

## **RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL**

### **I Project Title      FINAL PHASE: EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY PILOT PROJECT**

**I Project Description and Abstract** As we approach the end of a two-year cohort-based immersion experience with Facing History and Ourselves curricula, the researcher requests assistance for conducting and taping final exit interviews with individual cohort members and with the composite group; for supported time to devote to analyzing two years of notes, student artifacts, and student reflective writing; and for travel support that will facilitate dissemination of findings at national or regional conferences and in national or regional journals.

### **II Narrative**

#### **Current Situation**

Several years ago, The Department of Education was awarded a Departmental Initiative Grant to explore ways to implement Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO) methodology, resources, and content into middle and high school pre-service teacher preparation programs and to develop ways to assess the impact of a two-year FHAO immersion experience on a cohort of students. The short-range goal was that they would define their roles as teachers in terms of their moral as well as intellectual responsibilities for teaching and professional growth. The long-range goal was that students would participate in life-long learning and professional development experiences that embrace the moral intellectual dimensions of teaching.

More specific short-range objectives for Elmhurst College education majors were to:

- Engage in continuous examination of how education throughout history and in the contemporary realm has the potential to contribute toward human growth or human deprivation;
- Explore the rich content of history that is essential for higher order thinking and learning, and for understanding the context of human events;
- Examine personal concepts of “self”, “we”, and “they”, in order to identify areas of comfort and discomfort;
- Work with students in developmentally appropriate ways to help them explore complex issues such as prejudice, discrimination, oppression, and power in their lives and in society.

Develop the leadership skills for teaching social responsibility in their classrooms, schools, and communities in order to provide their students with a working awareness of the moral challenges and skills necessary to make informed choices in a democratic society.

A group of students was recruited during the Spring and Summer of 2001 and began their work together two days after September 11, 2001. It was a painfully ironic time to guide students into a journey on facing history and ourselves. In fact, I phoned the director of the Chicago FHAO office on September 10 and told him I didn’t think I could do this. I’m not afraid of a lot and usually like a challenge, if it’s one of my own choosing, but I felt incredibly inadequate and like a potential imposter in my own classroom. How could I answer the inevitable questions these students would ask about the all too human aspects of historical perspective when I couldn’t answer my own, one day post 9/11?

Together, this incredible group of students and I have worked through two years of committed study and intense processes of applying what has been learned. All women by chance rather than design, the group has discussed key concepts in the FHAO curriculum as they apply to themselves as a cohort; to each person's family, social, and professional relationships; to campus issues; and to their own place in a complex, often dichotomous, often confusing world that is busy writing history as we live it.

As promised in the departmental curriculum development grant two years ago, data have been gathered on their experiences in the form of Blackboard conversations, e-mails, semester papers, and my own notes on their conversations in classes. The cohort has worked with consultants from the FHAO office and with faculty members on our own campus. This semester, the last in our formal journey together, we focus on classroom applications not only of Holocaust Education curricula but almost more importantly of their impact on the "hidden curriculum": the culture of classrooms and schools, how students treat each other, how we as teachers interact with our students. One of our cohort members graduated in February but is still coming back for the seminars this semester, as are the cohort members who are student teaching.

### **Project Plan**

My challenge now is to analyze their processes of moral and affective development to see how their FHAO experiences have shaped their conceptualizations of their role as teachers. How have their philosophies of education changed since they took EDU 110 years ago? What do they believe about classroom culture and why? How do they intend to use what they have learned to make an impact on the lives of their own students?

In addition to my pages of notes from classes and cohort members' e-mail communications, Blackboard conversations, and two formal written essays addressing specific prompts, I want to conduct structured interviews with individual cohort members and with the entire group as a cohort. The interviews will be formatted to explore students' intended uses of concrete concepts in their own teaching, and the impact of cohort culture on the development of the group dynamic, both familiar areas of research for me. The area in which I want to go into greater depth is that of how the students have been impacted on an affective level and this is a very new area for me.

