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**APPLICATION FOR PROMOTION**  
**Elizabeth J. Sandell**  
**Fall, 2010**

**CRITERION 4: SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING AND GROWTH**

**Introduction**

This section includes discussion of evidence related to Criterion 4: Support Student Learning and Growth. Specific documents for evidence were included in the collection of materials submitted with my annual Professional Development Reports. The first part of this section includes a list of my professional service activities. The last part of this section includes a reflection about the experience and meaning behind some of the most significant among those professional development activities. When appropriate, the documentation is included in appendixes to this report.

For this criterion, the EEC department has specified a variety of significant and meaningful service activities related to the mission of the college and department. These include but are not limited to:

- Evidence of accurate, timely and personalized advising to students
- Availability and accessibility to students as evidenced by maintaining regular office hours, distribution of contact phone and e-mail, etc.
- Evidence of timely and accurate responses to student inquiries
- Evidence of involvement in advising student organizations, supporting students through participation in activities such as commencement and student oriented committees
- Evidence of mentoring students in research projects or through engagement in presentations at professional conferences
- Evidence of support and mentoring in graduate thesis, alternate plan paper and creative projects (for graduate faculty only)

Careful review of documentation about my performance over time in criterion 4 makes clear that my achievements do meet the contractual benchmark of “high achievement” necessary for promotion.

### **Activities and Documentation**

This section includes a list of my professional service activities related to service to students.

#### Academic Advising

1. Academic advisor for between 60 and 80 undergraduate students in EEC (see PDRs since AY06)
2. Periodic advising alert messages (see PDRs since AY06)
3. Regular office hours (see electronic and hard-copy example of sign-up sheet for appointments)
4. Survey about advising effectiveness, see PDRs since AY08 and hard-copy and electronic documentation for Application for Promotion.

#### Enhancing the Student Experience

1. Contributed to seminars for Block I EEC students (documented in PDRs for AY06, AY07)
2. Capstone projects in courses (documented in PDRs since AY06)
3. Hosted informal off-campus meetings of students from my classes (documented in PDRs since AY06)
4. Faculty advisor for Early Childhood and Elementary Education Club, student organization (documented in PDRs since AY07) and electronic and hard-copy documentation for Application for Promotion
5. Faculty advisor for Eastern European Student Association, student organization (documented in PDRs since AY07)
6. Faculty advisor for student group attending 2007 NAEYC conference (see PDR AY08)
7. Contributed definition “international education” suggested to MSU Kearney International Center (documented in PDR Y07)
8. Acted as practice faculty member for Students Consulting on Teaching (SCOT) student, February 4, 2010 (see Application for Promotion)

#### Recommendations and References for Students

1. Recommended students for COE scholarships (documented in PDRs since AY06)
2. Wrote recommendations and references for numerous students for scholarships, internships, fellowships, and employment (documented in PDRs since AY06)
3. Nominated Kim Maas for individual student leadership award, for Leadership and Action Award, April 2009. (Kim did receive this award), documented with electronic and hard-copy copy of nomination form in Application for Promotion
4. Nominated Ashley Milewski for individual student leadership award, April 2010. (Ashley did receive this award), documented with electronic and hard-copy copy of nomination form in Application for Promotion

Mentoring Undergraduate Student Research Projects

1. Co-authored white paper, “The Value of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity in the Tenure and Promotion Process at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Prepared October, 2009 by Anne Blackhurst, Ph. D., Dean, College of Graduate Studies and Research, Gina Wenger, Ph. D., Associate Professor, College of Arts and Humanities, and Elizabeth Sandell, Ph. D., Assistant Professor, College of Education, documented with electronic and hard-copy version with Application for Promotion
2. Established position description for Undergraduate Student Research Assistant (unpaid), documented with job description in electronic and hard-copy format with Application for Promotion
3. Mentor to MSU and North-eastern State University (Magadan) undergraduate students on research team, documented by photos and meeting notes
4. Mentor to MSU and North-eastern State University (Magadan) undergraduate students who presented at MSU’s 2009 Undergraduate Research Conference, documented by the conference program
5. Mentor to MSU and North-eastern State University (Magadan) undergraduate students who published articles in MSU’s 2009 Journal of Undergraduate Research, documented by the journal
6. Mentor to MSU and North-eastern State University (Magadan) undergraduate students who won a large grant from the URC/MSU Foundation, documented by MSU Foundation records
7. COE representative to MSU’s 2009 and 2010 Undergraduate Research Conference Steering Committee, documented by meeting minutes and materials submitted for Criterion 5, service to university, in Application for Promotion
8. Mentor to undergraduate students to attend and to present at the 2009 National Conference on Undergraduate Research, documented by meeting minutes
9. Mentor to 3 undergraduate students to attend and to present at the 2010 Focus on the Children Conference in Rochester, MN, documented by conference program
10. Judge for MSU’s 2009 Undergraduate Research Conference, documented by conference program and materials submitted for Criterion 5, service to university, in Application for Promotion

Mentoring Graduate Student Research Projects

1. Chairperson/advisor for graduate student thesis project (V. G. A.)
2. Chairperson/advisor for graduate student alternate plan paper (C. A. D.)
3. Chairperson/advisor for graduate student alternate plan paper (I. P.)
4. Committee member for graduate student thesis project (N. H.)
5. Committee member for graduate student thesis project (P. S.)
6. Committee member for graduate student thesis project (R. F.)
7. Committee member for graduate student alternate plan paper (S. M.)
8. Committee member for graduate student creative project (B. M. S.)
9. Secured funds for graduate student research and travel, documented by correspondence
10. Mentor to graduate student with research presentation at ACEI 2009 conference, documented by conference program

11. Mentor to graduate students with a writing group for their theses/APPs, documented by meeting notes
12. Mentor to students with research projects in MSU's 2009 Graduate Research Conference, documented by conference program
13. Judge for MSU's 2009 Graduate Research Conference, documented by conference program

### **Reflections on Significant Activities**

This section includes a reflection about the experience and meaning behind some of the most significant among my professional development activities. When appropriate, the documentation is included in appendixes to this report. The collection of artifacts has given me a new sense of my role in serving the students of MSU, Mankato.

