

SOAR Proposal Summer 2015

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Title: Self-Esteem Workshop Development: Knowing Your Worth

Project Description

Evelyn Murphy, president of the Wage Project, reports that women with a high school diploma lose approx. \$700k over their working lifetime (measured as 47 years). The differential increases to \$1.2 mil for women with a bachelor's degree. I am collaborating with Ashley Forsythe of the Career Center to erase the pay gap in an entire cohort of graduating females at Moravian College. Through the \$tart \$mart program as well as other activities, this cohort will acquire a new skill set that will enable them to achieve pay equity over their working lifetime. An AAUW Community Action Grant was submitted on January 15th to support this initiative. If the cohort has negotiation skills and confidence, they have the potential to earn equal pay and experience a notably different career path than their counterparts who do not have training.

As part of the \$tart \$mart licensure, we will obtain two licenses which will allow us to train six individuals. We will train two staff members and two faculty members from Moravian College, as well as two staff members from the AAUW Bethlehem Branch. We believe that by having individuals from different coalitions as trainers we will be able to expand our outreach and impact efforts. The \$tart \$mart program will be offered several times a semester over a two year period.

Self-Esteem workshops will run 1-2 times per semester over the course of the two-year period. The self-esteem component compliments \$tart \$mart because women must understand their worth in order to properly negotiate. Our goal is for them to develop a skill set that helps students identify their self-worth in the professional world they will be entering. **The design and development of the Self-Esteem workshop is the focus of this SOAR proposal.** A recent study found that women had lower self-esteem when they graduated from college than when they started. This effect was not observed in their male counterparts. It is critical that we understand the variables that contribute to the development and maintenance of self-esteem in girls and women. This SOAR project will do just that – by examining the literature on the topic of self-esteem and by developing a workshop that will combat the forces that contribute to the detrimental effects on women.

This project is also very timely in that the In-Focus theme for Moravian College next year is Poverty and Inequality, making it an ideal year to implement a pay equity program. If women are paid a lower wage than their male counterparts, they are not only experiencing discrimination, but they are also at higher risk to experience other inequalities, like poverty.

Roles and responsibilities of the students

This SOAR project will generate enough work to keep two students busy 40 hours a week for 10 weeks. The following set of bullet points contains the major roles and responsibilities for the SOAR project for Tara and Aisling.

- Conduct a literature review – the students will read primary sources on the topic of self-esteem and gender and maintain careful records of their findings on the topic. In this research they will identify the key factors that contribute to the development of self-esteem. This is a very important first step for the students' as this will provide them with the foundational knowledge on the topic.
- Students will research and evaluate self-esteem workshops that exist for female college students – this will set the stage for the design of the workshop that they create.
- Creation of the Moravian College Self-Esteem Workshop. This will involve creating a 2- hour workshop that will engage students in a discussion of self-esteem issues while at the same time working to increase their self-esteem. Tara and Aisling will also be responsible for the development of all workshop resource materials, handouts, etc.
- Students will help work on a conference presentation to be delivered at the Annual meeting of the National Women's Studies Association.
- Students will be responsible for attending all SOAR functions.

Proposed Timetable and Milestones

The tasks below represent the main tasks that the two SOAR students will be working on over the course of the ten-week period starting on June 1st 2015. I will meet with them 2-3 times a week to supervise their work and provide guidance and direction on the project. I will assign them specific tasks with accompanying deadlines. I will help to arrange and coordinate all of the meetings and focus groups that we run for this project. Lastly, I will give the students the opportunity to co-author a conference presentation on our work.

Week 1-3

- Begin the background research and literature review.
- Summarize primary sources.
- Begin to investigate self-esteem programs.
- Meet with key campus stakeholders to discuss the project.

Weeks 4-7

- Prepare Power point to present for SOAR weekly meeting.
- Begin to work on construction of the Moravian College Self-Esteem Workshop.
- Run focus groups to fine-tune the workshop components.
- Meet with the InFocus Directors to discuss collaborative programming for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Weeks 8-10

- Finalize the details and resource materials for the Moravian College Self-Esteem Workshop
- Work on their submissions for Scholars day and the Undergraduate conference.
- Submit final report on Summer SOAR project to Dr. Coleman.

Benefits to the students

This SOAR project will provide the students with extensive experience on the topic of self-esteem and how self-esteem is impacted by ones gender. There are several educational benefits associated with this SOAR project. Tara and Aisling will have the opportunity to work closely with me and collaborate as part of a research team. They will learn how to read primary sources with great detail and this will work to sharpen their problem solving skills. The construction of the Self-Esteem Workshop promotes innovation that will be rewarding to Tara and Aisling on a number of levels. This project will be empowering to Tara and Aisling because they will be building a workshop that will be implemented for their classmates. They will get to witness the workshop in action. There will also be benefits to them at a personal level. Being exposed to the content should have benefits as they leave the college and begin to go off into the workforce.