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Nomination Portfolio for the University System of Georgia
Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award

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October 26, 2021

Dear Selection Committee,

With great pleasure, I write to nominate Dr. Nikki DiGregorio, an Associate Professor in the School of Human Ecology, for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Award. Dr. DiGregorio's efforts to improve undergraduate education epitomize the goals and processes of SoTL. Her tireless efforts to encourage participation in SoTL, as well as reflection and action towards diversity and inclusion position her as one of the most prominent SoTL scholars on campus at Georgia Southern.

Ever mindful of the controversial nature of her content, Dr. DiGregorio frames her teaching around developing a learning community or commons, encouraging self-reflection and engagement of undergraduates all along the trajectories of their learning. Indeed, Dr. DiGregorio's classroom centers learning over teacher presentation of content. Reflective of this commitment, Dr. DiGregorio encourages students to bring in artifacts from their worlds into the classroom to ensure that students direct and take ownership of the activities of learning. Acknowledging that students are also world citizens, her classroom communities serve to remind students of their responsibilities to gain greater understandings of themselves and others as diverse individuals in order to enhance opportunities for all.

While Georgia Southern is privileged to have many outstanding teachers dedicated to improving student learning, I believe Dr. DiGregorio is uniquely deserving of this SoTL award. Her impact as an innovative educator extends beyond her own classroom. Maintaining a commitment to SoTL which is fundamentally predicated on coursework that is "rigorous, inclusive and relevant" has been the hallmark of Dr. DiGregorio's work with students, faculty colleagues and other learners. In addition to professional conference presentations, Dr. DiGregorio has been called upon to share her real-world understanding of diversity and inclusion with faculty and students across campus and across multiple disciplines.

Dr. DiGregorio's scholarship has also reflected her commitments to improving student learning through SoTL. Over the past five years she has more than half a dozen publications (with others under review) and over a dozen conference presentations related to SoTL. The majority of these publications and presentations highlight the importance of engagement with diversity and inclusion; reflection on the embodied being of learners in diverse contexts; and genuine engagement with some of the most important issues of our time.

Dr. DiGregorio has taken on primary leadership roles in SoTL through joining in the co-editorship of the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (IJ-SoTL) and in recently being elected president of the Family Science Association, a disciplinary organization that is focused on teaching and learning. She has both produced public, peer-

reviewed scholarship in the area of SoTL and is also engaging in guiding discussions of the continuing content and character of SoTL. In these respective positions, Dr. DiGregorio plays an important role engaging SoTL scholars internationally as well as locally, regionally, and nationally. Clearly, Dr. DiGregorio's record meets and exceeds the criteria for the Regents' SoTL award.

Thank you for your consideration of Dr. Nikki DiGregorio for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Award. Feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl L. Reiber', written in a cursive style.

Carl L. Reiber, Ph.D.
Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

Narrative of Teaching Philosophy & Evidence of Impact on Teaching and Learning Nikki DiGregorio, PhD

Associate Professor of Child and Family Development
School of Human Ecology
Georgia Southern University

Narrative of Teaching Philosophy

I am honored to serve as Georgia Southern University's [GS] nominee for the 2021 Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning [SoTL] Award. My experiences at Georgia Southern University [GS] thus far have served to shape and refine a number of areas of my teaching, as well as reinforce several facets of my approaches to instruction. Whether or not we are cognizant of it, we are always learning. Fundamentally, my teaching philosophy is anchored in the belief that effective pedagogy is rooted in learning. I consider this to be particularly relevant as an instructor of social sciences, as teaching has the ability to change the way both my students and I view the surrounding world. McKinney (2004) implores us to better our understanding of how, why, and when our students learn, a framework that serves as a guidepost for my pedagogy inside the classroom. In addition, I believe exploring what students have learned outside of the classroom is just as important, particularly within my discipline of family science. Effective teaching not only catalyzes interest within the student and instructor alike, but also provides students with the support required to foster deep learning that can be applied well after the semester's end. SoTL provides a platform from which I examine and evaluate my teaching and its relationship to student learning in meaningful ways that extend far beyond my classroom. It is my hope that the narrative* below illustrates the breadth and depth of my engagement in SoTL, my dedication to teaching and learning, and my contributions to my students, colleagues, and the broader SoTL community.

I strongly believe that students have a right and a responsibility to engage with information across levels and, as such, my work is profoundly informed by theories of andragogy as applied to self-directed learning (Merriam, 2001). To date, there is no single model of adult learning that explains the process of learning or the numerous contexts wherein adults learn. Andragogy is anchored in the following assumptions: adult learners are able to direct their own learning, life experiences inform their learning, their learning is problem-centered, and that they are largely intrinsically motivated to learn (Merriam, 2001; Ozuah, 2005). Thus, as their teacher, I exist to support the learning and application processes through a partnership that is generally predicated upon alignment between educator and student learning goals (Habibi & Branch, 2015). My engagement in SoTL provides unique insight and understanding with respect to my students' perspectives, their aspirations, and their concerns, from which I am able to adapt my teaching to situate course content in ways that prompt them to consider course content as relevant across the many arenas of their lives and encourage critical self-reflection. Over the years, I have had numerous students reach out and tell me they cannot "unsee" the intersectional nature of their social realities after completing my courses.

Additionally, feminist standpoint theory was formative during my education as a student and remains a central perspective as an instructor. Feminist standpoint theory encourages individuals to engage in critical analysis of dominant ideologies and to examine their own interactions and experiences with them (Harding, 1991). I aspire to serve as a guide while students develop their own lenses through which to examine content delivered in the classroom,

*Please note superscript numbers within narrative reflect numbered items on my curriculum vitae

as well as the information they receive from the world around them. Fundamentally, students are always trying to make sense of messages they receive from numerous facets of their lives. This framework highlights the ways in which the various social locations my students occupy shape their knowledge (Crenshaw, 1990; Harding, 1991). Engaging in SoTL utilizing this perspective has allowed me to design studies that are rigorous, inclusive of diversity of thought and experiences, and apply course content that is relevant to students beyond the classroom, while intentionally scaffolding reflective practices throughout my teaching.

