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## A Study to Determine the Attitudes of Master's Degree Recipients in Elementary Education Toward Courses in the Required Program at Utah State University

Clifford Russell  
*Utah State University*

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE ATTITUDES OF MASTER'S DEGREE  
RECIPIENTS IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION TOWARD COURSES  
IN THE REQUIRED PROGRAM AT UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

by

Clifford Russell

A seminar report submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

Elementary Education

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1968

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## INTRODUCTION

In meeting the requirements for the Master's degree in elementary education, it appeared to this writer that some of the course work taken was not applicable for a teacher whose primary purpose in pursuing the degree was to improve teaching skills. This was thought to be true because:

1. Some courses were not applicable in the area for which the degree was sought; and
2. Some courses were not structured in a manner that made them useful.

It was this writer's opinion that the main reasons most teachers seek a Master's degree are:

1. To improve teaching competence.
2. To gain a broader acquaintance with a deeper understanding of their subject matter.
3. To seek new methods and sensitivities to understand children.
4. To seek new insights into the psychology of learning and teaching.
5. To seek stimulation from intelligent and creative teachers on campus.

In short, they were trying to fulfill the ideal of becoming a master teacher.

It might be argued by some that any of the basic listed course requirements should be necessary for the Master's degree in elementary education. From this student's standpoint, however, it was believed that a more beneficial approach would be to allow him to structure his course requirements along the lines of his needs, whether they be highly specialized or more general. Several colleges and universities throughout the country have initiated such programs; e. g. Antioch College and Michigan State University (5). One area of concentration might consist of upper-level undergraduate courses in which the student is weak, or in which his curiosity and enthusiasm lie. This writer believes that the most valuable courses in his Master's program were two elective upper-level undergraduate courses.

Several teachers known to the writer have more hours beyond the Bachelor's degree than are required for the Master's degree. These teachers had not entered a Master's degree program because they did not wish to have their graduate work structured. These teachers desired to take courses for which they had a practical use.

Another area of the Master's degree program in elementary education which was questioned by this student was the value of the thesis or seminar report. The experience of writing a thesis or seminar report does give a person some competence in research and writing. However, this same affect could be obtained through the sizeable

papers that are required in many courses. If the thesis or seminar report were omitted, more emphasis could be placed on the papers that are written for specific purposes. Deleting the thesis or seminar report and the attendant "Research in Education" course from the program requirements would leave the student free to pursue additional courses which could better fulfill his future needs.

This seminar report was an attempt to determine whether similar views were held by persons who had received their Master's degree in elementary education from Utah State University since 1960.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was believed by this writer that it would be impossible to establish a degree program which would fulfill the needs of and satisfy all students. For this reason, it was impossible to objectively evaluate the effectiveness of the requirements for a Master's degree. However, it seemed that the opinions of recent degree recipients would provide a primary source of information for evaluating the relative merits of required courses and experiences. The Dean of the College of Education at Utah State University indicated that this important source of information about the Master's degree program in elementary education had been largely ignored in evaluating the program requirements at Utah State University.

It was the purpose of this seminar report to gather and analyze opinions about the value of degree requirements from teachers who had recently received Master's degrees in elementary education from Utah State University. Specifically, this seminar report attempted to determine:

1. Do graduate students believe the Master's degree in elementary education met their needs?
2. Do graduate students believe the courses required in the Master's degree program are of practical use?
3. Do the recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believe their time would have been



better spent had they been given more leeway in structuring their own program?

4. Do graduate students believe the time spent on the thesis or seminar report and the attendant "Research in Education" course could have been more beneficially used on some other course work?

5. Do graduate students in elementary education believe some required courses need to be structured differently so they will be of better future use to the teacher?

6. Do a majority of graduate students in elementary education believe they seek the Master's degree for the primary purpose of obtaining teaching skills as opposed to prestige or money?

### SOURCE OF DATA

Two basic sources of data were explored to obtain information for this study:

1. The first source was a review of the literature. The writer reviewed the available literature on the attitudes of students and educators towards Master's degree program requirements which were listed in the Educational Index and the Utah State University Library's Card Catalog as having been published since 1960. An attempt was made to review the research in this area and to determine related ideas and suggestions which had been published.

2. The second source of data was in the form of a questionnaire. The writer sent out a questionnaire to the Utah State University graduates of the Master's degree program in elementary education since 1960. The responses were counted and the results analyzed in an attempt to determine the respondents' attitudes toward the listed hypotheses.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is not the intent nor would it be possible to substantiate the questions in the Statement of the Problem through a review of the literature alone. This is true because this study was directed towards the attitudes of those persons who have received their Master's degree in elementary education from Utah State University. However, it is of value to determine if similar attitudes are being expressed on other campuses throughout the country with regard to the Master of Education Degree. One can then hypothesize more accurately what the attitudes of Master of Education Degree recipients at Utah State University might be.

