

To: Dr. John Watson, VP of Academic Affairs
From: Dr. Kevin Mason
Date: 04/024/2014
Reference: Professional Development Grant Completion Report

Included in this report are the following:

1. Results of grant.
2. Schedule of presentations.
3. Budget reconciliation.

We truly appreciate the support of this endeavor to increase research, and feel the money was well spent.

Thank you!

Abstract

Three years ago, we started a workshop series to encourage research. It was unique in that it involved two colleges across campus. The Economists (from the College of Business) and the Social Scientists from the College of Arts & Humanities were the participants. The result was the formation of the *ATU Empirical Social Science Research Group (ESSRG)*. The first year, we met during lunch in Rothwell or Witherspoon. But there were problems; many did not have time to get lunch before or after the meeting. Providing lunch removes one of the major obstacles to attendance. With greater attendance we feel that the research skills and research for numerous faculty on campus can improve. Fortunately, we (ESSRG) received a grant in the amount of \$720.00 to be used to cater lunches from Chartwells for the 2013/14 academic year. The least expensive meal option available to us was a box lunch at \$10.36 per meal. To stay within budget, we provided lunch or appetizers for six of the nine workshop events.

We had an inter-disciplined set of topics and presenters this past academic year. Specifically, we had topics from the disciplines of Math, Economics, Finance and Marketing, Political Science, English, and Business Data Analytics. All were well received by the audience, and all presenters received plentiful feed-back and suggestions. This workshop stimulated the development of several scholarship outcomes including submissions to journals and conference proceedings. In addition, new collaborative research was generated and many workshop members, sharpened their research methods skills. Although attendance varied by month, our average attendance was 15 faculty members.

Purpose / Objectives

The prominence and quality of faculty research is becoming increasingly critical as Arkansas Tech University proceeds to formal Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Level 3 status. Research informs teaching and has the potential to enhance the quality of teaching at the institution. Among other factors, SREB evaluates institutions on size, role, breadth of program offerings, and comprehensiveness. A major part of an institution's reputation evolves from its research output, and the subsequent reputation of its researchers.

The better prepared the researcher, the higher the probability of success with acceptance for publication or presentation. This research workshop series is designed to encourage research, and its presentation, for faculty across the Arkansas Tech University campus. Peer review is generally seen as vital for the roles of forming an archive of knowledge, as well as validating the quality of research. The individuals who peer review a presentation increases the probability errors will be caught and problems identified. The process of peer review is critical to establishing a reliable body of research and knowledge. The interdisciplinary nature of the ESSRG does not provide the narrow review of a discipline-specific topic as found in the traditionally-defined peer review process.

The intent, and established outcomes, of the ESSRG is to provide feedback with regard to clarity and research methodology. Specifically, the ESSRG provides an opportunity to the faculty of

Arkansas Tech University to get feedback on the validity of their research methodology and procedures prior to submission. If appropriate, the peer reviews suggests revisions and evaluate the presentation for scholarly validity and rigor. A secondary impact of the interdisciplinary membership of the ESSRG is interaction, and potential collaboration, with peers in varying disciplines who may not have otherwise been exposed to the scope of research on the Arkansas Tech University campus. As such, the ESSRG provides exposure to research methodologies and techniques the faculty member may not encounter in his or her own academic research.

The ESSRG attracted several “new” researchers to become directly involved in the research workshops. As a result, our series has grown to include faculty from multiple departments including; Management and Marketing, Accounting, Business Data Analytics, Economics and Finance, English, Professional Studies, Political Science, Sociology and History. During each presentation, there are always are several useful comments & suggestions for the presenters.

An important result of the ESSRG was that this forum gave nine presenting professors the opportunity to discuss and develop their research projects. As shown in Table 1, we had an inter-disciplined set of topics and presenters this past academic year. Specifically, we had topics from the disciplines of Math, Economics, Finance and Marketing, Political Science, English, and Business Data Analytics, In addition, the monthly research workshop meetings stimulate attendees to keep a focus on scholarship and strive to maintain discipline currency.

