

University of Maryland Baltimore Graduate School

Announcement of Doctoral Dissertation Defense*

Candidate: Diane M. H. Hall

Date, Time, and Place: April 1, 2008, 1:00 p.m., 525 West Redwood St. Room 5E11

Dissertation Title: Social Work Education and Personal Characteristic Predictors of Cultural Competence in MSW Students

Dissertation Abstract**: The importance of cultural competence in social work practice has been established by professional and educational standards, the growingly diverse American population, and the social work profession's emphasis on providing services to disenfranchised populations. Theory has explained that cultural competence develops in students over time in cognitive, behavioral, and affective ways and needs to be tested through trial and error before confidence or self-efficacy can be built (Bandura, 1977; Deal & Hyde, 2004; Hendricks, 2003). Based on theoretical implications and findings from past research, the present study examines the following research questions:

- (1) What are the cultural competence levels of MSW students?
- (2) Does student status influence levels of cultural competence?
- (3) Do social work education variables and personal characteristics predict levels of cultural competence in MSW students?

A national sample of 186 MSW students was gathered from respondents to mailed surveys. The research questions were answered through descriptive statistics, ANCOVA, and hierarchical multiple regression analyses. The present study found that MSW students and recent graduates had high scores on cultural competence as measured by the Multicultural Competence Inventory (Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994). MSW students who were in their foundation year, advanced year, or recent graduates had similar levels of cultural competence. Whereas personal characteristics and social work education variables did not contribute to levels of cultural competence in MSW students and recent graduates, cultural competence workshops and trainings were found to have a positive influence on cultural competence levels of MSW students and recent graduates. Implications from the findings for social work research, practice, policy, theory, and education along with recommendations for future research are discussed.

Dissertation Committee Chair (name and title): Dr. Carolyn Tice, Associate Dean and Baccalaureate Program Chair

Dissertation Committee Members (names and titles): Dr. Donna Harrington, Professor and Doctoral Program Chair

Dr. Kathleen Deal, Associate Professor

Dr. Laura Ting, Assistant Professor

Dr. Larry Ortiz, Professor and Director MSW Program,

California State University Dominguez Hills

The Open Presentation is open to the university community and invitees of the candidate. Any member of the Graduate Faculty may observe the Final Examination. Only committee members may vote. For more information, see **Procedures for Examination of the Doctoral Dissertation.*

***You must type your abstract on this form in the space provided.*

Updated: February 24, 2006