The degree of Master of Education is a relatively new one in the United States (6). In terms of sheer numbers, however, there are now more recipients of this degree than any other on the Master's level. A study of the various college catalog descriptions leaves one confused as to any standard objectives to be accomplished by students through study which leads to this degree. One area of confusion seems to be whether the Master of Education degree is to be post-collegiate or pre-doctoral. The confusion over the nature of this degree has been prevalent for quite some time. Rivlim and Schueler (13,p. 340-341) state that:

After 1900 M.A. and Ph.D. degrees became generally required for certain types of teaching positions... Whereas in earlier years preparation for research had been the nearly exclusive function of graduate degrees... Today the objectives of graduate study may point toward either research or teaching, and more frequently toward a combination of these two functions.

A large percentage of Master of Education degree recipients never pursue the Ed.D. or Ph.D. The doctorate costs too much in time, money, self-denial, desire and abilities (7). The reason a large majority of candidates seek the M.Ed. is for professional preparation (7). The problem is discussed in the Encyclopedia of Educational Research (4, p. 599):

The largest of master's degrees are conferred upon teachers, particularly at the secondary school level. Most teachers have taken the master's degree in education. One of the pressing unsolved problems of graduate schools has been the development of an adequate program of advanced studies for elementary and secondary school teachers. This brings sharply into focus the differences in philosophy between graduate programs which emphasize professional studies and advancement and those which concentrate upon preparation for research.

Several Presidential Commissions have recognized that graduate study based upon professional preparation was needed, as well as in the area of research. A commission appointed by President Truman in 1946 (I, p. 103) said: "Too frequently advanced degrees are granted in a narrow field of research, thus producing technicians in a very special field..." This commission urged that interpretive ability, skill in synthesis and achievement in teaching was a most important aspect for many persons seeking an advanced degree.

There is a recurring theme in much of the literature on graduate programs. This theme is that graduate schools have failed to meet one of their major responsibilities: that of preparing teachers adequately for their tasks as teachers (1). The proponents of this theme claim that the Master of Education or Master of Arts Degrees should not aim at the mastery of advanced methodologies. Hovey (7, p. 448) states that:

The majority of our first-year students do not want and do not need a plunge into the obtruse and esoteric ways of scholarship. Aside from prestige and dollar value of a graduate degree, what most of our students want and need is a broader acquaintance with and a deeper understanding of their subject, a filling-out of gaps in their basic knowledge, guidance in the plan of reading, stimulation from sane and lively teachers, and discipline toward more clearheadedness and sensitivity as their own hearts and minds experience the texts.

The results of some research indicate that instruction in the graduate schools has not changed to meet educational trends as have college and junior college programs. Carmichael (1) cites the tremendous changes that have taken place over the past thirty years in the college programs, but which are not reflected in graduate schools.

Teachers' professional magazines are particularly critical of the aid universities offer in helping the teacher to become better at his chosen profession. It is claimed (2) that at institutions of higher learning, graduate training in education (especially at the Master's degree level) has become thought of as synonymous with in-service education for teachers. Clark and Slaymaker (2, p. 38) state that this is nonsense: "Instead of being

synonymous, programs of continuing education for teachers in-service and graduate programs of study in education may, in fact, be mutually exclusive." They claim that rather than helping the teacher who needs specific help, much of the graduate offerings are designed to accommodate the student interested in pursuing advanced degree work. Or, if the student is interested in both the degree and specific help, he must follow a program which applies to the whole university. This is labeled (2, p. 38) as a "... canned graduate program used as a substitute for in-service education for teachers, justified chiefly on the basis of convenience and economy..." It is charged that many educational institutions have tried to standardize American higher education. In this regard, Millet (10, p. 259) points out that a "Common pattern of graduate education would be as unfortunate as a common pattern of undergraduate education once was."

The Master's degree program is used for a number of purposes other than just teacher education. Hovey (7, p.341) indicates:

They can vary policy and practice: (a) use the master's program to weed out all but the acceptable candidates for the Ph.D.; (b) make the master's degree a step one-third of the way toward the doctorate; or (c) award this degree as a certificate for the satisfactory completion of one year of post-baccalaureate study.

Hovey goes on to say that the Master's degree should not be oriented toward the pre-doctoral, nor should it be

labeled as "terminal". It should not aim at the mastery of advanced methodologies.

Accrediting associations have also identified the need for a change in philosophy in the graduate schools. Langelier (8, p. 324) states that: "A graduate program should be designed to meet the needs of the particular students enrolled ... one would assume that a major portion of a student's course work would be in the area of his teaching speciality." He points out that as much as half of a student's program should be permissible in undergraduate courses. He believes that the graduate school should be meeting the needs of its students, that the accrediting associations should insure this. "What curriculum is being offered in the light of the needs of the students enrolled in the program and the resources available is a question an examiner should surely ask." (8, p. 324).

In Dr. Conant's two year study of the education of America's secondary and elementary teachers, he points out that in many universities it is extremely difficult for a teacher to take courses of his need. He cites as a common example (3) a teacher of science in grades 6 or 7 who majored in chemistry and physics and now feels a real need for more knowledge of geology and astronomy. "The freshman or sophomore courses offered in the summer appear to be just the thing. But at present in most universities they are considered too elementary to count for a master's

degree." (3, p.197). To alleviate this condition, Conant spells out what he believes should be involved in the master's degree in teacher education (3, p.197):

The graduate schools of education or their equivalent (in universities organized without such separate degree-granting schools) should devise a program of increasing the competence of teachers as teachers with the following characteristics:

(1) It should be open to any graduate of the same institution in the same field of endeavor (e.g. elementary education, secondary schools social studies, etc.).

