

Community Engagement Mini-Grant Application

Name of Applicant: Patricia Chantrill & Amber Johnson Title/Department: Associate Professor & Graduate Research Assistant

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Project Title: **Expanding Community Partner Perceptions of Public Scholarship Potential**

Project Type: **Community-Based Research**

Proposals must be submitted to the Office of Community Engagement in Showalter 115.
No more than 3 pages.

I. Project Plan

II. Connection to EWU Strategic Priorities:

- **Student Success** For example, how many students will this project impact and in what ways? How does this project strengthen connections between students and faculty members?
- **Innovation**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Visibility**

III. Dissemination Plan

IV. Project Timeline (*Dates or time frame of the project*)

V. Evaluation Plan *Include project learning outcomes and assessment strategies (pre-post-tests, reflection papers and rubrics)*

VI. Budget

Allowable Expenses Include:

- Travel
- Student Workers
- Photocopying Costs
- Project Materials
- Books and Resource Materials
- Refreshments for trainings or community meetings lasting 2+ hours



11-02-2015

Applicant's Signature

Date

Department Chair's/Academic Leader's Signature

Date

Dean's Signature

Date

THE PROCESS:

- **Project Plan**

The project is designed to establish research-based partnerships with community partners* and collaborate toward innovative, evidenced-based approaches to solving social problems.

We conducted an online survey during the spring of 2015; the survey of Community Partners (CPs)* revealed that many participants had limited exposure to and experience with the kind of large-scale, problem-solving research that Public Scholarship achieves. While respondents readily articulated the goals of service-learning and volunteerism, their appreciation for the benefits of research extended only as far as “market surveys” and an updated inventory of client needs. With the advent of a robust Public Scholarship program, we believe CPs could begin to imagine using research to solve large-scale, chronic, and systemic problems they confront on a daily basis in their own work.

This phase of our plan includes conducting a series of focus groups with CPs, divided according to social services or programs aligned with specific demographics (i.e., youth services, food banks, women’s shelters, veterans, etc.) We will design and conduct the focus groups using a pre-test perception instrument, followed by video-based programming, followed by the focused discussion, and concluding with a post-test of perceptions. We will then analyze CP responses for insight into how EWU graduate student research would benefit the community even as it expands CP and graduate student perspectives on the promise of Public Scholarship. This phase will help us to introduce the concept of Public Scholarship and its growth at Eastern Washington University, especially as we hope to offer CPs the opportunity to expand existing perceptions about the role of research in *their* work.

Patricia Chantrill is the faculty lead and has conducted a variety of focus groups, both on- and off-campus. She is also responsible for developing the Public Scholarship Certificate at EWU. Amber Johnson is the graduate research assistant; she is also a skilled group leader especially trained in focus group management and evaluation. She has dedicated her thesis research to evaluating CP perceptions of Public Scholarship and promoting the new Certificate. Together, our plan is to help to change the face of and appreciation for Public Scholarship on campus and in our surrounding communities, expanding the role of existing Community Partnerships into fully-fledged research partnerships. Thus, this grant would fund research into a *specific* Public Scholarship project even as it serves to develop future research opportunities and promote Public Scholarship in the region. We look forward to increasing research-based and mutually beneficial relationships between Eastern Washington University and the community.

* We understand “Community Partners” (CPs) to be representatives of non-profit and/or government agencies dedicated to serving the needs of diverse populations for social justice and sustainability. Our list of CPs comes from the EWU Office of Community Engagement.

- **Connection to EWU Strategic Priorities:**

- a. **Student Success** For example, how many students will this project impact and in what ways? How does this project strengthen connections between students and faculty members?
 - i. This project will initially impact the students connected to it (research assistant, transcribers, recorders, etc.) After establishing the Public Scholarship Certificate, it will impact all graduate students interested in developing their public scholarship credentials and taking their research skills to the streets. By creating research triads of trained and motivated community partners, graduate students will have a

ready resource to tap when co-designing their public research agenda. This project will lead to sustainable, mutually-beneficial connections between graduate student researchers and the community during and after completion of graduate coursework.

