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Jennifer E. Rodgers

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE POST-LESSON REFLECTIVE PRACTICES OF
PRE-SERVICE HEALTH EDUCATION TEACHERS AT FOUR INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Jennifer E. Rodgers

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of Professional Studies in Education

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Jennifer E. Rodgers

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

Mary Renck Jalongo, Ph.D.
Professor of Education, Advisor

Valeri R. Helterbran, Ed.D.
Professor of Education

Crystal Machado, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Education

ACCEPTED

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: A Qualitative Study of the Post-Lesson Reflective Practices of Pre-service Health Education Teachers at Four Institutions of Higher Education

Author: Jennifer E. Rodgers

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Mary Renck Jalongo

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Valeri R. Helterbran
Dr. Crystal Machado

Reflective practice is an essential component in helping pre-service teachers to learn from their experiences and grow as teachers. The purpose of the study was to identify both the levels of reflection and the themes that emanate from the reflective practices of pre-service health education teachers as they reviewed lessons that they taught in conjunction with a methods course during their undergraduate programs. To accomplish this task, two types of data were collected. First, professors of health education methods courses completed a questionnaire about the reflective practices of pre-service health teachers. The second form of data collected were the written reflections that the undergraduate students completed following teaching experiences.

These data types were chosen to help create a picture of the emerging reflective practices of the pre-service health teachers which could serve to guide teacher educators' efforts to stimulate further reflective thought in their students. The following themes of the reflective practices of pre-service health teachers emerged from the data: management, content, teacher behavior, philosophy, strengths, and areas for improvement. The two types of data were also analyzed to determine the levels of reflective practice; the pre-service teachers in the current study engaged in reflective practice at a primarily descriptive level.

The findings from the study include two main implications for teacher education. First, the professor plays an important role in modeling reflective practice for pre-service teachers. Second, the use of questioning techniques and a variety of strategies should be used to promote reflective practice among pre-service teachers.