My SoTL work utilizes exploratory mixed methods research [MMR] designs whenever possible. I believe SoTL that incorporates MMR designs intrinsically creates and maintains space for nuanced student voices through the collection and analyses of multiple forms of data, particularly qualitative data. More specifically, my SoTL analyzes quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for exploration of whether the findings converge and how qualitative data results expand upon or contradict quantitative findings (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007), while supporting iterative inductive and deductive analyses (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). These inquiries are of particular interest, as my SoTL endeavors examine the teaching and learning of value-laden content as received by diverse students with various intersecting social identities. Research designs that necessitate multiple forms of input from students allow for distinct data to be captured, while simultaneously shaping their classroom experiences. For example, I have leveraged Twitter and other social media platforms to serve as conduits for students to uniquely identify and apply course content, as they experience and perceive it, outside of the classroom. Similarly, I also engage student voices in all of my courses, every semester, and allow their anonymous feedback to inform my teaching in the present, and thus, provide them with an additional opportunity to direct their own learning.

I believe that all too often student experiences outside of the classroom are ignored, despite the fact that they directly influence student learning. Moreover, given the applied nature of family science, student histories provide another mechanism through which I can engage students while illustrating the relevance of course content to their own realities and those of others. As Felten et. al (2013) noted, “integrating and honoring the diversity of student perspectives ... is no simple task” (p. 65). Through SoTL, I examine the interplay between students’ lived experiences and student learning. Teaching is central to my identity and, by definition, my teaching stems from learning *about* my students to inform learning about *how* they learn. My primary goals as an instructor embody this belief; therefore, with each class I strive to: create a welcoming classroom environment that invites and respects differing opinions and ideas; recognize that students are diverse in their backgrounds, histories, beliefs, biases, as well as in their levels of understanding and motivation; maintain awareness as an instructor of my role, both in the classroom and in community settings; and apply what is learned in the classroom to current external settings through a variety of methods. My participation in SoTL allows me to not only evaluate my teaching, but also to explore the unique relationship between context and content with each cohort that moves through my classes. Hutchings (2000) separates SoTL research into four categories, two of which are centered around the questions “What works?” and “What is happening?” These foundational questions, along with a uniquely integrated theoretical and methodological framework, guide my inquiries as a teacher-scholar. Taken together, my SoTL work is driven by my goals as an instructor of value-laden content, across a variety of family science courses taught in a series of ever-changing landscapes, to explore:

1. What works with respect to effectively teaching diverse undergraduate family science students about value-laden content that is directly shaped by dominant social norms and mores?
2. What is happening among educators and adult learners at the intersection of informal and formal technology use with respect to teaching and learning?
3. What works for effectively prompting critical reflection among undergraduate students in diversity-centered courses?
4. How can SoTL be promoted across the curriculum and levels to inclusively support engagement of diverse student backgrounds?

Essentially, I leverage SoTL to incorporate diverse student perspectives into my pedagogy in an effort to support inclusive self-directed learning and to guide students in developing critical reflection skills. Sandlin (2005) notes that critical reflection in supportive contexts can lead to stronger learning and I aspire to do just that, systematically, via engagement in SoTL. My teaching philosophy has guided my SoTL, which has evolved into disciplinary and interdisciplinary work evaluating teaching strategies geared towards supporting students as learners and as individuals. My dedication to SoTL has permeated all aspects of my work as a faculty member and has positioned me to take on leadership roles to both support and promote SoTL at GS and beyond^{56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61}. In this way, I am able to extend my reach as a teacher-scholar and serve not only my students and colleagues, but also surrounding disciplines and the broader community.

Evidence of Impact on Teaching and Learning

SoTL at GS

My interest in **teaching and learning** blossomed shortly after my appointment with GS began in 2014 when my colleague Dr. Trent W. Maurer exposed me to SoTL. I began to delve into the SoTL literature and soon realized my exploratory research, along with much of my curiosity as a teacher, aligned with the foundations of SoTL. Moreover, it became evident that even my traditional disciplinary research, primarily focused in the areas of social policy, marginalized social identities, and language use, shared common ground with SoTL. SoTL provides a mechanism through which I collaborate with other researchers, engage my students, apply disciplinary research to inform classroom experiences, explore the various roles of context in teaching and learning processes, examine the effectiveness of my teaching strategies, and participate in faculty learning commons (Shulman, 2002). I have become keenly aware of the importance of the internal and external aspects of SoTL in shaping one's own pedagogy and supporting that of others. As such, in 2018, I published a paper applying the concepts of situated knowledge and reflexive practice to help support new family science educators⁶.

During my first semester teaching at GS I developed a course that was new to the curriculum, CHFD3232: Sexuality in Human Development. I quickly realized the importance of context and that many of my students had limited exposure to content related to biological sex, let alone its intersection with social location and social norms. I also knew that **my classroom** may be the only educational opportunity in these areas for many of them and I felt a unique responsibility to ensure I was teaching in a translatable and digestible way. As such, I developed a multifaceted MMR project examining the effectiveness of specific teaching strategies centered around student comprehension and application of objectification and sexualization, building upon the work of Moloney and Pelehach (2013), which focused on teaching undergraduate

students about the sexualization of girls and women, respectively. My study utilized two validated scales, the Interpersonal Sexuality Objectification Scale [ISOS] (Kozee et al., 2007) and the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale [OBC] (McKinley & Hyde, 1996), along with scaffolded teaching activities and assignments, including a written reflective component for a subset of each class.

