Committee for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Professional Development Funding Proposal

COVER SHEET

Name, Title, and Department of Applicant(s): Kathleen Riley, Associate Professor, literacy
Kathryn Solie, Associate Professor, literacy

Title of Proposed Project: Partnering with Teachers for a Practice-Immersive Literacy Methods Experience

Beginning Date: July 1, 2019 Ending Date: December 31, 2019 Amount requested: $2,000

Other sources of funding (department, WCU or PASSHE Faculty Development Awards, FaStR, external grants, or other).

The undersigned agrees to accept responsibility for the conduct of the project, the expenditure of the funds provided, the dissemination of project outcomes on the WCU campus, and the filing of a final project report with the Committee for Excellence in Learning and Teaching.

_________________________  2/14/19
Kathleen Riley  
Applicant's Signature  
Date  

_________________________  2/14/19
Carol A. Smith  
Department Chair's Signature  
Date  

_________________________  2/14/19
Dean's Signature  
Date
Partnering with Teachers for a Practice-Immersive Literacy Methods Experience

**Project Overview (20 points):** In the fall of 2019, we will begin an exciting new program at West Chester University: The Community-Immersive Semester for Educators (CISE). This program was developed with the support of the CESW dean’s office and in collaboration with faculty in the Early and Middle Grades Preparation, Education Foundations and Policy Studies, and Special Education programs. CISE is for undergraduate education majors in the Early Grades Preparation (including those dual majoring in Special Education) to take an entire semester of coursework in a community setting.

The goals of CISE are to: (1) prepare teachers who are committed to understanding the context in which they teach and look to wisdom, history, and cultural resources of the community to support their teaching, (2) challenge deficit perspectives that are commonly held about students, families, and neighborhoods in Philadelphia (3) develop skilled and reflective educators who are committed to teaching in the School District of Philadelphia and other urban areas, and (4) develop a strong, mutually beneficial partnership with the Cobbs Creek neighborhood of Philadelphia and Anderson Elementary School.

Our program is modeled after Ball State University’s ten year old program, Schools within the Context of Community (SCC), in partnership with the Whitley Community in Muncie, Indiana. Core components of the SCC program, that we will integrate into CISE at WCU, are: (a) integrated coursework taken in a community setting, (b) a community mentoring program where teacher-candidates learn about the resources of the community from elders, leaders, and parents, (c) high-impact clinical experiences under the guidance of university faculty and mentor teachers, and (d) a critical service learning project where teacher-candidates work alongside community members on an issue impacting the community.

We request CELT funding to support one piece of the program: The Practice-Immersive Literacy Experience (PILE). The two literacy courses that will be taught within the CISE program are EDR 307: Foundations in Reading and EDR 304: Teaching Language Arts. Drs. Sobic and Riley will teach these courses in a practice-immersed format. We will partner closely with teachers and students at Anderson Elementary School to prepare students within a classroom environment. Our students will observe experienced mentor teachers teaching lessons, plan and teach lessons under the guidance of university faculty and classroom teachers, and work one-on-one and in small groups with students in their classrooms. This practice-immersive model for teacher education methods classes has been proven effective in preparing teachers to work with students from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds, including those who have been historically marginalized based on race, socioeconomic status, and language (Dutro, Cartun, Melnychenko, Haberl, & Williams, 2018; Kazemi, 2017).

The key to designing an effective practice-immersive literacy methods experience for WCU teacher candidates is developing a strong partnership and shared vision with the mentor teachers at Anderson Elementary School. Because the School District of Philadelphia is under-resourced, with a lack of professional development funds, class sizes of 35 students or more, and challenging building conditions, it is important that we compensate teachers for the time that they put into building this partnership and engaging in professional development towards a shared vision of high-quality literacy instruction. Research on similar programs has shown the importance of creating mutually beneficial relationships among school-based teachers and university faculty (Clark, Zygmunt, Clausen, Mucherah, & Tancock, 2015; Dutro, Cartun, Melnychenko, Haberl, & Williams, 2018; Kazemi, 2017). As opposed to typical field courses, this model requires more of mentor teachers in terms of engagement with both faculty and teacher candidates. We follow other promising programs in viewing classroom mentors as part of a community of teacher educators and it is therefore important to compensate them for their time and expertise. Similarly, teaching these courses in an integrated and embedded way is a significant expansion of our time and responsibility as faculty members in terms of both development and enactment.

The CISE program generally and PILE specifically addresses three themes and eight goals in the WCU Strategic Plan: Building on Excellence. Listed within each theme are the most relevant object.ve:s:
**Theme: Academies:** Goal 1: Assure Student Learning and Academic Excellence (Objectives, 1.3, 1.4); Goal 2: Strengthen the Academic Environment (Objectives 2.1, 2.5); Goal 3: Expand Academic Opportunities (Objective 3.3); Goal 4: Support Teaching Excellence (Objective 4.1.)

