GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

MAKE NO LITTLE PLANS HERE
IN THIS EDITION

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ORU GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Since the first year of offering the Doctorate in Educational Leadership (1999), 71 individuals have earned their Ed.D. Many doctoral graduates have leadership and administrative positions in public or private schools, not only in United States, but throughout the world. As of 2012, twenty of the graduates with their Doctorate in Educational Leadership are currently in leadership positions in institutions of higher education at either private or state colleges or universities serving as deans or associate deans.

For the eighth year, the Graduate School of Education is publishing this review of the doctoral abstracts from the Ed.D. candidates who successfully completed and defended their dissertations from fall 2011 to spring 2013. I hope that you will find them of interest and perhaps cause you to reflect on current issues in elementary/secondary school education, adult learning, and higher education or even conduct further research in these areas.

These dissertation abstracts represent hours of research study, frustration, dedication, and labor of the candidates, and their committees. They also represent hours of love, sacrifice, and support of families and friends. Each Doctoral candidate has successfully defended their dissertation before the Graduate Council and faced with challenging questions regarding their research and study before being awarded the Doctorate in Educational Leadership.

As the doctoral candidates are told before their defense, “you should be the world’s leading expert on the topic of your study when you go into your defense—at least for 20 mins. Because by the time you finish your defense, the topic of your research will have already expanded and surpassed your research knowledge base.”
As Chair of the Graduate School of Education, I am proud to showcase the dissertation research of our 2011-2013 new Doctors in Educational Leadership.

The faculty of the Graduate School of Education believes that God has called each of our adult learners to impact the world for Christ. The working educational professionals participating in our programs are daily walking out the College of Education’s vision.

**Transformed Educators**
**Transformed Society**
**The Miracle Ahead**
**A Transformed Generation**

Throughout this showcase, please note the diverse research topics and settings chosen by our new Doctors in Education. Each one has made significant contributions and has proven to be an expert in his or her chosen topic. It is our pleasure to share the nature of their research with you in this publication.
Degrees leading to an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

Dr. Blaise Bourgeois: Gifted Student Underachievement in High School: A Grounded Theory

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The Interrelationship Of School District Expenditures And Student Academic
Achievement In Oklahoma Public Elementary School Districts
DR. BLAISE BOURGEOIS

TITLE OF STUDY:
Gifted Student Underachievement in High School: A Grounded Theory

Successfully defended his dissertation on June 20, 2011

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Roso, Dr. Hullinger, Dr. Bourgeois (New Doctor), and Dr. Myers (Chair)

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Blaise Bourgeois
TITLE OF STUDY: Gifted Student Underachievement In High School: A Grounded Theory
PAGES IN STUDY: 137
CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree
MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Public School Administration

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY
The purpose of this study was to generate a theory of the factors that influence gifted student underachievement. The researcher analyzed the experiences of high school students to develop a better understanding as to why these students failed to live up to their academic potential. Data were collected from interviews with underachieving high school students representing high schools in five school districts in the upstate region of South Carolina. The participants in this study were classified gifted as outlined by the state of South Carolina’s definition of giftedness. All the students were identified by their school counselors as having underachieved and met the criteria for underachievement established by the researcher.

The data for this study were analyzed by using the Strauss and Corbin (1998) method of data analysis of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding was the process by which initial concepts were identified, coded, and placed into categories. In axial coding the categories and their respective codes were reevaluated and presented schematically. The selective coding process was used to identify a core category from among the previously identified categories.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
The theory developed pursuant to this study identified the lack of self-motivation as the major cause of gifted student underachievement at the high school level. The theory indicated that the interaction of several factors ultimately led to the lack of self-motivation, which in turn caused the underachievement. A review of those factors and their respective categories identified areas of concern in gifted student education. An understanding of those categories and their resultant interactions are essential to an understanding of gifted student underachievement. Those individuals who have an interest in or a responsibility for the education of gifted students should be knowledgeable of the theory postulated as a result of this study.
DR. DANIEL L. CRAIG

