Portfolio Paper
Jake Bolen

Portfolio Paper submitted for

Portfolio Requirement

at Marshall University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Edna Meisel, Committee Chair

Dr. Ron Childress, Committee Member

Dr. Lisa Heaton, Committee Member

Dr. Yvonne Skoretz, Committee Member

Graduate School of Education and Professional Development

South Charleston, West Virginia

2012

Table of Contents

[Introduction 1](#_Toc343706654)

[Academic Background and Professional Goals 2](#_Toc343706655)

[Understanding of Curriculum and Instruction 5](#_Toc343706656)

[Collaboration 9](#_Toc343706657)

[Scholarship 13](#_Toc343706658)

[Research 16](#_Toc343706659)

[Conclusion: Ready for Doctoral Candidacy 20](#_Toc343706660)

[References 23](#_Toc343706661)

# Introduction

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.

~Arthur Ashe

This quote by Arthur Ashe summarizes my experience in the doctoral program at Marshall University thus far. When graduating with a Master of Science degree in 2001, I thought my structured higher education was over. Taking several classes after graduation allowed me to look into topics that were interesting or might challenge me in new ways. Teaching college students in the Natural Resource and Recreation Management (NRRM) helped me to realize I was not quite finished with the education needed for a career in higher education.

All we have to build on are our past experiences. As Arthur Ashe stated, we have to be able to “use what we have.” We need to use our skills and talents to the best of our abilities, and make ourselves adaptable to any and all situations with which we are faced. It was obvious the academic rigor required in the doctoral program would be difficult and would require me to be tenacious in order to be successful. I made a promise that getting through would be a priority and no matter how hard it would be or how long it would take, it would happen. Having the talent and skills to begin the program was one thing, realizing how much there was still to learn was another.

Focusing on the impact of outdoor education on students of all ages is where my research began in the program. Concurrently, as an Academic Counselor for the University College, I was trying to help undergraduate students develop essential academic habits. Concentrating on improving those skills would take me in an unanticipated direction in curriculum and instruction

The journey that I have been on for the past several years has not been an easy one but the situation has helped me discover who I am as an individual, as an educator, and to see that through education and hard work I can influence those around me. This paper will take the reader through my journey of discovery. I will discuss my academic and professional goals and how they have brought me to this point in my life along with my understanding of curriculum and instruction. I will explore improvements in my own academic work habits from collaboration with others and also describe my work with professors and students, research opportunities and goals. Finally, the case will be made that after learning these new skill, I am ready to be admitted to candidacy.

# Academic Background and Professional Goals

 After graduating from Marshall with a Master of Science in 2001, I went to work at a non-profit organization that was designed to help displaced workers gain employment skills needed to re-enter the job market. Being in this position allowed me to work on and enhance my presentation skills by presenting to different sized groups of all ages. I was not just doing presentations for groups in a classroom setting, but presenting to people who had just been laid off from positions that they had for some time. Presenting to them gave me an opportunity to answer difficult questions during presentations and made me come into the meetings fully prepared to handle many situations. Working with these people was challenging and satisfying because they were able to learn new skills and get better positions than they had before being laid off.

In that same organization I was also given an opportunity to teach high school students that had been dismissed from or left the school system in Putnam County. During this experience I discovered how pleasant it was to watch students go through the learning process first hand. After leaving that position, I began working as a counselor with the Upward Bound Program at Marshall University. This is a program that focuses on increasing college attendance for low-income/first generation high school students. While working in the Upward Bound office I had opportunities to work with groups outside of the traditional classroom.

In previous years I had led groups on rafting trips and taken several long backcountry trips with friends and family. This background and expertise afforded me the opportunity to teach a course titled *Outdoor Adventure Education*. I had found my true calling; working with college students and teaching them something that I am passionate about. I have now taught the same class eight times over four years. In addition, working on the Marshall University campus also afforded me the opportunity to teach a section of UNI 101 to incoming Freshman almost every semester (five years).

