**Personal Narrative**

**Introduction**

I am currently a Professor at the College of Southern Idaho in the Teacher Education department teaching classes in teacher preparation and child development. As a professor, I am aware of the number of things required outside of teaching. I participate in a number of on campus and in the community activities. I will address those things here in this narrative. I will address the work I do as an educator, the teaching I do. I will address my service to the college. And I will address my service to the community.

**Service to Teaching**

*Exemplary*

I love teaching. I love everything about teaching—talking about it, learning about, telling others about it, and doing it. In 2012, I was chosen as the Academic Faculty of the Year and award a trip to the NISOD Conference. In 2013, my colleague, Dr. Tracey Meyerhoeffer and I were asked to teach a workshop on effective teaching techniques to other faculty. We have done this for three years now, and are already preparing for our fourth year. In addition to this, we have extended the workshop, now called the Effective Teacher Workshop part I and part II. Tiffany Seeley-Case and Shane Brown have joined us in these trainings, and teach part II. Dr. Meyerhoeffer and I still teach part I. It is a sort of orientation for new faculty, but mostly an introduction to teaching for all faculty, especially faculty who have no formal training in how to teach.

When I first began teaching at the College of Southern Idaho, I was asked to join a committee. I found the “Best Practices” committee run by Jim Dawson. I really enjoyed being a part of this, and as I got more involved, I realized that the idea of a “best practice” required research and telling others of what was current in the best practice of education, so I started the “Brown Bag” events where faculty could gather to hear presentations on ways to improve their instruction. We have grown the Brown Bag gatherings from one day a week, to three days a week now. I even have faculty asking me to start a fourth one for those people who can’t come to one of the ones offered.

*Current &* *Leadership*

Good teachers remain current in their field. In order to do this, I do many things. I work in the field, read current research, take classes, conduct workshops, and participate in professional gatherings. I am currently mentoring a preschool teacher at Oregon Trail Elementary School in Twin Falls. We meet once a week for me to observe her time with her students, and we also find time to visit outside of the classroom so she can reflect with support on her teaching methods. I love reading research. In the last ten years, researchers have come to know so much more about the way we learn. Ten years is a very short amount of time, and many teachers have been out of their learning environment for more than ten years and may not know what it current. So, not only do I want to know what is new in brain development, but I want to teach others these new findings. Every week I devote a few hours to reading new research and sharing it with my students and with faculty. I do this in my classes, workshops, social media (facebook and twitter), and in our Brown Bags. My favorite place to share it is at the “water cooler.” You can often find me having “hallway discussions” with fellow colleagues or students. One thing I enjoy is working with new teachers at local schools. My next step is to publish some of my own work in the field of education. I finished my doctoral work in 2012, and shortly after that took a course at BSU to learn how to publish some of this research. I submitted some of my work to a SENG Conference in San Francisco, but was not chosen to present at this conference. It is my personal and professional goal to continue to submit my body of work to publications and professional conferences. In addition to working in the field and continuing my studies, I also work with colleagues around the state to keep current in teaching. I have participated in discussions with other colleges and universities around Early Childhood Education and Teacher Preparation. I am currently involved in the ECE Consortium as a co-facilitator, IHELP, and a sub-committee of the Professional Standards Commission to participate in the five-year review of teacher standards. I have also attended the Ed Sessions monthly luncheon where we have heard guest speakers such as Sir Ken Robinson and Sal Khan from the Khan Academy. I find these events rewarding, and always make a point to meet the speaker and other attendees in order to create networking relationships. I have corresponded with mavericks in our field such as Alfie Kohn (author of The Schools our Children Deserve) and Paul Tough (author of How Children Succeed). I share their findings with my students in class. In this section of the narrative, I combined the topics of “current” and “leadership” because I find that I tend to do both together. Many of the things I do to keep current were things I initiated and therefore demonstrate my leadership.

*Commitment to the field of Education*

In addition to the things illustrated above, I demonstrate my commitment to the field of education in other ways. I am currently working with others on a grant to bring a nutrition class to our community to teach families with children healthy and cost-effective ways to prepare meals. I worked with university professors to rewrite a literacy class I teach so it meets the transfer standards to Idaho universities. I enjoy working on those kinds of changes in my teaching. For two years now, I have partnered with Luke Schroeder, the superintendent of Kimberly School District to provide his teachers with an In-Service Day on Martin Luther King Jr. Day here at CSI. The first year we did it we had two school districts involved. The second year we have five school districts involved and had to have two break-out sessions. The speaker this year, Mark Anthony Garrett, spoke on the power of “Relationships.” I share with him my research on “Relationships” in teaching. He asked if I would be willing to be a part of his national online work in teacher preparation and teaching about “relationship.” I said yes. Nothing has happened since then, but I anticipate it will. Most currently, and the project I’m most excited about is our Southern Idaho P-20 Professional Conference for area educators. The dates are set for July 12-13, 2016. We have two guest speakers, Dave Burgess (author of Teach Like a Pirate) arranged for July 12, and MK Asante (author of Buck) to be our speaker for July 13. The work with others is rewarding as we gather to share our expertise to bring such a daunting task to fruition.