TITLE OF STUDY:
A Descriptive Study Of The Nature Of Oklahoma Public School Superintendent Evaluations

Successfully defended his dissertation on March 26, 2012

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Oliver, Dr. Myers (Chair), Dr. Craig (New Doctor), and Dr. Davidson

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Daniel Craig
ABSTRACT

TITLE OF STUDY: A Descriptive Study Of The Nature Of Oklahoma Public School Superintendent Evaluations
PAGES IN STUDY: 105
CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree
MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Public School Administration

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY
The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of Oklahoma public school superintendent evaluations. Based on the perceptions of public school superintendents serving in independent school districts in Oklahoma, this study sought to describe the procedures by which superintendents are evaluated. The study further sought to determine the frequency, purpose, criteria, and instrumentation of evaluations. Finally, the study sought to determine if district size, based on student enrollment, significantly affected the nature of the superintendent evaluations.

This was a quantitative non-experimental study using a descriptive survey research model. A questionnaire was developed and administered to all superintendents of the 420 school districts in Oklahoma that offer kindergarten through twelfth grades. A 50% return rate was achieved with 209 useable surveys returned. The questionnaires were grouped for analysis based on the school district size indicated on the survey. The descriptive statistics from the survey data were examined for significance using a chi-square analysis to determine if district size impacted the nature of the survey responses.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Oklahoma superintendents were similar to superintendents across the nation in regard to their demographics. Most Oklahoma superintendents tended to be Caucasian males above the age of 50 with more than five years experience as a superintendent. The nature of Oklahoma superintendent evaluations was also comparable to national trends. Oklahoma superintendents tended to be formally and annually evaluated by all members of their school boards. Employment and accountability were commonly the primary purposes of Oklahoma superintendent evaluations. The school board and superintendent relationship was often the most important criterion, and a checklist or rating evaluation instrument was most often used. Most Oklahoma superintendents were satisfied with the process used to evaluate their performance.
DR. MICHELLE A. LEVERMORE

TITLE OF STUDY:
Faculty Perspectives On Preparing Seminary Students For 21st Century Church Ministry

Successfully defended her dissertation on April 12, 2012

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Tapp, Dr. Levermore (New Doctor), and Dr. Hullinger (Chair)

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Michelle Levermore
ABSTRACT

TITLE OF STUDY: Faculty Perspectives On Preparing Seminary Students For 21st Century Church Ministry
PAGES IN STUDY: 242
CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree
MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Colleges and Higher Education Administration

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY
The 21st Century has witnessed dramatic changes that affect individuals and societies. Of these, globalization, demographic changes, religious pluralism, technological shifts, and changing philosophical thoughts have implications for seminary education and Christian ministry. In response, new and emerging models of theological leadership place demands on seminaries and their faculty to adjust their roles and prepare students for ministry to a people and a culture that is diverse, pluralistic, and resistant to both the minister and his or her message. This qualitative study aimed at (a) ascertaining how faculty at The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminaries view their roles in preparing students for effective 21st Century ministry and (b) determining what faculty are doing to prepare students to effectively handle 21st Century ministry related challenges. Eight faculty participants from four ATS accredited seminaries in the Southwest region of the United States were interviewed. Additional data came from seminary websites, catalogs, and teaching notes. The data were analyzed inductively, and major themes were noted.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
The findings affirmed faculty’s commitment to engage in theological education in innovative ways in response to mounting 21st Century challenges. Faculty understand changing dynamics of ministry and feel personally responsible to help students balance societal demands and the timeless truths of the Christian faith. They perform three categories of roles, content knowledge experts, promoters of student growth and development, and equippers for effective ministry. They adjust course titles and contents to reflect shifting realities, and use discussions, research papers, presentations, and field activities in their teaching discourses. The amalgam of roles and strategies used indicate strong commitment to content, praxis, and the overall learning experience of students. There is, however, a need for a systemic and systematic method of tying the 21st Century challenges with specific strategies targeted to address them.
DR. EVALYNNE W. LINDBERG