I soon realized that if I wanted to teach full-time at the college level I would need a doctoral degree. I spent fall of 2009 researching doctoral programs in the region and decided that my background at the university, my outdoor training, and my background in education would all be a great fit with the Curriculum and Instruction program that Marshall University had to offer.

 Gaining a degree in Curriculum and Instruction could help me become a more effective teacher and advance my goals as an educator in several ways. I could be a more effective instructor by implementing academically supportive online components in my courses to help my students study topics more deeply and gain rich experiences with online learning. This type of degree would also give me a better understanding of different teaching models that are available and help me recognize for which students these methods might be most effective. A degree in Curriculum and Instruction could help me become more established in my field and possibly advance the degree program where I teach as an adjunct. These things accompanied by my background in the outdoors will help me to progress in my career goals.

 I chose Educational Technology as the area of emphasis in my doctoral program. While working as an adjunct instructor for the past four years in the Natural Resource and Recreation Management (NRRM) department I observed that many of the students were lacking the necessary skills to apply technology in their course work. Understanding how and when to apply different Microsoft Office programs in an office setting could be the difference in whether or not candidates move into the career they are seeking. Realizing this lack of technology skills could make them less marketable when trying to get a new position, I started to work more technology components into my classes. Further study in technology courses in this doctoral program would help me to develop and look more deeply into the ways that technology could enhance my courses and how I could get my students to gain more experience in the use of technology in my classes.

# Understanding of Curriculum and Instruction

 Curriculum is not stagnant, but ever changing. Jack R. Frymier (1973) compares the school to an “Army Tank” and describes the power that it has; pointing out that it has many shortcomings and flaws that need to be addressed in order for it to be moved in the right direction. This description painted a picture for me about how long it takes to make changes in our educational systems, both K-12 and higher education, in order for them to move in the right direction. In our CI 704 course, I came to understand the many social and political issues influencing education. Higher education is experiencing an economic crisis causing states to reduce funding and increase the cost of tuition. The K-12 classrooms are also constantly changing because of the ties they have to the political system. No matter the reason, educational administrators and teachers have to keep an open mind to what they will be confronting in the future.

With these educational issues in mind, the CI 702 Curriculum Theories course helped me understand where curriculum has come from, where it is now, and where it might be headed in the future. With a better understanding of this subject I can preemptively make changes or help to implement changes more quickly when needed. Our country and the world are in a constant state of change and educators need to have an understanding of how to evolve when these changes are taking place. The Curriculum Theories course also gave me the opportunity to look more closely and have a better understanding of what my own personal curriculum philosophy is and what has helped it to take shape. The following diagram shows how my past experiences and current understanding have formed my own educational philosophy:



Learning more about my own philosophy of teaching and learning has strengthened my teaching ability, and it has had a major impact on learning and processing information. Relating ideas to personal teaching experiences is easier now than in the past. This helps me process information more completely and share it with others. Having a better understanding of my personal philosophy about curriculum strengthens the courses I teach and helps me transfer those elements to help students understand the concepts with which they are working.

As my understanding of curriculum has increased I continuously share my knowledge and experiences. The funnel holds three elements that are core to my personal philosophy. Pinar et al (2004) contrast phenomenology first as experience; language and thought (poststructuralism) will follow. Phenomenology plays an important role in my philosophy because people experience things differently. Personal experiences have an impact on the way people interact with the world and help them make decisions based on those individual experiences. Taking that into account when designing my lessons and leading discussions in a way that will show that people often see things differently than their peers and they all have different stories to tell. Poststructuralism has shaped my teaching in ways that I had never thought about before; yet it fits so strongly with my educational philosophy. Making students come up with their own thoughts and conclusions is the best way for them to understand concepts and their place in the world.

Working with the low-income students in the Upward Bound Program allowed me to see how much of a disadvantage many students have when trying to attain an education and help themselves move forward from their current social and economic status. Part of my work as a counselor for those students was to help them see that they could do better, but it was more difficult for some to understand than others. My past experiences along with the theories of phenomenology and poststurcturalism have had the most influence in shaping me as an educator and how I interact with students and co-workers. My personal experiences living in a low-income household along with working with disadvantaged students for several years has helped me understand that this population of students needs to be better understood in order to get the help that they need to be successful in the current educational system. I am able to better serve this population of students by continuing my education in this doctoral program.

