



SOUTHWESTERN  
COLLEGE  
— 1885 —

# Southwestern College

Doctor of Education Program

Educational Leadership

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## **Dissertation Guide and Handbook**

Effective June 1, 2022

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Winfield, Kansas

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction: CAEP Standards and Preface.....	1
1.1 The Purpose of the Dissertation Handbook .....	3
1.2 Dissertation Quality .....	4
1.3 Dissertation Development .....	4
1.4 Planning and Progression of the Dissertation.....	5
1.5 Dissertation Courses .....	6
1.6 Probation/Suspension.....	9
1.7 The Dissertation Committee .....	10
1.7.1 The Committee Chairperson.....	10
1.7.2 Committee Members .....	11
1.7.3 Approval of the Dissertation Committee.....	11
1.8 Dissertation Committee Work .....	122
Chapter 2: Guidelines and Policies.....	13
2.1 Academic Integrity.....	13
2.2 Academic Integrity Violation .....	14
2.3 Time Limit for Degree Completion.....	15
2.4 Professional Portfolio and Final Defense.....	16
2.5 The Graduation Ceremony.....	16
2.6 Degree Posting .....	16
2.7 Publications and Presentations.....	16
Chapter 3: Overview of the Dissertation Process .....	17
3.1 The Dissertation Proposal.....	17
3.2 Proposal Defense .....	18
3.3 The Institutional Review Board Proposal.....	19
3.4 Data Collection and Analysis.....	19
3.5 The Final Defense .....	21
3.6 Purpose of the Final Defense .....	21
3.7 The Final Defense Meeting .....	22
Chapter 4: Dissertation Process Guidelines .....	24
4.1 Research Topic Selection.....	24

4.2 The Dissertation Proposal.....	25
4.2.1 Purpose of Dissertation Proposal.....	25
4.2.2 Parts of the Dissertation Proposal.....	26
4.3 Proposal Review.....	30
4.4 Preliminary Proposal Defense.....	31
4.4.1 Before the Preliminary Proposal Defense.....	31
4.4.2 During the Proposal Defense.....	32
4.5 IRB Review.....	32
4.6 Conducting Research and Writing the Dissertation.....	33
4.6.1 Conducting Research.....	33
4.6.2 Organization and Content.....	34
4.6.3 Writing Suggestions.....	39
4.7 Dissertation Review.....	40
4.8 Final Defense.....	40
4.8.1 Before the Final Defense.....	41
4.8.2 During the Final Defense.....	41
4.8.3 After the Final Defense.....	42
4.9 EDUC 865 Portfolio.....	42
4.10 Graduation and Commencement Ceremony.....	43
Appendices.....	44
Appendix A: Dissertation Checklist.....	45
Appendix B: Formatting Guidelines.....	62
Appendix C: Dissertation Writing Tips.....	71
Appendix D: Change Matrix Template.....	73
Appendix E: Title Page.....	64
Appendix F: Signature Page.....	77
Appendix G: Dissertation Committee Forms 1-4.....	78
Appendix H: IRB Forms.....	82
Appendix I: Dissertation Proposal Outline.....	87
Appendix J: Dissertation Final Defense Outline.....	88
Appendix K: SC Dissertation Rubric.....	89
References.....	106

# Southwestern College

## Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

### Dissertation Guidebook and Handbook

The Southwestern College vision is:

- *a learning community dedicated to*
- *intellectual growth and career preparation*
- *individual development and Christian values*
- *lifetime learning and responsible citizenship,*
- *leadership through service in a world without boundaries.*

### **Southwestern College CAEP Advanced Level Leadership Programs** **Standards**

#### **Standard RA.1 Content and Pedagogical Knowledge**

The provider ensures that candidates for professional specialties develop an understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and facilitates candidates' reflection of their personal biases to increase their understanding and practice of equity, diversity, and inclusion. The provider is intentional in the development of their curriculum for candidates to demonstrate their ability to effectively work with diverse P-12 candidates and their families.

#### **Standard RA.2 Clinical Partnerships and Practice**

The provider ensures that effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions appropriate for their professional specialty field.

