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Employment Qualifications for Community Service Agencies and Organizations in Midland and Odessa

Susan Garfield Edwards

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We, the undersigned members of the examination committee, certify that we have examined Susan Edwards and that she has met all requirements for the Master of Arts degree with a major in Counseling and Guidance; further, we have examined her on this date and have determined that she has demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of her field of specialization and that the Research Project is satisfactory in scope and quality for the degree Master of Arts.

Approved by the Comprehensive Examination Committee:

Richard E. Miller
chairman

April 12, 1976
date

Spencer K. Thompson

Clark Johnson

Archie Morrison
graduate council representative

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EMPLOYMENT QUALIFICATIONS FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICE
AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN
MIDLAND AND ODESSA

by

SUSAN GARFIELD EDWARDS

Report of a Master's Project

Submitted to the Faculty of Pedagogical Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
for the Degree

Master of Arts

The University of Texas of the Permian Basin
April, 1976

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Abstract

The terms "social work," "casework," and "counseling" signify similar but separate professions, occupations, and techniques. Their places within the spectrum of community or helping services are clarified by a discussion of relevant literature. Based on these perspectives, a survey of 104 local helping service agencies and organizations was undertaken to establish employment qualifications (educational, experiential, professional) for the helping professions. Follow-up was done in 10 situations where Master's Degrees in Social Work, Counseling, and Psychology were required for employment--to determine the particular value of the degree for the specific position. Indications from this study are: that, most positions available require a Bachelor's Degree or less; that, a priority is placed on relevant experience; that, specific competencies are not exclusive to one degree; and that, job titles refer to job functions as defined by individual agencies rather than levels of education. Responses from the early graduates of the Community Counseling Program suggest that the degree has not been particularly helpful in obtaining employment commensurate with the degree, although they feel that the coursework has upgraded their counseling skills. Suggestions are also made as to how the program might be restructured in order to better prepare students for employment and to meet the needs of the local communities.