSU initiatives in the areas of literacy and policy research,” said Marcy Driscoll, dean of the College of Education. “We fully expect her presence to help solidify the college, LSI and FCRR as nationally-recognized research institutions in reading education.”

LSI Director Laura Hassler Lang added, “We are extremely pleased that Dr. Foorman will be joining our research efforts. Having someone of her caliber at FSU will prove beneficial to not only the university but the entire educational community.”

Foorman’s distinguished background includes cross-linguistic research in Japan, Mexico and England, and research in the areas of reading, language development, spelling, phonemic awareness and vocabulary. She also serves on the editorial board for several journals, is a principal investigator on major federal grants in her areas of expertise, and has led government-sponsored literacy efforts at every level — from city to federal. She was instrumental in the revision and validation of the Texas Primary Reading Inventory, used in 95 percent of the school districts in Texas and in other states.

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“Many of the core ideas being implemented in current national initiatives to reform reading instruction are based on the findings from basic studies on reading processes conducted by Dr. Foorman and others during the last 25 years,” said Dr. Joseph Torgesen, FCRR Director. “Barbara’s skills and interests will be an invaluable asset to the College of Education and the FCRR as we continue our efforts to support the improvement of educational policy and practice in the broad area of literacy.”

Foorman said she was attracted to FSU by the excellent researchers affiliated with FCRR. “The College of Education is critically important to the success of FCRR because its faculty and students provide the real-world credibility of classroom experience,” Foorman said. “Together, the College of Education and FCRR are providing the technical assistance to Florida schools and schools across the nation that will make federal programs such as Reading First successful.”

As an Eppes Professor, Foorman joins the ranks of the university’s most eminent scholars. The professorships are named for Francis Eppes, the grandson of President Thomas Jefferson and one of the founding fathers of the Seminary West of the Suwannee, FSU’s institutional predecessor.

“The Eppes Professorship allows FSU to attract internationally-known scholars by offering them the resources they need to enhance the research they are accustomed to conducting,” Driscoll said. “Just having these scholars at FSU improves our academic reputation and capabilities.”

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