

**Provost's Initiative for Undergraduate Research Collaboration Award Application
For Summer 2017**

Name of Faculty Applicant and Discipline: [REDACTED]

Have you conducted collaborative research with students in the past? If so, please list your past experiences.

[REDACTED]

Name of Student Applicant: [REDACTED]

Have you worked with this student applicant before on research? If so, please describe your past experiences. If you have not worked with this student, please explain why this student is appropriate for this project and whether this student has prior experience collaborating on faculty research with someone else.

I have worked with [REDACTED] before on various in class projects, however, I have not had the opportunity to work with [REDACTED] on a full research project [REDACTED]. I have come to know [REDACTED] work ethic and thinking through many different topics. Class assignments completed by [REDACTED] have always been deeply insightful and thoroughly thought out. Though [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has experience working with various cultures and exhibits an openness and patience when asked to interact other perspectives. I believe these characteristics will help provide appropriate analysis of data with regard to social and cultural evidence. Additionally, [REDACTED] offers a perspective different than my own, both culturally and generationally. For this study, diverse perspectives are important. [REDACTED] is interested in working with and understanding a broad range of culturally diverse people and is interested in global literacy. This knowledge will benefit [REDACTED] role as a teacher with diverse populations.

Title of Proposal: Moving Toward an Understanding of the Complexities of Literacy

Are other funds available for this project with this student? If so, what are they?
There are no other funds available.

Does your academic unit provide funding, beyond supply budget, in the summer for either faculty members or students engaged in collaborative research?
No

I. Please provide a brief summary of the proposed research project. Please include the goals for the project and the goals for the student.

Project goal: a) To understand beliefs about literacy through an exploration of how literacy is valued and used from various perspectives. b) To document instructional techniques used

throughout different contexts; i.e., school, home, community. c) To compare the relationship between literacy knowledge and skills needed in daily life with literacy learning. Thus, the goal, ultimately, would be that of understanding the complexities of “being literate.”

Though the study will be conducted in [REDACTED], participants will have international backgrounds.

d) This information may also be helpful to the [REDACTED] in that the Strategic Plan (D) – Infuse our entire community with a sense of internationalization and diversity. Findings from this study may be beneficial when internationalizing curriculum, planning service learning projects, and preparing students from different backgrounds to attend [REDACTED].

e) To produce scholarly work that will also add to the field of education by documenting and discussing various understandings of literacy.

Faculty goal: a) To understand different ways that literacy is valued and used as well as to document how literacy is taught/learned within different contexts (school, home, community). This information will be used in literacy courses to assist teacher candidates in understanding various ways to differentiate for students in their classes. Students in the U.S. education system come from many backgrounds, various levels of literacy skills, and use literacy in different ways. It is important for teacher candidates to be exposed to this information explicitly to be effective with different learners in their classrooms.

Student goal: a) To further her understanding of what is considered literate and how literacy is used in various contexts. This knowledge will help [REDACTED] that can help students with different backgrounds become literate.

Summary: “Literacy as a concept has proved to be both complex and dynamic, continuing to be interpreted and defined in a multiplicity of ways” (Education for All, 2006, p.147).

Understandings of literacy vary from country to country and context to context. However, in the U.S. education system, teaching literacy is often a prescriptive practice. The fact that populations attending U.S. schools are diverse, in terms of cultural representation, SES, learning preferences exhibited, etc., means that it is imperative for teachers (and student teachers) to have knowledge of various ways students gain and use literacy. Additionally, the recent push for culturally relevant teaching practices means that teachers must know how to differentiate for and engage learners from many different backgrounds for many different purposes (Banks, 2015).

As literacy is context specific, it is therefore studied best by investigating “what people do with literacy and how what they do is shaped by the cultural conventions and ideologies found within specific social settings” such as school, home, and communities (Moll, Saez, & Dworin, 2001, p.19). For example, research in the U.S. often touts the importance of reading to children at a young age, even in the womb as being critical for reading achievement in early years. However, in many Latin American countries, parents value emotional bonding and language exposure at an early age, claiming that socio-emotional functioning will raise academic achievement (Alvarez, 2016; Desmond & Kubrin, 2009; Han 2008). Additionally, literacy learning and usage shape the way the brain thinks (Willis, 2008; Wolf, 1990). Children from these two contexts will bring different strengths, knowledge, and ways of thinking to the classroom which will require different approaches to teaching them. Students entering U.S. school systems with different

literacy experiences often find it hard to transition to instruction focused on the narrow view of literacy provided. Moreover, teachers are often unaware or unprepared to change instructional practices to meet the various needs of their students. Though literacy practices have been researched, studies often lack the international perspective of literacy learning and use.

