Application for Oscar W. Neale Fellowship

UW-Stevens Point
School of Education
Attached, please find a Call for Applications for the annual **Oscar W. Neale Fellowship** in the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point School of Education. This is an opportunity to deepen and strengthen collaboration among educators by choosing a K-12 teacher to receive a grant for a professional development project involving UWSP and local schools and agencies. The due date for submission of the proposals is October 1, 2014.

Thanks to the generous endowment of the Neale family, we expect this program to build ever stronger collaborative relationships among educators in Central Wisconsin.

The recipient will receive $10,000 to conduct collaborative research and development, and then will give a presentation at the 2015 Celebration of Teaching and Learning on May 7, 2015.

For information about past recipients, please see our website: uwsp.edu/education/Pages/Scholarships/OscarNealeFellowship.aspx.

For more information, please contact Associate Dean Patricia Caro at pcaro@uwsp.edu or 715-346-3720.

*Patricia Caro, Ph.D.*
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Biography of
Oscar W. Neale

Oscar Neale was an educator for half a century. Born in Birmingham, Erie County, Ohio, December 17, 1873. Republican. School teacher and principal; superintendent of schools; member of Wisconsin state senate 23rd District; elected 1946, 1950. He came to Stevens Point Normal School in 1917 and was director of Rural Education until his retirement in 1944. Following his death at age 83, a dormitory on the UWSP campus was named for him. Oscar Neale taught the first picture study course in a public institution in Wisconsin and was an authority on picture interpretation.

Neale’s first three years of teaching were in rural schools in Nebraska. Art appreciation was one of Neale’s principal interests. One day while county superintendent in Nebraska, he stopped at a school where the teacher was pasting from a women’s magazine on the school’s walls. “I realized then,” he recalled, “that we were not paying enough attention to the artistic side of life for the children.” Neale bought, on credit, a collection of pictures that he carried with him as he went about on visits to country schools. He carried a phonograph with him, playing music as he taught. That was the first time many of the people of rural Nebraska had ever seen a phonograph. Neale’s collection grew to 200 pictures that he carried with him in two iron trunks that traveled with him all over the nation where he was called to give picture study interpretations.

Neale authored many articles and two widely used texts, Picture Study in the Grades, published in 1925, and World Famous Pictures, published in 1933. Both these texts remain in the UWSP Archives. Neale traveled to hundreds of high schools to speak to prospective college students and to give commencement addresses and other speeches.

Neale was survived by two grandchildren: the late Jean Neale Stassel of Anchorage, Alaska, and her brother Jim Neale of Gainesville, Ga. Mrs. Stassel remembered her grandfather with great regard. She recalled his many years of Sunday school teaching where even the most active boys “would sit quietly, enraptured by his words.” The descendants of Oscar Neale have donated $1.9 million to UWSP to create the three largest scholarship programs offered here: the Oscar W. Neale Scholarship in Education, the Neale Alumni Honors Scholarships for entering freshman, and the Robert and Ventura Neale Memorial Scholarship for continuing Neale Alumni scholarship recipients.
Neale was never an artist or an art-specialist teacher. His interest in art probably began in 1896 at Doane Academy, a prep school associated with Denison University in Ohio. While at Doane, Neale elected to take drawing, an unusual step for a student following the classical course of study. He may have attended the public art appreciation courses given by faculty members from Shepherdson College, an institution affiliated with Denison.

Neale became a county school superintendent in Nebraska and later joined the faculty of a teacher training school in Kearney, Neb. His period of superintendency, in the Platte area, had quite an impact on the rest of his career. In later years, he liked to recall that he became acquainted there with Buffalo Bill and had discussed (artist) Rosa Bonheur with him (Neale, 1927).

