Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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MSc (University of Victoria, 2010)
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“Explicit and Implicit Measures of Weight-related Attitudes in Young Children: Associations with Perspective Taking and Executive Function”

Department of Psychology

Tuesday, July 21, 2015
10:00AM
Cornett Building
Room A228

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Ulrich Müller, Department of Psychology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Erica Woodin, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)
Dr. Viviene Temple, School of Exercise Science, Physical & Health Education, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Nathaniel Riggs, Human Development & Family Studies, Colorado State University

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Steve Garlick, Department of Sociology, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Weight-based stigmatization refers to negative beliefs and weight-related attitudes that are demonstrated through rejection, bias, stereotypes, and prejudice towards individuals because they are overweight or obese. With weight stigma prevalent and on the rise, assessment of factors associated with weight stigma is important in developing effective interventions for children. The goal of this study was to investigate weight stigma in relation to perspective taking skills and executive function (EF). Sixty-two 4- to 7-year-olds were administered measures of weight stigma (explicit and a Weight Implicit Association Test; Weight IAT), perspective taking skills, and EF. As expected, most children demonstrated the stereotype that fat was bad on explicit and implicit measures. Results showed that explicit weight stigma increases with age, and perspective taking skills and EF were not associated with weight stigma. The findings suggest that weight stigma increases with age and that early intervention is needed to reduce weight stigma.