(2) Courses should be allowed for credit toward the 30 semester hours whether or not the courses are of an elementary nature, provided they are clearly courses needed to increase the competence of the teacher.

(5) The summer-school sessions should be arranged so that four summer residences will complete the degree requirements, or two summers plus one fulltime semester residence.

(6) If the offering in the arts and sciences is not wide enough to provide meaningful work in the summer session (as it would not be in some state colleges), arrangements should be made for the transfer of credit from a university summer school with a good offering of courses in subject-matter fields.

(7) For elementary teachers, the degree should be master of education in elementary education; for secondary teachers, master of education in English (or science, or social science or modern languages or mathematics).

An approach some institutions are using to help teachers study in their area of need while working toward the Master's degree is to allow them to take subject matter courses that would amount to something more than a third of their required graduate program. Jersey City State College offers such a program (12). As an example,



a person interested in English may take subject matter courses amounting to approximately a third of his program. This does not include professional courses in such areas as children's literature, the teaching of language arts, or speech problems in the elementary school, which are provided in another part of the program. Radner (12, p. 47) states that: "The one point which seems to recommend this approach more than any other is the integration which is provides of the student's personal interest in English with his professional concern with elementary education."

Antioch College (5) initiated a similar program beginning with the 1964-65 academic year. This program started with ten students who were interested in the social sciences. In pursuing their course work, students were allowed to focus their efforts on their weakest academic and teaching areas. They met frequently to discuss their problems and ideas with members of the faculty; met educators from many different countries and from areas within the United States; made numerous field trips; and, finally, put their new ideas and knowledge to test in a classroom situation under a teaching internship plan in the surrounding communities. The Antioch Graduate Faculty believed the program successfully met the needs of their students.

Another area of controversy surrounding the Master of Education degree is whether or not a thesis or seminar report should be a requirement for this degree. Some (9) believe that research is definitely needed for persons

studying beyond the Bachelor's degree. This appears to be a minority viewpoint. The prevailing viewpoint seems to be that the Master's thesis will have to go. Hovey (7, p. 449) states that:

From both students and faculty, that requirement demands too much time ... The thesis needlessly prolongs his stay ... If the thesis is to be well organized, adequate in content, and correct in scholarly apparatus, it usually requires close, step-by-step supervision by one graduate professor. This done, it is ordinarily read by one or two more professors. Some schools make an additional requirement: that a committee examine the candidate orally on the thesis and on his field. What this calls for in faculty man-hours is sometimes staggering ... Is it not more honest simply to dispense with the thesis? I deny that this means any lowering of standards. I call for a reduction in the quantity of misdirected pretensions - a shift in standards, so to speak.

One method for solving the thesis or seminar report problem has been effected at William and Mary (6). Graduate students select a problem for study in the area of their interest or need. This problem is not a narrow piece of research as is generally the case, but a broad question which can be studied through synthesis and analysis as the student proceeds through his degree program. Galfo (6, p.36) cites as an example a student:

... who is interested in guidance in the secondary school might wish to answer the broad question "What methods may be used by the guidance counselor to help the classroom teacher to do a better job?" Many facets of this question may be investigated while the student is taking courses. While enrolled in a course in tests and measurement he could study available research which point toward increasing teacher understanding and use of standardized tests. A course in counseling can be used as a springboard for study of research on the role of the class-

room teacher as a counselor. Thus, as the student progresses through graduate courses, the normally required term papers take on added meaning and help integrate the total program into a cohesive meaningful experience.

Rather than a thesis William and Mary holds a final master's seminar in which the degree candidate presents the results of his study on this broad question as he progressed through his program. The end result is that the student has answered many question for which he felt a definite need.

Langele (8) suggests that where a traditional "Master of Arts/Ph.D." program is intended to train in producer of research, it can be argued that a teacher should be educated more as a consumer of research so that he can critically read the literature in his field.

Another area of concern of teachers who are receiving or who have received their master's degree is that many professional education courses are either poorly structured or are too theoretical and lacking in practical application. Lemons (9) interviewed over 300 teachers who were taking post-bacculerate courses in thirteen different teacher-preparation institutions. The teachers interviewed had at least one year's experience, included about equal numbers of men and women, and seemed randomly representative of grade levels and urban or rural locations. The comments of these teachers range from "harsh and contemptous through mild and indifferent to satisfied and delighted." A majority of the criticism, however, was uncomplimentary.