TITLE OF STUDY: Reading Achievement In The State Of Oklahoma: A Multiple Case Study Of Three Successful Public Elementary Schools

Successfully defended her dissertation on April 11, 2012

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Tapp, Dr. Myers (Chair), Dr. Lindberg (New Doctor), and Dr. Hullinger

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Evalynne Lindberg
ABSTRACT

TITLE OF STUDY: Reading Achievement In The State Of Oklahoma: A Multiple Case Study Of Three Successful Public Elementary Schools

PAGES IN STUDY: 153

CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree

MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Public School Administration

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY
The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the curricular and instructional approaches of three Oklahoma elementary schools that demonstrated success in promoting and/or sustaining improvement in reading achievement. This qualitative study relied on a multiple case design utilizing participants based on a purposeful sample. The primary sources of data for this study were interviews with school personnel and direct observations at the three school sites. These three Title 1 schools served a diverse and low socioeconomic status student population. A cross-case synthesis technique was used to analyze the data. This technique treated each individual school site as a separate case study; yet it permitted the researcher to aggregate the findings across the three case studies.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
This study identified the common curricular and instructional approaches used by the three schools involved in this study. Five characteristics that contributed to the reading achievement success at these schools emerged from the cross-case data analysis. These schools (a) ensured that the core reading curriculum selected met the criteria for being predicated on scientifically based reading research and addressed the essential components of reading instruction, (b) provided an opportunity for teacher involvement in the curriculum selection process, (c) allotted a minimum of 90 minutes daily for reading and language arts instruction, (d) utilized a systematic data assessment process to inform and differentiate instruction, and (e) provided appropriate and ongoing teacher professional development.
DR. GLENN M. MOORE

TITLE OF STUDY: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPENDITURES AND STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN OKLAHOMA PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Successfully defended his dissertation on April 25, 2012

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Davidson, Dr. Moore (New Doctor), Dr. Myers (Chair), and Dr. Oliver

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Glenn Moore
TITLE OF STUDY: The interrelationship of school district expenditures and student academic achievement in Oklahoma public elementary school districts

PAGES IN STUDY: 110
CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree
MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Public School Administration

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY
The primary purpose of this quantitative study was to analyze the relationship between school district expenditures and student academic achievement in 102 public elementary school districts in the state of Oklahoma. The secondary purpose was to investigate the relationship between school district expenditures and school district assessed valuation in those same school districts. Four research hypotheses, addressing both the primary and secondary purposes in this study, were postulated and tested utilizing a stepwise multiple regression analysis. Average school district expenditures by function from the 2005-2006 through 2009-2010 school years served as the independent variables for this study. Academic Performance Index (API) from the 2009-2010 school year and average assessed valuation per student from the 2005-2006 through 2009-2010 school years served as the dependent variables for this study.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
Administrative expenditures showed a negative relationship with API and demonstrated a positive relationship with assessed valuation per student when analyzing data from both the General Fund and All Funds. Operations and maintenance of plant services expenditures from the General Fund displayed a negative relationship with assessed valuation per student. Facilities acquisition and construction services expenditures from All Funds exhibited a positive relationship with API. Debt services expenditures from All Funds demonstrated a positive relationship with assessed valuation per student.

Several conclusions were derived from the findings. The finding that administration expenditures showed a negative relationship with API suggested that elementary school district administrators and boards of education should review resource allocation decisions that might increase expenditures on administration. The finding that some General Fund expenditures by function correlated with assessed valuation per student suggested that increased revenue received outside the General Fund due to higher assessed valuations per student may impact the way school districts expend money within the General Fund. The finding that debt services expenditures showed a positive relationship with assessed valuation per student indicated that school districts with higher assessed valuations per student are more likely to pass bond issues and incur principal and interest payments on said bonds.
Degrees leading to an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

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Educating Children in the Midst of Health Crises:
A Phenomenological Study of Teachers in Children’s Hospital Schools

