

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Science Literacy: An Undergraduate Alternative to Traditional Introductory Science Courses

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DATE: July 2020

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This study utilized qualitative research methods to explore the attitudes, understanding, and professional opinions of Ball State University science instructors on science literacy. In-depth, semi-structured interviews with 8 introductory science professors of various departments were recorded, transcribed, and coded using content analysis to understand their relationship to science literacy and the role it plays within the traditional introductory science courses. Professors were asked a series of questions separated into four sections which addressed the following: Ball State's core curriculum, expectations within the classroom, perceived differences in student groups, and science literacy. Several themes emerged including: addressing scientific fundamentals, recognizing credible scientific sources, students fulfilling the core requirement, and relevancy to student lives. An additional section is included, which discusses the difficulties and potential for the development of a new course in science literacy. Implications and recommendations for Ball State University are discussed.