Announcement of Thesis Defense
College of Education
Department of Curriculum & Pedagogy

You are cordially invited to attend a

THESIS DEFENSE

THE SERVICE LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF HISPANIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE U.S. – MEXICO BORDER

This phenomenological qualitative study explored the service learning experiences of Hispanic high school students on the U.S.-Mexico border. This study took place in a high school located in south Texas along the U.S.-Mexico border; population approximately 248,142 and ethnically 95.6 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census, 2013). The participants were selected via purposive sampling, thus it was restricted to participants involved in the service learning opportunity with the Volunteer Income Tax Assessor (VITA) program while taking a high school level financial analysis class. Service learning education is defined as the integration of academic material, service activities, and critical reflection based on reciprocal partnerships that engage students and community members to achieve academic, civic, and personal learning objectives (Bringle, Clayton, & Hatcher, 2013).

Semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted after school in a general education classroom located on the participants’ school campus. Through the use of open-ended questions, participants discussed their experiences. The researcher first analyzed data based upon the preconceived themes of transfer of knowledge, student motivation, and students’ self-assessment of their role in their community through student-centered, participatory, and activist forms of instruction. The researcher found the overarching themes based upon the participants’ experiences included: (1) better understanding and application of knowledge, (2) enjoyment of working with the community, (3) enhanced confidence when problem solving and working with diverse people, and (4) the development of positive relationships.

Wednesday, July 29, 2015
10:00 a.m.
Killam Library 420
Dr. Jennifer Coronado, Chair
Dr. Ronald Anderson, Member
Dr. Marcela Uribe, Member
Dr. Lourdes Viloria, Member

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Andrea Garza

The mission of the College of Education is to prepare highly effective, culturally competent educational and clinical professionals who are equipped to assume leadership roles in a global society.