Paired samples t-tests were used to compare pre and post course survey responses for independent semesters. Across each semester analyzed, significant differences were found on select survey items. Notably, significant differences were found only on items from the OBC; qualitative data provided insight into these findings. Open coding was used to develop thematic categories observed within students' written assignments and similar concepts were grouped together thematically (Cho & Lee, 2014). Using Landis and Koch's (1977) interpretation of Cohen's kappa resulted in a very strong level of agreement between the raters' coding of qualitative data, indicating strong interrater reliability ($\kappa = .812, p < .005$). Excerpts from student reflective papers included the following:

I became fixated on women's bodies and how they were deemed beautiful in the media, and my heart sank when I realized I did not fit this description. During my sophomore year of high school, I developed an eating disorder after battling with depression and self-harm. My whole life has been focused on living up to what society has expected of me as a woman and what it values from my gender. It was not until this class that I realized my true potential and what really matters in life. I explored my identity more and learned to love myself better.

For a while it felt like being a woman and being a Christian were battling against each other. I had to be modest, but I longed to feel pretty and important. I felt ashamed of the way that God created me and was embarrassed by the shape of my body. But as I complete this course I realize that my religion is just a part of who I am. I can be a woman and be proud of myself, because God created me this way for a purpose. My sexual values system does not have to compete with itself, it can complement itself.

I guess I hadn't noticed how much women were being objectified everywhere. Now I can't look at my phone without thinking about the advertisements we looked at in class. They make everything from food to cars about sex. Consumers need to start thinking more about what is going on around them so we can change society.

The results of this published study⁴ build upon disciplinary research examining methods of teaching about sexualization to undergraduate students, while contributing to the SoTL literature on intentional teaching of these constructs. Supporting my goals of engaging diverse student backgrounds, exploring the roles of informal technology use in the learning processes, and prompting critical reflection among students, this study evaluated the effectiveness of teaching activities centered around sexualization and objectification (e.g., social media advertisement critique assignment; song lyric analysis assignment). The findings indicated that students who were assigned papers with a reflective component reported improved scores on the OBC. As a result, I adapted assignments to incorporate reflection in my other courses (e.g., CHFD3133: Diversity in Human Development, CHFD4237: Legal and Public Policies Affecting Families, CHFD4134: Family Life Education) and have developed and disseminated SoTL

projects evaluating their impact on student receptiveness to the material, as well as student learning. Collectively, these efforts support my goal of promoting and leveraging SoTL across the curriculum to engage diverse students in a myriad of ways.

I have furthered my SoTL work through collaboration with a colleague in the College of Education at GS. We have conducted a MMR project examining the utilization of specific teaching strategies and assignments to enhance student self-reflection in undergraduate diversity-centered courses. The findings of this SoTL project were published in *College Teaching*² and emergent themes included an increase in empathy, greater level of awareness of stereotypes and biases, and a better understanding of other cultures/groups.

Currently, I am currently analyzing data from a pilot study investigating the relationship between conceptualizations and experiences with gender and undergraduate student learning¹⁰. I collected data across four semesters of introductory writing courses wherein enrollment is overwhelmingly comprised of first year students. Utilizing best practices recommended by The GenIUSS Group (2014) at the Williams Institute, survey items exploring gender identity, perceived safety on campus, perceived comfort level in the classroom, experiences with gender expression, and conceptualizations of masculinity and femininity in relation to learning experiences were utilized. Analyses of data from a sample of 274 undergraduate students revealed that while the overwhelming majority of participants in this sample self-identified as cisgender men and women, many students worry that their peers may question their sexual identity based on mannerisms. Furthermore, a substantial portion of the students in this sample, across semesters, consistently reported that they do not feel free to dress however they choose on campus, they do not feel safe on campus, and that they do not express themselves in class as frequently as they would like due to these concerns. Open-ended responses illuminated perceived influences on their learning. These preliminary findings provide further impetus for supporting more inclusive learning environments and the role of perception in shaping classroom experiences.

At the **department level**, I have collaborated with colleagues in my own unit and have an article in press detailing a model for internships that we developed, implemented, and piloted with students over the course of three years¹. More specifically, guided by self-efficacy theory and scaffolding theory, we utilized feedback from students to directly shape the 9-12 credit internship course delivery mode and related assignments. The dissemination of this work provides faculty supervising internships in related disciplines with an adaptable framework from which to assess their level of involvement in these learning experiences.

I collaborated with a colleague in my program and conducted a pilot study exploring undergraduate students' attitudes toward marriage equality. This work examined specific teaching activities centered largely around prejudice and discrimination to examine their effectiveness in facilitating the development of more positive attitudes towards marriage equality. The results of quantitative analyses revealed substantial numbers of students became more supportive of marriage equality over time. Qualitative analyses of written open-ended student responses utilizing the constant comparative method resulted in three emergent themes: supportive of marriage equality, increased understanding of marriage equality, and opposed to marriage equality. Collectively, the findings of this exploratory study indicate that the teaching method utilized was effective in fostering the development of more positive attitudes towards marriage equality. Of particular interest, qualitative data analysis revealed that a subset of the participants demarcated between beliefs, values, and attitudes to reconcile discordance. We presented our work virtually at the 2021 ISSOTL Conference¹⁴ and the manuscript is currently

under review⁸, with plans to explore the gap illuminated between qualitative and quantitative data and student experiences of cognitive dissonance in future SoTL projects.

I have also engaged in collaborative efforts to document SoTL in my discipline of family science, in an effort to understand how to better promote it. In partnership with a graduate student and a colleague, I conducted content analyses of the National Council for Family Relations (NCFR) annual conference programs from 2006-2015 and co-authored the manuscript⁷. NCFR is the largest disciplinary organization within family science. Findings highlight the paucity of research exploring the inclusion or exclusion of SoTL sessions at professional meetings. Moreover, results support the need for greater congruence between the missions of faculty and institutions to support forms of scholarship that more directly benefit students.