#### Academic Advising for Undergraduate Students

There is a high number of undergraduate student advisees assigned to each EEC faculty member. EEC faculty members do not have any release time to accommodate this number of advisees. During AY06, my first year in the department, I was on a fixed term contract. Department practice is to not assign any advisees to first-year faculty members. During AY07, my second year in the department, I became department chairperson.

During my term as EEC department chairperson, I paid more attention to my role as an academic advisor for undergraduate and graduate students in EEC. I made sure that I had at least ten hours per week of office hours for student advising appointments. I distributed periodic "advising alerts" with information that students needed to know in a timely manner.

There are unique features of each student's situation (PSEO, transfer student, change in major, low GPA, application for variance, etc.) that make it challenging to align every student with the scope and sequence for academic majors in our department. Student progress in the Early Childhood Education academic major is often hampered by the fact that many of the courses are only taught once each academic year. Students with PSEO credits, transfer credits, etc. are naturally out of sequence.

Here is what one of the students wrote about my advising: "You really are getting me through college though; I appreciate your help more than you know."

I developed a computer-based survey to collect feedback about the quality of my academic advising from the advisees themselves. There was a long process to get the survey written and entered to the MSU assessment web pages in ways that protected their privacy. The survey was finally ready in December, 2008. Each year, about 50 students were invited to respond to the survey. These were students who had met with me in the previous four months for academic advising. The survey asked students to respond on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. In December, 2008, twelve students responded to the

survey, at a time when most students were focused on final exams and leaving for the semester break. In October, 2009, fourteen students responded to the survey. The MSU Institutional Assessment staff members set up the survey so respondents were anonymous. There was no link among these documents related to specific students and their specific responses.

Table 4-1: Responses to Annual Advising Survey for E. Sandell, FY09 through FY10<sup>1</sup>

Criteria	Strongly Agree/Agree Fall 08 (n = 12)		Strongly Agree/Agree Fall 09 (n = 14)	
Advisor Knowledge				
Helps plan educational program	11	92%	11	78%
Knowledgeable about requirements	10	83%	12	86%
Accurate in information	9	75%	12	86%
Up to date with information	8	67%	13	93%
Advisor Availability				
Contacted fairly easily when needed	11	92%	12	86%
Responds to emails or phone calls	11	92%	12	86%
Available during posted hours	11	92%	11	78%
Generally available via e-mail	10	83%	13	93%
Advisor Resourcefulness				
Knows where to seek answers	10	83%	12	86%
Refers to right people	10	83%	11	78%
Helps students set goals	7	58%	10	71%
Helps deal with university “red tape”	5	42%	9	64%
Advisor Connections with Students				
Approachable	12	100%	12	86%
Takes student interests into account	11	92%	12	86%
Concerned about student success	10	83%	11	78%
Knows my academic progress	9	75%	10	71%
Advising Usage				
I have little need to see my advisor often	4	33%	8	57%
I do most of my own advising	3	25%	5	36%
My friends provide my advising	2	17%	2	17%
Overall, I am satisfied with my advisor	10	83%	10	71%

For advising knowledge, there were 4 items on the survey. Respondents generally agreed or strongly agreed with items that suggest that I was knowledgeable, accurate, helpful, and up-to-date.

For advisor availability, there were 4 items on the survey. Evidently, my advisees know how to contact me and believe they can reach me when needed. Respondents agreed or strongly

<sup>1</sup> Based on reports generated by Student Information Management System, College of Education, Minnesota State University, Mankato. August, 30, 2010.

agreed that I was available during office hours or by email or telephone or that they could contact me fairly easily when advice was needed.

For advisor resourcefulness, there were 4 items on the survey. Respondents agreed or strongly agreed refer them to the right people/places when needed and that I know where to seek answers if in doubt. This is where I could improve somewhat. Scores for items such as “helps deal with university ‘red tape’” and “helps students set goals” were lower than I would like to have seen. On the other hand, I do usually refer students to other MSU offices that can respond to their specific questions, and I often help students to complete forms. I think it’s important to foster student independence by expecting them to actually follow up on the tasks. This may be perceived as not helping them with red tape. Furthermore, most students who are assigned to me for advising have already set their goals: completion of an initial teacher licensure program. So, it is not necessary for me (as their adviser) to help them set their goals.

For advising connections with students, there were 4 items on the survey. Respondents agreed or strongly agreed that I am approachable, that I take their interests into account when advising and that I am concerned with their success as individuals.

For advising usage, there were 4 items on the survey. Evidently, my advisees see value and a role for a faculty member to be involved in their advising. Respondents disagreed or were neutral about having their friends provide most of their advising and that they do most of their own advising. Overall satisfaction was at 71% to 83%.

Overall, I am pleased with the survey itself and with the web-based process for getting student feedback on my advising. Because I knew I was going to do the survey, I paid special attention to student advising. I plan to do a survey each year to compare results.

### Accessibility to Students

During nearly all semesters at MSU, I established 10 hours each week for regular office hours and posted those hours on my office door. However, I might not be available at the immediate time that the student walks to my office. I also created a booklet in which students can sign up for appointments. This booklet is in the pocket box on my office door. In this way, I have a record of which students have made appointments with me. I have other responsibilities besides academic advising, and I cannot be in my office at all times. Students need to learn to plan ahead and set times to meet with their advisors.

Each semester, I notify advisees with an email to remind them about my accessibility. Here is an example of the wording of these emails:

*“You are receiving this note because you are on my list of academic advisees. I have a sign-up sheet on my EEC office door and you may sign up for appointments in any open space. I can have appointments at other times, but need to negotiate those on an individual basis. Please plan ahead so that you and I have time for an advising session before you reach a deadline.”*

During the semester when I was half-time Acting Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, I had half as many hours for appointments in the EEC department. This only made sense because I was half-time in the department. Evidently, some advisees came to my office and, when I was not there, arrived at another office door to ask another faculty member for advice, which she provided. Although she could not provide a count of how many students this involved, she told me that she identified a “trend” and that she felt it was taking too much of her time to meet with them and to mend whatever mis-advice I had given them.

