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Doc 9 Research Forum Abstracts

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National Louis University

Adult and Continuing Education

DOC-9 — Research Conference

April 10-12, 2015

Chicago Campus—2nd Floor Atrium

In this research conference, members of the 2015 ACE Doctoral Cohort (Doc-9) will present their research for public review and discussion.

These presentations are a formal component of the Critical Engagement Project—a sustained and critical inquiry.

Through their Critical Engagement Project, doctoral students infuse their dissertation with a critical sense of self, their commitments, and their vision of both self and the world they seek to build through their inquiries.



Friday, April 10, 2015

- 6:00-6:10 Refreshments
- 6:10-6:15 Dr. Tom Heaney: Opening Remarks
- 6:15-7:00 Wilson Cain, III
Storycatchers Theatre: An Investigation of Arts Education as Social Change Agent
- 7:00-7:15 Break
- 7:15-8:00 Eniola Tammy Lynn Burton-Smith
Giving Voice to the Fear: Preparing to Properly Care for Female Service Members and Veterans with Mental Health Concerns Related to Sexual Trauma in Service
- 8:00-8:15 Break
- 8:15-9:00 Arshi Rizwani-Nisley
Helping Students L.E.A.P. Ahead: Literacy Education in an Accelerated Pathway A Redesigned Developmental English Program
- 9:00-9:10 Closing Presentation

Saturday, April 11, 2015

- 8:30-9:10 Continental Breakfast
- 9:10-9:15 Dr. Randee Lipson Lawrence: Opening Remarks
- 9:15-10:00 David S. Noffs
Resonating Frequencies of a Virtual Learning Community: An Ethnographic Case Study of Online Faculty Development
- 10:00-10:15 Break
- 10:15-11:00 La Tonia Nyela Wells
Understanding White Privilege and Intellectual Racism in K-12: An African Philosophical Perspective
- 11:00-11:15 Break

- 11:15-12:00 John LittleJohn Jr.
Failure Was Not an Option: The Lived Experiences of African American Male Graduates in Doctoral Programs at Historical Black Universities and Predominately White Universities
- 12:00-1:10 Lunch Break
- 1:10-1:15 Dr. Derise Tolliver-Atta: Opening Remarks
- 1:15-2:00 SMSgt Russell S. Lowe, USAF (Retired)
Military Resilience and Transformation: The Challenges faced by Military Veterans of the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan during the Transition from Combat to Civil Society
- 2:00-2:15 Break
- 2:15-3:00 Adrienne C. Smith (Aziza)
Giving Voice to African American Women's Authentic Lived Experiences with Race, Education and Training Activities in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program: A Narrative Inquiry
- 3:00-3:15 Break
- 3:15-4:00 Angela Brown Burke
Learning to Work Together: A Phenomenological Approach to Understanding Participation
- 4:00-4:15 Break
- 4:15-5:00 Donald J. Gautreaux
A Change of Habit: An Autoethnographic Study on the Midlife Career Transitioning from Trade Worker to Teacher in Higher Education
- 5:00-5:10 Closing Presentation

Sunday, April 12, 2015

- 8:30-9:10 Continental Breakfast
- 9:10-9:15 Dr. Tom Fox: Opening Remarks
- 9:15-10:00 Jonathan Tucker
"An Other Place": Stories of Adult Education in the Universal Deep South
- 10:00-10:15 Break

- 10:15-11:00 Maribel Lopez and Joan Richards
Estrellas Fugaces—Latinas Inspiring Latinas to Prevail
- 11:00-11:15 Break
- 11:15-12:00 Felicia L. Townsend
The Stages of Training Transfer: What Should be Emphasized When? A Multiple Case Study Examining the Factors that Hinder and/or Support Training Transfer
- 12:00-12:15 Break
- 12:15-1:00 Billie Laminta Poe
Bringing Awareness to the Barriers Causing the Lack of Parent Involvement in the Chicago Public Schools: A Qualitative Case Study
- 1:00-1:10 Closing Presentation



