Research Statement for a Teaching-Focused Institution

Research Statement

People spend most of their adult life committed to doing some form of work, but the pursuit of meaningful and enjoyable work is often left to chance. As a vocational researcher and educator, my work is devoted to ensuring that people, especially college students, choose the work path that best fits their personality. In my research, I analyze the personalities of individuals in gender atypical jobs to determine how it is related to their satisfaction. In addition, I integrate this research into the psychology classroom by studying how using students' personalities to create collaborative research groups affects learning and group cohesion.

Section one establishes the importance of the field, captures readers' attention, and provides a summary.

Teaching-focused research statements can establish the importance of education immediately.

Overview of the Field

Vocational psychology is built upon the assumption that the match between a person's personality and the characteristics of their occupation predicts career satisfaction. When personality and occupation match, there is increased satisfaction. The dominant model of personality and occupation divides them up into six types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional (RIASEC). Many sex differences exist in occupation preferences, and there is evidence showing that career satisfaction is lower among people whose occupation is atypical for their gender (e.g., male nurses, female firefighters). However, the reasons for dissatisfaction are not clearly understood. These vocational principles apply to education as well, but very little research has applied them to the management of college classrooms.

Section two outlines the general field in language accessible to nonspecialists, even to people outside of psychology.

Emphasize the use of theory to guide research questions.

Establish the existence of a gap in the research literature.

Current Research

My research applies vocational theory to explain satisfaction and performance in the work environment and in the classroom. Starting with the work environment, I have conducted several studies with my graduate advisor, Dr. Don Hall, exploring the effects of mismatches between personality and work environment. In a series of studies published in the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, we showed that mismatches had a larger impact on women's satisfaction than

Section three outlines a program of research, giving specific examples to illustrate productivity.

Mention prestigious mentors and coauthors, but clearly establish current independence as a researcher.

Emphasize journal names when they are respected in the field.

This material is a companion to *Becoming a Psychology Professor: Your Guide to Landing the Right Academic Job*, by Guy A. Boysen. An overview of the book can be viewed on the American Psychological Association website (https://www.apa.org/pubs/books/4313054).

Additional supplemental material is available on the book's companion website (http://pubs.apa.org/books/supp/boysen/).

men's. I continued this research by examining possible explanations for the increased effect on women and found, using a large sample of working adults who had taken the Strong Interest Inventory, that the effect was especially pronounced among women in stereotypically masculine jobs. I presented this work as a poster at the APA Annual Convention and am currently drafting a first-authored manuscript for publication.

Highlight first-authored work even though teaching-focused institutions will place similar emphasis on activity as on priority.

Emphasize turning projects into journal publications.

Because I also identify as psychology educator, I have applied my research skills to improving students' satisfaction in my classes. Although vocational psychologists have emphasized the importance of finding fit between personality and work in the career setting for many decades, I have been one of the first to investigate how the same principles can be used in the college classroom. My first project examined how randomly assigning groups or assigning groups with maximum diversity of personality types affected a group presentation project. The results showed that diversity lead students to estimate that work had been more evenly distributed among the group members, and it also let them rate the final project as being of higher quality. An article about this project is currently in press at *Teaching of Psychology*.

Teaching-focused colleges will appreciate scholarship of teaching even if it does not fit into other forms of programmatic research.

Studies on educational practices must be shared publicly to be scholarship of teaching, otherwise they are simply assessment., which is material for the teaching statement.

Future Plans

Section four summarizes the next steps in the program of research.

I have two projects planned to follow up on the finding that women in stereotypically masculine jobs show increased work dissatisfaction. Using the same data set, I plan to conceptually replicate the work with men in gender atypical jobs. In addition, I plan conduct a targeted sampling of people in gender atypical jobs so that I can conduct a detailed survey about their work experiences; by assessing factors such as workplace discrimination, vocational training, mentor availability, and salary, I can begin to explore potential causes of the effect.

Be as specific as possible when outlining future research.

For the classroom research, I plan to conduct a study using semester-long collaborative learning teams. Once again, I will randomly assign team composition, but the follow-up study will assess perceptions of team cohesion, performance on team tasks, and

Future plans for research should be directly connected with current research.

individual test performance throughout the semester. I have submitted a small grant proposal to the Society for the Teaching of Psychology to fund this project.

In addition to these specific plans for studies, I also plan to use my research to benefit students in several ways. Of course, my classroom-based research will benefit students by allowing me to discover and utilize the most effective teaching techniques possible. However, the most important benefit will be providing opportunities for undergraduate researchers. Due to the ethical problems with teachers conducting research on their own students, I plan to train undergraduate research assistants to conduct all of the procedures of the classroom study on team composition. I will then mentor them on the analysis of data and collaborate with them in presenting the research at a conference; the grant proposal included funding to support student travel to the conference. My more traditional vocational research projects will also afford students the opportunity to gain practice with conducting literature reviews and data analysis. Overall, I have a record of research productivity and plans for productivity that will provide meaningful opportunities for undergraduate researchers.

Teaching-focused institutions do not require faculty to have external funding, but applying for grants is still respected.

Emphasize the direct benefits of doing research on classroom teaching.

Provide examples of how involvement of students in research will be meaningful, high-impact educational practice.

Teaching-focused institutions often place equal emphasis on opportunities for student involvement and publications, even to the point of devaluing productive research with no undergraduate involvement.