I know we all want to be responsive to students who need advice. I have certainly responded to students who stop at my door and ask questions because their academic advisor happens to not be available. But I thought our department had an understanding that there was a process for handling students who reported that they could not contact their advisors or who claimed that their advisors were unavailable: to suggest that the student try by phone, email, and written note to request an appointment with their advisor, and then, if the faculty advisor does not respond, that the student should contact the department chairperson. When a faculty member responds to student questions for other academic advisers, he or she is actually undermining the rest of the department.

This is what I wrote on February 4, 2009 to my advisees:

*“You are receiving this note because you are on my list of academic advisees. I want to alert you to some information ... this semester, I am working half-time in the EEC department and half-time for the MSU Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. It’s quite interesting, but it means that I have fewer office hours available for advisees. I have a sign-up sheet on my EEC office door and you may sign up for appointments in any open space... on a Wednesday morning. I can have appointments at other times, but need to negotiate those on an individual basis. Please plan ahead so that you and I have time for an advising session before you reach a deadline.”*

### Faculty Advisor for Student Organizations

#### *Early Childhood and Elementary Education Club (ECEE Club)*

During AY08 and AY09, I was faculty advisor for the Early Childhood and Elementary Education Club. The purpose of this organization is to:

- represent the students in pre-service teacher education programs
- foster professional development among ECEE students at MSU

During this period, I facilitated the ECEE Club’s expansion to including more than 50 student members. The ECEE Club also updated and revised its Constitution. As faculty advisor, I attended ECEE Club meetings, brainstormed ideas about leadership and events, advised about fundraisers, and planned leadership transitions. The ECEE Club also promoted our department’s student trip to the 2007 Annual Conference for the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

At the conclusion of AY09, the ECEE Club President nominated me for the RSO Advisor Award. Although I did not receive the major award, I did receive an RSO Advisor Appreciation Achievement Certificate.

*Eurasian and East-European Student Organization (EESO)*

Along with Assistant Professor Lydmyla Ardanova, I am co-advisor for the EESO. The purposes of this organization are to represent the students of Eastern Europe at MSU, Mankato, and to create an awareness of Eastern European cultures and languages, within the university and general community. The EESO:

1. Allows membership to any student at Mankato State University-Minnesota and to any individual from an outside community, who may be interested in the Eastern European area and who would like to learn more about its culture and languages.
2. Holds frequent get-togethers and functions in order to create a sense of community among members, and to expose them to the culture and languages of the Eastern European area.
3. Holds events at Mankato State University-Minnesota campus, such as art shows and keynote speakers, in hope of informing the larger-scale community and the culture of the Eastern European area.
4. Helps students who are from the Eastern European area adapt to the culture and life of the United States.

As faculty advisor, I attended EESO meetings, brainstormed ideas about leadership and events, hosted a trip to the Museum of Russian Art (Minneapolis), helped decide about fundraisers, helped to plan leadership transitions, and encouraged and facilitated activities at the International Festival at East High School in April, 2008. EESO members contributed community service hours to assist me with translation of documents and messages between English and Russian languages.

Enhancing the Student Experience

To enhance the student experience, I incorporated capstone projects into the courses that I taught. For example, in the Spring, I organized students in two sections of EEC 412 to provide a “Make It; Take It” workshop room during the 2006 annual conference of the Minnesota Kindergarten Association. I also included a course requirement for them to volunteer for several hours at the 2006 annual conference of the Minnesota Kindergarten Association. As another example, in EEC 245, an assignment involved student teams in writing, videotaping, editing, and presenting 4-minute movies. Five of the six teams also entered their movies in the iMovie Festival. One team won second place: \$100.00

During the past four years, I have included an informal off-campus meeting for several classes. I planned evenings that featured education-related films and discussions, so our meetings were fun and yet focused on the experience of early childhood education.





EEC 365 Fall Semester, 2005



EEC 435 Fall Semester, 2005

Student Comments: Thank you for once again inviting us all into your home. It was a very pleasant evening. I enjoyed the movie, and all the munchies hit the spot!! – Denise

### International Connections

AY06 Friendship Family: My family became a “Friendship Family” for AY2005-2008 for MSU’s International Student Office. We were assigned a Russian-speaking student from Kazakhstan who is studying Community Health through a Muskie Fellowship at MSU. This relationship helped the student learn about American culture and family life. In turn, it helped my family learn about and appreciate another culture and family life patterns. We spent about two hours each month with each other, experiencing family dinners, church dinners, dental appointments, and more. The experience also helped me to be continually aware of how others perceive ideas and behaviors in our American college culture.

International Experience Embedded in Courses: I included an international experience in several of my course, EEC 455 Supervision and Leadership in Early Learning Environments. I involved all the students as Cultural Ambassadors with the international students in KSP 106. The students in my class joined a small group and participated in six cross-cultural experiences during the semester. This fostered understanding of another culture. It also provided students in my class with a special experience to mention on their resume, job applications, and scholarship applications.

AY06 Welcome to International Students in COE: I led the International Studies Committee to sponsor a tea in March for faculty to meet international students enrolled in the College. The conversational agenda was to discuss what led them to select MSU for their education. Representatives from the International Student Office were present also to share about how that office supports students in their work at MSU.

### Recommendations and References for Students

Each year, I wrote dozens of letters of reference and recommendation for students. In part, my recommendations resulted in many successful applications for scholarships and employment. Documentation is available through my files and emails. Names are not included here in order to respect these students' privacy.

Also, for three years, I encouraged the Nu Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma to actually implement its scholarship program. As a result, in October, 2009, their Grants Committee awarded the first scholarships in the last five years to two MSU students: Betsy Hawes and Emily Cowan. Betsy was a senior at MSU. She was an elementary education major with a pre-primary concentration. Emily was a junior at MSU. She was an elementary education major with a concentration in mathematics.

