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

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Education with an emphasis in Educational Practice

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M.S. in Strategic Studies, June, 2004, U.S. Army War College, PA
M.S. in Vocational Education, May, 1986, Pittsburg State University, KS
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The Relationship of Self-Directed Learning Readiness and Completion of Officers in the
Army War College Distance Education Program

Date: 21 October 2019
Time: 11:00
Place: Sigma Aldrich Room, Technology and Learning Center, Marillac Hall

Abstract
Today, more adults are participating in online education than ever before. The latest data from the Department of
Educational Statistics show an increase of students taking all coursework online grew to 15.4% (Ginder, Kelly-Reid, & Mann,
2018). Despite this trend, some adults lack the readiness to engage in formal adult education. Readiness and other factors
such as time and personal matters adults encounter are some of the most significant challenges for institutions in addressing
attrition rates, which average 38% (USDE, 2011). The Army higher education programs experience the same problem in their
educational institutions (U.S. Army War College Data, 2016). Retention and education of military service members directly
impacts the readiness of military units.

This study examined the relationship of self-directed learning readiness and completion of the Army War College
Distance Education Program (AWCDEP). Prior research has examined other aspects of student achievement in the
AWCDEP, yet self-directed learning readiness has not been specifically explored. The AWCDEP is the equivalent to a civilian
master’s program for the Army formal education system. The data for 165 respondents were analyzed which included 134
completers and 31 non-completers. The Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) was utilized for the study. Overall
the research results indicated a high readiness for self-directed learning by both completers and non-completers of the
AWCDEP. The three variables of family, AWCDEP course hours and participant work hours were examined. Participant
work hours was the only significant indicator of AWCDEP completion. All participants with part-time (<40 hours) work hours
successfully completed the AWCDEP.

The specific examination of SDLRS as an indicator of AWCDEP readiness is not a valid indicator of course
completion. The variable of participant work hours examined in this study may impact future preparation of students for
successful completion of the AWCDEP.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
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