

Arkansas Tech University
Professional Development Grant Final Report-2018

FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) Annual Higher Education
Workshop and Symposium
Emmitsburg, Maryland
June 4 – June 7, 2018

Caroline Hackerott
Assistant Professor of Emergency Management

FEMA EMI Annual Higher Education Workshop and Symposium

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This final report outlines the results of a professional development grant that funded travel, lodging, registration, and meals during travel to the Annual FEMA EMI Higher Education Workshop and Symposium, June 4-7, 2018. The grant was approved in support of my attendance through which I was to deliver a half-day workshop on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) within the disciplines of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (EM/HS), a team session presentation to attendees regarding developing program assessment strategies, and a solo presentation regarding collaborative student testing and performance assessment. In addition to these responsibilities, I also co-hosted a facilitated discussion regarding SoTL in EM/HS and facilitated a Special Interest Group (SIG) regarding SoTL.

B. Restatement of professional enhancement opportunity

The annual EMI Higher Education Workshop and Symposium attracts EM/HS higher education professionals, educators, researchers, and government agency representatives.

The opportunity to present one's research, exchange ideas, and develop positive relationships with other professionals in EM/HS academia is unique within the field of disaster research and emergency management education. As a co-convener of the SoTL SIG, I also have the opportunity to establish closer professional relationships with researchers focused on the study of the pedagogy, goals, and curriculum development within our nascent discipline.

C. Brief review of the professional enhancement opportunity

This opportunity to network with prominent scholars, academic peers, practitioners, and grant program directors allowed me to solicit essential feedback from emergency management community as I prepare my work for scholarly publication. Attending other presentations and interest sessions, combined with less formal conversations, informed my own scholarship and teaching by identifying current trends and areas of needed study. This benefit was coupled with opportunities for collaboration with scholars outside of ATU, identification of potential practical activities for our students, and the identification of articulation opportunities for our students who wish to pursue higher degrees.

My participation at this conference provided benefit to ATU and the Department of Emergency Management in multiple ways. ATU was highly visible and in position to strengthen our reputation as well as our national and international professional network. The networks and peer relationships established through participation in this conference can support a multitude of projects at ATU encompassing both

undergraduate and graduate students. We bring several recognized speakers to our departmental Emergency Management Conference each year as well as invite guest lecturers to our classes and student organization meetings. Many of these scholars and professionals are willing to travel to Russellville for little or no stipend and/or interact with our students virtually because of their familiarity with our program, faculty, and scholarship activities. In order for our reputation to be maintained or enhanced and our networks to continue to strengthen and expand, participation at this meeting is critical.

D. Summary of experiences

My presentations resulted in multiple discussions with other scholars and potential grant providers. I also received invitations for involvement in additional related and collaborative research opportunities. Interaction with multiple government agency representatives has increased the likelihood of internship placement nationally for our undergraduate and graduate students. I also had the opportunity to talk with both peers and students in attendance about the ATU graduate program. As a result, we have received several serious inquiries about entry into the Fall 2019 cohort.

E. Conclusion and recommendations

I received valuable feedback from established scholars within the discipline of emergency management. I have incorporated this feedback into my current research projects involving SoTL within EM/HS. I was also recruited to sit on the editorial board of a new international journal. My participation in this conference not only served to provide new ideas regarding the pedagogy within emergency management for integration into my own classroom(s), but also resulted in an invitation to contribute chapters to two separate book projects. I will also continue to serve as the co-chair of a FEMA-sponsored focus group/task force charged with examining the scholarship of learning and teaching within emergency management. Involvement in this national task force also strengthens the national reputation of our program. I am hopeful that my involvement may also increase the recruitment of graduate students into our program at ATU.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Professional Development committee and the Office of Academic Affairs for supporting my involvement in this important and influential workshop and research community. I believe my involvement enhances my personal professional development and serves to expand our department's standing in our discipline.