

**TLAC Conference Grant Program
Application for Grant
November 1, 2016**

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Conference: American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference
Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices Special Interest Group
April 27 – May 1, 2017
San Antonio, TX

Professional Information

In the fall of 2011, I joined the faculty at NMU as a full-time Assistant Professor for secondary literacy in the School of Education, Leadership and Public Service; this August (2016), I was promoted to Associate. My first five years at NMU have been a fantastic time of growth and accomplishment in the scholarship of teaching. I have taught 25 (and counting) new (to me) courses and have collaborated with numerous colleagues and local teachers in order to research the scholarship of teaching. Since 2011, each annual review of my performance documents that both my teaching and my research have been evaluated as “exceeding expectations”; this accomplishment is, in part, is due to the reciprocal nature of my teaching and scholarship. Nevertheless, as a still-new faculty member, I still have much to learn—especially as my teaching responsibilities and research lines continue to expand and to interconnect.

Statement of Need and Goals

I am presently at a critical point for growth in my teaching and research responsibilities. In May of 2014, I took on the role of leading a formal partnership between NMU and a local high school in order to collaboratively prepare secondary-level teacher candidates and to develop ways to meet new (2013) CAEP accreditation standards for field-based teacher preparation. This partnership has successfully completed the pilot stage and is now in the “sustain and generate” stage of the NCATE (2010) continuum for partnership development—a time of systemic changes in policy and practice between partnering institutions. Keeping abreast of the national conversation about the new accreditation expectations and knowledge of best practices for clinical partnerships are essential for continuing develop and to refine this clinical partnership as a vital component of our teacher education program. In August of 2014, I also took on the role of the coordinator for the graduate reading program; this role includes teaching new (to me) graduate online courses for K-12 educators and aspiring literacy. My teaching and research experience is couched in *secondary (grades 6-12) education*; my new roles implore me to prepare elementary (K-8) educators and literacy specialists (k-12) through coursework, program coordination, research, and mentoring students to become professional leaders. My need for

professional learning is still great in relationship to this role. Additionally, between 2014-2016, in my new role within the graduate reading programs, I have chaired six thesis committees for students who studied educational practices in K-12 and university contexts. Attending and presenting at the American Educational Research Association Conference will enable me to deepen and broaden both my knowledge and scholarship of teaching. More specifically, attending the conference will (1) help me to prepare to teach new courses, and (2) it will provide me with a venue for sharing findings from a year-long study focused on the scholarship of teaching. It is with these goals in mind that I respectfully submit this application for a 2016 TLAC Conference Grant.

Conference Information

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) is a national organization focused on impacting education through scholarship in education. The annual conference is one of the largest and most prestigious venues for disseminating educational research and the practical implications of research findings. Within this national organization, the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) is an international special interest group (SIG) determined to “inform and rethink teaching and teacher education by studying practice-varied educational settings and methodologies” (<http://www.aera.net/SIG109/Self-Study-of-Teacher-Education-Practices>). Rooted in post-modern and feminist thinking (LaBoskey, 2004), self-study methodology intends to both inform the researchers and to generate knowledge that can be shared both within and beyond the professional discourse community. While self-study research does not aim to prove answers to education phenomena, it does aim to guide teacher educators to be researchers who explore and challenge their assumptions with the purpose of improving their understanding and practice of teaching (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). The S-STEP special interest group holds its annual meeting and a research panel presentation at the AERA conference. I have selected to attend, the broader AERA conference and the S-STEP conference strand for four reasons:

- 1) Attending previous (2012-2016) AERA conferences and S-STEP meetings (2015-2016) has been instrumental to developing my teaching, my scholarship of teaching, and my professional development as a newly-elected executive officer in the S-STEP SIG;
- 2) I desire to broaden my understanding of and immediate ability to teach new reading courses (ED 517 and ED 575) during the 2016-2017 academic year (and beyond);
- 3) I am actively working to continue to develop the undergraduate and graduate reading programs in the School of Education and through a partnership with a local school; and
- 4) I, along with two colleagues, will be presenting findings from a year-long research study on the scholarship of teaching and learning at this 2017 conference. Sharing my research and participating in critical conversations with other teacher educators will also contribute to my professional development, knowledge of teacher education, and development of courses in the reading program.