### Independent Study Agreements

There are a number of reasons why a student might want to register for independent projects, including:

- a. Additional credits in order to reach their 128 credits to graduate
- b. Additional credits in order to reach a full 12 credits for a semester
- c. Additional credits to fill the gap between the formerly-required 16 credits for student teaching and the now-required 12 credits for student teaching
- d. Credits for work done in a service learning experience that was not connected to a course
- e. Credits for work done in a research project that was not connected to a course
- f. Filling a semester while the student waits for admission to professional education

The following chart indicates the number of specific students, not the number of credits for which each student registered. The EEC department had no standard or limitation on independent work until Spring, 2009. Since only once or twice was I allowed to use teaching “load” for mentoring students in independent study, I do not think I took advantage of this possibility.

Table 4-2: Comparison of Number Independent Study Agreements among EEC Department Faculty Members, AY09

Number of Undergraduate Students Enrolled in Independent Study Projects											
Semester	Prenn	Mastin	Traynor	Werhan	Matz	Rahn	Duran	Good	Ballard	Reuter	Sandell
Su06		1							1	1	
Fa07				1				8		1	2
Spr08				3			2			13	1
Sum08			2							1	4
Fa08			1	1			1			1	10
Spr09			2				1	3		3	11
Sum09								1			
Fa09	1			1		1			2		1
Total UG	1	1	5	6	0	1	4	12	3	20	29

Number of Graduate Students Enrolled in Independent Study Projects											
Semester	Prenn	Mastin	Traynor	Werhan	Matz	Rahn	Duran	Good	Ballard	Reuter	Sandell
Su06					1				3		
Fa07								1	2		
Spr08							2		1		1
Sum08					5		1		2		1
Fa08							1		1		
Spr09									4		1
Sum09											
Fa09						7			1		
Total GR	0	0	0	0	6	7	4	1	14	0	3

TOTAL	1	1	5	6	6	8	8	13	17	20	32
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### Undergraduate Student Research

To my knowledge, I am the only EEC department faculty member who has involved undergraduate students in research projects during the past five years. My involvement has resulted in student conference presentations and articles related to MSU’s Undergraduate Research Conference. These students were able to:

- Gain significant insight into the world of academic research.
- Learn specific skills that will help later in design and conducting scholarly research projects.
- Be involved in research typically only available to advanced graduate students and faculty members.
- Learn high-level project planning and research skills.

- Learn a wide variety of research approaches and terminology.

As a “Faculty Seeking Undergraduate Scholars,” I have an entry on the (virtual) Center for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Works sponsored by the Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Works Advisory Group: <http://grad.mnsu.edu/research/cursc/> The virtual Center is dedicated to improving the presence and quality of undergraduate-faculty collaborations across campus. The goal of the center is to help the university achieve its mission of promoting learning by effectively integrating undergraduate teaching, scholarship and research.

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**Description of Project:** Assessment of quality for early childhood education and care programs

**Mentor Expectations:** Minimum of three hours of research per week

Although the site is a work in progress, please take note of the “Faculty Input Form” under “Research Opportunities.” This site encourages faculty to post their current and future needs for undergraduate participants. We hope that students will be able to identify possible opportunities and that faculty will be able to identify interested students, fostering collaboration between faculty and students.

During AY08, I secured funding from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for one undergraduate student worker to assist Dr. Duran. The funding was for 60 hours of undergraduate research assistance at \$8.70 per hour.

During AY09, I mentored 9 undergraduate students involved in 3 research teams. Products of Undergraduate Research Teams included proposals for the MSU Undergraduate Research Conference and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. These students also connected with undergraduate students in Magadan, Russia. Katie Robb, Casandra Schmidt, Stephanie Tautges, Anne Kennedy, and Katelyn McMahon conducted cooperative projects and then combined their data for MSU’s 2009 Undergraduate Research Conference.

During AY10, I secured funding for two undergraduate student workers to assist with some research and data collection on one of my projects at MSU. The support included \$925.00 for student work time – 100 hours at \$9.25/hour for Student Para-professional Level 3. This supported 2 hours/week for Maggie Looft and Kiley Theede for 4 weeks of Fall semester, 15 weeks of Spring semester, and 6 weeks of Summer Session.

One student (S.T.) said she learned these things:

*During this research project I learned that about my own philosophies. It took me over an hour to sort through all of the philosophies, I kept switching things around and finally had to stop because I could have kept going for another hour or more. I really took the time to read the statements and think about how I personally felt about each of them.*

*Another thing that I learned from this project was that, even though I didn't personally help write it, writing grants have a lot that go into them, and if they are not written correctly they could be thrown out. I really think that this is an interesting research project and am glad that it got accepted to be at the research conference. The third thing that I learned while helping with this project was that it was very interesting to see the different philosophies while entering the data. We noticed that some of the numbers were consistently in the "Strongly Agree" category. It makes me very excited to see the results from Russia in comparison to those from here.*

*I honestly felt that I could have been given more responsibilities throughout the research project, but I do understand that others were there for more credits and required more hours. At the beginning of this project I went out and asked different companies for donations so we could give the participants a little something for helping us out. I was not able to receive anything from any of the companies as they had either just donated to another project or fundraiser, or they simply did not have anything they could donate at the time. Doing this was quite the experience for me; at first I was kind of shy and not sure what to say, and as I went into the next two companies, I felt I got more professional and more confident. At the end of the research project, I helped enter the data. This was really interesting as I stated before. I really liked the program that we entered the data into, it was very efficient and I thought that we flew through the entries.*

*At first I was unsure about the research project. I wasn't sure how many people (mostly students) would take this project seriously as it does require some time. But once we began the project and I completed my philosophies, I was more anxious to see the results. I figured that anyone serious about education would take the time to really read each statement and complete the forms as asked. Now, I am really looking forward to seeing and analyzing the data from what we collected as well as what our friends from Russia have collected.*

Another student (K.R.) said she learned these things:

*One thing I learned was that with research, you learn as you go. There were many things that I learned as the researching went on, meaning after the first group or students were researched, I personally found out better ways to do and address the research. And then after Dr. Bauer talked about how she has used Q-Sort, I learned more. It is an experience that seems to always be changing and added to. Another thing I learned or know about research is the researcher must get signatures of all the interviewee's. I know this as when I was involved in a smaller research with another professor on campus, not all students interviewed signed the forms, and there results we were not able to use because we had no proof they read the consent form and were indeed old enough to be participating.*