Wilson Cain, III

Storycatchers Theatre: An Investigation of Arts Education as Social Change Agent

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Ranee Lipson Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University
Jennifer Berlinda Thompson, Ph.D., Columbia College Chicago

Through the theoretical frame of transformative learning, this research investigates the Chicago-based Storycatchers Theatre Company's arts programming for court involved and incarcerated youth. The conceptual frame of arts-based methodology highlights the intersectional and multilayered aspects of the program. Qualitative Crystallization analytical methodology supports the rigorous analysis of the collected data through a multigenre lens, which provides richly detailed analysis of the programming and its participants. Storycatchers Theatre encourages participants to tell their stories through writing, performance and production. The participants are assisted in the development of the performative texts by a staff of teaching artists associated with the theatre. The program provides a platform that addresses past and current traumatic experiences, and supports a narrative, which encompasses issues of healing, agency, and life skills.

Eniola Tammy Lynn Burton-Smith

Giving Voice to the Fear: Preparing to Properly Care for Female Service Members and Veterans with Mental Health Concerns Related to Sexual Trauma in Service

Ranee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Tom Fox, Ed.D., National Louis University
Deborah E.K. Matos-Lowe, Ed.D., National Louis University
Dorcas McLaughlin, Ph.D., RN, CP, PMHCNS-BC, Saint Louis University School of Nursing,
Webster University

“As if it wasn't bad enough I had to duck and dodge bullets and missiles all day every day, I had to go and get raped.”

The Department of Defense claims a zero tolerance for sexual assaults yet the numbers have continued to increase incrementally over the past decade. This research engagement is a conversation about how women experience their bodies post sexual assault that is very different from how it is viewed in the absence of the violation. The experience of being sexually assaulted is traumatic and disparaging and can cause the victim to undergo physical, psychosocial/emotional injury. The experience for each individual is as different as the person

themselves. No two perceptions will manifest identically and the methods for managing the symptomology will be as varied as the trauma. The purpose of this study is to inform future theory, practice and policy related to promoting mental and emotional wellbeing among female Service members and Veterans who have been exposed to the trauma of a sexual assault during their Military service. It will provide insight into the challenges and unmet needs of female Service members and Veterans who have been sexually assaulted during their Military careers and inform the greater social consciousness of the community.

“Our experiences are the most direct path to understanding. What they took from us is of Great value!”

Arshi Rizwani-Nisley

Helping Students L.E.A.P. Ahead: Literacy Education in an Accelerated Pathway - A Redesigned Developmental English Program

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University

Joe Schaffer, Ed.D., Laramie County Community College

This comparative, multi-case study examined which of three innovative developmental English curriculum models would best promote the retention and the persistence rates of students at Laramie County Community College (LCCC).

Each year, almost eight million students enroll in a community college. Unfortunately, almost 60% of these students do not have college level reading, writing, or math skills. Because these students may have to spend several semesters in non-credit courses, only about 22% graduate with a degree within six years.

To address this completion issue, a Task Force of faculty and staff at LCCC examined inventive developmental English models around the country. After several site visits, the Task Force created a unique model combining aspects of two best-practice models to create a one semester long program called L.E.A.P. (Literacy Education in an Accelerated Pathway).

This qualitative study accomplished the following three goals:

- (1) Research and examine alternative methods of providing developmental instruction.
- (2) Design a new developmental English model.
- (3) Develop a comprehensive plan for implementation.

David S. Noffs

Resonating Frequencies of a Virtual Learning Community: An Ethnographic Case Study of Online Faculty Development

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Ranee Lipson Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University
Anne Becker, Ed.D., Columbia College Chicago

Despite opportunities for artist educators to locate their practice in online learning environments, many remain reluctant to embrace virtual classrooms. As schools are being forced to create an increasing array of online courses, administrators are reluctant or unable to provide additional resources for equipping faculty with the skills needed to support online course development. Specific guidelines to train faculty how to teach online are often fragmented or local. Programs that demonstrate the ability to grow vibrant and connected online cultures may help guide future faculty development.