The 2017 AERA Conference will be held in San Antonio, TX, and the theme is “Knowledge to Action: Achieving the Promise of Equal Educational Opportunity.” This year’s AERA keynote speakers and concurrent sessions will bring expertise and the most recent research related to fostering partnerships between Institutions of Higher Education and K-12 schools; expertise in preparing K-12 teachers to teach best-practices for reading in urban and suburban classrooms; expertise in disciplinary literacy strategy instruction, and expertise in research on the intersection of culture, literacy and learning. Each of these topics is an excellent fit for my professional development and for my co-researchers and I to disseminate scholarship related empowering all learners through multimodal teaching and learning in the online environment. With the aforementioned in mind, my goals for the 2017 AERA conference include:

- 1) garnering research on best-practice pedagogy for teaching practicing elementary teachers to teach reading in diverse classrooms (a still-new area for me, as my teaching experience is in preparing secondary education students);
- 2) acquiring methods and research-derived insights related to partnerships between Institutions of Higher Education and K-12 schools; and
- 3) presenting research focused on the scholarship of teaching.

This year’s AERA Conference and S-STEP meeting promise to be instrumental in my continued professional development, my teaching, and my work with prospective and practicing teachers.

Presenting Scholarship of Teaching at the Conference. At the 2017 AERA Conference, my co-researchers (two NMU colleagues) and I will be presenting our research to an international audience of teacher educators through the S-STEP SIG. The title of our research presentation is: “Exploring Use of Multimodal Literacies in Academically Diverse Online Classrooms: Creating Opportunity, Access, and Ownership.” As a group of three teacher educators representing literacy, educational leadership, and special education, we conducted a self-study of our teacher education pedagogy in the online environment with the guiding question of: “How can we use multimodal literacies to re-see our practices and to empower others to construct and to communicate meaning?” Our purpose was to explore the “pedagogic potentials of multimodal literacy” (Walsh, 2009) by acting upon recent findings from our longitudinal, collaborative self-study into how we use and learn through visual literacy; acting on our findings, we sought to extend our line of inquiry and to more inclusively empower learners to negotiate and to make meaning through multimodal literacy practices (Eisner 1998; Langer, 2011).

Post-Conference Plans. When I return from the 2017 AERA Conference, I will meet with my colleagues in the School of Education, Leadership, and Public Service to share and critically discuss ideas and resources gathered at the conference during our bi-monthly literacy meetings. My learning will also be shared with my NMU graduate and undergraduate students both directly through course experiences and indirectly as my acquired knowledge guides my planning for teaching four new courses and continuing to improve the courses I already teach. In the months following presenting and discussing our research at the 2017 conference, my co-

researchers and I will write a manuscript for publication. Finally, pedagogical knowledge, skills, ideas, resources and research garnered from my attendance at the conference will be shared with local teachers as I continue to work with practicing and prospective K-12 teachers, and as I continue to develop a literacy-centered pedagogy through a university-school partnership.

In summary, I believe my presentation and attendance at the 2017 American Educational Research Association Annual Conference and the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices research panel presentation will both bolster and expand my knowledge and skills as I continue to develop the undergraduate secondary education literacy program, as I sustain and deepen my role as a teacher education partner with Marquette Senior High School, and as I expand my teaching responsibilities to include online graduate literacy courses and literacy courses in the elementary education program. I also believe that the changes I implement into my teaching immediately after the conference will make meaningful contributions to the scholarship of teaching for the community teachers and the prospective teachers whom I teach. Thank you for considering this grant application.

Budget (estimated expenses)

Airfare	550
Lodging	500 (5 nights; shared accommodations)
Ground Transportation	50
Meals	190
Conference Fee	400
Total	\$1,690*

*I am requesting **\$1500** from the TLAC Conference Grant Program. If awarded, the grant will be used to help defray the cost of attending the American Educational Research Association Conference. Additional expenses may be paid out of pocket, although I may request up to \$200 supplemental funding from my department.

**Further information about the American Educational Research Association Conference may be found at , <http://www.aera.net/Events-Meetings> and information about the S-STEP SIG may be found <http://www.aera.net/SIG109/Self-Study-of-Teacher-Education-Practices>. Please note that the list of executive officers has not been updated.

***Please see the additional Curriculum Vita attachment and attached copy of my previously submitted report from my 2014 TLAC grant award.

References

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- LaBoskey, V. K. (2004). The methodology of self-study and its theoretical underpinnings. In Loughran, J. J., Hamilton, M. L., LaBoskey, V. K., & Russell, T. (Eds.), *International handbook of self-study practices, part two* (pp. 817-869). Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
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