*During this research project, I learned you can do with research is adding information and materials. In starting this research, it was under my understanding that we were only going to have a select few interviewees. As the research went on, it seemed that we have added more and more people as there are more who are interested in the research. I also*

*learned that people like to know the results. It has always been taught that when interviewing people, confidentiality is important. Although it still is important, research should be done in a way that is confidential, but a way you will be able to track down the people interviewed to tell them the results of the research. The last thing I learned in this area is that with research, you can also have students from other countries involved in this process. In our case, we are including Russia. This is very interesting and great, as there is more information we can use and compare.*

*During this research project, I developed these attitudes: One thing I learned in this area is sometimes people do not really think about the answers they are giving. It is important to be able to throw out these answers or statements. I feel this is very important to know, as this one factor can skew your entire research results. Another thing I learned in this area is that I feel with all researches, one should have the choice to do the research or not to. By this I mean that with our Q-sort, we gave interviewee's the option to opt out of the research process at anytime. I feel this is very important as well because if you force someone to do something they may not like, your results will not be true. During this research, I feel it is important to know the results of this particular research, as it involves something that I am directly interested in. I honestly do now know all my own philosophies on education, as it seems to change with the different environments I have been involved in. By this I mean that in comparing the different areas we are, I feel this idea will be proven.*

One student (C.S.) said during this research project, she learned these things:

*The way a person answers a question on an assessment, such as Global Guidelines, depends on how they interpret the question, the actions of the teacher, etc. Some QRIS cost a lot of money, while others do not. The use of QRIS is not yet required for all schools and child care centers.*

*During this research project, I practiced these three behaviors: Making as many comments as possible about the rating I had just chosen for a question. Keeping two formats of my research (one for back up). Asking questions if I do not understand what or why something is being done.*

*During this research project, I developed these three attitudes: For an actual assessment of a program, I think a person should visit multiple days. You may not see everything in one visit. It is important to be professional with the correspondents. Speak and dress appropriately. I feel that when being assessed, you are nervous and may even feel as if you are putting on a show, even if you are not. It is not just an assessment of the classroom, but also of the teacher and may be stressful on the teacher.*

During Fall, 2009, I served as the COE representative to the Task Force on Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work. In that role, I co-authored a monograph with Dean Anne Blackhurst and Associate Professor, Gina Wenger: "The Value of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity in the Tenure and Promotion Process at Minnesota State University, Mankato." This monograph was shared with the Task Force and

with members of the President’s Cabinet. The paper provided rationale and examples of the ways in which undergraduate research advances both the University’s mission and the faculty member’s ability to document achievement in each of the five areas specified in Article 22.

*As a comprehensive public university, Minnesota State Mankato strives to integrate teaching and research in service to the local, regional, and global communities. This mission is reflected in the criteria for evaluation of faculty members, as specified in Article 22 of the faculty contract. In addition to teaching, research, and service, these criteria include contributing to students’ growth and development, as well as the faculty member’s own professional development and preparation. Perhaps no single activity integrates the five criteria more effectively than undergraduate research, which represents the true blending of teaching and research in ways that benefit students, faculty, and the larger community. As a result, faculty mentorship of undergraduate research and creative activity fulfills multiple purposes in the promotion and tenure process at Minnesota State Mankato. (Blackhurst, Wenger, and Sandell, 2009).*

During AY09 and AY10, I served as one of two COE representatives to the Undergraduate Research Conference Steering Committee. The Steering Committee met for 2 hours monthly and worked for 3 days at the URC in April.

#### *2009 Undergraduate Research Conference*

Reflections on the Conduct of Research with Human Subjects Across Two Cultures  
Kimberly M. Maas (Department of Sociology & Corrections) (oral presentation, conference proceedings, and 2009 Journal of Undergraduate Research at *Minnesota State University, Mankato*. from <http://grad.mnsu.edu/research/urc/journal/>

Cross-Cultural Understanding of Philosophies of Pre-Service Teachers  
Katelyn McMahon, Anastasiya Horeva, Katie Robb (Department of Educational Studies: Elementary & Early Childhood Education)  
\*Recipient of Undergraduate Research Conference Large Grant (oral presentation, conference proceedings)

Use of Global Guidelines Assessment in Early Childhood Education Settings  
Casandra Schmit, Anna Kucherenko, Alexandra Zhykova, Anne Kennedy (Department of Educational Studies: Elementary & Early Childhood Education)  
(oral presentation)

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From: Maas, Kimberly Michelle  
Sent: Wednesday, November 04, 2009 1:11 PM  
To: Sandell, Elizabeth Jill  
Subject: just wanted to send you a thank you

Thank you for allowing me to do research for you and advising me along the way. Where I work

at the USDA, rather the other part where I'm interning decided out of the blue to hire me temporarily in December to do some research for them. While it may only be temporary I believe it is because she saw the resume that I had with prior research that she thought me capable of doing this for her organization. I will gain some hands-on professional experience outside of school now. So thanks for the help. I really appreciate it.

Kimberly Maas  
Email: [Kimberly.maas@mnsu.edu](mailto:Kimberly.maas@mnsu.edu)

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### *2010 Undergraduate Research Conference*

Fostering Teacher Understanding of Dakota and Lakota Education Experiences: Past, Present, and Future by Maggie Looft and Kiley Theede (Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education) (poster session, 2010 Journal of Undergraduate Research)

### *2010 Focus on Children Conference*

The Focus on the Children Conference offered a variety of workshops of interest to early childhood and school age care professionals, educators, parents, foster care providers, and those interested in the development of children, birth through twelve years of age. An audience of 400 attended this event.

