



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degrees of Master of Nursing and Master of Science

of

TOM YING

BSN (University of British Columbia, 2009)
BSc (University of British Columbia, 2007)

**“Exploring Peripheral Member Engagement
in a Virtual Health Care Professionals’ Network”**

School of Nursing
School of Health Information Science

Friday, December 14, 2018
1:30 P.M.
Human and Social Development Building
Room A451

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Elizabeth Borycki, School of Health Information Science, UVic (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Noreen Frisch, School of Nursing, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)

External Examiner:

Dr. Andre Smith, Department of Sociology, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Anita Prest, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic

Abstract

Lurkers make up the majority of membership in an online network, but not much is known about them as they are not publicly active (e.g. Post online). Data on the lurker population of Nurses and Health Care professionals in electronic Communities of Practice (eCoP) is also lacking. The purpose of the study was to conduct an exploratory study to understand the experience of lurkers on InspireNet and determine how nurses or health care professionals interacted, barriers to posting online, and whether or not they wished to remain a lurker. Conventional content analysis was used as the methodology to conduct this qualitative study with 15 participants via online interviews. The results showed that lurking was not indicative of the level of engagement, as most were engaged in InspireNet content or were connected to other members (e.g. Core Members). Lurkers were not opposed to posting online, but required relevancy to their work and ease of using the website as prerequisites. Lurkers had difficulty finding information on the InspireNet website. It is important to engage all members of an online network. Strategies to engage lurkers include supporting their informational needs by improving website usability, incorporating advanced search features, and providing value (e.g. Relevant content, topics, and webinars).