Five questions with...

Charles Ellis, Jr., PhD

Charles Ellis Jr., PhD, joined the ECU faculty in August of 2014. Dr. Ellis is an associate professor and the Director of Masters Education in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. Dr. Ellis is a licensed and certified speech-language pathologist who received his Bachelor of Science and Masters Degree from The University of Georgia, Athens, GA. After practicing clinically for 10 years in inpatient and outpatient settings, he returned for his Doctor of Philosophy degree which he received from the University of Florida, Gainesville, FL in 2005. Dr. Ellis has published 70 peer-reviewed journals articles and over 100 presentations related to Parkinson's disease, stroke, traumatic brain injury, and health disparities and minority health issues. At ECU, Dr. Ellis' academic concentration focuses on adult neurogenic disorders and he teaches courses related to aphasia and cognitive disorders. He is the director of the Communication Equity and Outcomes Laboratory where his research is designed to understand outcomes associated with adult neurologically based disorders of communication and factors that contribute to the lack of equity in service provision and outcome disparities that exist among some population groups. In 2014 he awarded Fellowship of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) which is one the highest awards bestowed upon ASHA members.

What do you like best about working at ECU?

The overall environment. The combination of great co-workers (faculty and staff) and students makes ECU a great place to come to each day. I find substantial cooperation and collaboration on many levels across campus which facilitates ease in accomplishing research and teaching goals and objectives. ECU admits high caliber students who are committed to learning and making a difference after graduation. Alumni represent the core values of ECU well.

What do you find most exciting about your research and its potential?

My research related to adult neurogenic disorders and disparities are in line with key health-related issues in eastern North Carolina. The eastern part of the state is part of the stroke buckle of the stroke belt and the diabetes belt where health-related outcomes are the absolute worst. I believe my research has the potential to improve the health outcomes in the region and access to care issues that contribute to those poor outcomes.

What excites you about teaching?

The eagerness of students to learn and the resources that are available to improve teacher creativity and outcomes. The quality of students are a huge plus and makes teaching a great joy.
What do you hope students take away from their experiences from working with you on your research?

That at some level we are all researchers and should be committed to the research enterprise. Regardless of whether graduates go forward with clinical careers, the outcomes they achieve are reported and they should take great care in evaluating and reporting those outcomes.

What is your favorite teaching or research moment?

Having students present their research independently at the 2015 American Speech Language Hearing Association in my unexpected absence. I had full confidence in their ability to present the information. However, when they were called up to respond under such unexpected circumstances, I felt very proud to be associated with these student scholars who make such great contributions to my research lab.