Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing

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The Relationship between Perfectionism, Perceived Stress, and Coping
in Baccalaureate Nursing Students

Date: September 22, 2020
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Place: Seton 312

Abstract
Perfectionism in nursing students is an understudied problem that may affect student and workforce success. Perfectionism has been linked to increased stress and less effective coping styles, as well as depression, anxiety and other psychological alterations. However, it has rarely been studied in nursing students. Studying perfectionism in this population is important because it may increase the likelihood that new nurses will struggle with the stress of practice and it could be a significant factor in early career attrition. The purpose of this descriptive, correlational study was to gain a better understanding of the incidence of perfectionism in a nursing student population, both as a whole and by age group, as well as the relationship between perfectionism, perceived stress, and coping style. In a sample of 184 traditional BSN students from a public, urban University, 106 (57.6%) of the participants were classified as maladaptive perfectionists with a significant decrease in the incidence of maladaptive perfectionism from the younger to the older age groups ($X^2 = 10.05, p=0.04$). There was a significant relationship between perfectionism and perceived stress and a positive correlation between perfectionism, perceived stress and the use of some dysfunctional coping practices such as denial, venting, self-blame and behavioral disengagement. These findings underscore the need for screening and intervention that could mitigate untoward academic and career effects. Implications for research, education, policy, and practice are offered.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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