One of our three outcomes, in the Department of Education, is that graduates of our certification programs will be caring. That means they will be teachers who believe in and practice: the ethic of caring and advocacy for their students' learning and well-being, self-reflection about their professional practice, passionate dedication to teaching and learning, and being an active participant in a democracy. This aligns perfectly with all three objectives of the People, Power, Politics category of Elmhurst College's general education/liberal arts core. As teachers, we deal with outcomes a lot, we know we want students be they in kindergarten or college, to "display good character" but how is that developed? What are the theoretical underpinnings of those concepts? How has the moral reasoning of cohort members changed, been affirmed, or acquired a basis of conscious knowledge to support dispositions and beliefs about their roles in terms of moral or affective dimensions of teaching that may have been present or growing for some time?

These kinds of questions are taking me into fascinating but rather unfamiliar territory. With the help of Dennis Barr at Harvard (who I met at a week-long Facing History and Ourselves retreat in

Connecticut back in Summer of 2001) I've begun working through a reading list of Kohlberg's Approach to Moral Education, William Damon's The Moral Child, books by Powers and Higgins come next and also Alex Molnar's yearbook chapter on The Construction of Children's Character. My interview protocol will be comprised of questions drawn from this reading, from questions in the margins of my notes over the past two years, and of questions posed by the cohort members themselves. The spirit of democracy, equality, lack of hierarchy, and respect for each other as learners no matter our ages or any of the other ways in which we are very diverse, will continue, even into the construction of these interviews.

### **Faculty Expertise**

I was introduced to FHAO a month after beginning at Elmhurst College by attending the August, 2000, institute on our campus. I subsequently participated in a week-long FHAO immersion retreat in Connecticut during the summer of 2001 (accompanied by Dr. Mike Lindberg and Dr. Jim Cunningham). Shortly afterward, I was invited, as was Dr. Lindberg, to join FHAO's national steering committee of college/university-based educators. (Dr. Mike Feldman is also a member.) I met with the group for the first time in Boston last summer and my cohort students will be meeting students from two committee colleagues' classes this semester in an on-line discussion of FHAO's "Twilight LA" project. This past fall I was part of a team (at the invitation of a cohort member) that presented a session on Holocaust Education at the state-wide Student Illinois Education Association conference. Dr. Lindberg and I team-taught a FHAO course during the J-term this semester and will be providing our jointly developed curriculum for posting on the national FHAO website. (We hope to teach the course again next J-term.) Additional research interests include the ramifications of teacher testing, cohort culture, and the professional development of practicing teachers.

### **Plans for Evaluation and Dissemination**

Evaluation: FHAO directors from the Chicago FHAO office (Chcuk Meyers) and the national office in Brookline, MA, (Alan Stoskopf) are aware of the 2-year cohort project and have come to campus to meet the cohort members. Both will be reading drafts of the outcomes of my research and writing, and would gladly provide feedback on the drafted interview questions, as will Dennis Barr at Harvard University. In addition I intend to share process components with Mike Lindberg, Mike Feldman, and Richard Hazley on the Elmhurst College campus.

Dissemination: Alan Stoskopf, from the national FHAO office, would like to post excerpts on their website and has made suggestions re: possible forums for publication of my results. I will also submit proposals to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) conferences over the next two years (deadlines fall on June 1 each year) to share findings with teacher educators.

### **III Timeline**

Interviews will take place in May, 2003, and/or early June. The bulk of the work, in terms of artifact analysis, and some of the initial writing will be accomplished in the summer of 2003. My contract is an 11-month one. I usually manage to stay busy with departmental work but

things are a bit slower in summer. I love research and writing: and this project will be a welcome “mental shift” from ongoing NCATE preparation.

#### **IV Budget**

<b>Expenditure Item</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>In-Kind or Matching Costs</b>
Travel funding (in lieu of salary) for me or EC colleagues involved with FHAO. (Travel to AACTE and/or ATE conferences for information dissemination purposes.)	\$1,900	-
Funding for extended Holocaust Education experiences this summer for cohort members associated with this 2-year project. (We have dreamed of visiting the Holocaust Museum but several of our cohort members are financially challenged.)	\$1,500	Matching funds will immediately be sought on and/or off-campus if this component is funded.
Supplies: interview tapes, printing costs, postage, etc.	\$100	Dept. of Education
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$3,500</b>	

#### **V. Current and Previous Grants**

“Teachers Lead – Leaders Teach” Initiative: Associated Colleges of Illinois

Source: US DOE – Transitions to Teaching

Value: \$2.2 million (5-year grant)

Funded: October, 2002

Role: Contributing writer as ACI Induction & Mentoring Subcommittee Leadership Team