At the **University level**, my SoTL work has cultivated my involvement with different initiatives at GS. In 2017, I was selected as a Diversity & Inclusion Faculty Fellow [DIFF], a multidisciplinary team that develops and implements educational opportunities around teaching for faculty. I have delivered 17 teaching and learning workshops as a member of DIFF^{30,31,33}, as well as 3 invited workshops related to teaching and learning for faculty in other departments and student leaders on campus^{32,34,35}.

I have collaborated with faculty in other units at GS who engage in reflection upon our pedagogy at very different points in our careers as educators. Through establishing a learning commons (Shulman, 2002), I have been able to experience firsthand the value for faculty and students, by proxy. This paper was published in *Reflective Practice*³, supporting its broad dissemination to promote these efforts in other academic settings.

Additionally, I co-authored a chapter that was published in *Self-Efficacy in Instructional Technology Contexts*⁵ highlighting the internal and external barriers that are often experienced by teachers with respect to the integration of instructional technology. More specifically, by exploring foundational research in this area and offering recommendations to help increase teachers' self-efficacy related to effective technology utilization in the classroom, I aim to support teachers and students in their quest to meet changing teaching and learning needs. Lastly, I am also involved in a variety of forms of service and committee work related to SoTL that allow me to support teaching and learning directly and indirectly at various levels within the campus community^{46,47,48,49,50,51,52,53,54,55}.

National and International SoTL Work

My research agenda has resulted in **collaboration** with colleagues at institutions **beyond GS**. For example, I have collaborated with colleagues at other institutions exploring the use of narratives in public policy pedagogy to enhance student learning. Developing an understanding of why certain content is difficult for students to learn is paramount to effective teaching (Chick et al., 2009; Hutchings, 2002; McKinney, 2012) and family policy courses may trigger student biases and misconceptions in ways that other courses do not. This exploratory study applied transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 1975; Cranton, 2006) and the concept of relational work (Moore, 2013) in the development of targeted assignments to guide students in examining problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive. Results indicate that students in the group that was given the narrative-based inquiry policy assignment reported greater empathy, increased understanding of the complex interactions between policies and individuals, and heightened motivation to be more involved in political processes. For example, one student from

the experimental group critically reflected on their learning, “My beliefs and values have changed some. I learned that not all policies actually are here to protect and help people some hinder people,” while another student stated:

After reading the first hand account my beliefs are the same but my feelings are stronger. I’m angrier. We know how to help stop homelessness. Reading Jeanie’s family’s story makes me feel like I know them and this is preventable, terrible experience is happening to someone I know.

We presented our findings at the 2019 National Council on Family Relations Conference¹⁶ and the manuscript is in preparation¹².

I have also collaborated with colleagues from the University of Prince Edward Island, Weber State University, and the University of Colorado - Denver, to present a paper at the 2018¹⁷ National Council on Family Relations Conference disseminating our findings from a research project evaluating methods of engaging student voices through scholarly teaching in family science. Similarly, I have worked with colleagues from other institutions to distribute our findings related to assessing and facilitating learning within family science courses via application of Bloom’s Taxonomy²³, sharing documentation of a model for graduate student collaborative research²⁴, present data supporting the use of e-portfolios²⁵, and have been a part of various other SoTL research teams that have made our findings widely available^{26,27,28,29}.

Currently, I have a manuscript under review for publication that is the product of a collaborative effort with a colleague from GS, as well as Colorado State University - Boulder, to document the extent of SoTL published in family science journals since 2009⁹. Findings indicate gender and the Carnegie Classification of institutions are predictive of engagement in SoTL within the discipline. Moreover, despite SoTL’s relatively recent entry into family science, it is growing. This paper aims to educate family scientists about SoTL, provide collaborative opportunities and information about refereed outlets for SoTL scholars in family science, and bolster participation in SoTL within the discipline.

Presently, I am part of a research team on behalf of the Institute for Social Healing sponsored by York College of Pennsylvania, with colleagues from York College and Penn State University, collecting data for a project centered around social healing and hard conversations in the classroom¹¹. This project is designed to gather data from faculty and student perspectives on difficult conversations in the classroom. We are exploring how faculty and students define, experience, facilitate, and negotiate difficult conversations with personal and professional safety. The data from this study will drive further research and also inform existing best practices to support effective teaching and learning for all parties involved.

Along with colleagues from institutions in Nevada, Colorado, Maryland, Texas, and Pennsylvania, I recently presented a paper at NCFR’s 2021 Conference in November of 2021¹³. The paper disseminated research supporting the use of open educational resources [OER] in family science, as well as provide attendees with tools for leveraging OER to increase equity, access, and representation in the classroom and in extension programs. I am working with this research team to develop a SoTL study with student partners to explore the reception of OER in family science classes.

My participation in SoTL at the international level has increased substantially in recent years. In Spring of 2021, I was named Co-Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*⁵⁷. This role has allowed me to engage with SoTL scholars

from all over the world. I am working with the editorial team to increase our readership and support broader dissemination of published works by completing the processes to have the journal listed in additional databases. Perhaps most importantly, this role allows me to actively promote SoTL, which has the potential to change teaching and learning across higher education.

In June of 2021, I was elected president of the Family Science Association [FSA], which is the premier teaching-centered organization within the discipline of family science⁵⁶. FSA publishes *Family Science Review*, a peer-reviewed academic journal that serves as the primary teaching journal within the field. In my role as president, I work closely with the FSA Executive Board to ensure the organization supports educators through initiatives such as developing our teaching resources repository and creating opportunities for involvement for students and new professionals. FSA also hosts the Teaching Family Science Conference annually, which draws participants from all over the world from multiple academic disciplines, as well as service providers and practitioners, looking to engage with new research related to teaching and learning and provides me with a fantastic opportunity to elevate SoTL.

