



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

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BSc (University of Victoria, 2010)

**“If They Only Knew: Investigating the Public’s Perceptions of Issues
Facing Canadian Military Members Transitioning Back into Civilian
Society”**

School of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies

Wednesday, September 13th, 2017

9:00 a.m.

MacLaurin Building

Room A326

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Tim Black, School of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, University of Victoria
(Supervisor)

Dr. Susan Tasker, School of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Nevin Harper, School of Child and Youth Care, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Hao Zhang, Peter B. Gustavson School of Business, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Research on military health indicates that some members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) experience challenges during their military-to-civilian (MTC) transition(s). This novel study explored the Canadian public's perceptions of the issues facing CAF members during their transition back into civilian society. Its significance is in its unique findings and contribution to a previously unexplored topic within research on MTC transitions. A cross-sectional survey was administered via structured in-person interviews with 100 Canadian civilians not affiliated with the military. Findings included civilian participants' accurate as well as inaccurate perceptions about MTC transition issues compared to existing literature on veterans' transition experiences. Participants underestimated issues regarding transitioning CAF members' social networks and overestimated PTSD as the biggest struggle facing CAF members during their MTC transitions. Though participants accurately perceived that CAF members experience struggles during their transition, they overestimated the level of transition difficulty as reported by CAF members (Black & Papile, 2010; Life After Service Survey, 2014). Further research is recommended to examine the public's perceptions of MTC transition issues and to better understand the potential implications of civilians' perceptions on transitioning CAF members.