Beginning Teacher Induction to Urban Schools: Associated Colleges of Illinois

Source: Foundation for Independent Higher Education - Challenge Grant

Value: \$42,000 (1-year pilot grant)

Funded: June, 2002

Role: Contributing writer as ACI Induction & Mentoring Subcommittee Leadership Team

Illinois Content Area Tests for Teachers: Predictive Validity

for Beginning Teacher Performance

Sources: Elmhurst Faculty Development Research Mini-Grant

and Illinois Association of Teacher Educators (IATE) Mini-Grant

Value: \$500 (EC), \$250 (IATE)

Funded: May, 2001 (EC: AY 2001-2002). September, 2001 (IATE, AY 2001-2002)

Role: Grant writer, both grants

## **VI Scholarship – Past Three Years**

### Refereed Journal Articles

Selke, M. (2001). The professional development of teachers in the United States of America: the practitioners' master's degree. European Journal of Teacher Education, 24(2), 205-214.

Selke, M., Mehigan, S., Fiene, J., & Victor, D. (submitted: March 1, 2003) Validity of standardized teacher test scores for predicting beginning teacher performance. Journal of Teacher Education, Jan/Feb, 2004.

### Peer-Reviewed National Conference Research Papers

Gmelch, W., Divins, B., Jared, E., Marvelle, J., Merz, C., Selke, M. (February, 2001). Tips for New and Experienced Department Chairs: Perspectives of a Novice Department Chair of Education in a Liberal Arts College. AACTE, Dallas, TX.

Selke, M. (February, 2000). Impact of a Practitioners' Master's Degree on Subsequent Individual Development. Research report – 80<sup>th</sup> national ATE conference, Orlando, FL.

Selke, M. & Fiene, J.(2002,February). A Collaborative Standards- Based Rubric for Evaluating the Performance of Induction-Year Education Graduates. ATE, Denver,CO.

Selke, M., Mehigan, S., & Victor, D. (January, 2003). Validity of Standardized Teacher Test Scores for Predicting Beginning Teacher Performance. AACTE, New Orleans, LA.

Selke, M., Mehigan, S., & Fiene, J. (February, 2003). Standardized Teacher Test Scores and Beginning Teacher Performance: Any Connections? ATE, Jacksonville, FL.

### Peer-Reviewed National Professional Presentations

Doerger, D., Selke, M., & Fiene, J. (February, 2003). From Doctoral Student to Faculty Member: Conducting A Professional and Successful Job Search. ATE, 2.5-hr Professional Clinic, Jacksonville, FL.

Miller, F., Selke, M., Riess, B., & Blecka, K. (2000, February). Performamnce-based Student Teacher Assessment Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Implementing INTASC Principles and State Standards. Thematic session, 80<sup>th</sup> national ATE conference, Orlando, FL.

Williams, B., Blackwell, P., Diez, M., Galluzo, G., Selke, M., & Wise, A. (2000, February). Achieving the New Vision of Master's Education for Teachers. NCATE-Sponsored panel presentation, 80<sup>th</sup> national ATE conference, Orlando, FL.

Selke, M. (2000, April). Tips for Writing Qualitative Research Session Proposals. AERA, New Orleans, LA.

Selke, M., DeLucia, S., Freitas, D., Murphy, J., & Perlman, B. (2000, February). Focus on Praxis: Issues and Action. Council of Unit Presidents-sponsored special session, 80<sup>th</sup> ATE conference, Orlando, FL.

Selke, M.J., Meyers, C., Watkins, A., & Selke, M.M. (2002, November). So I Have to Teach the Holocaust: How and – Why? Invited session, Illinois Education Association Annual Pre-Service Teacher Conference, Bloomington, IL.

#### Sample of Local Workshops, Presentations, and Speeches

Selke, M. (April, 2003). Validity of Standardized Teacher Test Scores for Predicting Beginning Teacher Performance. Invited presentation, IATEPC, Springfield, IL

Selke, M. (April, 2002) Why FHAO in pre-service teacher preparation? Invited speaker, Facing History and Ourselves, Chicago Office, 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary benefit dinner, Chicago, IL.

Selke, M. (September, 2000). Make a Difference – Be a Teacher. Presentation/speech for the Elmhurst College Student ASCD Chapter Fall meeting, Elmhurst College.