I am currently serving as a Guest Editor⁵⁹ for a forthcoming special issue of *Family Science Review*, “Pedagogy in the Wake of a Pandemic,” which I am very excited to see move to publication in the coming months. Additionally, since 2017 I have served as Co-Editor of *Family Science Review*’s Professional Development and Reflection Corner⁶⁰, which publishes manuscripts that detail reflection upon pedagogy, decisions and challenges around teaching, and encourages family science teachers to share their experiences with others. I have also been invited to serve on the Outstanding SoTL Paper Award Committee for NCFR⁵⁸ and as a member of the Family Science SoTL Task Force⁶¹.

More broadly, I work to support SoTL by serving as a reviewer for academic journals that publish SoTL^{62,63,64}, and have participated in over 20 workshops and trainings⁶⁵ related to teaching and learning since my appointment began with GS in 2014. Similarly, I have delivered 21 peer-reviewed presentations related to SoTL in support of making these works more accessible to wide audiences. Collectively, these efforts illustrate my strong and growing record of scholarship, my effectiveness in prompting critical reflection and content application among my students, my ability to foster collaboration and engage in multidisciplinary SoTL, and my participation in various SoTL leadership roles to promote SoTL and its broad dissemination.

One of the most remarkable aspects of SoTL, in my estimation, is that it is intrinsically reciprocal. SoTL, albeit demanding, is very rewarding work. The benefits of SoTL – both for those directly and indirectly engaged – come in many forms, with some more palpable and readily documentable, and others less visible and subtle. While there is still much to discover, I know that at every level my SoTL work encourages me to keep learning, so that I may keep teaching.

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CONDENSED CURRICULUM VITAE**Nikki DiGregorio, PhD**

Associate Professor of Child and Family Development

School of Human Ecology

Georgia Southern University

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor of Child and Family Development Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia	2019 – present
Assistant Professor of Child and Family Development Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia	2014 – 2019

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED SoTL PUBLICATIONS

1. Gregg, K., Dove, M., & **DiGregorio, N.** (in press). Instructional scaffolding in internships: Supporting future professionals in Family Science. *Syllabus*.
2. **DiGregorio, N.**, & Liston, D. (2021). Enhancing student self-reflection in college-level diversity courses. *College Teaching*, 1, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2021.1901068>
3. **DiGregorio, N** & Liston, D. (2020). Reflecting upon teaching diversity-centered courses: From novice to veteran. *Reflective Practice*, 21, 1, 132-143.
doi: 10.1080/14623943.2002.1712194
4. **DiGregorio, N.** (2018). Effective teaching of objectification and sexualization. *Family Science Review*, 22(4), 23-37. <https://www.familyscienceassociation.org/journal/>
5. **DiGregorio, N.** & Liston, D. (2018). Experiencing technical difficulties: Teacher self-efficacy and instructional technology. In C. Hodges (Ed.), *Self-efficacy in Instructional Technology Contexts*. Springer.
6. **DiGregorio, N.** (2018). Survival tips for new family science professionals. *Family Science Review*, 22(2), 89-98. <https://www.familyscienceassociation.org/journal/>
7. **DiGregorio, N.**, Maurer, T. W., & Pattanaik, S. (2016). Documentation of SoTL trends at NCFR, 2006-2015. *Family Science Review*, 21(2), 54-73.
<https://doi.org/10.26536/fsr.2016.21.02.03>

SoTL MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

8. **DiGregorio, N.** & Maurer, T.W. (under review). Undergraduate Students' Attitudes Toward Marriage Equality: Changes in an Introductory Family Science Course. Submitted to *Family Science Review*.
9. Maurer, T. W., **DiGregorio, N.**, & Reinke, J. (under review) The extent of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning published in human development and family studies journals since 2009. Submitted to *Family Science Review*.

SoTL MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

10. **DiGregorio, N.** (data analysis). Conceptualizations of gender and undergraduate student learning experiences.
11. Rich, A. J., **DiGregorio, N.**, Evans, L. (data collection). Social healing and hard conversations in the classroom.
12. Rich, A. & **DiGregorio, N.** Narrative approaches in public policy pedagogy to enhance student learning. (manuscript preparation).