- ii. Research also verifies the strengthening of ties between students and faculty who partner on behalf of community-based projects. This project is designed to encourage and develop collaborative research triads consisting of faculty, graduate students, and community partners. The connection between student and faculty will be essential to developing and nurturing the connection with the community partner, each of us bringing our expertise to bear on the problems identified in concert with CPs. Additionally, graduate students who participate in community-based research are more likely to complete their coursework and defend a thesis within a 2 year timeframe.

 - b. **Innovation:** This project creates partnerships based on the principle of research-as-service to the community. By returning to the founding principles of Public Education and Public Scholarship at a Public Baccalaureate Institution, we seek to collaborate toward innovative solutions based in rigorous, meaningful research. Community partners, we've learned, are very busy people. They haven't had the time or opportunity to imagine the potential of research in the larger scope of actually solving community-wide problems. This project seeks to expand understanding and deepen commitment to collaborative research for the good of the community. The potential for community benefits are significant, lasting and *generative*. These partnerships strengthen Eastern's contribution to the region and offer students, faculty partners, and community members a sense of unity, accomplishment and pride in knowing that we are contributing to a better future for all.

 - c. **Community Engagement:** We are encouraging CPs to develop an informed and engaged voice in the process of solving problems through research. Public Scholarship engages all members of the partnership as allies in solving problems. Ultimately, these research-based partnerships will invest also graduate students in their local communities, establish their role as partners-in-scholarship, and help them to envision a community where their research addresses significant and tangible issues.

 - d. **Visibility:** Graduate research will enjoy more relevance and visibility off-campus. Graduate students would have the opportunity to use what they've learned in their coursework to benefit their community, participating in partnerships that increase the prestige of the institution even as they establish new connections for future projects. This project would help to construct a scholarship bridge from the community to the campus while increasing student competence as scholars and creating professional connections with community leaders. The university would be respected for allocating its graduate research skills and energy for the benefit of stronger, healthier communities.
- **Dissemination Plan**
 - a. Spring 2016: Report results at the Community Engagement Institute in April of 2016. Additionally, Amber Johnson will finalize her thesis draft and defend it in May of 2016.

 - **Project Timeline** (*Dates or time frame of the project*)
 - o Late Fall 2015: Schedule Focus Groups and Contact/confirm participants
-Currently creating a list of community partners to invite to focus groups

- Forming focus group tasks i.e. pre-test/post-test, video presentation, and discussion prompts
 - Recruit and assign recorders and transcribers for focus groups
 - Winter 2016: Conduct Focus Groups. Analyze data, reflection and results assessment.
 - Spring 2016: Report results at the Community Engagement Institute in April of 2016; polish final draft and defend thesis before June 2016.
- **Evaluation Plan** *Include project learning outcomes and assessment strategies (pre-post-tests, reflection papers and rubrics)*
 - a. Pre-test of perceptions of research among Community Partners
 - b. Play research/service learning video
 - c. Post-test of perceptions of research among Community Partners
 - d. Analyze transcriptions and evaluate findings
 - e. Share findings at Community Engagement Institute, with PS certificate faculty members, thesis chair members, and the Office of Community Engagement
 - **Budget**
 1. Five 2-hour focus groups require \$30 each (\$15 per hour) for student assistance in recording responses, \$20 in refreshments for participants, and \$10 each in photocopying materials and supplies = \$300
 2. Transcription assistance (student workers, 10 hours at \$10 an hour) = \$100
 3. Travel and parking fees (at Riverpoint Center) = \$100
 - a. *Allowable Expenses Include:*
 - b. Travel
 - c. Student Workers
 - d. Photocopying Costs
 - e. Project Materials
 - f. Books and Resource Materials
 - g. Refreshments for trainings or community meetings lasting 2+ hours