

**UMSAEP UM-UWC Academic Exchange Program Report
2020-2022 Project**

**Developing an Online Learning Space:
The Teaching and Learning of Post Qualitative Inquiry in Higher Education**

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Our Past Collaborations

We have previously collaborated on a UM-UWC SAEP project from 2016-2018 on multimodality and which was highly generative - leading to two intensive residential retreats for academics across the four higher education institutions in the Western Cape, a colloquium on multimodality at UWC, two book projects were developed and where we wrote chapters in each other's edited books and presented these at international conferences such as the American Education Research Association. Prof Candace Kuby's current position in her university (i.e., Director of Qualitative Inquiry) and Prof Vivienne Bozalek's position with regard to her National Research Foundation project where she supervises a number of PhD students in focusing on using post qualitative research in higher education, made this current project a generative one for both institutions

Issues and Needs Meet by Current Project

Within the field of qualitative research, a new, up and coming area of interest is 'post qualitative inquiry'. In 2011 a chapter in the SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research was solely dedicated to the topic of post qualitative inquiry (see St. Pierre, 2011). Over the past decade scholars in the U.S., South Africa, Canada, Australia, and many other countries have begun to explore the doing of post qualitative inquiry. This new shift in the field of qualitative research has also created a space for discussions on pedagogy: How do we teach our students to become post qualitative inquirers? How do we assist academics who wish to use post qualitative inquiry with their students?

The current project, which involved the University of Missouri and the University of Western Cape through the two principal investigators, Drs. Kuby and Bozalek, was developed to assist academics, (post)graduate students, and their supervisors who wished to incorporate novel post qualitative

approaches in their research projects. We created a fourteen-month long virtual space which could serve as an informal course on [Post Philosophies and the Doing of Inquiry](#). The webinars were conducted through a webinar platform based at the University of Missouri. Each month, an eminent academic/practitioner in the field was interviewed by one of the principal investigators. While our main audience was intended to be people associated with our two higher education faculties and departments, we also aimed to open the online learning space to other scholars internationally.

We thus recorded the sessions and made them available to the public on a [YouTube channel](#) devoted to the webinar series. You'll notice that some videos have around 1,000 viewings each! The number of views continue to rise as students and faculty around the globe find them helpful. The hoped-for effect or impact was intended to assist in graduate students and fellow colleagues understandings of Post Philosophies and their Practice in Higher Education. To this end, we created discussion sessions every two weeks after the webinars took place for our PhD students. These were hospitable environments for graduate students and colleagues to express their reactions to the webinars and to further learn from each other's understandings of the complex concepts covered in these sessions.

In addition to the fourteen-month webinar series, Candace Kuby traveled to UWC in December 2019 to present at two conferences on post qualitative inquiry and the teaching of it in higher education. The first conference was organized by Viv Bozalek titled "New Materialist Reconfiguring Higher Education" (December 2-4, 2019) and the second was "Pedagogies in the Wild: The 3rd South African Deleuze & Guattari Studies Conference" (December 4-6, 2019). Both conferences took place on the campus of UWC. Candace was able to combine the visit for these two conferences with planning sessions with Viv Bozalek on the eighteen-month long online learning space proposed above and to give a workshop with her former graduate student, Becky Christ, on post qualitative research for UWC (post)graduate students and academics. In addition, Viv planned to travel to Missouri to continue planning the year-long online learning space, and also to give a lecture at the University of Missouri in April 2020, but this could not take place because of the Covid epidemic.

The project was successful in that a fourteen-month long virtual learning space on post philosophies and the doing of inquiry was developed and executed. Candace and Viv were fortunate enough to be able to host fourteen sessions where eminent academics in the field generously gave of their time to answer a set of questions and to engage with further questions from the online audience. A further outcome of the project which as an unexpected spin off was that the prestigious Sage journal, *Qualitative Inquiry*, approached the two principal investigators, Candace and Viv, to do a double special issue in the journal of the online sessions. This is an esteemed international journal with a high impact factor in the humanities and social & behavioral sciences (4.716 impact factor). The editor also agreed to have submissions from the principal investigators current and past PhD students, who would write about their responses to the webinars and the application to their own work. This is still currently being worked on as it has required a great deal of work, editing, reviewing and following up on the manuscripts which have been developed from the series. We are close to submitting the entire collection for publication.