As I share here my commitment to teaching excellence I realize that none of this brings me the kind of joy I get from being with my students. If I had one piece of evidence that I think speaks to and addresses the criteria for this application, it would be my letter of recommendation from my student, Samantha Lubcke (see portfolio entry). She testified to the things in my teaching that I want my students to know.

**Service to College**

*Leadership*

In the past I have been the committee chair for the Best Practices committee. I stepped down so I could devote more time to developing the Brown Bag events and the “Civility Project.” I chaired the Brown Bag events for many years, and then enlisted the help of Tiffany Seeley-Case and Shane Brown. John Brown is in charge of the Civility Project on campus, and I assist this project with coordinating the civility messages that are delivered to CSI employees each month. In addition to these examples of leadership, as I mentioned above, I am working with Idaho college and university professors to write curriculum that meet transfer standards and to keep current with 21st century teaching and learning needs. And finally, I am the student club advisor of the TEACH Club here at the College of Southern Idaho. The club plans community and campus events such as reading in schools, participating in carnivals, and participating in club activities such as the lane of trees. We also take a trip to Boise each spring to participate in the IEA Delegates Assembly, where the students witness the governance of this professional organization and learn about the workings of our “voice.” Each year, I have the students over to my house where we celebrate the work we have done and have time to build our own community.

In addition to the courses I’ve designed for my department, I am also interested in being a part of the “FLEX” credits our campus is designing. I’d like to see a course that teaches students about the world of college, a course where they examine who they are in this world, and have time to explore their own humanity. I’d like this course to be based on their interests, and perhaps design it around a classic movie such as “Blade Runner” where we explore things not currently being taught, but still meet the goals of a general education plan. I currently use the book by Matthew Sanders called Becoming a Learner in my classes. My students tell me they wish they had read this book before starting college, and that all students should read this book. It is experiences like this that make me realize we can create a curriculum that will help students become successful students.

**Service to Community**

*Magic Valley Community*

By the time I was 24, I had lived over half of my life outside of the United States, and then in 1987 I moved with my husband and young son to Twin Falls, Idaho. That was 29 years ago. Since that time I have traveled overseas and around our country, but not lived anywhere since. Up until then I had never lived in any one place for more than three years, so to live in one place for 29 years, to establish roots, has been a rich experience for me. It has been a while since I served on a school board which I did when I sat on the SILC (Southern Idaho Learning Center) from 2006-2009. But I do co-facilitate a PTE Advisory board at CSI for the Early Childhood program. We hold board meetings twice a year, and invite members of the community to sit on our board. We get feedback from this board and make changes to our program. The feedback we’ve received and implemented has proven successful to our program. For example, one change we made as a result of this feedback is starting our own kindergarten at CSI. We partnered with The Boys & Girls Club of Twin Falls (also a member of our advisory board) to use one of their vacant classrooms. In exchange, we offer their staff professional development training sessions.

*Charitable Work*

I believe in service, and I believe in giving to my community. In addition to the fiscal and physical support I give to my church and our local arts community, I also believe in service. On 9/11 each year, a day designated by President Barack Obama, I participate in a neighborhood service project of some sort. One year I organized a painting party where a group of neighbors and friends got together to paint the outside of the house of one of our elderly neighbors. We found great community and enjoyment in this gathering and service project. I also encourage my students to participate in service, assigning them a community service project each semester. Additionally, I like to give my time sitting on other boards and participating in symposiums. Most recently I was a part of an Early Childhood conversation in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho sponsored by the ICF (Idaho Community Foundation). Shortly around this time, I sat in a day-long symposium in Boise where many leaders gathered to talk about Early Childhood Education in Idaho. Most notably, former Governor Cecil Andrus and current State Superintendent of Education, Sherri Ybarra, were present at this event. At this event, I was able to meet some leaders, share some ideas, and further network and share the work that CSI is doing to lead the state in quality early care and education at CSI.

**Conclusion**

It has been a very fulfilling career to teach and work at The College of Southern Idaho. I look forward to many more years, and I have many ideas of things I want to do to grow myself both personally and professionally during my time here. I want to grow the Best Practices Committee so that more people can attend. I plan on working with our department to house all of our children under one roof. Finally, with the changing nature of education, I will continue to remain current in research. I want to take this opportunity to thank the FSEC committee for the work and time they put into organizing faculty and for the time they take to read my application.