

EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF EARLY CAREER ACADEMICS

The DocWork Team* began their SSHRC-funded research in 2006 with the purpose of better understanding the reasons for the high non-completion rate amongst doctoral students, especially in the social sciences. Their long-term goal was to improve doctoral completion rates by rethinking existing policies, practices, and pedagogies based on research evidence.

They soon realized the importance of investigating the experiences of all early career academics (doctoral students, post docs and pre-tenure academics). While they are still committed to understanding why students do not complete, this is only part of a now broader focus on learning, specifically learning how to do academic work and the development of academic identity. The team now conceptualizes the movement from doctoral student to pre-tenure academic as an identity trajectory. Their current research moves the investigation beyond the Social Sciences and into the Life and Applied Sciences.

The short papers posted on the CAGS site are meant to contribute to a richer understanding and conceptualization of early career academic experience in today's increasingly pressured academic landscape. Each draws out the implications of the research through a series of questions.

*The team, led by Professors Lynn McAlpine (McGill) and Cheryl Amundsen (SFU), has included over the seven years Marian Jazvac-Martek, Allison Gonsalves, Shuhua Chen, Greg Hum and Esma Emmioglu.