The Virtual Learning Community (VLC) Fellowship program at Columbia College Chicago supports informal, faculty led online communities in an arts-based institution historically resistant to online instruction. The author will present findings from an Ethnographic Case Study of the VLC program that questions how professional faculty development and learning occurs in these settings within the frameworks of connectivism and transformative learning.

La Tonia Nyela Wells

Understanding White Privilege and Intellectual Racism in K-12: An African Philosophical Perspective

Derise Tolliver-Atta, Ph.D., DePaul University, Primary Advisor
Thomas Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University
Carole Lund, Ed.D., Alaska Pacific University

This study seeks to examine the manifestations of white privilege and intellectual racism in K-12 education. The purpose of this single case study is to interpret in what ways the beliefs; attitudes and behaviors of White teachers of African American students are influenced by white privilege and intellectual racism.

The research design was an Africentric qualitative single case study that focused on the experiences of five White teachers in urban schools. The Africentric Paradigm was utilized as the theoretical framework. Research questions that guided the study were as follows: 1) What assumptions and beliefs do White teachers hold of their African American students that manifest in their interactions with them, 2) In what way does how and what White teachers teach their predominately African American students reflect intellectual racism, 3) In what ways do teacher education programs prepare White teachers to teach a culturally diverse student body, more specifically African American students, and 4) In what ways do White teachers see white

privilege as impactful in the education of African American students? The data collection instruments used were interviews and document analysis.

For more information about this Critical Engagement Project contact: nwells501@gmail.com

John LittleJohn Jr.

Failure Was Not an Option: The Lived Experiences of African American Male Graduates in Doctoral Programs at Historical Black Universities and Predominately White Universities

Derise Tolliver-Atta, Ph.D., DePaul University, Primary Advisor

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University

Reginald C. Jackson, Ed.D., University of Chicago

Various forms of racism are among the most pressing and complex issues faced by African American males in American higher education. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to compare the lived experiences of African American male doctoral graduates from historical Black universities (HBCUs) and predominately White universities (PWIs), their encounters with racism, and factors that contributed to the overall success for their attainment of a doctoral degree.

In this comparative case study, six men were interviewed to discuss the effects of intellectual, institutional, and individual racism, and factors that promoted their success to graduate. The theoretical framework of Africentrism, which addressed coping mechanisms, selfethnic identity, and the theory of selfethnic reflectors and Critical Race Theory (CRT), which addressed the negative impact of marginalization-isolation, racial oppression, and microaggressions informed this study, and were used to analyze the data obtained from these interviews.

Several findings emerged from the research such as (1) some forms of covert and overt racism continue to be evident at PWIs, and not at HBCUs for the participants interviewed; (2) effective coping strategies were developed over time, as it is critical to maintain a positive mental psyche and remain focused; and (3) failure was never an option from the very beginning of the participants academic journey, which is a standard of excellence and a key aspect of an African-centered paradigm.

For more information about this Critical Engagement Project contact:

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SMSgt Russell S. Lowe, USAF (Retired)

Military Resilience and Transformation: The Challenges faced by Military Veterans of the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan during the Transition from Combat to Civil Society

Randee Lipson Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University
David Shostak, Ph.D.
Deborah Matos-Lowe, Ed.D., National Louis University (Doc-7)

This presentation will discuss the major transitions in military life experienced by veterans of the most recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These transitions include the reintegration challenges that deployed military members encounter as they blend back into family, community, church, and a peacetime setting, from the war-zone to a civilian career and lifestyle. While most military personnel are resilient and have the ability to recover under the difficult circumstances associated with combat, such as experiences and exposure to traumatic situations, many of them also experience problems handling stress over the months and sometimes years of transitioning from the war-zone to civil society.

This study highlights the correlation of transformational learning and its relationship to military resiliency. The methodology used in this study includes a unique and new process of data collection and data analysis that was developed by the researcher, which will also be discussed during this presentation.