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED SoTL PRESENTATIONS

13. Greiving, J., Willis Hepp, B., **DiGregorio, N.**, Rich, A. J., & Payne, P. *Open Educational Resources as Tools for Increasing Equity, Access, and Representation in the Family Science Classroom and in Extension Programs*. Paper presentation at the 2021 National Council for Family Relations, delivered virtually.
14. Maurer, T. W. & **DiGregorio, N.** *Undergraduate Students' Attitudes Toward Marriage Equality: Changes in an Introductory Family Science Course*. Paper presentation at the 2021 International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference, delivered virtually.
15. **DiGregorio, N.** & Rich, A. J. *Leveraging student Engagement with difficult topics in an online diversity course*. Paper presentation at the 2020 National Council on Family Relations Conference, delivered virtually.
16. Rich, A. J., **DiGregorio, N.** & Strassle, C. *Narrative approaches in public policy pedagogy to enhance student learning*. Presented at the 2019 National Council on Family Relations Conference, Fort Worth, Texas.
17. VanLeeuwen, C., Payne, P., **DiGregorio, N.**, & Greiving, J. *Engaging student voices through scholarly teaching in family science*. Presented at the 2018 National Council on Family Relations Conference, San Diego, California.
18. **DiGregorio, N.** & Maurer, T.W. *Documentation of SoTL trends: A pilot investigation in family science*. Presented at the 2018 Teaching Family Science Conference, Park City, Utah.
19. Dove, M.K., **DiGregorio, N.**, Gregg, K. *Supporting future professionals: Students' perceptions of the value of internships*. Presented at the 2017 National Council on Family Relations Conference, Orlando, Florida.
20. **DiGregorio, N.**, & Rich, A. J. *Effective pedagogy of sexualization and objectification*. Presented at the 2017 Teaching Family Science Conference, Nassau, Bahamas.
21. Liston, D. & **DiGregorio, N.** *Reflecting upon teaching diversity centered courses: From novice to veteran*. Presented at 2017 SoTL Commons Conference, Savannah, Georgia.
22. **DiGregorio, N.**, & Maurer, T.W. *Documentation of SoTL trends: A pilot investigation in family science*. Presented at 2016 SoTL Commons Conference, Savannah, Georgia in.
23. **DiGregorio, N.**, Sherif Trask, B., & Settles, B.H. *Assessing and facilitating learning in the Family Science classroom: An application of Bloom's Taxonomy*. Presented at 2015 Family Science Association Conference, St. Augustine, Florida.
24. **DiGregorio, N.**, Perkins, K. J., Bailey, C., Hull, J., Rich, A., & Palkovitz, R. *Transformational learning: Documenting the process of graduate level collaborative research*. Presented at 2015 Family Science Association Conference, St. Augustine, Florida.
25. Settles, B., Sherif Trask, B., McConatha, M., & **DiGregorio, N.** *E-Portfolios: the assessment tool of the future within the fields of Family Science and Human Services*. Presented at 2015 Family Science Association Conference, St. Augustine, Florida.
26. **DiGregorio, N.**, Rich, A.J., Bailey, C.E., & Perkins, K.J. *Transformational learning: The connection between student transitions and growth*. Presented at 2015 USG Teaching and Learning Conference: Best Practices for Promoting Engaged Student Learning, Athens, Georgia.
27. **DiGregorio, N.** *Engaging Family Science students through applied learning*. Presented at 2014 National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference, Baltimore, Maryland.
28. **DiGregorio, N.** *Social media, Family Science, and learning*. Presented at 2014 National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference, Baltimore, Maryland.

29. Rich, A. J., **DiGregorio, N.** *Globalization and family science: Teaching students how to advocate for responsible social justice.* Presented at 2014 National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference, Baltimore, Maryland.

SELECTED INVITED TEACHING PRESENTATIONS

30. Costello, L., **DiGregorio, N.**, Lee, R., Reyes, A., Shannon-Baker, P., Smallwood, S., & Walsh, C. *Unpacking Privilege.* Workshop for faculty, staff, and students. Georgia Southern University, delivered online in January - April of 2021.
31. Costello, L., **DiGregorio, N.**, Lee, R., Reyes, A., Shannon-Baker, P., Smallwood, S., & Walsh, C. *Managing Difficult Conversations.* Workshop for faculty, staff, and students. Georgia Southern University, delivered online in January - April of 2021.
32. **DiGregorio, N.** *Intersectional identities and inclusive language.* Presentation to the Department of Music, Georgia Southern University, in September of 2020.
33. Costello, L., **DiGregorio, N.**, Smallwood, S., & Walsh, C. *Diversity & Inclusion in the Classroom.* Workshop for faculty, staff, and students. Georgia Southern University, October of 2018.
34. **DiGregorio, N.** *Diversity and intersectionality.* Presented to LEAD2100 and Community Engagement Team. Georgia Southern University, January of 2018.
35. **DiGregorio, N.** *Diversity: Where identities intersect.* Presented at the Alternative Break Student Leader Diversity Workshop. Georgia Southern University, November of 2016.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS RELATED TO SoTL

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|--|------|
| 36. Outstanding SoTL Scholar Award, Georgia Southern University | 2021 |
| 37. University Inclusive Excellence Award, Georgia Southern University | 2020 |
| 38. Faculty Excellence Award, College of Behavioral & Social Sciences,
Georgia Southern University | 2020 |
| 39. Diversity & Inclusion Faculty Fellow, Georgia Southern University | 2018 |
| 40. Teaching Award, School of Human Ecology, Georgia Southern
University | 2017 |
| 41. Scholarship Award, School of Human Ecology, Georgia Southern University | 2016 |

INTERNALLY FUNDED GRANTS RELATED TO SoTL

42. **DiGregorio, N.** (funded). Diversity & Inclusion Faculty Fellows. Faculty Center & Office of Inclusive Excellence, Georgia Southern University; Fall 2018 – Fall 2021; \$7,500.00.
43. **DiGregorio, N.** (funded). Faculty Service Award. Faculty Service Committee, Georgia Southern University; Fall 2018; \$500.00.
44. **DiGregorio, N.** (funded). Professional Development Award, Georgia Southern University, Spring 2017; \$746.00.
45. **DiGregorio, N.** (funded). *The pedagogy of objectification and sexualization within contemporary American culture.* SoTL Academy, Georgia Southern University; Spring 2017; \$500.00.