Such comments as the following are examples of the negative criticism leveled at the professional education courses (9, p. 26):

Nothing but junk  
Too theoretical  
Poorly taught  
Useless  
Completely inadequate  
A waste of time  
Too much duplication  
Too much overlapping  
Mickey Mouse courses  
Lacked zip  
Busy work  
Rinky-dink courses

The quality of the teaching of professional education courses was particularly criticized. The bulk of the criticism was that the courses had been taught by improperly prepared instructors or people who had been unsuccessful teachers in the public schools. The teachers interviewed generally condemned general methods courses - not the need for such courses. A majority stated that there was little connection between such courses and what actually goes on in the classroom. This type of criticism was also leveled at educational psychology courses. Most of the teachers indicated a recognition of the need to understand human behavior, but were not convinced that the educational psychology courses had helped them to achieve that understanding. It was Lemon's opinion (he is the Chairman of the Nebraska Commission on Teacher Education and Professional standards) that (9, p. 27):

There is a distressing gap between what is taught in the education courses and the real

world of teaching. There is unnecessary overlapping and duplication. There are classes that are poorly taught by instructors who are either not sufficiently experienced or who have been too long away from the classroom situation. There are failures to make teachers aware of what is being taught.

The oft repeated phrase by those being interviewed by Lemon (9) was that the teachers of education courses needed to get into the classroom and see that which was being taught being put into action.

From the review of literature a body of common problems surrounding the Master of Education degree was seen to exist. It was apparent that some of the questions listed in the Statement of the Problem are valid for other campuses. It was hypothesized they were also true at Utah State University. The questionnaire sent out attempted to determine the validity of the following hypotheses.

## HYPOTHESES

1. A majority of the students who completed Master's degree programs in elementary education between 1960 and 1967 believed that many of the required master's degree courses in elementary education did not meet the needs of those persons receiving the degree.

2. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed the content of some of the required courses for such degree had no practical application for the persons receiving the degree.

3. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed their degree program would have been of more value to them if they had been able to structure more of their program to meet their individual needs.

4. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed the time spent on a thesis or seminar report could have been better used pursuing course work of their own need or interest.

5. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed some courses need to be structured differently so they will be of better future use to the teacher.

6. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education sought the degree to obtain teaching skills as opposed to prestige or money

## PROCEDURE

In constructing the questionnaire it was necessary to keep its validity uppermost in mind. To insure that the information obtained from the questionnaire was valid, each hypothesis was keyed to several different questions. The respondent was also given the choice of remaining anonymous.

Two sources of evaluation were used to test the questionnaire's applicability before it was considered to be in final form:

1. Comments and recommendations were solicited from members of the Faculty of the College of Education at Utah State University.

2. The faculty of the Woodruff Elementary School in Logan, Utah were requested to complete a copy of the questionnaire and to offer comments and recommendations. A majority of this faculty had a Master's degree or its equivalent in graduate courses.

Numerous recommendations from both sources were incorporated into the questionnaire.

On April 19, 1968, the questionnaire (see Appendix B) was sent to all the people who had received Master of Education degrees in elementary education from Utah State University since 1960. Although the College of Education



provided a list of Master's degree recipients, neither the files of the Graduate School, the College of Education, nor the Department of Elementary Education contained information as to the department which awarded the degrees. The two avenues used to obtain a list of recipients of degrees in elementary education were:

1. A check of the theses or seminar reports on the shelves in the Library for those people who had received their Master of Education degree since 1960; and
2. A check of the Commencement Exercise Program for a list of each year's graduates.

A majority of the theses and seminar reports by Master of Education degree recipients were not on the shelves in the Library. A majority were also not listed in the Library's Card Catalog. Therefore, the second method was more useful. This involved some possibility of compiling a list that was not completely accurate. The only basis for determining whether the degree had been taken in secondary or elementary education was by the advisor listed. There was no definite way to determine whether the degree had been taken in administration, supervision or teaching. It is possible that some questionnaires were sent to people in secondary education. It is also possible that some of the recipients of degrees in elementary education were missed. This is true because graduate students are encouraged to indicate a preference for an advisor. Sometimes the advisor for an

elementary education student is not a member of the faculty of the Department of Elementary Education.

## FINDINGS

Hypothesis number 1. A majority of the students who completed Master's degree programs in elementary education between 1960 and 1967 believed that many of the required Master's degree courses in elementary education did not meet the needs of those persons receiving the degree. This hypothesis appeared to be valid because 67% of the persons answering the questionnaire believed that only half or less of the required courses met their needs. Another fact that added to the appearance of the validity of the hypothesis was that 70% of the respondents believed that the curriculum taken for the Master of Education degree was of moderate value as opposed to the 16% who believed it was of great value. 14% believed it was of little value.

Hypothesis number 2. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed the content of some of the required courses for such degree had no practical application for the persons receiving the degree. This hypothesis appeared to be valid because:

1. A majority of the respondents believed that an elective course would have better met their needs in the place of two required courses: 63% who took Se Ed 164, Measurement and Evaluation; and 57% who took Ad Ed 285, Research and Thesis or Seminar Report. Four other required

courses had a high percentage of persons who felt an elective course would have better met their needs: 50% for Psy 200, Principles of Learning; 43% for Ad Ed 260, History and Philosophy of Education; 46% for Ad Ed 266, Introduction to Research in Education; and 42% for El Ed 204, Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced.