The keynote speaker for this year's conference is Gaye Gronlund, M.A. Gaye is a former preschool, kindergarten and primary teacher of both regular and special education. She is the author of five books published by Redleaf Press ([www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org))

Along with Dr. Reuter, I was faculty mentor to 3 undergraduate students to attend and to present at the 2010 Focus on the Children Conference in Rochester, MN. We presented on April 18, 2010, along with students: Amber Bissonette, Alyssa Nicholson-Hansen, and Amanda Sterna. We provided a 1-¼ hours workshop. We tried to provide a blend of recent research, applied theory, and practical application. Most providers and classroom teachers really appreciated receiving a few new strategies they can use right away.

In completing a presentation proposal, all presenters were asked to align workshops with the Minnesota Core Competencies for Early Childhood Education and Care Practitioners or the Minnesota School Age Core Competencies. These documents can be found online at [http://www.mncpd.org/core\\_competencies.html](http://www.mncpd.org/core_competencies.html) This helped insure that the Focus on The Children Conference was an approved training through the Minnesota Center for Professional Development. This process was also a learning experience for the three undergraduate students involved in our presentation.



### Graduate Student Research

#### *Capstone Experiences Supervisor*

The following students are working or have worked with me as their academic adviser on master's theses or alternate plan papers:

Azarova, Vera Grigoryevna, Master's Thesis, College of Education. "Pilot test of a quality rating and improvement system in early education programs in Magadan, Russian Federation and in Minnesota, United States of America," completed in 2010.

Afdahl-Doble, Calane, Alternate Plan Paper, College of Education. "Vocabulary Development Among Spanish-Speaking Preprimary Children: Response to Family Literacy Intervention in the Home Language," completed in 2009.

Pyrch, Iryna, Alternate Plan Paper, College of Education. "Analysis of Changes in Teaching Methodologies in Elementary Schools in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialistic Republic: Comparison of Socialist and Independent Periods," to be completed in 2011.

#### *Capstone Experiences Committee Member*

I have served on the capstone project committees for several other students:

Fairchild, Ruth, Master's Thesis, College of Arts and Humanities. "Like a *Tica*: An Autoethnography About Cultural Adjustment in Costa Rica," completed in 2009.

Hajiyeva, Nargiz, Master's Thesis, College of Education. "Impact of Imagine Educational Program on Conflict Resolution on the Program Participants, completed May, 2009.

Madhavarapu, Samatha, Master's Thesis, College of Allied Health and Nursing. "Smoking Cessation and Healthcare Providers' Advice," completed in 2009.

Shrestha, Binki Maiya, Master's Creative Project, College of Arts and Humanities. "Portfolio of Reflections and Artifacts Related to Teaching English as a Second Language," completed December, 2009.

Siddela, Paulkani, Master's Thesis, College of Science, Engineering and Technology. "Changes in baroreflex heart rate response [working title]," to be completed in 2011.

#### *2009 Graduate Research Conference*

To my knowledge, I am the only EEC department faculty member who has involved graduate students in research projects that resulted in presentations and articles related to MSU's Graduate Research Conference. During AY07 – AY09, I facilitated a study group of graduate students who were working on their capstone projects: Vera Azarova, Calane Afdahl-Doble, Nargiz Hajiyeva, and Samatha Madhavarapu. All of the group members presented at MSU's 2009 Graduate Research Conference. One student won an Outstanding Presentation Award Winner. Two students published their work in MSU's Journal of Graduate Research.

Afdahl-Doble, Calane, Alternate Plan Paper, College of Education. "Vocabulary Development Among Spanish-Speaking Preprimary Children: Response to Family Literacy

Intervention in the Home Language.” (poster session, 2009 Graduate Research Conference).

Azarova, Vera Grigoryevna, Master’s Thesis, College of Education. "Pilot test of a quality rating and improvement system in early education programs in Magadan, Russian Federation and in Minnesota, United States of America," (oral presentation, 2009 Graduate Research Conference; Conference Journal, Vol. 1, 2009).

Hajiyeva, Nargiz, Master’s Thesis, College of Education. “Impact of Imagine Educational Program on Conflict Resolution on the Program Participants,” (oral presentation, 2009 Graduate Research Conference; Conference Journal, Vol. 1, 2009).

Madhavarapu, Samatha, Master’s Thesis, College of Allied Health and Nursing. “Smoking Cessation and Healthcare Providers’ Advice,” (oral presentation, 2009 Graduate Research Conference; won 2009 GRC Outstanding Presentation Award Winner)

### *Financial Support for Graduate Students*

EEC had not had a graduate assistant funded by the MSU College of Graduate Studies and Research since AY 2004 – 2005. Increasing the number of department graduate assistantships attracted quality graduate students and enhanced the research and work of several of the department faculty members. Furthermore, teaching and research experience is essential for students who wish to continue to a doctoral program, perhaps here at MSU, Mankato

Due to my efforts, during AY08 and AY09, ES:EEC had two full-time graduate assistants supported by Academic Affairs, College of Education, and Department resources. The EEC department used its two College-supported Graduate Assistantships during AY08 and AY09 to add depth to the department graduate efforts. One position (supported by College and Department funds) enabled the College to hire an international graduate student to teach one undergraduate course each semester and to facilitate its partnerships with Northern International University in Magadan, Russia. The other position (also supported by Academic Affairs/College funds) enabled the College to hire a teaching assistant to assist two faculty members with research projects and to provide instruction in one undergraduate course each semester.

Also, I encouraged one of our graduate assistants (Vera Azarova) to apply to the College of Graduate Studies and Research for a Graduate Student Travel Award. This application generated \$300 for her to participate with me in a juried poster session at the 2008 national conference for the Association for Childhood Education International. This conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia, from March 26 – 29, 2008. As her adviser, I helped Vera prepare and present a cross-cultural qualitative study that is being implemented in Mankato, Minnesota and Magadan, Russia. In this study, pre-service teachers use photographs taken by children to understand the children’s meaning of their learning environments. The poster session was held Friday, March 28, 2008 from 3:15 – 4:15 pm.

I applied and received a grant for Spring, 2010 so that Iryna Pynch, international graduate student in EEC, worked some hours this semester and was paid through the College of Education funds related to Reassignment and Research (Dean Miller approved this based on recommendations from the R&R Committee). This grant provided for about 10 to 12 hours each

week of employment related to her major and things she will learn that will apply directly to her future activities in Ukraine. We worked on several research projects together and she is assisting me with communication in Russian with our colleagues in Russia.