At times in my doctoral coursework I did not see myself changing as much as realizing. This academic work has given me a better understanding about the meaning behind ideas and philosophies. The language used to express my thoughts and ideas will be different in the future because of my research and readings. For example, I have learned more about the ideas of feminism, racism, and classism by reading what Peter McLaren (an educator that is working to make advancements in education through his poststructuralist teachings) has written and what people have written about him. Peter McLaren (2010) states that “revolutionary critical pedagogy is about the hard work of building community alliances, of challenging school policy, of providing teachers with alternative and oppositional teaching materials” (p. 393). He has very progressive ideas about curriculum’s and poststructuralism’s role in helping change the status quo. While some of his beliefs and ideas are extreme, I see that is often what is needed for people to recognize the importance of helping those students who are at a disadvantage financially and educationally. I now recognize that curriculum is ever changing and those who do not evolve will be left behind.

Courses taken over the past three years have had a major impact on the way that I teach, and on how my research and ideas can influence or even change the way that educators approach their own teaching. In CI 701 Curriculum Development course we were given the opportunity to develop a curriculum for a professional development course. Through this project which increased our knowledge of the Theory of Change (Rossi, Freeman, & Lipsey, 2004) the group looked more deeply into the application of models and understanding how goals should be written with outcomes in mind. This knowledge has helped me grow in my understanding of curriculum design, theory, and the models of teaching. In the future I will use this knowledge to design course materials and to help others understand why and how to design better lessons in all subjects.

Curriculum and Instruction accompanied with Educational Technology have paired up well with the experiences that I have had while working with low income students as well as with the college students who are looking to go into an outdoor recreational field. In fact, recently the NRRM program was absorbed into the College of Science’s Integrated Science and Technology department from the College of Education. With the type of work that our graduates will be doing or the type of work they would like to be doing after graduating, the move was important and will help our students. The CIEC 700 Technology and Curriculum course gave me the opportunity to work with technology by incorporating audio and video into teaching materials. Doing this allows the student to take in the information in small pieces or multiple times. With the amount of multitasking that students do today it is important that they can view things multiple times. With the improved knowledge and skills I have gained in curriculum and online course design throughout my doctoral program, I will be able to help the NRRM Department develop technology components that will enhance their courses and make our students use new technology in order to be more marketable in the workforce.

# Collaboration

 My first year in the doctoral program offered opportunities to collaborate with other students as well as teachers at Marshall University. While each opportunity has helped me grow as a student of Curriculum and Instruction, there are a few of these experiences that stand out above the rest.

One of the most powerful collaboration experiences for me was the writing that I did as a Graduate Assistant here at Marshall University with Dr. Childress and my co-workers Melissa Rhodes and Elbert Davis. We did a presentation on using professional development to implement the National Common Core Curriculum (NCCC) at the Southern Regional Council on Educational Administration (SRCEA) Conference in November 2011. The week after we got back we decided that we had enough information to submit an article on a timely subject (implementing the National Common Core Curriculum) to the SRCEA Journal that is published annually by Auburn University. Over the course of the next several months the paper went through well over 20 drafts before being submitted. While working with my fellow Graduate Assistants it was obvious that we all had different strengths concerning the writing of the article. We used that realization to help us reach our goal of publishing. Elbert worked on the background and literature review; Melissa had the most background with K-12 teaching experience and she used that in her writings; and I had the most experience with research and technology and used that to develop tables and charts in order to create a visual representation of the research.