Table 1: 2013/14 Empirical Social Science Research Group (ESSRG) Workshops

Date	Presenter	Discipline	Topic	Attendance	Lunch (Costs)
09/11/13	Dr. John Watson	Math	<i>High Level Mathematics for Young Minds</i>	20	No Lunch provided
10/9/13	Dr. Masa Kuroki	Economics	<i>Using Dry County Policy to Estimate the Effects of Alcohol Consumption on Life Satisfaction</i>	18	No Lunch provided
11/6/13	Mr. Dan Wilkins	Finance	<i>Microfinance and its impact on Developing Countries</i>	13	Lunch for 13 (\$134.62)
12/2/13	Dr. Jeff Aulgur	Professional Studies	<i>Nonprofit Board Members' Self-Perception in the Role of Organizational Governance and The Balanced Scorecard</i>	13	Lunch for 13 (\$134.62)
1/15/14	Dr. Brent Hogan	English	<i>Reanimating Arabic ESL Students from Fossilization</i>	14	No Lunch provided
2/05/14	Dr. Monica Varner	Sociology	<i>Complex Critical Reflection of Cultural Variables: A Content Analysis of Service Learning Portfolios Employing the ABC123 Model For Constructing Cognition</i>	14	Lunch for 14 (\$144.98)
3/05/14	Dr. Jim Walton	Marketing	<i>Is the Marketing Mix a "P" Short</i>	12	Lunch for 12 (\$124.26)
3/31/14	Dr. Efosa Idemudia	Business Data Analytics	<i>An Empirical Investigation of the Dependence of MRI and CT Scanners on Total Expenditure on Health, Infant Mortality Rate, and Physician—A Global Comparison of Multiple Countries.</i>	14	Lunch for 13 (\$134.62)
4/23/14	Dr. Mike Rogers	Political Science	<i>A Natural Disaster of Civic Proportions: A Comparative Study of Civic Literacy in Two Southern Universities</i>	11	Appetizers provided (\$50.14)

Throughout the academic year, ESSRG members were asked to provide feedback concerning the workshop. Specifically members were asked to report outcomes that have resulted from their participation in the research workshops. Past benefits that have occurred include:

- The paper presented has been submitted to a journal for review
- The paper presented has been submitted to a conference to be published in the conference proceeding.
- The paper presented has been submitted to a conference to be presented at a conference.
- You are now going to create a new research paper that is based upon or related to the research you presented.
- You were able to create some new collaborative research with one or more of the other members.
- Presentations have led to generation of ideas new research
- Presentations have led to a greater understanding of research methods
- Presentations have led to a greater understanding of another's discipline.

In this past year several worthwhile outcomes were observed. **Table 2**, shows some of beneficial outcomes for presenters and attendees that were reported. In short, research presenters gain constructive help for improving their articles. Many of the papers presented are targeted for publication into various journals. Researchers who attended, but did not present were stimulated to think about research ideas and methods.

Table 2: 2013/14 Empirical Social Science Research Group (SSERG) Workshop Outcomes

Presenter	Topic	Outcomes
Dr. Masa Kuroki	<i>Using Dry County Policy to Estimate the Effects of Alcohol Consumption on Life Satisfaction</i>	Dr. Kuroki stated that he received some valuable information from one of the group members concerning the use of regression analysis. He hopes to improve the research and submit it to a journal within the next few months.
Mr. Dan Wilkins	<i>Microfinance and its impact on Developing Countries</i>	Dr. Wilkins' paper was based upon observation from 12 years of experience as a practitioner. He received some ideas on developing his research and knowledge in the field of microfinancing.
Dr. Jeff Aulgur	<i>Nonprofit Board Members' Self-Perception in the Role of Organizational Governance and The Balanced Scorecard</i>	I intend to submit a journal article for consideration based on the research this calendar year.
Dr. Brent Hogan	<i>Reanimating Arabic ESL Students from Fossilization</i>	Dr. Hogan stated that he received great feedback regarding two major factors. The first was to include more Greek society interaction with our Arabic international services. This led him to contact club groups as well so they can be in incorporate our students. The research presented will be submitted to the Arkansas TESOL conference for next year. It will also be submitted to the national TESOL conference as well. Dr. Hogan also stated that through the workshops, he has received other research ideas. As a result, he is currently writing a novel about teenage runaways.
Dr. Monica Varner	<i>Complex Critical Reflection of Cultural Variables: A Content Analysis of Service Learning Portfolios Employing the ABC123 Model For Constructing Cognition</i>	Dr. Varner's paper has been invited for publication in a sociology journal called <i>Free Inquiry</i> found at the following site: http://ojs.library.okstate.edu/osu/index.php/FICS/ . Also, this presentation lead to collaborative work on a future project with group members Dr. Marc Fusaro and Dr. Lucas Maxwell where a Consulting Model in Service Learning will be explored. And finally, a new stage of the presented research is now underway.