Hypothesis number 3. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed their degree program would have been of more value to them if they had been able to structure more of their program to meet their individual needs. The validity of this hypothesis could not be adequately proven. A majority of persons had strong negative feelings regarding their degree program. This was borne out by the fact that:

1. 82% of those persons receiving the degree in administration and 91% of those persons receiving the degree in teaching/supervision, believed that half or more of the courses should be left to a student's discretion; and

2. 76% of those receiving the degree in administration and 76% of those receiving the degree in teaching/supervision believed that half or less of the required courses taken for the Master's degree were helpful in meeting the needs for which they sought the degree.

There were only two courses, however, that a majority of persons believed did not adequately meet their needs: Se Ed 164, Measurement and Evaluation, and Ad Ed 285, Research and Thesis or Seminar Report.

Hypothesis number 4. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed the time spent on a thesis or seminar report could have been better used pursuing course work of their own interest or need. This hypothesis appeared to be valid because:

1. A majority, 58%, of the persons responding felt that time spent on the thesis or seminar report could have been better used pursuing courses of interest or need; and
2. A majority, 57%, of persons responding indicated an elective course would have better met their needs.

Hypothesis number 5. A majority of the 1960-1967 recipients of the Master's degree in elementary education believed some courses needed to be structured differently so they would be of better future use to the teacher. This hypothesis appeared to be valid because a majority, 79%, of those persons who took Ad Ed 260, History and Philosophy of Education; and a majority, 64%, of those persons who took Psy 200, Principles of Learning, believed those two courses were very poorly structured or more poorly structured than most courses.

Hypothesis number 6. A majority of the 1960-1967 Master's degree recipients in elementary education sought the degree to obtain teaching skills as opposed to prestige or money. This hypothesis was valid for persons who received their degrees in teaching/supervision, but invalid for persons who received their degrees in administration. 78%

of teachers/supervisors sought the degree to improve teaching skills; only 12% of the administrators sought the degree to improve teaching skills.

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## APPENDIXES



Appendix A  
Initial Letter

April 19, 1968

Dear Colleague:

This questionnaire is being sent to every person who has received his Master's degree in elementary education from Utah State University since 1960. It is for the purpose of gathering data for a Master's seminar report on "A Study to Determine The Attitudes of Master's Degree Recipients in Elementary Education Toward Courses in The Required Program at Utah State University."

The Dean of the College of Education at Utah State University has approved this survey. His office has provided your name and address from their files. I assure you that your name will remain anonymous. As a matter of fact, you may omit your name from the enclosed form. There is a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed for your convenience in returning the completed questionnaire.

As a former Master's degree candidate you can appreciate my concern in obtaining the requested information as quickly as possible. May I ask that you take a few minutes to fill in the questionnaire and return it now.

Thanks so much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

CLIFFORD RUSSELL

Woodruff School  
143 South 2nd West  
Logan, Utah 84321

Appendix B  
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Optional)
2. Sex ☐ Male ☐ Female
3. Have you completed the requirements for a Master's degree in elementary education at USU since 1959? (Graduates at 1959 and earlier commencements should mark no and return form uncompleted).  
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Was your Msster's degree in teaching, supervision or administration?  
☐ Teaching ☐ Supervision ☐ Administration
5. Are you presently teaching?  
☐ Yes, full time ☐ Part time ☐ Not teaching  
☐ Substitute teaching ☐ Other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
6. Are you presently an administrator or supervisor?  
☐ Administrator ☐ Supervisor
7. Rank the following in their order of importance as they influenced your decision to pursue a Master's degree.  
☐ Money ☐ Prestige ☐ Certification  
☐ Advancement ☐ Improve teaching skills  
☐ As a step towards a doctorate, or other advanced study  
☐ Other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
8. Has the prestige value of the Master's degree been worth the effort of obtaining it as opposed to taking elective courses not leading to a degree?  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially ☐ No opinion

9. Has the dollar value of the Master's degree been worth the effort of obtaining it as opposed to taking elective courses not leading to a degree?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially ☐ No opinion
10. Have the added knowledge, experience, and competencies gained as a result of taking the required courses for the Master's degree made the degree worth the effort of obtaining it?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially ☐ No opinion
11. If you were just beginning study beyond the Bachelor's degree again, would you pursue the Master's degree or elect courses on the basis of your need and/or interest?
- ☐ Pursue Master's degree ☐ Elect courses
- ☐ No opinion
12. If you were to advise a colleague who was beginning study beyond the Bachelor's degree, would you advise him to pursue the Master's degree as opposed to taking elective courses not leading to a degree?
- ☐ Pursue Master's degree ☐ Elect courses
- ☐ No opinion
13. Do you believe that the time you spent on your thesis or seminar report could have been better used pursuing courses of interest or need?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No opinion
14. To what extent has the information you assembled from writing the required thesis or seminar report been of subsequent value to you as a teacher, administrator or supervisor?
- ☐ Great value ☐ Moderate value ☐ Little value
- ☐ No value
15. In your opinion, what portion of the course work for a Master's degree should be left to a student's discretion?
- ☐ All ☐ More than half ☐ Half
- ☐ Less than half ☐ None

16. Approximately what portion of the required courses taken for the Master's degree were helpful in improving your effectiveness as a teacher, supervisor, or administrator?