We also used an online cloud storage site to keep and access information that we needed to share as a group. By using the cloud technology and email we were able to stay in touch and get the final submission in before the January deadline. The article was titled *Using a Theory-Based Model for Professional Development: Implementing a National Common Core Curriculum* (Bolen, Davis, & Rhodes, 2012). It was accepted in its final form and published in the September 2012 SRCEA Journal. CI 677 Writing for Publication helped me to see a large writing project through from beginning to end. The most important lesson that was learned from the course was that the editing never stops. When getting feedback from others one needs to take it constructively and use it to enhance their own writing skills. Also, looking at what others have written and the individual writing styles that different people have helps to understand what one’s own style is and how it can be applied to future writings.

Because of this experience I now have a clear understanding of the importance of working with the strengths of others in a group. We were able to use a community of practice model (Cowan, 2012) to help us collaborate with several different people and reach our desired goals. Understanding and breaking up the project made it more manageable for each of us to work through the writing and editing in order to complete the article. Working within the deadlines and making improvements from comments and suggestions from the reviewers was a real eye-opener to understanding the editing process on a long-term project. Being able to take criticism and apply it to making a better article was a difficult process. But, I will be able take these editing and collaborative experiences and apply them to my dissertation in order to produce a high quality document.

The EdMedia Conference that I presented at collaboratively with Dr. Heaton and several classmates was a different experience and had a different set of challenges. We had each prepared our own qualitative research information for a particular course assignment that we would bring together for a presentation. We had an overall theme but it needed to be pulled together into a cohesive concept. The research to be presented was on *Exploring the Application of Gaming and Gaming Principles in Education* where we each discussed a few of James Paul Gee’s (2007) 36 learning principles. Dr. Heaton worked with us individually and as a group to keep everyone up to date and making progress by sending email with detailed directions on the work we each needed to do. Again, the use of technology helped us stay in touch and look at each other’s work if needed. Through this collaboration I experienced the importance of working within a theme as a group in order to reach the desired outcomes of a project. We each completed our individual, varied research; but we were able to present the results with a coherent theme so the presentation would have richer content than our individual projects. Without clear communication (in person and electronically) within the group the project would not have been as easy to accomplish.

 While working as a Graduate Assistant, I have been involved with the accreditation for Marshall’s education programs. I have collected and compiled data for reports for the accrediting agency. The accrediting agency now uses less paper by keeping documents online. I have been a part of making sure this information is recorded correctly and that all information regarding full-time and part-time faculty is up to date and accurate. I was also asked to make sure that the APA formatting was correct in the references for all of the syllabi. This provided me the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the proper format that was to be followed for a syllabus to meet all of the requirements for the university as well as an in depth look at the APA manual. I have also written reports needed for accreditation for the School Psychology Program and the Professional Education Unit (PEU) that included data from follow-up surveys of graduates and part-time faculty. These reports were used as exhibits for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standard 1. Working with this process has given me an understanding of the accreditation process and the importance of data collection and reporting in educational programs. These experiences have added to my readiness to work with data and communicate results clearly.

Collaboration was not something that was new to me, but the great degree to which I have worked with people in the past three years has given me a new understanding. Working with professors and other graduate assistants in the accreditation, writing to publish an article, as well as putting together multiple presentations has helped me to see the importance of a learning community and using someone’s strengths and helping with weaknesses. All of these experiences have helped me grow professionally and have given me an opportunity to apply what I have learned in my courses to real academic situations. In the near future I will apply my knowledge of collaboration while working with professors and others on the dissertation writing process.

# Scholarship

 My scholarship experiences have included co-teaching an online graduate course, participation in both qualitative and quantitative research opportunities, and presentation of research findings at a regional conference. Each of these opportunities brought new challenges and a better understanding of curriculum and instruction and the different facets involved with the degree. One way it has increased my understanding is through the delivery of online coursework and getting a firsthand experience of what is required with online instruction compared to traditional classroom instruction. My research experiences have been rich and thorough in my coursework and have helped me gain a deeper understanding of curriculum and how it is designed and delivered in the United States compared to other advanced and third world countries.