#### **Standard RA.3 Candidate Quality and Selectivity**

The provider demonstrates that the quality of advanced program candidates is an ongoing and intentional focus so that completers are prepared to perform effectively and can be recommended for certification where applicable.

#### **Standard RA.4 Satisfaction with Preparation**

The provider documents the satisfaction of its completers and their employers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation.

#### **Standard RA.5 Quality Assurance System and Continuous Improvement**

The provider maintains a quality assurance system that consists of valid data from multiple measures and supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based. The system is developed and maintained with input from internal and external

stakeholders. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements, and highlight innovations.

## **Preface**

The doctor of education (Ed.D.) in educational leadership is a professional degree for practitioners in education and is presented through admission processes that develop cadres of intelligent, visionary doctoral-level educators who will integrate education with 21st century society and technology. The program continues the Southwestern College tradition of educators as servant leaders. A graduate and educational leader will be devoted to improving education by serving the needs of candidates and organizational members; focusing on meeting their needs; developing employees to bring out the best in them; coaching others and encouraging their self-expression; facilitating personal growth in all who work with them; and listening as they build a sense of community.

The doctor of education in educational leadership program is for early- and mid-career educators who view building, district, higher education and educational leadership as collaborative, visionary, and transformative to affect change in responsive educational settings. The Ed.D. degree is awarded upon successful completion of the professional portfolio and proposal defense and the dissertation and its final defense. The curriculum includes both the theory and the practice of education through learning modules that typically establish the theory and then include a practicum within the module.

Within the Ed.D. in educational leadership, Southwestern College offers Kansas licensure programs in building administration, and district administration. A master's degree in building leadership can be conferred within the program. Candidates beginning the program without previously having obtained a master's degree are required to obtain two areas of licensure through the Ed.D. program. Candidates who have master's degrees and one of the three areas of licensure already obtained can add one additional area of licensure while earning the Ed.D.

## **The Purpose of the Dissertation Handbook**

The purpose of the dissertation handbook is to articulate for doctoral candidates the processes and procedures of writing a dissertation in the field of Education at Southwestern College. Use this *Handbook* for information on the overall process involved in completing your dissertation and the college requirements for fulfilling this task. Since the *Handbook* outlines an important part of your doctoral journey, it is important to read it, and all accompanying documents, at the beginning of your program, and referencing them as necessary throughout your studies. For general questions about the dissertation process, please contact your Doctoral Program Adviser at [Jackie.glasgow@sckans.edu](mailto:Jackie.glasgow@sckans.edu)

## Chapter I Introduction

The dissertation in the doctoral program in educator preparation at Southwestern College is to be a result of original research that contributes to the body of knowledge in the field. A dissertation is a work that is significant in its development. It requires more complex research questions than those associated with a master's thesis. Consequently, more time, depth, a greater scope, foci, and originality are inherent expectations associated with the work.

### 1.1 THE PURPOSE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is a formal, comprehensive, analytical project that marks your transition from doctoral candidate to scholar by making an **original research contribution** to your field of study. The purpose of your dissertation should be to clearly present a specific problem, extensive academic research on the subject, data collection (if applicable), original analysis and data interpretation, and comprehensive conclusions.

The dissertation is intended to:

- Enhance your understanding of your field of study;
- Provide you with experience conducting research in your field of study;
- Develop and demonstrate your ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate data and conclusions in your field of study;
- Make a significant contribution to your field of study;
- Include a thorough review of associated literature;
- Demonstrate your ability to design and carry out an individual, original research project;
- Give you the opportunity to conduct exhaustive research on the relevant topic;
- Showcase your analytical skills;
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of advanced research principles and techniques;
- Facilitate your recognition of the fundamental role of ethics in your field of study;
- Help you further develop your skills in project planning, time management, organization, and implementation; and
- Show evidence of the high level of professional competence you have achieved as a scholar.