SELECTED COMMITTEE WORK RELATED TO SoTL

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|--|----------------|
| 46. Inclusive Excellence Educational Workgroup | 2021 – present |
| 47. Member, General Education Redesign Subcommittee | Spring 2021 |

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|--|-----------------------|
| 48. Assessment Report Co-Author | Fall 2019 |
| 49. Interim Program Coordinator | Spring 2019 |
| 50. Member , Faculty Development Committee | Fall 2021 - present |
| 51. Member , Academic Standards Committee | Fall 2020 - present |
| 52. Member , CHHS Curriculum Committee | 2016 –2018 |
| 53. Member , Writing Enrichment Faculty, QEP | Fall 2015 – Fall 2019 |
| 54. Co-Chair , Eagle QuaRC Steering Committee | 2016 – present |
| 55. Reviewer , University Research Symposium Review Committee | 2015 – 2021 |

SELECTED SERVICE RELATED TO SoTL

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|--|---------------------|
| 56. President , Family Science Association | 2021 – present |
| 57. Co-Editor in Chief ,
<i>International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning</i> | 2021 – present |
| 58. Outstanding SoTL Paper Award Committee ,
Advancing Family Science Section, NCFR | 2020 |
| 59. Guest Editor , <i>Family Science Review</i> , “Pedagogy in the Wake
of a Pandemic” Special Issue | 2020 – present |
| 60. Co-Editor , <i>Family Science Review</i> : Professional Development and
Reflection Corner | Fall 2017 – present |
| 61. Member , Family Science SoTL Task Force | Fall 2015 – present |

SELECTED JOURNAL REVIEW EXPERIENCE

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 62. <i>International Journal of Multicultural Education</i> | Fall 2020 – present |
| 63. <i>Teaching & Learning Inquiry</i> | Fall 2018 – present |
| 64. <i>Family Science Review</i> | Fall 2017 – present |

65. SELECTED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO SoTL

- | | |
|---|------|
| Evolving Models for Predictive Analytics and Student Success Workshop | 2021 |
| Quality Matters Research Roundup: Surveys, Supports, and Synergy | 2021 |
| Teaching Diversity and Difference Workshop | 2020 |
| Getting Students to Read: Transform Learning with Perusall | 2020 |
| OFD Webinar: Hybrid Classrooms: Four case studies | 2020 |
| Academic Assessment Summer Institute | 2019 |
| Perusall Tool Training Workshop, Center for Teaching Excellence | 2019 |
| Academic Assessment Institute | 2017 |
| QEP Workshop: Effective Feedback Writing | 2016 |
| QEP Training: Google Forms, Folio Rubric, and Criterion | 2016 |
| CT2 Workshop: Strategies for Success: Teaching All Students | 2016 |
| CT2 Training: Teaching and developing online courses certification | 2015 |
| QEP Rubric Training, Georgia Southern University | 2015 |
| CT2 Symposium: Engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
(SoTL) | 2014 |

Regents' Award Selection Committee
University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

9 September 2021

Dear Selection Committee Members:

Dr. Nikki DiGregorio has requested I write a letter in support of her nomination for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. As the FY 2011 Award Winner, and colleague and SoTL research collaborator of hers, it is indeed my privilege to do so. I have known Dr. DiGregorio since she came to Georgia Southern University and our collaboration has put me in a unique position to comment on her achievements.

Because we are in the same program (Child & Family Development) we often share many of the same students. On numerous occasions I heard students complimenting her teaching and ability to relate even in our largest classes. We also have collaborated extensively on SoTL research projects since 2015, shortly after she began her appointment. Kathleen McKinney, an internationally-recognized authority on SoTL, describes a 3-part progressive model of Scholarly Teaching: Good Teaching is that which enables students to learn; Scholarly Teaching is that which uses evidence about the teaching-learning connection and best practices in pedagogy to further enhance student learning; The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning [SoTL] is actually producing and disseminating new evidence in peer-reviewed fora for other teachers to use in their own Scholarly Teaching to improve their students' learning. Over the past seven years that she has been at Georgia Southern University, Dr. DiGregorio has made significant contributions to the SoTL literature, rising to the highest level of Scholarly Teaching.

In the time that we have been scholarly collaborators, we have jointly produced four pieces of SoTL scholarship: three peer-reviewed presentations and one peer-reviewed publication. This research has been unique and groundbreaking and represents the only scholarship to date that documents the extent of SoTL scholarship in our field of Family Science, both at our major disciplinary conference and in our "big 3" disciplinary journals and our only disciplinary SoTL journal. As such, it has great potential to be referenced and cited and to generate significant influence within our field. Even more impressive is that fact that she is the lead author on the publication and the lead presenter on two of the three presentations, and that she accomplished all of this while still a tenure-track Assistant Professor.

In addition, we currently have another peer-reviewed presentation forthcoming and two manuscripts under review in our disciplinary SoTL journal. The presentation focuses on a shared teaching and learning interest of ours: understanding changes in students' attitudes about issues in diversity, equity, and inclusion—in this case, students' attitudes about marriage equality—in Family Science courses. One of the two manuscripts is also based on this work. The other manuscript is based on our work examining SoTL publications in our disciplinary journals (referenced above). This is a multi-institutional effort, and Dr. DiGregorio played a pivotal role in collaborating with the full research team to bring this idea to fruition.

Dr. DiGregorio has also collaborated with other scholars on SoTL projects and has produced single-author SoTL scholarship, too. Of her six peer-reviewed SoTL publications, she is the first author on all six, with sole

authorship on two. This demonstrates not just that she has established herself as a highly productive (averaging nearly one SoTL publication per year) and independent SoTL scholar, but that she has taken on a *leadership* role in assembling and directing scholarly teams to bring SoTL projects to life. It also reflects her ability to work with scholars with varied interests and to integrate her own scholarly disciplinary expertise into her work. For example, Dr. DiGregorio has made significant contributions to the University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts, including serving as a 2018 Diversity & Inclusion Faculty Fellow and being recognized with the University Inclusive Excellence Award in 2020. A significant thread in her SoTL scholarship has explored the teaching of college-level diversity courses, from both faculty teaching and student learning perspectives. This type of SoTL scholarship is critically important, substantially under-studied, and can significantly benefit from Family Science's unique disciplinary approach to these issues; such scholarship not only moves Family Science SoTL research forward, but also advances the broader interdisciplinary SoTL literature. Simply put, there are no other voices in the literature who are saying what Dr. DiGregorio is saying and we are all made better by her contributions. Such scholars are rare and precious and most certainly deserving of reward and recognition.