 I have been teaching college level classes for several years but I had never taught a graduate course or an online course. I knew that doing both at the same time would be a challenge; but I had no idea how much knowledge I would gain in the process. My experience with online teaching came from co-teaching the CIEC 534 course offered at the Marshall University Graduate College with Dr. Lisa Heaton. One of the most important lessons grasped from teaching the CIEC 534 class was the importance of time management and making continued adjustments in the course. Because the university began working with the new Blackboard software at this time, Dr. Heaton and I had to work out some glitches in order for the students to be able to work through the course. We split the grading of assignments, so that was not the challenging part of teaching the course. The student emails poured in describing problems they were having concerning the new Blackboard delivery system. We were constantly working to resolve these issues along with teaching the content of the course. When one of us would discover a problem I would test it and make changes then give that to Dr. Heaton to upload or change the course assignments so the students could keep moving forward.

The CIEC course was designed to help teachers learn to use software and apply it to their lessons in the classroom. This required that I understand many aspects of those software programs in order for me to help students and answer questions that came up. I had to do my own research on these programs in order to find the best way to help students. I have told my students that to truly understand a concept one has to teach someone else about it. CIEC 715 Online Course Development and Delivery helped me to understand better what it takes to support a learning management system, help faculty to develop successful online courses, and develop my own online learning experiences for my courses. I feel that my understanding of the different types of software and their applications is much richer than it was before the class. I now appreciate the importance of diving into the Internet and recognizing reliable, applicable literature to learn more about the topics I am teaching.

 Working with graduate students compared to undergraduates opened my eyes to important differences in teaching. While working with undergraduates, I have seen they need more attention and direction for each assignment; while my graduate students, for the most part, could take an assignment and shape it to fit their personal needs and work more independently. Most graduate students will engage in discussions (online or in person) even past the point they need to for gaining credit on an assignment, while the undergraduates tend to do only what is needed to get credit. The experience for students in this course will hopefully be applied to their lessons. They will be able to use the knowledge gained in this course and apply it to all instruction in the future in order to help students understand concepts.

I have also had opportunities to work with co-workers to do a presentation for the SRCEA Regional Conference. We presented the quantitative and qualitative results from a pre and post survey that was given to the participants of an Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) grant to determine the effectiveness of the model that was used. The professional development model (Theory of Change) was the model that was followed to reach the short and long-term goals of the project. We presented the model along with the findings at the conference, then took the information and used it as a basis for an article for the SRCEA Yearbook.

Working with Dr. Childress and my co-workers allowed me to look more deeply into the world of quantitative and qualitative research and learn how to apply it to implement successful professional development. In my professional life I had collected data before but had not analyzed it deeply enough to utilize it to make educational improvements or evaluations. The research experiences from my doctoral program, while difficult have been challenging and enjoyable as the end product was educational useful; and seeing the influence that three graduate assistants could have on helping to fulfill the ITQ grant requirements was especially rewarding.

# Research

In the Survey Research and Design course I was able to gain a better understanding of how surveys worked and how to design one that is reliable. The survey I designed for this course would answer the question of “how prepared were the study habits of conditionally admitted students?” This would eventually lead to the research that I will use for my dissertation topic. Learning the design process and going through different edits to my survey let me see the importance of looking closely at the instrument. It also allowed me to look at the many different types of surveys, when is the right time to use them, what type of survey to use in order to get the best results, and how to process the data once received. This class taught me what I need to know in order to get quality, reliable data from participants.

The main project in Survey Research and Design was to examine survey designs as well as research an Improving Teacher Quality grant that was being conducted in a region of West Virginia. We worked collaboratively to make improvements to the survey and the way it was designed, we then administered to the participants in the ITQ grant with a pre-test/post-test design. Our last task was to examine resulting data and report results of the effectiveness of the ITQ grant in a formal report and work closely so that our individual work would fit together to give an accurate report of the results.

Analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data with Dr. Childress and others in the course gave me a whole new perspective on collaboration and research analysis. I could now see the importance of reporting data and using it to improve future trainings for the ITQ grant. It also gave me a firsthand view of the need for clarity in report writing and how these are used for evaluation. I did not understand the amount of work that went into updating or designing surveys before this class. I look at surveys in a new, more critical way, after working with several and understanding the design mistakes that can be overlooked in the building process.