**Most Relevant Academics Objectives:** 1.3. Strengthen and develop academic programs which have proven effective or for which there is projected demand; 3.3. Establish opportunities for students to benefit from a WCU education through programs offered at off-site locations and in collaboration with other organizations; 4.1. Enhance learning by using/assessing new/traditional pedagogical methods.

**Theme: Diversity:** Goal 2: Support Diversity on Campus (Objective 2.2.)

**Most Relevant Diversity Objective:** 2.2. Continue to create/implement cultural awareness programs for faculty, staff and students which incorporate the needs and experiences of the diverse groups that make up the WCU community and to provide programs that will improve the campus climate as well as enhance the experience of all faculty, staff and students.

**Theme: Engagement:** Goal 1: Strengthen Academic, Co-curricular and Support Programs through Partnerships that Promote Learning, Outreach and Service (Objectives 1.3, 1.6); Goal 2: Increase Institutional Visibility and Reputation (Objective 2.1.); Goal 3: Expand Local Community Involvement (Objectives 3.1., 3.3, 3.4)

**Most Relevant Engagement Objectives:** 2.1. Strengthen WCU's regional, national and international visibility/reputation; 3.1. Pursue partnerships...promoting shared goals/visions; 3.4. Convene stakeholders to address local, national and international issues.

**Project Methods/Activities (25 points):** PILE implementation will include:

1. Select and identify two classroom teachers at Anderson with whom we will partner for the practice-immersive literacy methods courses. We will work with the principal of Anderson to find teachers who are interested in being PILE mentors and would be a strong fit for this program.
2. Conduct a pre-survey with mentors to determine their students' strengths and areas for growth, their own professional development needs, and the ways we can support their students' learning.
3. Meet with PILE mentors to develop a schedule for Friday literacy blocks that involves:
   a. Mentor teachers modeling lessons for WCU teacher candidates
   b. WCU candidates designing and teaching lessons with feedback to small groups of students under supervision of faculty and mentor teachers.
   c. Faculty teaching integrated literacy courses (EDR 307 and EDR 304) on-site at Anderson.
   d. WCU students working one-on-one with Anderson students as reading/writing buddies.
4. Provide professional development to PILE mentor teachers in literacy instruction. Purchase professional development materials.

**Timeline (10 points)**

**Spring 2019:** Work with the principal to identify teachers to be PILE mentors; Solic and Riley will visit their classrooms to get a feel for the classroom environment and develop relationships.

**June 2019:** Survey mentors to identify professional development they would like in literacy and/or what kinds of materials they believe would support their students' achievement. Survey topics will include: 1) Reasons for wanting to work with WCU students and faculty in PILE; 2) Perceptions of students' strengths/areas for growth in literacy and engagement during literacy instruction; 3) Desires for professional development; and 4) Materials that would benefit their work as literacy teachers/mentors.

**July/August 2019:** Co-design the practice-immersive literacy methods experience for WCU students. **August 2019:** 1) Purchase materials for practice-immersive literacy methods experience. 2) Pre-survey of WCU candidates, including questions about dispositions towards working with students from historically marginalized backgrounds based on race, socioeconomic status, language, and geography.
September-December 2019: Enact the practice-immersive literacy methods experience; meet with mentor teachers regularly before or after school.

December 2019: Post-survey of PILE mentors and WCU teacher candidates.

Outcomes (25 points):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PILE Goal</th>
<th>Outcome/Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop positive and trusting relationships with classroom teachers at Anderson who will support the development of WCU teacher candidates.</td>
<td>PILE mentor teachers decide to continue in Fall 2020; Conference presentation with PILE mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the professional development of Anderson teachers.</td>
<td>Pre/Post survey for PILE mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet the student learning outcomes of EDR 304 and EDR 307 in a practice-immersive format.</td>
<td>Regular SLO assessments, augmented with teacher-candidate survey data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop in WCU teacher-candidates an assets-based disposition towards students who have been marginalized based on race, socioeconomic status, geography, language.</td>
<td>Pre/post survey of teacher-candidates; Analysis of conceptual framework assignment, showing dispositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved student engagement in literacy in classrooms.</td>
<td>Pre/post survey of PILE mentor teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collaborative Effort (10 points): The CISE program is a collaborative effort between WCU faculty in three different departments; Anderson faculty, staff, administration, and students; and the Cobb’s Creek community. Drs. Riley and Solic will collaborate with Anderson teachers to design a practice-immersive literacy methods experience that is beneficial to Anderson students and WCU teacher candidates.