*Graduate Research Design and Advising*

In my research experience, it is not necessary for a thesis to result in a “proof” of the hypothesis. Part of the scientific process is to report and explain what happened, even if it does not turn out the way the scholar originally anticipated. It is not necessary for a research design to have a control group or to control for every confounding variable. A thesis research project can take many forms – qualitative, formative, case study, and more. Knowledge may be learned from reporting on a study that did not prove the hypothesis, that did not go smoothly, or that used qualitative designs.

Prior to coming to MSU, Mankato, I served on committees for two master’s degree capstone projects at the University of Minnesota. Both of them were thesis projects. Since coming to MSU, Mankato, I have served on committees for six master’s degree capstone projects. Three of them were successful thesis projects. Three of them were alternate plan papers or creative projects. Four of them were in departments other than EEC. Not one of these master’s capstone projects had a research design similar to the others.

During AY09, I served on four committees for master’s degree students. Two were in our department, one was in another department in the College of Education, and the fourth was in another College. Two were alternate plan papers and two were thesis research projects. During AY10, I served on two committees for master’s degree students. One was a thesis research project and one was a portfolio creative project. None of them had the traditional quantitative, control/comparison group research design.

The Table 4-3 illustrates which EEC faculty members had advisees who registered for credits for their capstone projects during AY08 through AY10. (Note: there were no EEC graduate students registered for master’s degree capstone projects in AY06 and AY07, so data for those years is not shown on the chart. There may be some duplication in the count, because one student may have registered for credits in more than one semester of the specified academic year.)

Table 4-3: Number of EEC Graduate Students Enrolled in Capstone Projects, AY08 through AY10<sup>2</sup>

EEC	Number of Students Per Academic Year								
	AY08			AY09			AY10		
	APP	Crtv	Thesis	APP	Crtv	Thesis	APP	Crtv	Thesis
Faculty Member	EEC 694	EEC 695	EEC 699	EEC 694	EEC 695	EEC 699	EEC 694	EEC 695	EEC 699
Ballard	1	1	1		7			4	
Browne									
Duran				3					
Fogg									
Good									
Mastin									
Matz									
Meyer-Mork									
Prenn									
Rahn							1		
Reuter									
Sandell						3			
Traynor									
Total	1	1	1	3	7	3	1	4	0

Dr. Ballard, and Dr. Prenn when Dr. Ballard was on sabbatical leave, has been the coordinator for graduate studies in the EEC department during these years. Dr. Ballard has advised the majority of graduate students and has primarily directed her advisees to complete Alternate Plan Papers and Creative Projects. There was only one student in a single semester that was registered for Thesis credits with Dr. Ballard. Graduate students in our department are repeatedly advised by Dr. Ballard to complete an Alternate Plan Paper instead of a thesis because “it will be easier.” An Alternate Plan Paper or a Creative Project does not position a student well for future doctoral studies. Dr. Ballard’s advice suggests that EEC department colleagues are not “thinking and acting like a doctoral institution,” which is one of President Davenport’s main goals. For whom exactly is it easier? The student? The faculty advisor? The department?

During 2009, I was the faculty adviser for two students who were completing their thesis projects in the EEC department. One of them successfully defended her thesis in May, 2009 and officially graduated in December, 2009. Originally, the other student (CAD) was planning to graduate in May, 2009. However, she had at least one course remaining to complete during the Summer, 2009. She officially graduated in December, 2009.

CAD and I had worked with Dr. Stephen Bohnenblust in the Center for Excellence in Scholarship and Research. He seemed to think her research design could be adequate for an

<sup>2</sup> Based on registration information on MSU’s Course Schedule website.

MSU, Mankato master's degree thesis research project. Along the way, the student had also consulted with Dr. Duran (as her project leader and collaborator). CAD worked as a graduate assistant with Dr. Duran on this project. CAD collected data for Dr. Duran's project and (with Dr. Duran's permission) was going to use some of the data as the basis for her master's thesis project. The student's research was part of Dr. Duran's projects with Head Start in Faribault. Dr. Duran discussed and reflected on the design with the student.

Dr. Duran had added the student's project to Dr. Duran's IRB-approved research project (IRB Proposal Log #3062). During this student's time in our department, I tried repeatedly to get a copy of Dr. Duran's proposal to the IRB. However, it was not until January, 2010 that I actually found a copy, which did not refer to the student's participation in the project. I have signed documentation from the IRB Administrator, Dr. Patricia Hargrove, that the way this student's IRB was handled was typical for graduate students collecting data under the leadership of a faculty research design. Dr. Hargrove noted that this project was based on Dr. Duran's research design, not CAD's. So, in a sense, it would have been academic dishonesty if CAD had filed her own proposal with the IRB. Dr. Hargrove commented to me that the IRB procedures in place in 2007 did not really provide for adding student workers' names to IRB proposals. She noted that the practice at MSU, Mankato is a bit cumbersome sometimes and that she is aware that occasionally projects have a number of student research workers, without ever naming them in the IRB's file... even for inclusion in their eventual master's thesis projects. Given this situation, Dr. Hargrove suggested that it was not essential, and not a legal liability or ethical misconduct, that we did not have CAD's name in the IRB file for this project. Dr. Hargrove took this case (with identifying information removed) to the IRB administrator's meeting later this week to get clarification of this practice. (See documentation)

CAD had submitted sections of her study, including the design, for two other graduate-level research courses, including one EEC course taught online during the Summer 2009 by Dr. Prenn. The student received an "A" from Dr. Lee for KSP 609 Research Methods in Fall 2008. This class included opportunities for students to design their research projects. The student received an "A" from Dr. Prenn for EEC 610 Scholarly Writing in Summer 2009. This class also included opportunities for students to further refine their research reports.

I received guidelines about master's degree capstone projects for the EEC department from Dr. Peggy Ballard on September 24, 2008. These guidelines stated: "All thesis projects require a proposal. If data collection is part of the thesis, this proposal must be approved before any data collection is started by completing the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process."