I was also given the opportunity to explore the techniques involved in qualitative research. While working with Dr. Heaton and other students to prepare for the EdMedia Conference in Denver, I was able to look at how video games are used in an educational way to help people learn more quickly and be more motivated to be successful at the tasks they are learning. I did this by learning to play a never before played, cognitively challenging video game while studying James Paul Gee’s (2007) learning principles to see how many applied to the game being tested.

Also, I worked on a project in Dr. Campbell’s Multicultural and Diversity Issues class that allowed me the opportunity to interview someone from Tunisia to gain a better understanding of multiculturalism in education and the similarities and differences in the way that education is treated in each country. In Dr. Debela’s Qualitative Research in Education course I conducted interviews with incoming freshmen to gain a deeper understanding of their study habits, how they have developed, and how teachers helped them better their skills. All of these experiences have given me a richer understanding of the individuality of those we work with and how we interact with each other and the technology that is around us. I also gained an appreciation for data that is collected qualitatively and how that can enhance quantitative data.

The qualitative research process is a tedious one that takes time in order to do it correctly. Finding participants to take part in the research can be difficult. I have learned that qualitative and mixed methods research help to paint a picture with more detail than quantitative alone. By simply adding one or two open ended questions at the end of a survey a researcher can get a whole new set of data that can be used with, or possibly separately, from the quantitative data that was collected.

**Beginnings of the Dissertation**

The study that was conducted for my research and design course gave me an inside look at the academic skill levels of at-risk incoming freshmen at Marshall University. Working with Dr. Childress to evaluate the data and develop the best model for presenting the data at the National Social Science Association Conference was a helpful experience. Learning how data like that could be used to evaluate an educational issue and how much influence that one could have on policies and procedures helped me to understand how important educational research is.

While working on my academic skills research with Dr. Childress we were also researching how academic skills can impact retention rates at colleges. Brunsden, Davies, Shelvin, & Bracken (2000) wrote that at its core, the retention of college students is a complex issue, representing an interplay of personal, institutional, and societal factors, with likely associated detrimental costs and implications to all three audiences. With a focus on retention, my interest lies in research to show how academic skills help or hurt students’ abilities to stay in school. Finding out what study skills areas my students were lacking in could help to better serve them and help the University College retention rates. Improving a population of students that needs more attention than the traditional student population was an important goal of the department I worked in. While much has been written about retention, this research aided me in looking more deeply into the subject and helped me recognize that no other studies had been conducted that compared these populations -- honor’s students and conditionally admitted students. Looking at the significance of these two polar groups in order to determine why one might be more successful than the other is important in understanding why one group performs better than the other.

I have collected three years of data for this longitudinal study that will compare these two groups of students’ academic skills with their retention rates in college. The groups are at opposite ends of the academic spectrum with the honor’s students having higher test scores and grade point averages and the University College students having been conditionally admitted with hopes of being fully admitted. Fortunately, the data gathered from this study for my dissertation can be compared and analyzed in the future. The two groups will be compared and contrasted in 32 different sub-categories and those results will be compared with the retention rates of the five groups that were surveyed. Also looking at how demographics play a role in academic success could be helpful in determining success rates.

Because of the knowledge I have gained so far from this doctoral program, I realize the important role that research plays in the improvement of education for middle and high school students. By expanding my focus from outdoor education to retention and academic skills I have opened new doors into research. By switching my focus I can see that there are a variety of things that I could apply my educational experiences toward; not just the few things that I had thought about and been comfortable with in previous years. I also gained great experiences in presenting research at both regional and national conferences. This has allowed me to gain research knowledge and share that information with a wide variety of audiences.