As if that weren't impressive enough, Dr. DiGregorio has also assumed multiple leadership roles in the SoTL community. She is currently the President of the Family Science Association, the teaching-focused organization within our discipline of Family Science. She serves as co-Editor for *two* major peer-reviewed SoTL Journals: a) *Family Science Review* (the only Family Science SoTL journal), and b) *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (one of the major interdisciplinary SoTL journals). She is the only Family Scientist to ever serve as co-Editor for *IJ-SoTL*, which brings increased visibility to our field within the journal. She serves on the Outstanding SoTL Paper Award Committee for the Advancing Family Science Section of our major international Family Science organization, the National Council on Family Relations [NCFR]. This committee gives the only award for SoTL from our international organization. She also serves as a reviewer for *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, another one of the major interdisciplinary SoTL journals; she is one of only a handful of Family Scientists who review for this journal, again bringing increased visibility to our field.

It is evident to me that Dr. DiGregorio has established a name for herself in the field of SoTL research, both generally and in her discipline. She has participated in numerous collaborative multi-institutional projects, she has initiated multiple projects of her own design, and she has taken a leadership role in the SoTL community of scholars. I can think of no one with a more impressive SoTL vita in the past few years and no one more deserving of this award.

Sincerely,

Trent W. Maurer, Ph.D.
Professor of Child & Family Development
School of Human Ecology
Georgia Southern University

October 31, 2021

Dear Members of the Awards Committee:

Dr. Nikki DiGregorio asked me to write a letter in support of her nomination for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Award. As an FY 2015 Award Winner and a long-time colleague, it is my absolute honor to do so. I met Dr. DiGregorio when she was hired as an Assistant Professor at Georgia Southern. Since 2014, I have had multiple opportunities to collaborate with her on different committees and through the Faculty Center, and to evaluate her work by reviewing her portfolio for promotion and tenure and the Outstanding Georgia Southern SoTL Scholar Award. Based on my extensive professional knowledge of her work, I believe she is most deserving of the Regent's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award.

Dr. DiGregorio has a well articulated teaching philosophy that permeates her approach to teaching: creating a welcoming classroom environment for a diverse student population, using a variety of methods and striving to connect learning in the classroom to application in external settings. Dr. DiGregorio has grounded her dedication to teaching and student learning in andragogy, as it applies to self-directed learning, and the feminist standpoint theory that encourages students to engage in critical analysis. Moreover, she combined her teaching with SoTL and masterfully situated her research within a strong theoretical framework. Dr. DiGregorio engages in a systematic examination of issues about student learning in her own classes and the discipline of Family Science and she does so in a collaborative manner. Her research explores the various roles of context in teaching and learning processes, critical reflection and engagement among undergraduates with a particular focus on diverse student backgrounds and courses in diversity. Her exceptional knowledge of foundational and current SoTL literature, as evidenced in her narrative, is invaluable to a SoTL researcher. As she engages in understanding students' perspectives, aspirations, and concerns, she is able to design rigorous research projects and employ adequate methodologies. Dr. DiGregorio utilizes exploratory mixed methods that allow representation of all student voices and uses the results to inform and adapt her teaching in response to student feedback. It is clear to me that Dr. DiGregorio has fully adopted self-reflection, a crucial characteristic of SoTL.

The value of any SoTL project is measured first and foremost by its impact on students. Dr. DiGregorio's research led to greater empathy, increased understanding of the complex interactions between policies and individuals, heightened motivation to be more involved in political processes, greater level of awareness of stereotypes and biases, and a better understanding of other cultures/groups, to name a few. The highest endorsement of the quality of her scholarship comes from student's qualitative comments such as: "It was not until this class that I realized my true potential and what really matters in life" and "My beliefs and values have changed some. I learned that not all policies actually are here to protect and help people some hinder people." These statements are the best indications of students' critical reflection of their own learning.

Secondly, good scholars are evaluated by their contribution to existing knowledge. Dr. DiGregorio's scholarly work contributed new knowledge about teaching activities centered around sexualization and objectification in family science, documented the paucity of SoTL research at professional meetings in her field and provided an adaptable framework of an internship model for related disciplines.

Dr. DiGregorio is engaged in a scholarship that is public and peer reviewed. She has a successful and well-documented publication and presentation record. Since 2016, Dr. DiGregorio has published seven peer-reviewed articles, has two in review and is a leading author on all, but two of them. Her findings were shared through 29 national and international peer-reviewed presentations, which included dissemination at the National Council for Family Relations, the largest disciplinary organization within family science and the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and SoTL Commons, two premiere SoTL conferences.

Dr. DiGregorio took on leadership roles to support and promote SoTL at Georgia Southern and beyond. At the national level she is actively involved in advancing SoTL in Family Science: serving in multiple editorial roles and most recently as the President of the Family Science Association. At the international level, she serves as the Co-Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, a double-blind peer reviewed journal. I wholeheartedly nominated and advocated for Dr. DiGregorio's appointment to this position. My collaboration with her on the upcoming 15th year special journal edition reinforced my belief that her knowledge and skills will provide a significant contribution to the journal and to SoTL more generally. I know she is working diligently to increase the readership and elevate the profile of the journal so that it can continue to enhance the status of SoTL world-wide.

Dr. DiGregorio is deeply committed to her students' learning, exemplifies the best characteristics of a teacher-scholar and is an asset to the greater SoTL community. I unequivocally support her candidacy for the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award.

Diana Botnaru

Dr. Diana Botnaru

Professor of Human Anatomy and Physiology
Georgia Southern University
SoTL Commons Conference Chair
dbotnaru@georgiasouthern.edu