This study will explore and document how people in different contexts value literacy and use literacy knowledge and skills in their lives. In addition, observation and interviews will provide a view of instructional techniques and real life application of literacy. This study will help build broader understandings about literacy within the field allowing educators to communicate and teach literacy concepts and skills effectively in many contexts and with many stakeholders. This project will use the concept of 'situated literacies,' as well as the interplay of literacy practices across home, school, and communities to gain an understanding of "being literate." Participants will have international backgrounds and knowledge of U.S. education systems.

II. Describe why this is an impactful project for the student at this time in their education and why a 6-week summer experience would be valuable (versus an independent research experience (493) during the academic year).

Next year, there will be no room for [redacted] to investigate one of [redacted] – cultural influences on learning and literacy. [redacted] has chosen a full course load each semester to pursue a major in education & minor in social justice so this summer would be an opportune time to synthesize [redacted] courses and [redacted] studies outside of the country to incorporate this information into [redacted] lesson design next year when [redacted] teaches full time. It is required that [redacted] graded unit plan next year be a culturally relevant literacy unit. [redacted] will be able to directly apply what [redacted] learns this summer into [redacted] teaching of diverse populations next year.

III. Please explain why you believe this student is the right student to conduct intensive research? To what extent can she/he work independently?

[redacted] is a hard-working, self-starter. [redacted] has shared his experiences being a non-native English speaker in America with [redacted] in great detail. [redacted] has learned much from his experiences as well as [redacted] visits to Italy speaking with family and friends there. [redacted] can help interview teachers and students from other cultures/value systems without judgement to add to this research. [redacted] is interested in cross-cultural interactions and global literacy and passionate about social justice ([redacted]). I believe [redacted] can offer a different perspective from my own based on [redacted] cultural background and experiences as well as [redacted] position as an experienced teacher candidate.

[redacted] I feel that [redacted] cultural knowledge will add immensely to this project. Further, this project provides a formal and systematic way for [redacted] to conduct [redacted] inquiry in the various communities with which [redacted] interacts.

I have several students interested in working on this project and think [REDACTED] exemplifies the characteristics to be an equal collaborator. [REDACTED] says she enjoys working with others and being a part of a team and also working on [REDACTED] own. When working independently [REDACTED] is not afraid to ask for guidance, but is confident working on [REDACTED] own. I have seen these characteristics in class and in my experiences as [REDACTED] advisor. We have built a good rapport over the past 3 years and I know [REDACTED] is a self-starter and seeks deeper knowledge about topics [REDACTED] is passionate about.

IV. What are the specific roles and duties of the student with regard to this project? Stating the student will read/write/conduct research is insufficient. Please be specific with regard to the particular skills and tasks the student will be conducting.

[REDACTED] will be conducting some of the literature review regarding literacy specific to this study; i.e. global literacy studies from different contexts. I would like for [REDACTED] to also help me observe and interview participants. If we could begin this project in May or June, [REDACTED] could help develop observation protocol so that she could assist in observations of classrooms to look at how literacy is used and taught in different contexts. This year, the end of school is delayed due to the weather so I anticipate opportunities for working in schools until mid-June. [REDACTED] will also assist in developing interview questions based on the literature and our collaborative interests. I have suggested scholars, protocol, and questions to start our work. I will also ask [REDACTED] to analyze the observations and interviews on [REDACTED] own and then with me.

[REDACTED] and I will observe and interview people in different communities in [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] would like to conduct research with educators from [REDACTED]. These perspectives would add to the richness of the diversity we hope to include. I also have many participants from China, Africa, Germany, Mexico, and India to add to our purposeful sample.

As I have not facilitated a full research project with an [REDACTED] before, I am not certain what tasks will need more guidance. However, my work on research projects with doctoral students should help me provide support in appropriate places. I intend to have [REDACTED] working collaboratively with me on each step in the research process. [REDACTED] wants to assist with everything she can.

V. Please outline a tentative work plan (more detail is better) for research that demonstrates the appropriate time commitment for both faculty and student researcher. (Note. It is expected that regular face-to-face meetings and collaborative work time will take place with students.)

[REDACTED] met to discuss this project, however, I will meet with [REDACTED] to finalize design of the project and obtain an IRB as soon as possible.

Week 1 – Research instruction. I believe it will take time initially to teach [REDACTED] how to conduct research. First, I will introduce the steps and process broadly and then again in detail at each phase. I have a few articles that I will ask [REDACTED] to read and we will discuss *conducting a qualitative research project*.