# Conclusion: Ready for Doctoral Candidacy

 The past several years have been demanding to say the least. I have gotten better at managing my time in order to deal with new challenges that were competing for this limited resource. My knowledge base has increased in the areas of teaching, learning, and curriculum in ways that I did not know were possible. My understanding of poststructuralism and phenomenology has shown me why I teach using personal experiences and listening to others in order to appreciate how they view similar experiences and how that has influenced them. I understand that not all teachers and students teach and learn in the same way; and with that understanding changes can be implemented to change the way I teach and test for understanding.

 My experience in courses paired with opportunities I have been given over the past three years have prepared me for the next stage of doctoral work. The work that I have completed with professors, other students, and coworkers has provided the resources and contacts I will need to be successful and to have an influence on the topic that I have selected for my dissertation. I wanted to grow and be more knowledgeable about education when I decided to undertake this challenge and I have done both in ways that I could not have predicted.

 Through my educational coursework and working as a Graduate Assistant I have had many opportunities to improve and advance my writing skills and techniques. I started by taking a course that would help me understand how to write for professional journals, I have gotten an article published in a journal by working collaboratively with coworkers, written reports to help the university with accreditation, and edited numerous professional working documents. My personal tenacity, these writing experiences, and many more opportunities that I have been presented with and finished successfully have prepared me for the research and writing that are needed to complete a dissertation.

 Presentations, publications, professional involvement, and research have given me opportunities to apply and showcase my talents as a doctoral student. I have:

* Proven that I will stay with projects and see them through to the end by doing research for my dissertation for the past three years.
* Published two papers in academic journals after going through several stages of personal and professional editing.
* Written reports for the university to help with accreditation.
* Taught courses and applied models and theories at the graduate and undergraduate levels.
* Conducted and written research results for multiple quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies.
* Analyzed data with professors and worked on my own to gain a better understanding of the software that I will be using with future research.
* Presented at state, regional, national, and international conferences on a variety of subjects and received excellent feedback.

 It is all of these experiences that make me confident that when admitted to candidacy I will do quality work in a timely manner as well as seeing it through to the end.

 I leave you with a quote that explains how I feel about the education that has been given to me and how I view the educational process. George Bernard Shaw said “If I have an apple and you have an apple and we exchange those apples we each will still have an apple. If I have an idea and you have an idea and we exchange those ideas we will each have two ideas” (Quote Investigator, 2011). We need to be willing to share as educators in order to advance the field. There is a fear that when ideas are shared that the person who had the idea is losing some sort of control or power. In this technological age we need to share our ideas with other educators so they can improve on lessons that are presented in order to fit the needs of their classroom or a particular audience. When we start doing this with all great ideas, I hope that we will see an increase in students wanting to learn.

# References

Bolen, J., Davis, E., & Rhodes, M. (2012). Using a theory-based model for professional development: Implementing a national common core curriculum. *Southern Regional Council on Educational Administration 2012 Yearbook: Gateway to Leadership and Learning*, 15-22.

Brunsden, V., Davies, M. Shelvin, M., & Bracken, M. (2000). Why do HE students drop out? A test of Tinto’s Model. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 24(3), 301-310.

Cowan, J. (2012). Strategies for developing a community of practice: Nine years of lessons learned in a hybrid technology education master's program. *Techtrends: Linking Research & Practice to Improve Learning*, *56*(1), 12-18

Davis Jr., O. L. (1981). A Conversation with Jack Frymier. *Educational Leadership*, 38(7), 570.

Frymier, J. R. (1973). *A school for tomorrow*. Berkeley, California: McCutchan Pub. Corp.

Gee, J. P. (2007) *What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

McLaren, P. (2010). Afterwords.  *Educational Theory*, 60(3), 391-393.

(Pinar W F Reynolds W M Slattery P Taubman P M 2004 Understanding curriculum)Pinar, W. F., Reynolds, W. M., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. M. (2004). *Understanding curriculum*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Quote Investigator: Dedicated to tracing quotations. (2011). Retrieved from http://quoteinvestigator.com/2011/12/13/swap-ideas/

Rossi, P., Freeman, H., & Lipsey, M. (2004) *Evaluation: A systematic approach* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.