☐ All ☐ More than half ☐ Half

☐ Less than half ☐ None

17. Approximately what portion of the elective courses taken for the Master's degree were helpful in improving your effectiveness as a teacher, supervisor, or administrator?

☐ All ☐ More than half ☐ Half

☐ Less than half ☐ None

18. In your opinion, of what value has the curriculum taken in fulfilling the requirements for the Master's degree been in meeting the needs for which you sought the degree?

☐ Great value ☐ Moderate value ☐ Little value

☐ No value

NOTE: Persons who received their Master's degree in administration are requested to return the questionnaire without completing the remaining questions. Persons who received their Master's degree in teaching and/or supervision are requested to complete all questions.

Several of the same instructors teach many of the required courses listed below. Thus, the composite of responses may reflect the general attitudes of Master's degree recipients towards required courses in elementary education. These responses cannot be used to evaluate attitudes towards an individual instructor, and no attempt will be made to do so.

Directions: Please list by each course title the number which best represents your attitude towards the course.

19. Approximately of what value was this course to you in meeting the needs for which you sought the Master's degree?

1. Great value
2. Moderate value
3. Little value
4. No value
5. Course not taken

☐ Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation  
☐ El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced  
☐ El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education  
☐ El Ed 220 - Creative Education  
☐ El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading  
☐ El Ed 260 - History and Philosophy of Education  
☐ Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership  
☐ Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Education  
☐ Ad Ed 285 - Research and Thesis or Seminar Report  
☐ Psy 200 - Principles of Learning  
☐ Psy 205 - Child Psychology and Development

Please list elective & supportive courses & give same information on them

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20. If the course was required, indicate which of these responses applies.

1. Course not taken
2. Course adequately met my needs
3. Elective course would be better

☐ Se Ed 164 - Measurement & Evaluation  
☐ El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced  
☐ El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education  
☐ El Ed 220 - Creative Education  
☐ El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading  
☐ El Ed 260 - History and Philosophy of Education  
☐ Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership  
☐ Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Education  
☐ Ad Ed 285 - Research and Thesis or Seminar Report  
☐ Psy 200 - Principles of Learning  
☐ Psy 205 - Child Psychology and Development

21. How well was this course structured (planned) in comparison to other courses you have taken?
1. Very poorly structured.
  2. More poorly structured than most courses
  3. About as well structured as most courses
  4. Better structured than most courses
  5. Very well structured

Se Ed 164	- Measurement and Evaluation
El Ed 204	- Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced
El Ed 219	- Seminar in Elementary Education
El Ed 220	- Creative Education
El Ed 225	- Improvement of Reading
El Ed 260	- History and Philosophy of Education
Se Ed 264	- Instructional Leadership
Ad Ed 266	- Introduction to Research in Education
Ad Ed 285	- Research and Thesis or Seminar Report
Psy 200	- Principles of Learning
Psy 205	- Child Psychology and Development

Please list your elective & supportive courses & give same information on them

22. If a term project was required, do you believe it represented an appropriate use of your time?

1. No term project was required.
2. Very useful term project required
3. A project of some, but limited value required
4. A project of no value was required

- Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation
- El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced
- El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education
- El Ed 220 - Creative Education
- El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading
- El Ed 260 - History and Philosophy of Education
- Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership
- Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Education
- Ad Ed 285 - Research and Thesis or Seminar Report
- Psy 200 - Principles of Learning
- Psy 205 - Child Psychology and Development

Please list your elective & supportive courses & give same information on them

23. Regarding the applicability of this course to your needs, was it:
1. Applicable
  2. Not applicable because of structure
  3. Not applicable because of presentation
  4. Not applicable because of not being related to professional needs
  5. Other

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Se Ed 164 | - Measurement and Evaluation             |
| Se Ed 204 | - Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced |
| Se Ed 219 | - Seminar in Elementary Education        |
| El Ed 220 | - Creative Education                     |
| El Ed 225 | - Improvement of Reading                 |
| El Ed 260 | - History and Philosophy of Education    |
| Se Ed 264 | - Instructional Leadership               |
| Ad Ed 266 | - Introduction to Research in Education  |
| Ad Ed 285 | - Research and Thesis or Seminar Report  |
| Psy 200   | - Principles of Learning                 |
| Psy 205   | - Child Psychology and Development       |

Please list your elective & supportive courses & give same information on them

[illegible]

Appendix CFollow-up letter

April 28, 1968

Dear Colleague:

On April 19, 1968, a copy of a questionnaire was sent to you for the purpose of gathering data for a Master's seminar report on "A Study to Determine The Attitudes of Master's Degree Recipients in Elementary Education Toward Courses in The Required Program at Utah State University. If you have not completed this questionnaire, I urgently request that you do so and return it to me as soon as possible.

This follow-up letter is being sent to all the recipients of the questionnaire. This is because many respondents have chosen to remain anonymous and there is no way of determining those persons who have already completed the questionnaire.

Thanks so much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

CLIFFORD RUSSELL

Woodruff School  
143 South 2nd West  
Logan, Utah 84321



Appendix D

## SUMMARY OF DATA OBTAINED FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

107 questionnaires were sent out on April 19, 1968. 51 responses were returned after this initial request. On April 28th a follow-up letter was mailed. There was an additional 25 responses to this letter, for a total of 76. The information received from the respondents to the questionnaire has been tabulated and entered in the appropriate boxes on a copy of the questionnaire.

