

Appendix

CEHD Grant Application Form

Submit this application form by one of the following due dates along with your proposal. Applications must be received, at tate-center@wmich.edu, by 5:00 p.m. on August 15, November 15, March 15, and June 15.

Application					
Applicant Name:	Elizabeth Isidro				
Title:	Assistant Professor of Literacy Studies				
Department:	Special Education and Literacy Studies				
Title of Proposal:	Virtual Tutoring: Fully Preparing Literacy Pre-Service Teachers for the Real World of Teaching				
Amount Requested:	\$1,887.90				
Dates of Project:	July 6, 2020 - September 30, 2020				
Evaluation Guidelines					
Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Undecided 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1	
The proposed research/creative activity is well conceived and organized.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	4	3	2	1
The proposed work will increase the likelihood that the applicant will secure external funding in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	4	3	2	1
The methods and/or procedures are clearly stated and appropriate for the proposed activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	4	3	2	1
The plans for data analysis or evaluation critique are clearly stated and appropriate for the proposed activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	4	3	2	1
The costs for the proposed budget are clearly itemized and justified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	4	3	2	1
This project has the potential to advance the scholarly/creative reputation of WMU.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	4	3	2	1

Virtual Tutoring: Fully Preparing Literacy Pre-Service Teachers for the Real World of Teaching

Background and Purpose of the Proposed Study

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed large issues in education never before imagined. During the past months, long-term school closures has left teachers scrambling to provide online learning though without sufficient training, support, and resources to do the work (UNESCO, 2020). This phenomenon points to the need not just in helping in-service teachers effectively teach K-12 students virtually, but more so, in preparing pre-service teachers (PSTs) to teach virtually to meet the demands of teaching in a technologically-driven society (Moore-Hayes, 2011; Trumble, 2016) and in the face of future teaching-learning disruptions (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Toquero, 2020).

Unfortunately, this work becomes quite challenging due to constraints such as (1) limited research base, (2) the lack of holistic and integrated curricula, and (3) the absence of virtual teaching experiences for PSTs to learn to connect the teaching of content, pedagogy and technology. First, while research abound on the effectiveness of distance learning, instructional approaches, and learning outcomes in online settings in higher education institutions (Ko & Rossen, 2004; Nilson & Goodson, 2017), there is scant research in discipline-specific online pedagogical practices (e.g., best practices for online teaching of reading comprehension online) (Pytash & O'Byrne, 2014). Additionally, within teacher preparation programs, PSTs are traditionally taught to incorporate technology in classrooms through a stand-alone technology course however there is also a need to merge content and pedagogy with technology within coursework of the different methods classes (Luo, Hibbard, Franklin, & Moore, 2017). Third, PSTs may have opportunities to connect content, pedagogy, and technology but these opportunities are provided within in-person field placements exclusively, depriving them of chances to apply content, pedagogy, and technology in virtual environments.

One way to overcome these constraints is to start affording PSTs the opportunity to implement instructional activities in virtual environments within specific disciplines and methods courses (with no intention of replacing in-person field experiences). For example, in literacy teacher education, PSTs may be given opportunities to teach K-12 students in virtual environments (Groenke, 2008; Ortlieb, Sargent, & Moreland, 2014) for them to understand what and how literacy instructional activities can be implemented in virtual environments. Additionally, what success and challenges might they face when implementing literacy instructional activities in virtual environments? Studying PSTs' virtual literacy teaching experiences is important because of the central role of experience in learning to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Korthagen, 2001; Zeichner, 2010) whether it would be in traditional classrooms or virtual environments.

The purpose of this study is to investigate PSTs' instructional activities in virtual environments and their experiences of implementing literacy teaching activities. This study is framed within a transformative pedagogy of multiliteracies, where texts and literacy practices are redefined to include *multimodal* ways of communicating and meaning making (i.e., visual, audio, spatial, behavioral, and gestural modes) (New London Group, 1996). Literacy educators and students are viewed as *active participants* of social change and *designers* of meaning based on the different modes of communication. Given this, components of pedagogy include *situated practice* (or experience), *overt instruction* (explicit metalanguage), *critical framing* (considering the social context and purpose), and *transformed practice* (where students become designers of

their own future learning). Thus, following this view, PSTs are viewed to have a sense of agency “to create a more productive, relevant, innovative, creative, and even, perhaps, emancipatory pedagogy” (Kalantzis, Cope, and Cloonan, 2010, p. 72).

Methods

A. Research Design

This study will utilize a case study approach to arrive at in-depth descriptions of PSTs’ literacy instructional activities and experiences in instructional implementation within virtual environments. This study is bound by one literacy methods course offered during the Summer II 2020 session as the context of the study and PSTs’ virtual literacy teaching activities and experiences as the object of study (Creswell and Poth, 2018).