More important, Neale came to feel that the arts were neglected in teacher education and children’s education, and determined to do something about it. The incident that triggered this decision, Neale claimed, was the discovery of a young teacher in a one-room rural school covering the walls of her classroom with pictures clipped from the pages of a dressmaker’s magazine. She had no source for attractive and aesthetically valuable education visual aids, nor standards for choosing such aids. Neale reacted very strongly to what he felt was a demeaning situation for the teacher and a lost educational experience for the students. Years later, he was reported as saying that this incident had shown him that there had been too much emphasis on the three Rs, and he set about remediying this through a one-man crusade. He bought reproductions on credit then toured schools to give talks about these pictures. Incidentally, he also carted about a phonograph, thus becoming a kind of early arts educator (Neale Retires, 1944).

Neale became a speaker on the tent Chautauqua circuit. A newspaper clipping of 1927 described his two decades on the Chautauqua platforms and continued; “Today Mr. Neale’s 200 reproductions are still intact, enclosed in two iron trunks that have traveled with him all over the nation where he has been called to give picture study interpretations. Iron stands and racks are part of his equipment and the entire display can be erected and made ready for use in an hour’s time.” The article describes something of the structure and content of these presentations; “The exhibit starts with masterpieces for the little folk, the children who are taught to correlate them with their studies in music, history, geography and literature. Another group is for high school age and still another division appeals to the adult age, in relation to music and song.”

Neale seems to have been an outgoing personality and a persuasive speaker. A former student recalled his teaching with enthusiasm, remarking that Neale’s classroom was in the un-air-conditioned upper floor of a Stevens Point building, but students flocked to his classes and were not distracted by the summer heat during his presentations. Neale’s postretirement career as a Wisconsin state senator also suggests that he could attract and hold an audience.
Neale on Art

The actual statements Neale made about art works in his classes and public lectures are difficult to determine, though something about them can be imagined by examining his publications. Neale’s Preface to Picture Study in the Grades (1927) included this declaration: “Picture Study in the Grades aims primarily to develop in the children of our schools an appreciation and so that their ideas may be influenced by the patriotism, the piety and the beauty which the great artists of different ages have given the world” (n.p.). In the same preface, Neale quoted G. Stanley Hall’s discussion of Picture Study:

Teachers do not realize how much important, not only for children but for everyone who has special artistic training, the subject matter of a picture is than its execution, style, or technique. The good picture from an educational standpoint of view is either like a sermon teaching a great moral truth or like a poem, idealizing some important aspect of life. It must palpitate with human interest (Neale, 1927, n.p.).

Neale’s Work

Neale felt that art works had a moral, ethical and sometimes patriotic function. This sort of thinking was not just a provincial Wisconsin or even American notion. Neale worked within the framework of his own time.

Picture Study was an important and valuable feature in an attempt to educate the American public about visual art.
Fellowship Application

Name: ____________________________________________

School District or Agency: ____________________________

Since: ____________________________________________

Level / Subjects Taught: _______________________________

Licensed Since: _____________________________________

Bachelor’s Degree from: _______________________________

Master’s Degree from: _________________________________

National Board Certification Y ___ N___

Please attach the following:

1. A cover letter that includes a brief overview of your experience and background and a brief overview of your proposal.

2. A current resume and three current letters of reference, including a building administrator, a central office administrator, and a teacher educator based at a college or university.

3. A written proposal (maximum 1,000 words, including references, and maximum five pictures, charts or tables) showing your plan for a Neale Fellowship for twelve months, including budget and timeline details. Also include the name(s) of the UW-Stevens Point School of Education professor(s) with whom you will be collaborating. You may assume that you will be granted approximately $10,000. Applicants are strongly encouraged to highlight the ways in which their proposed projects will, in some way, manifest the ideals espoused by Oscar W. Neale and his work.

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria:
- Appropriate to the life and work of Oscar W. Neale (see attached biography)
- Appropriate to the mission of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point School of Education (see attached SOE mission statement)
- Appropriate to the professional development of teachers
- Collaboration with a UWSP professor and inclusion of UWSP undergraduate students

Timeline: Proposals are due October 1, 2014. The recipient(s) will be notified on or before October 17, 2014. Presentation of the award will be at the Celebration of Teaching and Learning Celebration on May 7, 2015. The recipient will present a final report of the project at the 2015 UWSP Celebration of Teaching and Learning reception.

Send application materials to:
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