

## **A Commitment to Growth and Collaboration: The Impact of Dr. Timothy O. Ireland**

Dr. Timothy O. Ireland, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Niagara University, is deeply passionate about teaching, extending his commitment far beyond the traditional classroom. His genuine dedication to student development is evident in his approach to teaching and learning. What sets him apart is his willingness to acknowledge that, at times, we can all be wrong. This openness to being wrong not only facilitates personal growth but also helps him reach new goals and fosters effective teamwork. His adaptability and receptiveness to new ideas demonstrate his forward-thinking mindset, crucial in an ever-changing academic environment.

In the realm of collaborative research, Dr. Ireland's emphasis on open-mindedness is significant. Acknowledging the possibility of being wrong enhances one's ability to accept new information and ideas, even if they challenge existing work. This willingness to reassess and adapt is essential in advancing research and contributing to the growth of collective knowledge. Dr. Ireland's approach encourages intellectual humility. It promotes an environment where learning and collaboration thrive.

Dr. Ireland has also been involved with the Rochester Youth Development program, where he offered insightful observations on crime and public rehabilitation. He concluded that reducing crime cannot always be credited solely to systemic efforts or public rehabilitation centers, which may not always be the actual root causes of issues. His perspective highlights the need for further research into these systems to understand their complexities better and enhance their effectiveness. As a scholar, Dr. Ireland is a genuine

motivator, showing patience, a data-driven approach, and a passion for his work—qualities essential for rigorous Ph.D. research.

### **Niagara University Library: A Vital Resource for Ph.D. Research and Academic Growth**

The Niagara University Library plays a crucial role in supporting Ph.D. students, providing essential resources for in-depth academic research. I had the opportunity to attend a talk by David Schoen, who provided a detailed and insightful overview of the usability of the Niagara University Online Library portal. His explanation emphasized the importance of the library's resources for Ph.D. studies, particularly the specialized tools and services it offers. These include interlibrary loans, research guides, and access to a wide array of databases, all of which are indispensable for advanced academic work.

Mr. Schoen highlighted the effectiveness of the library's digital tools in supporting research. I was particularly impressed by how he demonstrated the use of the library's website alongside Google Scholar to peer-review papers, streamlining the research process efficiently. One of the most surprising pieces of information was that the library's eBook collection is six times larger than its printed collection. Additionally, he noted that the library's field search capabilities significantly outperform Google search in terms of precision and relevance, which is crucial for researchers seeking reliable, peer-reviewed sources.

For Ph.D. students, the Niagara University Library becomes more than just a place to access materials; it serves as a vital partner in the research journey. The library provides access to numerous peer-reviewed papers, books, and other resources at no additional

cost, which would otherwise be difficult to obtain elsewhere. This resource-rich environment fosters an intellectual community and supports the academic growth of students at all levels. The Niagara University Library is not just a repository of knowledge—it is a crucial hub for research development and academic success.

### **Personal Reflection on Nichole Prescott, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, The University of Texas System**

Listening to Nichole Prescott, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at The University of Texas System, was both inspiring and deeply relatable. As a first-generation college graduate and a member of a minority group, her story resonated with my own experiences. Her background and journey reminded me that our beginnings—no matter how humble—shape who we become and influence the direction of our futures. She opened her speech in a language I didn't understand, which at first caught me off guard. But as she explained, it was a way to express her deep commitment to Tribal sovereignty and cultural preservation. Her dedication to revitalizing the Myaamia language and honoring her heritage showed the strength of cultural identity in leadership.

Dr. Prescott's personal and academic journey—from attending a low-performing school to becoming a university vice chancellor—could easily seem extraordinary or even unreachable. Yet, the humility and authenticity with which she shared her story made it feel possible for others who share similar backgrounds. Her involvement in collective impact and collaborative systems change demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to higher education. With a Ph.D. in history, she has drawn upon her academic training to create

meaningful change, contributing to The University of Texas System's strides in making education more inclusive and accessible. Her mention of SP17, a law prohibiting targeted support for specific communities, was particularly thought-provoking. While she didn't state her views directly, it became clear that her values might not align with the limitations imposed by the law.

One of the most impactful ideas she shared was the importance of curiosity and self-awareness in research and problem-solving. She encouraged us to embrace uncertainty in our study—it's okay not to know everything because the drive to find out is at the heart of discovery.

### **Personal Reflection on Chapter One of Research Design by John W. Creswell and J.**

#### **David Creswell**

Chapter One of Research Design by John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell provides a foundational understanding of the research process, particularly valuable for students embarking on their academic journey in graduate or Ph.D. research. The chapter outlines the key elements involved in designing a research study, introducing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. What stood out most to me was the emphasis on aligning the research problem, purpose, and questions with an appropriate methodology—something I had not fully considered before. This alignment ensures that a study is not only coherent but also meaningful and valid.

The authors stress that every good research project begins with a strong research problem, and I appreciated their guidance on narrowing a broad topic into a focused

research question. As someone preparing for advanced academic research, I found their step-by-step explanation both practical and reassuring. They also emphasize the importance of the researcher's worldview or philosophical stance, such as post-positivism, constructivism, or pragmatism. This was particularly eye-opening, as I had not previously considered how my own values and perspectives might influence my approach to research.

Moreover, the discussion about ethical considerations reminded me that research is not just a technical process but also a moral responsibility. The authors' call to conduct research that is respectful, inclusive, and transparent resonated deeply with me. Overall, Chapter One not only clarified the structure of a research design but also encouraged me to think critically about the "why" behind my research. It made me realize that research is more than just gathering data—it's about contributing knowledge in a thoughtful, systematic, and ethical way. This chapter has set the tone for how I want to approach my own research journey moving forward.

### **Personal Reflection on ADS 810 Research Seminar Course Assignments – Fall 2025**

The ADS 810 Research Seminar course assignments for Fall 2025 provide a rigorous yet meaningful structure that truly challenges and deepens my understanding of doctoral-level research. Each component is carefully designed to support the development of essential research skills, while also encouraging reflection, collaboration, and academic growth. What stood out to me the most was how the assignments are not just isolated

tasks, but interconnected elements that collectively will contribute to my future dissertation and scholarly writings.

The obligation to attend and actively engage in each seminar session contributed significantly to building a sense of academic community. Through participating in discussions, listening to guest speakers, and reflecting on their perspectives, I gained a deeper appreciation for the importance of collaborative learning. Writing five personal reflections on these experiences challenged me to critically assess various research methodologies and approaches, prompting me to relate them to my own doctoral research interests. Additionally, these reflections enabled me to appreciate how diverse academic backgrounds and perspectives influence the design and implementation of research.

The Prospectus assignment and the creation of the Literature Review Matrix are both challenging and immensely rewarding. By synthesizing a range of dissertations and scholarly articles from various research methodologies (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods), I will gain valuable clarity about my topic and research design preferences. Although the Literature Matrix appears time-consuming, and an invaluable tool for organizing sources and identifying gaps in the existing literature. Additionally, the ePortfolio assignment provided an exciting opportunity to demonstrate my development as a researcher and present my work in a professional, accessible format. I now view it as a dynamic document that will continue to evolve throughout my doctoral journey. Ultimately, these assignments are not just academic tasks—they will serve as crucial steps in my growth toward becoming a confident, competent, and ethical scholar.