Adrienne C. Smith (Aziza)

Giving Voice to African American Women's Authentic Lived Experiences with Race, Education and Training Activities in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program: A Narrative Inquiry

Derise Tolliver-Atta, Ph.D., DePaul University, Primary Advisor
Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University
Vanessa Sheared, Ed.D., California State University

African American women, welfare, and education and training are the focus of this research. Narrative Inquiry methodology was used to explore this qualitative study and the Womanist Epistemology Perspective lens was used for analysis. This study gives voice to African American women who have used the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Their stories highlight marginalization and oppression in access and utilization of the education and training activities in the temporary assistance program, capturing the women's experiences from a polyrhythmic standpoint. In order for social welfare programs to be effective, women need personal development and quality adult education and training programs.

Welfare reform has been discussed at length but women on temporary assistance are rarely invited to participate in the development or modification of policies. Thus, policymakers and caseworkers consistently misrepresent them. My findings show that education and training

matters to women receiving temporary assistance, but the bridge from training programs to work is too short and does not transition them off welfare.

Questions guiding this research include: What are the *authentic* lived experiences of African American women in temporary assistance? How do labels influence the way women understand their worth? What kind of choices do women have to seek employment or education and training programs? And how are they informed?

Angela Brown Burke

Learning to Work Together: A Phenomenological Approach to Understanding Participation

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University

Basil Wilson, Ph.D., King Graduate School, Monroe College

Glenda Simms, Ph.D., Simms' Consulting

No longer can policy makers, social workers and community development organizations make decisions without taking into consideration the impact on local residents. At the same time they struggle with being able to effectively engage community members. This study examines the meaning of participation as experienced by five participants, members of two participatory groups, working together to find ways of arriving at solutions to the problems they face.

The phenomenological study reveals that important aspects of their experience and concept of effective participation revolve around the pursuit of a process where persons feel valued and motivated to participate, where differences are not a reason for conflict and where the facilitator and the process allow individuals to learn to be more inclusive through their interaction. There is no single recipe for effective participation. Some ingredients have been identified but the actual recipe will depend on who is involved, their expectations and priorities, the objectives of the exercise, the issue being discussed and cultural practices among other factors.

Donald J. Gautreaux

A Change of Habit: An Autoethnographic Study on the Midlife Career Transitioning from Trade Worker to Teacher in Higher Education

Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Randee Lipson Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University

Deborah Matos-Lowe, Ed.D., National Louis University (Doc-7)

Liliam Perez, Ed.D., National Louis University (Doc-8)

Eugene Rinaldi, Ed.D., National Louis University (Doc-1)

This study is about the transformative learning experiences of four people—mine included—who have transitioned from the labor trades into teaching in higher education during the middle years of their life. Although midlife career change often occurs between people of different professional backgrounds, transitioning from the labor trades into teaching is not a widespread practice among trade workers. The conventional belief is that those working in the labor trades are members of the working class—the electrician, the firefighter, the general contractor—and their occupations identify who they are and who they will remain to be. Fortunately, that has changed and many colleges and universities have designed and developed innovative non-traditional adult learning curriculums that offer an opportunity to those coming from the labor trades who are interested in teaching in higher education as a second career.

While thinking about a topic to write for a critical engagement project, I reflected on my own midlife career transition, and I was curious in finding out if there were others who had undergone a similar midlife career change as I already had accomplished. I began to research this phenomenon through reading literature and by inquiring information from former co-workers and colleagues. In my search, I found three participants who were willing to share their personal experiences as part of this study. This autoethnographic reflection will describe how we former trade workers have transitioned into and contributed to the field of Adult Education with our knowledge and experiential learnings.

Jonathan Tucker

“An Other Place”: Stories of Adult Education in the Universal Deep South

Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University

Ian Stronach, Ph.D., University of Manchester

Four of the five states that share the lowest tier in American rankings for median income, education, and wealth distribution are located in the Deep South. These three categories are inter-locked, meaning that each one is both a cause and effect of the other two.