This information from Dr. Ballard did not indicate exactly who approves a thesis proposal -- other than the IRB. In this student's case, the IRB approval was received through Dr. Duran's IRB Proposal Log #3062, "Spanish Immersion and Monolingual English Immersion in Preschool Education: An Experimental Longitudinal Comparison." The IRB proposal identified Dr. Duran as the principal investigator and Dr. Patricia Hoffman as the secondary investigator.

I knew that Dr. Duran had submitted her proposal to the IRB and that it was approved in May 2007, before CAD began her graduate studies. I talked with CAD several times about having Dr. Duran submit an amendment to add CAD as a student researcher to the IRB

materials. CAD told me that she remembers seeing a written notification to the IRB about project continuation. This paper included notification that graduate and undergraduate student workers would be working with Dr. Duran. However, the IRB file does not show that Dr. Duran's continuation and revision was actually submitted to or approved by the IRB. And CAD's name was never added to Dr. Duran's IRB proposal and/or project.

In January, 2010, I met with Dr. Patricia Hargrove, coordinator for the IRB at MSU. Dr. Hargrove noted that this project was based on Dr. Duran's research design, not CAD's. So, in a sense, it would have been academic dishonesty if CAD had filed her own proposal with the IRB. Dr. Hargrove commented to me that the IRB procedures do not require listing students' names on IRB proposals. According to information from IRB committee members, research projects occasionally have a number of student research workers, without ever naming the students in the IRB's file... even for inclusion in their eventual master's thesis projects. Given this situation, I contend that it was not essential, and not a legal liability or ethical misconduct, that CAD's name was not in the IRB file for this project. Dr. Duran wrote a letter to document that CAD assisted with data collection within the parameters and protocols of the IRB approval, even though CAD did not have a separate IRB proposal. Dr. Duran sent this letter to the IRB and to send a copy to me, for CAD's student files.

According to the College of Graduate Studies and Research, thesis proposals: "... should be approved before data collection is started. This proposal requires acceptance and endorsement by the student's examining committee. It is not required that the thesis proposal is approved by the College of Graduate Studies and Research." (from <http://grad.mnsu.edu/capstone/thesis.html>) In this case, Dr. Duran was one of CAD's original thesis committee members, in addition to Dr. Peggy Ballard and me. By agreeing to include CAD in her research, Dr. Duran approved CAD's thesis proposal. By signing CAD's academic plan and meeting with CAD, Dr. Ballard approved CAD's thesis proposal. As CAD's adviser, I approved her thesis proposal.

During her final semester before graduation, CAD wanted to apply for funding for thesis expenses from the College of Graduate Studies and Research: "The College of Graduate Studies and Research provides financial assistance to partially reimburse students for expenses related to completing a thesis. Stipends up to \$200 to support research related expense are available each semester; however, funding is available on a limited basis. This financial support is currently available only to students completing a thesis as the program capstone project." (<http://grad.mnsu.edu/student/thesisfunding.html>)

The GSR form, Request for Funding to Complete Thesis Research, required the applicant to attach an approved Thesis Proposal. CAD needed a revised description of her thesis. According to a conversation with CAD on January 22, 2010, CAD asked for my help on revising the description for submission along with her application in late January 2009. She does not recall that Dr. Prenn helped her at all, unless it was to proofread the paper. CAD did not report any "scrambling" was involved beyond the normal work to meet a grant proposal due date.

During the summer, 2009, I spent countless hours when I was not on faculty duty to meet with CAD to edit and to refine her paper as a thesis. Her thesis committee included Dr. Duran, Dr. Ballard, and me. CAD was ready to get feedback from her committee members after May,

2009. However, Dr. Ballard and Dr. Duran were unavailable to provide feedback. Dr. Ballard had left the Mankato area for the summer and Dr. Duran was busy with the process of leaving the Mankato area to move to Utah. The student thought that Dr. Good and Dr. Meyer-Mork could be helpful to her, so we asked them to replace Dr. Ballard and Dr. Duran on the committee.

During the summer, most faculty members (including me) were off campus and not on duty. In July, 2009, Dr. Good and Dr. Meyer-Mork took great issue with the student's paper as a thesis and vehemently argued that it should be an alternate plan paper. They were opposed to the form of the research that CAD had followed, and they did not consider that it was a worthy design for a thesis project. With their quick review, Dr. Good and Dr. Meyer-Mork identified problems and did not think it was worth working on the design problems to help the student craft a better thesis within the limited time available. I think with department and committee support, the student could have revised the thesis to be adequate for her degree. Unfortunately, the student could not afford additional time to complete her degree. The result is that CAD re-wrote the material as an alternate plan paper and graduated in December, 2009.

### *Graduate Student Advising*

In AY09, I recruited a Ukrainian student into the master's program in the EEC department. This student also speaks the Russian language. The plan of study that I drafted for the student in August, 2009, was based on the current requirements for a master's of science in Early Childhood Education as it was listed in the current MSU Bulletin. However, I have learned that many of the printed requirements were out-of-date and were misleading to me and to the student. Several courses are not even offered.

During AY10, Dr. Ballard was the student's academic advisor. However, at the end of the academic year, the student applied to change her advisor so that I would work with her. Dr. Ballard told me that she advised the student to complete the alternate plan paper capstone project for her master's degree because, according to Dr. Ballard, it is "easier" to complete than a thesis, even if it is not the student's first choice.

The student is happy with the plan of academic study related to a major in Early Childhood Education. Her undergraduate major was social pedagogy, which is related to Minnesota's family education, and, therefore, more related to early childhood education than to counseling. I did talk with the student during her initial visit to campus about majoring in counseling or psychology or special education. The student was very clear that she wanted to take a few courses, but not a major, related to child psychopathology or abnormal psychology. The student and I did discuss these academic majors, but they do not fit her goals. Her I-20 for her student visa does say she is going to study in Early Childhood Education, but she could change her major (if she wanted to change) without going back home for a year. It is a simple matter of deciding on a new major, getting approval for admission from the new department, and then submitting a form to the International Center. There would have been no consequences to changing the student's major.