Plan for Sharing Project Results/Final Report (10 points):

CESW: We will share results from the first year of the CISE program, including PILE, in order to continually improve the program and to ultimately expand it to include a social work component and possibly more cohorts of students in the future.

WCU Community: With PILE mentors and WCU candidates, we will share results of our program at a WCU conference, such as the Frederick Douglass conference or Research and Creative Activity Day.

Local Community: Along with PILE mentor teachers and WCU teacher candidates, we will share results of our program at a local conference, such as the Ethnography Forum at UPenn.

Nationally: We will research the CISE program, which will include practitioner-research on PILE and present at national conferences, such as the American Education Research Association, the Literacy Research Association, and the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Internationally: We also plan to publish findings from this project in internationally-circulated journals such as the Journal of Teacher Education and Teaching and Teacher Education.

Works Cited:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Budget</th>
<th>Requested Grant Amount</th>
<th>Other Funding Sources</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personnel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty dual comp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley</td>
<td>359</td>
<td></td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solic</td>
<td>359</td>
<td></td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benefits at 16.94%</td>
<td>122</td>
<td></td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal (Personnel)</strong></td>
<td>840</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Operating Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials for Anderson students' &amp; WCU teacher candidates' classroom use</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300 from literacy dept</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies - materials for teachers</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Stipend 2 @ $500/each</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal (Operating Expenses)</strong></td>
<td>1160</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Costs</strong></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>2300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Budget Justification:

1. Personnel
Designing a practice-immersive methods course will take considerable faculty time that is above and beyond what is normally required for a typical field course. Since we will be collaborating closely with mentor teachers to deliver instruction within the context of an elementary classroom, faculty will need to meet with mentor teachers in the summer and throughout the semester in order to ensure a high-quality, integrated experience for WCU teacher candidates and the students at Anderson.

Drs. Solic and Riley will meet with Anderson mentors (approx. three 1 hour meetings) prior to the program starting, facilitating professional development based on their interests and needs (e.g., on writing or reading workshop, approximately 4-8 hours), and meeting regularly with the mentors before or after school (one hour, at least every other week during the semester, possibly weekly). We believe this level of collaboration, especially during the inaugural year, will be important in developing a high-quality and truly collaborative experience with the mentors that is built on trusting and mutually beneficial relationships.

$359 is a recognition of this extra time (17-24 hours), which because of the fully embedded nature of the program, will be ongoing and require us to invest in different ways than a typical methods class or a typical field class. It is not an hourly rate, per se, but a recognition of this work. It will be dispensed at the end of the semester.

2. Operating Expenses
Similarly, this model will require more from the mentor teachers at Anderson than is typically required of mentor teachers in a field course. The teachers will be opening their classroom - and their teaching practice - to a group of 20 students and 2 faculty members, and act as part of a team of teacher educators. They will meet regularly with West Chester faculty (see above) outside of their regular teaching responsibilities. To achieve this level of collaboration, it is important to compensate the teachers for time spent outside of the regular school day.

$500 is a recognition of this extra time (17-24 hours). It is not an hourly rate, per se, but a small recognition of this work. It will be dispensed at the end of the semester.

The Literacy Department will contribute $300 for materials that will be used by Anderson students and WCU teacher candidates. These materials will be selected together with the Anderson mentor teachers and possibly the WCU teacher candidates and will include multicultural children’s picture books that will be used during the reading and writing workshops for read-alouds, independent reading, writing mini-lessons, and shared reading. One of the main goals of this collaboration is teaching WCU candidates culturally relevant teaching practices, and having materials that offer students reflections of their own experiences is critical.

Materials for teachers will ensure that we are able to engage in professional development together (likely through shared reading of a book related to literacy education) so that we are all working from shared frameworks when working with students and teacher candidates. Therefore, professional development materials are needed ($160 for books and other materials for the teachers).
KATHLEEN RILEY  
243 South Saint Bernard Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143  
202-441-3383, riley.kathleen@gmail.com  

EDUCATION  

August 2012  Ph.D. Reading, Writing, and Literacy, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA  
May 2004  Master of Arts in Teaching, Elementary Education, American University, Washington, DC  
May 2001  Bachelor of Arts in English, African-American Studies minor, Colby College, Waterville, ME  

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS  

August 2013-present  West Chester University, College of Education and Social Work, West Chester, PA, Associate Professor (Assistant Professor August 2013- August 2018)  
Fall 2007-Spring 2012  University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education, Philadelphia, PA, Instructor, Field Work Supervisor, Research and Teaching Assistant  

SELECTED SCHOLARSHIP PRODUCTS  

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS  


SELECTED GRANTS  


Riley, K. (June 2014–June 2015). *Reading the World While Learning to Teach: Critical Perspectives on Literacy Methods*. West Chester University College of Education Dean’s Faculty Scholarship Grant. ($1,704.50)