An Other Place tells the stories of adult education students in Louisiana, Mississippi, and East Africa, interlacing them amongst themselves, erasing boundary lines of place, policy, and history. These stories are also woven in and out of the author’s experiences both in and out of the classroom, both with the students and within the policies and budgets that dictate who “learns” and who doesn’t.

Stories of students and the author are then juxtaposed with blues lyrics, newspaper articles, and excerpts from popular poetry and fiction, all primary sources that attempt to paint a truer, more beautiful picture of an American region that deserves to be painted in a more realistic *and humane* picture, rather than just one or the other.

Maribel Lopez and Joan Richards
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Estrellas Fugaces—Latinas Inspiring Latinas to Prevail

Randee Lipson Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Tom Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University

Yolanda Nieves, Ed.D., Wilbur Wright College

Milk Ramirez, Ph.D., Northeastern Illinois University

This is a collaborative research study using Narrative Inquiry to understand the lives of Latina women who have successfully completed an Associate's Degree/Certificate, or greater, and are working in their field of study. We studied the lived experiences of Latina women to have an understanding as to the factors that were barriers and the strategies that contributed to them reaching academic success. We have used our research to design a performance that will inspire Latinas to pursue college and to persevere through adversity to attain their education. The performance may also reach a broader audience in school systems, such as guidance counseling professionals, teachers, and the individuals who can and do support Latinas in the attainment of their education.

We chose feminist theory as our theoretical framework. Some feminist theoreticians propose that women of color are triply oppressed by their race, class, and gender. Familial obligations including care of spouse and children, having to work to support the family, community obligations, weigh on women of color in greater ways. In addition, women may not have had role models or support systems to show them a value to continuing their education.

Felicia L. Townsend

The Stages of Training Transfer: What Should be Emphasized When? A Multiple Case Study Examining the Factors that Hinder and/or Support Training Transfer

G. Thomas Fox, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Thomas Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University

Mark E. Rodgers, DSW, Marywood University

This multiple case study addressed the factors that hinder and/or support training transfer before, during, and after training in two different organizations: a small private university and a governmental agency. Studying these two organizations served as a foundation to understanding how different types of organizations perceive and address learning and transfer as related to four key variables: supervisor support, transfer climate, opportunity to perform, and post-training job aids.

Through exploring different aspects of organizational theory, the study examined organizational structures, organizational cultures, and organizational communications and how they shape our understanding of the ways employees behave and respond to training and transfer within their institutions. Having a clear understanding of how one's work environment impacts training transfer at various stages of the transfer process will assist adult educators, future researchers, and supervisors create and implement effective pre and post transfer strategies.

Billie Laminta Poe

Bringing Awareness to the Barriers Causing the Lack of Parent Involvement in the Chicago Public Schools: A Qualitative Case Study

Dr. Randee Lipson Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Dr. Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University

Dr. Wendy Yanow Ed.D.

The primary purpose of this study was to bring awareness to the barriers that are causing the lack of parent involvement in The Chicago Public Schools. Data was collected from parents, teachers, principal, one focus group, field notes and observations. In conducting this study, four conceptions were highlighted: 1. Balancing time between work, chores and school; 2. Lack of communication; 3. Academic challenges and 4. Strategies promoting parent involvement. One concept does not negate the other of its importance, however, out of the four concepts; the one that stood out the most was communication. In my opinion, communication sets the tone and the Obie once of the school. I believe that effective communication is the beginning of healing miss-communications and obtaining understanding, which in fact could lead to positive collaborations among the triads (parents, teachers and principals).

In addition, our children are a product of their own environment; meaning, that the behavior children demonstrate in the community or at home; are brought into the classrooms. It is our responsibility, as educators, to channel that behavior whether good or bad into teachable moments. We are to nurture the holistic child and that includes empowering the parents, as well as the community. I believe that the voices of the parents must be heard in order to create ways and means of bridging the gap of parent involvement.