Methodology / Process for Project

Each international guest speaker who was chosen as an expert on Post Philosophies and the Doing of Inquiry were guided by either Candace or Viv through a set of four questions that had been prepared upfront to ask all the scholars who agreed to participate in the series. The questions were as follows:

1. How does your philosophical approach influence your ways of doing inquiry?
2. What does this philosophical approach make thinkable or possible for inquiry? (so how does your approach relate to more traditional practices such as literature reviews, data collection, analysis, and so forth)
3. What are your perspectives on methodology(ies) and/or methods? How do you envision that in your approaches to doing inquiry?
4. What mechanisms could be put in place at universities to help supervisors and/or committees support students doing post-philosophy inspired ways of inquiring?

The invited guest speakers each discussed the philosophical approaches which underpinned their practice and what this made possible for them to do inquiry, they discussed their perspectives on methodologies and their ideas for assisting supervisors and students to engage in these kinds of research. The invited panelists also suggest several readings for webinar attendees to read prior to the webinar, although not required. Some of them brought one or more graduate students they had worked with, some scholars were interviewed together as pairs of scholars who had written on the subject together (for example, Lisa Mazzei and Alecia Jackson, as well as, Liz de Freitas and Nathalie Sinclair).

The feedback from attendees and participants in the series was that they found the series very useful in that it is often more accessible to hear someone talk about their scholarship than reading dense articles (or at least to pair the conversation along a dense reading).

The Post Philosophies and the Doing of Inquiry webinar series kicked off in August 2020 and was held on the third Thursday of every month until September 2021, with a total of 14 sessions completed in the end. Each session was recorded on the zoom platform and made available on YouTube for those who missed the session or who wanted to revisit what had happened. The research assistant, Erin Price, a PhD graduate student at Missouri University then transcribed the sessions which served as the basis for the articles in this special issue(s). The sessions were as follows:

August 20, 2020 • Iris van der Tuin

September 17, 2020 • Elizabeth St. Pierre

October 15, 2020 • Stephanie Springgay

November 19, 2020 • Alecia Jackson & Lisa Mazzei

December 17, 2020 • Kakali Bhattacharya

January 21, 2021 • Erin Manning
February 18, 2021 • Ezekiel Dixon-Román
March 18, 2021 • Aaron Kuntz
April 15, 2021 • Kathrin Thiele
May 20, 2021 • Elizabeth de Freitas & Nathalie Sinclair
June 17, 2021 • Fikile Nxumalo & Eve Tuck
July 15, 2021 • Sarah E. Truman
August 26, 2021 • David Ben Shannon
September 16, 2021 • Maggie MacLure

This Zoom platform and format allowed the 1-2 international guests and hosts (ourselves) to have video and audio capabilities for a discussion. We used the chat box function for those in attendance to connect throughout the session and the Q/A icon to help us moderate inquiries posed to the panelists. People shared with us that these monthly webinars (and the recordings on YouTube) were a welcome space during the pandemic to feel connected, to learn from speakers as professional conferences were on hold, and to feel a sense of community. Others said they assigned the recorded webinars and accompanying suggested readings by authors to students they advise and/or in courses they teach. We are grateful many received the webinars in this way during such a difficult time in the world. We did not expect this.

Budget

We requested funds to travel once to each other's institutions (Candace to UWC in December 2019 and Viv to Mizzou in April 2020). Candace planned for 9 nights (November 30 to December 8, 2019) and Viv planned for 5 nights (April 21 to 26, 2020). Candace was able to use the funds as indicated above but Viv was unable to travel due to the COVID pandemic which stopped all international travel.

Appreciation

Candace and Viv would like to express their thanks for the support offered by the UMSAEP UM-UWC Academic Exchange Program. It was a great deal of hard work for the two principal investigators, but worthwhile in that the project provided a means to gain access to knowledge on Post Philosophies which was appreciated broadly in the academic community and which will continue to be used by those interested in this field.