University of Victoria | Graduate Studies

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

of

JASMINE CHRISTINE GAINES

BCYC (Douglas College, 2015)

"Mindful Children: Exploring the Conceptualization of Mindfulness Practice in Public Elementary School Settings"

School of Child and Youth Care

Tuesday, May 28, 2019
2:00 P.M.
Human & Social Development Building
Room B107

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Jennifer White, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Daniel Scott, School of Child and Youth Care, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Anne Bruce, School of Nursing, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Geoff Steeves, Department of Physics and Astronomy, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

In recent decades, the practice of mindfulness has spread from its initial Eastern philosophical and spiritual roots and has been adapted in various Western contexts of service provision in attempts to improve the physical and psychological well-being of individuals with a diverse range of conditions. Secularized versions of mindfulness are currently being utilized in elementary schools. Given the rising presence of mindfulness practices in elementary schools, it is important to learn about educators' experiences, perceptions, and beliefs regarding these practices. This study investigates how mindfulness practice is being conceptualized and taught in public elementary school settings with children. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with 6 educators in 3 public elementary schools within the same catchment area. A thematic data analysis approach was utilized to derive central themes from the interviews. The findings contribute to qualitative understandings surrounding the benefits and limitations of current practices. As well, approaches and strategies are proposed that could inform a more comprehensive practice of mindfulness and more consistent implementation in these settings.