Keep in mind that the dissertation is not just another academic assignment. A dissertation study is intended to make a significant contribution to the research literature in your field. It must be scholarly, succinct, and of sufficiently high quality to be published in part in a

peer-reviewed journal. The dissertation may be submitted by the candidate to ProQuest and made available to other researchers – seasoned professionals and academics, as well as future candidates – all over the world. Through guidance from the dissertation committee chairperson and members of the dissertation committee, candidates are expected to plan, carry out, and account for their research at a scholarly level. **The candidate is expected to use the most current research that is not older than ten years. Exceptions would be the seminal research of theorists or historical research.**

The dissertation is grounded through an examination of beliefs and formal knowledge gained through the program of study.

## **1.2 Dissertation Quality**

The dissertation is to be of a high quality regardless of the form of inquiry. In this regard, high quality is achieved through a clearly stated intention to answer a question or solve a problem and in doing so makes a significant contribution to the field of education.

There is a clear relationship to the development of a theory or model, and the research question(s) reflect sound conceptualization. Within the body of the dissertation, a well-organized, thoughtful review of the theoretical, historical, and research literature establishes and extends the intellectual bases for the appropriate, rigorous, and internally consistent research design and methodology. Coherence between the design and the purpose statement or hypotheses is logical and focused. The data findings and results contribute meaningfully to a cogent interpretation solidifying theory, policy, practice, and further research. Across all elements of the dissertation there is evidence of critical thinking. **Southwestern College does not accept action research as a dissertation design.** The dissertation will demonstrate the writer's command of the grammar and mechanics of standard written English. The most recent edition of APA style formatting is required. The doctoral candidate is expected to have full knowledge and command of APA elements.

## **1.3 Dissertation Development**

**The development of a dissertation, whether quantitative, qualitative and/or mixed methods, typically has five chapters. The headings for each chapter are found in the appendices (Appendix B).** Additional information about the organization of the dissertation is developed through discussion with the dissertation committee chair and its members. This development process allows for some variance, but overall, the dissertation can be structured through the series of questions and statements provided in Appendix B. Not all dissertations answer every question, however, the guiding questions are noted in Dissertation Alignment: Guiding Questions, Dissertation Rubric, and Chapter Headings (Appendix B).

## 1.4 Planning and Progression of the Dissertation

The progression through the program includes the careful development of the program of study with the aid of the doctoral advisor. Each candidate accepted into the program is assigned to the advisor. The following shows the progression of the dissertation process:

<b>Candidate Responsibility</b>	<b>Faculty/Advisor Responsibility</b>	<b>Dissertation Transition Point</b>
Develop plan of study	Program Advisor	Required coursework
1 week summer residency per course in July	Program Advisor/Instructor	EDUC 804 (1 week residency) and 903 (1 week residency)
Completion of coursework	Program Advisor	Review plan for meeting all course requirements
First dissertation course	Instructor	EDUC 901- develop topic, the type of study, problem, purpose, significance of the study for chapter 1 and the literature review with outline, annotated bibliography for chapter 2. Must pass rubric with mostly a score of 2 with some 1's.
Second dissertation course	Instructor	EDUC 902- continue chapter 2 revisions. Finish the development of chapter 1 and the research questions. Create a draft of the chapter 3 methodology. Must pass with rubric scores of mostly 3's with some 2's.
Third dissertation course Candidate selects faculty chair to continue the dissertation process. Will select one faculty committee member and one non-SC faculty	Faculty chair and committee	EDUC 904- Chair provides detailed feedback on chapters 1-3 for further revisions. Chair will submit to the committee for further feedback. Candidate defends the



member of choice with a terminal degree		proposal, completes the IRB documents for submission, conducts the study after IRB approval, collects transcribes and analyzes data.
Fourth dissertation course Apply for graduation with the registrar. Registrar will conduct a degree audit.	Faculty chair and committee  Program chair	EDUC 905 –candidate writes chapters 4 and 5. Chair and committee provide feedback. Final defense is completed. EDUC 865 – After the final defense, a portfolio requirement is completed.

**1.5 Dissertation Courses**

In order to facilitate completion of the dissertation, four courses are completed: EDUC 901, 902, 904, and 905.