This study will be framed by the following research questions:

1. What literacy instructional activities can PSTs implement in a virtual environment?
2. What are PSTs’ teaching experiences when implementing literacy instructional activities to K-8 students virtually?

B. Participants

Participants of this study will include PSTs who are WMU-CEHD undergraduate students of the Elementary Education Program. These PSTs are enrolled in a literacy course as part of their program requirements. In this course, TCs will be learning to design and teach literacy lessons to K-8 students virtually as part of their practicum experience in the course. The course instructor is a literacy studies faculty member. My role, as the McGinnis Reading Center Director, is to recruit K-8 students and provide digital literacy instructional materials (e.g., assessment forms, digital texts). Maximum variation sampling (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993) will be conducted to maximize the range of perspectives that can be obtained from and about the cases. In this regard, four or five participants will be an ideal number to perform a sound cross-case analysis (Yin, 2014).

C. Data Collection

HSIRB approval will be secured and consent letters will be collected from the TCs who are willing to participate in the study. Situated within a naturalistic inquiry, participants will engage in a series of virtual literacy lessons with an assigned student (K-8) registered for tutoring through the WMU McGinnis Reading Center. Data sources for this study will primarily include:

1. Semi-structured participant interviews (after grades are due) regarding virtual teaching experience, each approximately lasting between 45-60 minutes (transcribed)
2. Video recordings of PSTs’ virtual teaching/lessons (only 2 lessons out of a total of 6 will be transcribed due to budget limits)

These data sources will be triangulated with other pertinent data sources such as course instructor’s/ researcher’s observation notes of PSTs’ teaching (live virtual observations), pre—and post- course survey (e.g., demographics, expectations about the course, online learning and teaching experiences) and photos of K-8 student learning artifacts.

D. Data Analysis

Video recordings and interviews will be transcribed. Formal data analysis will begin with an organization of the data files by type. This will be followed by a careful reading of each data source and creation of notes on page margins to form initial codes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). With

the triangulation of the different data sources (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the codes will later be analyzed and collapsed into bigger categories as basis for patterns or themes emerging from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Anticipated Outcomes and Plans for Continuing Research

The results of this study have the potential to benefit different stakeholders in the following ways: (1) inform curriculum and instruction of literacy teacher educators as they try to prepare PSTs to teach literacy instructional activities to elementary students not just in face-to-face but also in virtual spaces; (2) contribute to the emerging research base on literacy teacher preparation that focuses on discipline-specific online practices when teaching literacy in virtual environments; (3) inform (in part) decisions of policy makers in higher education and state departments in creating systems and structures as well as resources that are facilitative of positive experiences and potential instructional activities for virtual teaching within university-based teacher preparation programs, and (4) benefit K-8 students who will receive free virtual literacy lessons facilitated by the PSTs in the study.

This base-line level research will be extended to focus on more specific lines of inquiry related to culturally responsive teaching practices of literacy PSTs' within virtual environments, early literacy teacher education within virtual spaces, differentiated reading instruction in virtual environments, and affordances and limitations of literacy teaching texts, tools, and technology when teaching literacy virtually.

Most of the data collection (i.e., PSTs teaching literacy lessons to K-8 students virtually) is embedded as part of course practicum requirements. However, if funds are secured for this project, end-of-course interviews will be scheduled after course grades are due (sometime end of August or September). From that point, transcriptions of video recordings and interviews will be conducted and completed by December 2020, at the latest. Dissemination of results will be through conference proposals (e.g., Literacy Research Association; American Educational Research Association) and journal submissions (e.g., Teaching and Teacher Education; Literacy Research and Instruction).

Budget

(Redacted)

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Appendix

Interview Protocol (After the end of the course; Semi-Structured):

1. Tell me about your program/major (e.g., early childhood, special education) and your year in the program.
2. Please tell me about experience you may have interacting with and/or teaching children (e.g., childcare, tutoring, coaching, etc.).
3. Prior to this course, what experiences (if any) have you had teaching virtually? (Or, is this your first experience teaching virtually, specifically literacy lessons?)
4. Describe to me the different literacy instructional activities you conducted with your assigned student this past semester. (Probe for different possible activities such as conducting specific assessments, reading activities, and writing tasks).
5. What were some of the modifications or changes you felt were necessary in implementing any of the activities?
6. Describe some of the tools you used in your teaching.
7. After describing the activities and tools, tell me about your experience in implementing these literacy activities online. (Probe and encourage specific examples or incidents to illustrate points.)
8. What would you consider as your personal success during the virtual literacy teaching experience?
9. What would you consider to be your personal area for improvement after this virtual literacy teaching experience?
10. What kinds of supports or resources did you wish you received that might have contributed to better or more successful experience?