There are two sets of figures in questions 7 thru 18. Those in black type are the responses of persons who received their degree in teaching/supervision; those in red type are the responses of persons who received their degree in administration.

The requirements for the degree of teaching/supervision and administration are different. For this reason, administrators were requested to answer only questions 1 thru 18.

The figures in the columns in questions 19 thru 23 indicate how many persons responded to each particular column heading.

In some instances the figures listed in answer to the various questions do not add up to the total responses received. This is because some persons did not answer all parts of the questionnaire.

Tabulation of responses to questions 2 thru 18

2. Sex ☒ 38 Male ☒ 38 Female

3. Have you completed the requirements for a Master's degree in elementary education at USU since 1959? (Graduates at 1959 and earlier commencements should mark no and return form uncompleted).

☒ 76 Yes ☐ 0 No

4. Was you Master's degree in teaching, supervision or administration?

☒ 38 Teaching ☒ 4 Supervision ☒ 34 Administration

5. Are you presently teaching?

☒ 47 Yes, full time ☒ 7 Part time ☒ 2 Not teaching

☐ 0 Substitute teaching ☐ 0 Other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are you presently an administrator or supervisor?

☒ 24 Administrator ☒ 2 Supervisor

7. Rank the following in their order of importance as they influenced your decision to pursue a Master's degree.

\* ☒ 3 ☒ 1 ☒ 6  
\* ☒ 2 Money ☒ 0 Prestige ☒ 8 Certification

☒ 2 ☒ 27  
☒ 16 Advancement ☒ 4 Improve teaching skills

☐ 0  
☒ 3 As a step towards a doctorate or other advanced study

☐ Other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Has the prestige value of the Master's degree been worth the effort of obtaining it as opposed to taking elective courses not leading to a degree?

☒ 11 ☒ 18 ☒ 13 ☐ 0  
☒ 18 Yes ☒ 6 No ☒ 7 Partially ☒ 0 No opinion

9. Has the dollar value of the Master's degree been worth the effort of obtaining it as opposed to taking elective courses not leading to a degree?

☒ 12 ☒ 25 ☒ 5 ☐ 0  
☒ 14 Yes ☒ 11 No ☒ 9 Partially ☒ 0 No opinion

\* Teachers/Supervisors

\* Administrators

10. Have the added knowledge, experience, and competencies gained as a result of taking the required courses for the Master's degree made the degree worth the effort of obtaining it?

$\frac{10}{23}$  Yes  $\frac{5}{1}$  No  $\frac{27}{9}$  Partially  $\frac{0}{1}$  No opinion

11. If you were just beginning study beyond the Master's degree again, would you pursue the Master's degree or elect courses on the basis of your need and/or interest?

$\frac{19}{30}$  Pursue Master's degree  $\frac{21}{4}$  Elect courses

$\frac{2}{0}$  No opinion

12. If you were to advise a colleague who was beginning study beyond the Bachelor's degree, would you advise him to pursue the Master's degree as opposed to taking elective courses not leading to a degree?

$\frac{18}{32}$  Pursue Master's degree  $\frac{21}{2}$  Elect courses

$\frac{3}{0}$  No opinion

13. Do you believe that the time you spent on your thesis or seminar report could have been better used pursuing courses of interest or need?

$\frac{24}{17}$  Yes  $\frac{17}{14}$  No  $\frac{1}{3}$  No opinion

14. To what extent has the information you assembled from writing the required thesis or seminar report been of subsequent value to you as a teacher, administrator or supervisor?

$\frac{7}{8}$  Great value  $\frac{10}{17}$  Moderate value  $\frac{23}{11}$  Little value

$\frac{0}{0}$  No value

15. In your opinion, what portion of the course work for a Master's degree should be left to a student's discretion?

$\frac{0}{0}$  All  $\frac{22}{16}$  More than half  $\frac{16}{12}$  Half

$\frac{3}{6}$  Less than half  $\frac{1}{0}$  None

16. Approximately what portion of the required courses taken for the Master's degree were helpful in improving your effectiveness as a teacher, supervisor, or administrator?

$\frac{3}{4}$  All  $\frac{9}{9}$  More than half  $\frac{19}{14}$  Half

$\frac{9}{7}$  Less than half  $\frac{2}{0}$  None

17. Approximately what portion of the elective courses taken for the Master's degree were helpful in improving your effectiveness as a teacher, supervisor, or administrator?

$\frac{10}{5}$  All  $\frac{23}{17}$  More than half  $\frac{4}{10}$  Half  
 $\frac{4}{2}$  Less than half  $\frac{1}{0}$  None

18. In your opinion, of what value has the curriculum taken in fulfilling the requirements for the Master's degree been in meeting the needs for which you sought the degree?