Riley, K. & Solic, K. (June 2014–June 2015). *Bringing Undergraduate Teacher-Candidates into Activist Teacher Communities: An Undergraduate Urban Education Fellowship*. West Chester University College of Education Dean’s Faculty Scholarship Grant. ($1,965.00)

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED PRESENTATIONS


SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Review Board: Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, The New Educator, Journal of Teacher Education
- Founder, Urban Literacy Practicum, Fall 2015-present
- Co-Founder, Urban Education Fellowship, Spring 2015-Spring 2018
- Faculty Advisor, Student Outreach to Urban Schools, Fall 2015-present
- Member, Search Committee for Learning Specialist for Academic Development Program (ADP), Spring 2017
- Co-Chair, West Chester University Commission on the Status of Women, Fall 2016-present
- Advisory Board and Steering Committee Member, Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies (YES) Program (2014-present)
- Literacy Department Assessment Committee, Fall 2014-Spring 2016
- Member, Search Committee for Two Tenure-Track Literacy Faculty Positions, Fall 2016
- Committee Member, Pennsylvania NAME (National Association of Multicultural Education), Spring 2015
- Elected Representative, Faculty Senate, Fall 2017-present

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- **Boston Public Schools**, Boston, MA - Long-term Substitute, Fifth Grade, March 2013-June 2013
- **Newton Public Schools**, Newton, MA - Long-term Substitute, Third Grade, November 2012-February 2013
- **Penn Partnership Schools**, Philadelphia, PA - Professional Development Facilitator: Summer 2009
- **Fairfax County Public Schools**, Falls Church, VA - Teacher, Fourth Grade, Summer 2004-Spring 2007
- **District of Columbia Public Schools**, Washington, DC, Teacher, Fourth Grade, Fall 2002-Spring 2004
Kathryn Solic  
Associate Professor, West Chester University  
107E Recitation Hall, West Chester, PA 10383  
Office: 610.436.2545  
E-mail: ksolic@wcupa.edu  
Vitae last updated December 2018

EDUCATION

University of Tennessee, Theory and Practice in Teacher Education, Knoxville, TN  
Ph.D. in Teacher Education, Concentration in Literacy Studies, May 2011  
  • Dissertation: Teachers' Experiences with Comprehension Instruction in Upper Elementary Classrooms

University of Florida, School of Teaching and Learning, Gainesville, FL  
Master of Education in Reading Education, December 2004  
  • Alumni Graduate Fellowship Recipient

University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN  
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Hesburgh Program in Public Service minor, May 2003  
  • Summa Cum Laude  Phi Beta Kappa Inductee, Psi Chi Inductee

HONORS

2018 West Chester University Outstanding Academic Advisor Award  
2018 West Chester University Graduate Student Association Recognition Award  
2017 West Chester University Honors College Outstanding Faculty Member  
2012 Distinguished Finalist, Dissertation of the Year, International Literacy Association

EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor, 2018-present  
Literacy Department, College of Education and Social Work, West Chester University  
Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs Faculty Associate, Fall 2018-Spring 2019

Assistant Professor, 2013-2018  
Literacy Department, College of Education and Social Work, West Chester University  
Literacy Department Assessment Coordinator, Fall 2014-Spring 2017  
  • Oversee all aspects of departmental assessment system, including all program reporting.

Adjunct Instructor, 2012-2013  
Literacy Department, College of Education and Social Work, West Chester University  
  • Teaching Language Arts 4-8 (EDR 306)  
  • Foundations in Reading 4-8 (EDR 308)  
  • Literacy Practicum and Seminar II (EDR 532)

Adjunct Instructor, 2007-2011  
Department of Teacher Education, School of Education, Indiana University South Bend  
  • Assessment in Schools (Graduate)  
  • Introduction to Research (Graduate)

SELECT PUBLICATIONS


**SELECT RESEARCH GRANTS**

Principal Investigator. Solic, K. (2014-2015). *Struggling Readers' Perceptions of Executive Function Based Reading Comprehension Instruction.* One-year research grant funded by PASSHE Faculty Professional Development Council. $6,276.00.


**SELECT PRESENTATIONS**


**SELECT WCU SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

Member. Carnegie Community Engagement Reclassification Core Team; Chair of Faculty sub-group

Member, Associate Director of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs Search Committee

Co-Facilitator, The Community Immersive Semester for Educators, College of Education and Social Work

Co-Facilitator, Urban Education Fellowship Program, College of Education and Social Work

Acting Associate Facilitator, Council of Professional Education

Assessment and Accreditation Committee Chair, Council of Professional Education