Purpose – We will develop a focused problem statement together first. We have discussed the problem as a lack of understanding among teachers about how best to teach literacy to diverse populations. With K-12 students entering and leaving U.S. schools from other areas of the U.S. and other countries, there is a need to understand what knowledge and beliefs they bring into the classroom and what they need when they leave. For example, students from some African countries believe that one needs to read and write to be literate and earn respect from community members to be successful. Yet, students from some areas of the Pacific Islands believe that proficiency in 2 oral languages constitutes being literate and successful (there is no orthography). When students from these contexts are placed in one classroom, the teacher will need to address these beliefs and knowledge of literacy through instruction. Alternatively, if these students go back to their original contexts, they will need to have the knowledge and skills that will help them be successful in those contexts. It is important for teachers to know that every student does not have the same belief about being literate nor how to use literacy effectively for success. [REDACTED] and I will need to discuss this problem more specifically to finalize our research questions and framework of study.

Literature Review – [REDACTED] will begin with readings from scholars focused on literacy in diverse settings such as Education for All, Ladson-Billings, Freire, bilingual literature, and Dell Hymes – communicative competence work. I will also ask [REDACTED] to find further readings.

Week 2 – We will spend some time reading through the literature and establishing a framework for our study. As we agree that the problem is an equity issue, I suspect that our frame will involve a social justice or socio-cultural lens so we will start there. We will also finalize development of observation protocol and interview questions this week if not earlier.

Week 3 – Observations and interviews in classrooms with participants in Oregon will take place in week 3 (maybe late week 2).

Week 4 – Analysis will begin. We will start by using NVIVO for initial coding and analysis of interviews. Then we will manually code for more specific themes. After [REDACTED] and I have had a chance to look at the data separately, we will collaborate on the analysis and implications.

Week 5 – Findings – Further analysis, determining implications, and writing will occur this week. We will discuss the findings and how teacher candidates might use this information as well as how it might apply to [REDACTED] and the larger field of education.

Week 6 – Writing – we will write up a report and possibly a presentation for Oregon Council for Teachers of English, Oregon Reading Association, or another literacy conference. I have presented with students at OCTE in the past and it is a great experience for our students to present to colleagues and network for future jobs.

We will devise a more detailed daily/weekly schedule after a more in-depth discussion of this research project and all that it encompasses. This is still a work in progress until [REDACTED] and I sit down together.

Depending on when we begin this study, we may interview and observe before the full literature review is complete as we need to observe literacy practices when teachers are in school.

VI. Please briefly describe your mentoring plan for the student. (Note: Students new to full-time research are rarely ready from the start of a project to work intensively on research for 35 hours per week. They often lack the planning and anticipation skills to acquire materials (reading/supplies) and/or the inquiry skills to make effective use of time on the project. Please describe the mentoring/development activities that will support your student's development and entre into the world of research. What will you do to help them be successful researchers/scholars? (Please see the following attachment that outlines the challenges of research and some mentoring examples <http://www.cur.org/assets/1/7/333Spring13Pita11-15.pdf>).

I work with doctoral students presently. As the chair and a committee member for dissertations in education, I teach the steps of research and suggest specific scholars that guide quantitative and qualitative research work. I will be able to teach [REDACTED] the process of research based on this background. I anticipate working with an undergraduate student will require more guidance and plan on working closely with [REDACTED] I have found various aspects of the process that need more support such as the purpose of a literature review, among other things. In my experience, it takes students time to understand that synthesizing literature to make an argument is not the same as summarizing the literature in a disconnected fashion. Another issue often arises when students try to develop a research question and align research questions with methodology. I believe that these previous experiences will help me support [REDACTED] better, however, I also know that I cannot anticipate everything. As we will be working together on this, I feel it will be easier with the [REDACTED] to eliminate some of the issues that arise than with doctoral students [REDACTED] students are working on their own. [REDACTED] has asked to work in my office, so we will be in close proximity. This will make it easier to answer questions and guide the work.

The mentor examples in the article provided mention availability/meeting times and social outings as important aspects of mentoring (Pita et al, 2013). Structured schedules and social time is something I practice with doctoral students. I will make a structured schedule with deadlines a priority. In our limited time working together, [REDACTED] has taken direction well and we have established a good working relationship. I believe this will make social time more engaging and beneficial. After accomplishing the tasks of each phase of the research project, I take my doctoral students to celebrate with coffee and treats. I will do this with [REDACTED]. In the intense time of the summer, this might occur weekly or even every few days. I also believe that observing and interviewing together will provide different environments to build our professional relationship. I believe relationship building at all levels is vital. I also believe that even when working independently, being in close proximity has benefits. When we are working on campus/in my office, we are there for each other when we need to discuss or ask questions about the project. This will provide structure for guidance and collaboration. I will show [REDACTED] some good research studies as models for our work.

I am very confident in [REDACTED] ability to have a 35-hour work week over the summer. However, I will need to provide structure and accountability daily so we can work efficiently. Currently,

[REDACTED]

