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 Education with an emphasis in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

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Social Work Junior Faculty Perceptions of Their Doctoral Level Teaching Preparation

Date: November 23rd, 2021
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Place: Remote

Abstract
Each year, hundreds of students graduate with a terminal degree. Many have aspirations to teach at a college or university. This includes graduates of social work programs. However, little information is known about the experiences of teaching readiness of social work Ph.D. graduates. The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of social work junior faculty and their perceptions of readiness to teach.

Literature reporting on the curriculum in Social Work Ph.D. Programs are linked to students being developed and consumed in research (Acquavita and Tice, 2015; Dinnerman et al, 1999; and Reneau, 2011). Since many programs are often research focused, many overlook preparing students for their teaching role in academe. Thus, while many are prepared to conduct research, they may not be prepared to teach.

The Modified Ph.D. Project Survey, which is a series of questions based around teaching preparedness and readiness, was administered to tenure-track social work faculty. The findings revealed a collective display of perspectives of doctoral training based around teaching and instruction. A total of 42 completed surveys were used in the final analyses. Results from the study reported there is need for improvement for preparedness to teach and for mentorship. The participants in this study reported they were moderately prepared to teach after graduating from their Ph.D. programs. The findings also suggest that there is a great need to improve mentorship in these programs. Recommendations of future research involve more qualitative data of alumni social work doctoral students and collecting research that focuses more on mentorship as a form of teaching preparation.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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