Dr. Kenneth Williams ............................................................... 34
A Phenomenological Inquiry into the Academic Integration and Social Integration
Experiences of African American Deaf Students Attending a Four-year Predominantly
White Institution in Georgia
DR. JOHNNA N. BURNS

TITLE OF STUDY: EDUCATING CHILDREN IN THE MIDST OF HEALTH CRISES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF TEACHERS IN CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL SCHOOLS

Successfully defended her dissertation on March 28, 2013

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Roso, Dr. Burns (New Doctor), and Dr. Hullinger (Chair)

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Johnna Burns
ABSTRACT

TITLE OF STUDY: Educating Children in the Midst of Health Crises: A Phenomenological Study of Teachers in Children’s Hospital Schools

PAGES IN STUDY: 146
CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree
MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Higher Education

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY

Hospital school teachers are a unique population of educators highly qualified and experienced in teaching students who are facing health crises. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe the lived experience of teaching seriously ill students in the hospital school setting.

The study was guided by the following primary research question: What is the essence of teaching students facing health crises? Semi-structured interviews with seven full-time hospital school teachers yielded five themes.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Three of the emergent themes were focused on the teachers’ roles, and two themes dealt with the teachers’ values. A primary role-based theme was the teachers’ focus on relationships, and more specifically, relationships with the students, with the students’ families, as advocates for health-challenged students, and with the students’ multidisciplinary care team. A second theme was the necessity of flexible prioritization, primarily with scheduling, learning goals and objectives, and curricular streamlining. An additional role-based theme was as a normalizing factor for the students. The interviews revealed a fourth, more values-based theme of teaching in the present moment and for the “now” of the child’s life, not trying to predict the child’s future. The final theme was a description of teaching success defined not by the teachers’ accomplishments or academic assessments, but instead by the individual success stories of their students. Cumulatively, these themes described the lived experience of teaching children facing health crises in hospital schools.
DR. KENNETH WILLIAMS

TITLE OF STUDY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO THE ACADEMIC INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN DEAF STUDENTS ATTENDING A FOUR-YEAR PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION IN GEORGIA

Successfully defended his dissertation on June 1, 2012

Photo (from left to right): Dr. Hullinger, Dr. Tapp (Chair), Dr. Williams (New Doctor), and Dr. Miller

Dr. Patrick Otto, Chair of the Graduate Department, Oral Roberts University College of Education, Congratulates Dr. Kenneth Williams

ORU GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
ABSTRACT

TITLE OF STUDY: A Phenomenological Inquiry into the Academic Integration and Social Integration Experiences of African American Deaf Students Attending a Four-year Predominantly White Institution in Georgia

PAGES IN STUDY: 137
CANDIDATE FOR: Doctor of Education Degree
MAJOR FIELD: Educational Leadership/Higher Education

PURPOSE AND METHOD OF STUDY
The formal and informal structures of colleges and universities are pivotal to the social integration and academic integration process of students. Therefore, addressing the specific needs of different groups of students, such as non-traditional students, first generation students, students of color, and academically at-risk students it is critical their persistence. For example, African American students often leave college before obtaining their degrees due to their inability to academically integrate and socially integrate into university settings. It is also noted that Deaf students are confronted with academic and social challenges due to their unique culture. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the social integration and academic integration experiences of African American deaf students attending a four year predominantly white institution in Georgia. Data consisted of the results from semistructured interviews of four African American Deaf students.

NAME: Kenneth Williams
DATE OF DEGREE: May 2013
INSTITUTION: Oral Roberts University
LOCATION: Tulsa, Oklahoma
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
Each participant shared how limited faculty interaction and being selected to work in study groups with peers were challenges for them in their academic integration process. Participants also described their social integration process at a four-year predominantly white institution in Georgia. The social and academic integration of these African American Deaf students was hindered by reactions to both their Deafness and ethnicity. Limited faculty interaction and lack of access to peer study groups affected their academic integration. Participants experienced feelings of isolation, feelings of discrimination and limited communication with peers all as challenges to their social integration.