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GSA Connects 2022 meeting in Denver, Colorado

Paper No. 232-1

Presentation Time: 8:05 AM

THE ROLE OF FACULTY-STAFF LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN FOSTERING ETHICAL AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT (Invited Presentation)

SORGE, Brandon¹, **ANGSTMANN, Julia**², WILLIAMSON, Francesca³, FORE, Grant⁴, COLEMAN, Martin⁵, PRICE, Mary F.⁶, HESS, Justin L.⁷, NYARKO, Samuel⁸ and SANDERS, Elizabeth A.⁷, (1)Department of Technology Leadership and Communication, Purdue School of Engineering at IUPUI, 799 W. Michigan St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, (2)Center for Urban Ecology and Sustainability, Butler University, 4600 Sunset Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46201, (3)Department of Pediatrics, Indiana University School of Medicine, 705 Riley Hospital Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46202, (4)STEM Education Innovation and Research Institute, IUPUI, 755 W. Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202, (5)Department of Philosophy, IUPUI, 902 West New York Street, CA 301B, Indianapolis, IN 46202, (6)Forum on Education Abroad, P.O. Box 425, Warren, RI 02885, (7)School of Engineering Education, Purdue University, 701 W. Stadium Ave, Armstrong Hall, West Lafayette, IN 47907, (8)STEM Education Innovation and Research Institute, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, 755 W. Michigan Street, UL 1180 D, Indianapolis, IN 46202-5195

Faculty-staff learning communities (FSLCs) are collaborative, and often cross-disciplinary, communities of practice where discourse, discussion, and critical reflection are used to improve teaching practice. Two case studies are presented: a 4-year FSLC at an R1 research university with engineering and earth science faculty and a 1-year FSLC at a small, primarily undergraduate institution with participants from twelve distinct disciplines. Both FSLCs supported participants as they explored how to further ethical and civic development among students and guide those students in acting upon their knowledge for social change.

In the first case study, the FSLC was facilitated during the 2018-2019 to 2021-2022 academic years and focused on fostering changes in STEM ethics curriculum and departmental climate and culture through the development of course community-engaged learning experiences. Eight out of the 9 participants reported that they had gained greater knowledge of critical reflection and increased comfort in implementing critical reflection. Additionally, 6 of the 9 reported they felt prepared to scaffold ethical learning for their students. Student interview data suggested the importance to students of understanding the ethical underpinnings of their studies and a desire to be more involved in their community.

In the second case study, a 2019-2020 academic year FSLC composed of 14 faculty and teaching staff, explored the design and implementation of farm-situated place-based experiential learning curricula. Five out of 8 participants reported that the FSLC enabled them to successfully develop and implement critical reflection in their course and 6 out of 8 reported increased comfort integrating urban farm content into their courses. Most participants also reported that their students were engaged in the course modules (7/8), had increased environmental science literacy (7/8), and increased civic mindedness (6/8). These self-reported findings were supported with student pre-to-post-survey data on environmental science literacy [$t(248) = -6.430, p < .001, \text{Cohen's } d = .407$], and civic mindedness [$t(248) = -10.982, p < .001, \text{Cohen's } d = .696$].

Findings from these two case studies suggest that FSLCs can be powerful pathways to fostering ethical and civic development in instructors and students.

Session No. 232

[T167. The Role of Geoethics, Equity, and Environmental/Ecological Justice Education in STEM: The Geosciences Story](#)
Wednesday, 12 October 2022: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM

Mile High Ballroom 1D (Colorado Convention Center)

Geological Society of America *Abstracts with Programs*. Vol 54, No. 5
doi: 10.1130/abs/2022AM-379324

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