



Title of Project:

Exploring the Use of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as a Source of Professional Development for Teachers of English Language Learners

Researcher:

Rebecca Bergey
University of Virginia
Rmb4my@virginia.edu



Rebecca Bergey

Research Supervisor:

Dr. Susan Mintz
University of Virginia
slm4r@virginia.edu

Project Summary:

Demographic changes in the US (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015) are creating classrooms comprised of a growing number of English language learners (ELLs). At the same time, new rigorous standards push all teachers to consider and address the role of language in academic learning (Bunch, Kibler & Pimentel, 2012). This context of a large number of ELLs in classrooms guided by rigorous standards requires that all teachers are prepared to meet the unique linguistic needs of ELLs. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offer a potential form of professional development (PD) to reach a large, widespread audience of educators, but up until now there has been limited research on the use of MOOCs as PD. This study aims to examine teacher learning experiences in a MOOC designed to prepare educators for working with ELLs. Findings will be useful for MOOC designers to understand and improve the design of MOOCs as well as for district and state education leaders to inform decisions about the use of MOOCs as a form of PD.