Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Education with an emphasis in Teaching and Learning Processes

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MEd in Education, June 2011, Mercer University Atlanta
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Conceptualizations of Teaching in the Higher Education Classroom

Date: January 7, 2022
Time: 7:30am-9:30am
Place: Remote

Abstract
The purpose of this multi-method study was to explore how faculty members, who teach at higher education institutions that deliver a liberal arts experience, view teaching and how those views inform their teaching practice. Teaching beliefs can feel like a messy construct (Pajares, 1992) but are important in determining what informs teaching practice. Pratt (1994) also explains beliefs inform conceptions of teaching practice. The conceptualizations of faculty, more specifically their teaching beliefs, were the focus of this study. Thus, this study investigated the following research questions: Given the context of a liberal arts institution, what are faculty members’ conceptualizations of teaching? How does the faculty’s conceptualization inform their teaching practices? Participants completed an Approach to Teaching Inventory (ATI), answered oral interview questions, shared their course syllabi for analysis, and sent their students an anonymous student questionnaire. Data was analyzed to find patterns and themes to address the research questions using thematic analysis. Findings from this study have implications for higher education institutions and faculty to foster, support, and develop teaching beliefs and practices throughout the faculty member’s teaching career.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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