Dr. Jim Walton	<i>Is the Marketing Mix a "P" Short</i>	Based upon this research, Dr. Walton hopes to write a chapter for a Retailing textbook that underscores the importance of employee training (people) for successful implementation of the other 4 marketing mix P's (price, promotion, product, and place). This research will also be used in a Retailing course that Dr. Walton is developing.
Dr. Efosa Idemudia	<i>An Empirical Investigation of the Dependence of MRI and CT Scanners on Total Expenditure on Health, Infant Mortality Rate, and Physician—A Global Comparison of Multiple Countries.</i>	Dr. Idemudia received suggestions for improving the statistical methods to should lead to more accurate analysis of the empirical data. Dr. Idemudia will re-write some of the analysis and submit the paper for a conference. Also received new research ideas.
Dr. Mike Rogers	<i>A Natural Disaster of Civic Proportions: A Comparative Study of Civic Literacy in Two Southern Universities</i>	Dr. Rogers hopes to have the finding in this study published in a book. From the workshop, Dr. Rogers received ideas for improving the designed and therefore the meaningfulness of the results.
Various Workshop Attendees (non-presenters)	<i>Other Feedback (comments) from non-presenting research group members</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I developed a greater understanding of experimental design and research methods. 2. I developed some good research ideas that I hope to pursue. 3. Attending the workshops has given me a better appreciation for how concepts in one discipline can be used to explain or investigate phenomena in other disciplines. 4. The meeting stimulated me to think about and appreciate research.

Process for Attainment of Objectives / Goals

Arkansas Tech faculty members are invited or may ask to be included on the presentation schedule. We strive to offer one research presentation per month during the academic year. Each presenter is allotted 40 minutes to present their empirical research and allow time for discussion where the audience provide feedback and suggestions for improvements in the research literature review, model, or analysis. Because the audience is diverse with respect to their discipline, feedback usually includes varied perspectives that can lead to creative understandings.

Dissemination of Results

The immediate impact of the ESSRG is the feedback provided to the presenter and the knowledge gained by those in attendance. A secondary impact is the scholarly debate and engagement of researchers during a presentation session. Such exchanges are both healthy and educational in the academic environment. All presenters are encouraged to publish or present their research in external forums as they deem relevant.

Budget

Every possible step is taken to be cost efficient with expenses associated with attendance and participation in the ESSRG workshops. For the 2013-2014 academic year, the ESSRG received a grant in the amount of \$720.00 to purchase lunches for participants from Chartwells, per university guidance and policy. The least expensive meal option available was a box lunch at \$10.355 per meal. To remain within the operational budget, the ESSRG did not provide meals at all presentations throughout the year. Rather lunches were provided for five of the meetings and appetizers were provided for one meeting and no food was provided at three meetings.

Expenditure Results:

<i>Cost per Box Lunch (Chartwells):</i>	<i>\$10.355</i>
<i>Number of Box Lunches:</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Cost of Box Lunches:</i>	<i>\$673.10</i>
<i>Appetizers:</i>	<i>\$50.14*</i>
<i>Total Cost (Lunch + Appetizers):</i>	<i>\$723.24**</i>

** (\$46.90 paid from the grant fund provided and \$3.24 provided by the MGMK department)*

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