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 Educational Psychology

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M.S. in Administrative Leadership in Education, December, 2005, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
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Building of Community Through Discussion Forums in Online Faculty Development

Date: October 17, 2019
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Place: Bayer Education Bio-Lab (Inside TLC), UMSL South Campus

Abstract
 Participation in ongoing pedagogical faculty development is critical to successful faculty teaching. In recent years new pedagogical strategies and rapidly changing technologies have increased the need for faculty to participate in development. Additionally, faculty must support student populations which are continuing to shift and include greater numbers of at-risk students. However, at the same time, changes in the academic environment have made it more challenging for faculty to prioritize development participation. These changes include increasing demands on faculty schedules, competing demands to focus on research and obtain grants, and increasing part-time faculty appointments. As a result, the faculty development model is seeing a growth in online asynchronous offerings. While researchers have focused heavily on online course pedagogies, few have assessed these findings in online offerings for faculty who bring their own unique needs and motivations. Particularly, it is important to look at how developers construct communications and social interactions in these online programs.

This mixed methods study assessed online faculty development for community building and social construction of knowledge. This study included five data collection points. First, to supplement the current limited literature on online faculty development, the researcher interviewed program developers currently designing and delivering fully online faculty programs. Based on this data, a four week fully online asynchronous faculty development program was developed to assess these strategies. Next, 31 faculty from a variety of higher education institutions around the United States were recruited to participate in the program. The remaining four data collection points came from these faculty participants and include: a confidential pre-survey, submissions within the course, a confidential post-survey, and a post-course interview. An in-depth analysis of this data was conducted utilizing both current qualitative coding strategies (Community of Practice and Community of Inquiry) and open coding. Implications of the findings could help inform future online faculty development design and delivery practices.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
Chairperson, Theresa Coble Ph.D.
Committee Faculty Member, Carl Hoagland, EdD
Committee Faculty Member, Keeta Holmes, EdD
Committee Faculty Member, Keith Miller, PhD