$\frac{4}{7}$  Great value  $\frac{32}{24}$  Moderate value  $\frac{6}{3}$  Little value  
 $\frac{0}{0}$  No value

Tabulation of responses on question 19

19. Approximately of what value was this course to you in meeting the needs for which you sought the Master's degree?

- |             |                |              |          |                  |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|----------|------------------|
| 1.          | 2.             | 3.           | 4.       | 5.               |
| Great value | Moderate value | Little value | No value | Course not taken |

<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	- Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation
<u>4</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	- El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Adv.
<u>7</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	- El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education
<u>15</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>	- El Ed 220 - Creative Education
<u>21</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	- El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading
<u>2</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	- Ad Ed 260 - History & Philosophy of Education
<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>31</u>	- Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership
<u>7</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	- Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Ed.
<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	- Ad Ed 285 - Research & Thesis or Seminar Report
<u>5</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	- Psy 200 - Principles of Learning
<u>12</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	- Psy 205 - Child Psychology & Development

Tabulation of responses on question 20.

20. If the course was required, indicate which of these responses applies:

1. Course not taken
2. Course adequately met my needs
3. Elective course would be better

7 6 21 - Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation  
5 19 14 - El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Advanced  
5 24 9 - El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education  
8 26 3 - El Ed 220 - Creative Education  
5 27 7 - El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading  
2 21 16 - Ad Ed 260 - History and Philosophy of Education  
18 7 4 - Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership  
0 21 18 - Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Education  
1 15 19 - Ad Ed 285 - Research & Thesis or Seminar Report  
1 19 19 - Psy 200 - Principles of Learning  
3 30 5 - Psy 205 - Child Psychology and Development

Tabulation of responses on question 21

21. How well was this course structured (planned) in comparison to other courses you have taken?

5. Very well structured
4. Better structured than most courses
3. About as well structured as most courses
2. More poorly structured than most courses
1. Very poorly structured

<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	- Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation
<u>0</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	- El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Adv.
<u>1</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	- El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>2</u>	- El Ed 220 - Creative Education
<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>3</u>	- El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading
<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	- Ad Ed 260 - History & Philosophy of Education
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	- Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership
<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	- Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Ed.
<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	- Ad Ed 285 - Research & Thesis or Seminar Rep.
<u>5</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	- Psy 200 - Principles of Learning
<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>2</u>	- Psy 205 - Child Psychology & Development

Tabulation of responses to question 22.

22. If a term project was required, do you believe it represented an appropriate use of your time?

4. A project of no value was required  
 3. A project of some, but limited value required  
 2. Very useful term project required  
 1. No term project was required

24 0 4 0 - Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation  
5 7 19 1 - El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Adv.  
5 11 17 1 - El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education  
2 23 7 0 - El Ed 220 - Creative Education  
3 19 13 0 - El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading  
10 4 18 5 - Ad Ed 260 - History and Philosophy of Education  
3 12 20 2 - Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Ed.  
2 11 18 1 - Ad Ed 285 - Research & Thesis or Seminar Report  
5 3 0 0 - Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership  
6 5 18 8 - Psy 200 - Principles of Learning  
5 22 7 0 - Psy 205 - Child Psychology and Development



Tabulation of responses to question 23

23. Regarding the applicability of this course to your needs, was it:

5. Other  
 4. Not applicable because of not being related to professional needs  
 3. Not applicable because of presentation  
 2. Not applicable because of structure  
 1. Applicable

<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>	- Se Ed 164 - Measurement and Evaluation
<u>17</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	- El Ed 204 - Elementary School Curriculum, Adv.
<u>26</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	- El Ed 219 - Seminar in Elementary Education
<u>29</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	- El Ed 220 - Creative Education
<u>31</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	- El Ed 225 - Improvement of Reading
<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	- Ad Ed 260 - History & Philosophy of Ed.
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	- Se Ed 264 - Instructional Leadership
<u>15</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>	- Ad Ed 266 - Introduction to Research in Ed.
<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	- Ad Ed 285 - Research & Thesis or Seminar Rep.
<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	- Psy 200 - Principles of Learning
<u>35</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	- Psy 205 - Child Psychology & Development

## VITA

Clifford DeWayne Russell

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Education

Seminar Report: A Study to Determine the Attitudes of  
Master's Degree Recipients in Elementary  
Education Toward Courses in the Required  
Program at Utah State University

Major Field: Elementary Education/Supervision

Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born at Bingham, Utah, December 5,  
1929, son of Clifford James and Thelma Johnston  
Russell; married Donna Clark Russell January 2,  
1949; five children--Cathy, Patricia, Judith,  
Christine, and Corinne.

Education: Attended elementary school in Green River,  
Wyoming and Harrisville, Utah; graduated from  
Weber County High School in 1947; received the  
Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of  
Maryland, with a composite major in history and  
political science and a major in education, in  
1965; did graduate work in education at the  
University of Virginia in 1965; completed  
requirements for the Master of Education degree,  
specializing in elementary education and  
supervision, in 1968; candidate at present is  
on a year's Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program  
at Michigan State University.

Professional Experience: 1968 to present, Experienced  
Teacher Fellowship Program, Michigan State  
University; 1966-68, elementary school teacher,  
Woodruff School, Logan, Utah; 1965-66, elementary  
school teacher, T. O. Smith School, Ogden, Utah;  
1946-1965, served in the United States Naval  
Service.