**901 Dissertation Writing I.** This course is an introduction to the dissertation process. Candidates will develop an understanding of the philosophical foundations of research as they relate to the selection of a dissertation topic. Candidates will generate a dissertation topic and conduct an extensive review of the literature surrounding that topic. Candidates will develop an understanding of the role of theory as an integral part of the dissertation process. A draft of a comprehensive literature review as well as proposed research questions will be presented for faculty review. *Candidates must pass the course with a grade of B or higher and may repeat the course for credit. Prerequisite: EDUC 819 with a grade of B or higher.* Credit 3 hours

Annotated Bibliography established for relevance, similarity, and credibility (min 60)
Research focus/topic established
Problem Statement developed
Significance of the Study noted
Research process & criteria established
Conceptual framework established
Theoretical framework established
Alternative theory established
Topical outline created that traces the argument (begins with an assertion, substantiated with statistics, and delimited to a review of related and relevant areas of the literature)

Lit Review drafted—systematic analysis and synthesis of the literature reviewed, discusses how the studies related to, help define, or advance the theory, ends with a summary, implications and/or discussions for further research and ends with a conclusion that relates back to the introduction
Lit Review refined
Purpose & Research questions drafted both qualitative and quantitative formats
APA formatting followed with minimal errors
Expected rubric scores of 2's with an occasional 3 per section

**902 Dissertation Writing II.** This course expands the dissertation writing process begun in EDUC 901: Dissertation Writing I. Using their comprehensive literature review and potential research questions, candidates will establish a context that frames the research problem by drafting the introductory chapter of the proposal. Candidates will also develop a source-supported research design (philosophy, methodology, strategy of inquiry, and methods) in a draft of the methodology chapter of the proposal. A cumulative draft of the introductory, literature review, and methodology chapters will be presented for faculty review. Candidates select their chair at the successful completion of this course prior to enrolling in EDUC 904. *Candidates must pass the course with a grade of B or higher and may repeat the course for credit. Prerequisite: EDUC 901 with a grade of B or higher.* Credit 3 hours

Chapter 1 and 3 components developed
Chapter 1—Intro and Background of the study developed
Chapter 3 developed: design and methodology w/ purpose and research questions established/hypotheses written as needed
Research completed on strategies for improving validity
Research conducted & knowledgeable on data analysis techniques
Considered participants for study—sampling, population, context of the study
Alignment with rubric (at least all 3s for Chapters 1, 2, and 3)
APA formatting followed with minimal errors
Identify Dissertation Chair when solid structure of Chapters 1-2-3 have been developed based on rubric
Annotated Bibliography continued based on relevance, similarity, and credibility to include validity, design, methodology, data analysis process (min 75)
Expected rubric scores of 2's with an occasional 3 per section

**904 Dissertation Writing III.** In this course candidates work with their chair to revise and finalize the sections of the dissertation developed in EDUC 901 and 902: the introduction and significance section, the literature review, and research design. At the completion of the first three chapters and with the recommendation of the chair, candidates select their committee members. Candidates collaborate with the chair preparing their proposal for defense and submit their proposal to the committee members for review. Once a successful proposal defense is completed, candidates present their study to the IRB Board for approval and the

study is conducted. A draft is written for the data collection, analysis, and conclusion sections. *Candidates must pass the course with a grade of B or higher and may repeat the course for credit. Prerequisite: EDUC 902 with a grade of B or higher. Credit 3 hours.*

Submits solid structure of Chapters 1-2-3 and Chapter 3 outline
Submits annotated bibliography (min 75)
Submits research matrix with databases and keywords used
First review & feedback from Chair
Develop Chapter 3
Develop all supporting documents (e.g. survey questions, interview questions) as appendices
Tight connection between Chapters 1-2-3
Alignment with rubric (minimally scores of 3)
Committee members identified (Form 2 signed and submitted)
Rubric review and feedback from committee
Preproposal Meeting with committee
Successful Proposal Defense (Form 3 signed and submitted)
IRB completed, submitted and approved
Vet research questions, survey questions, etc.
Data collection completed
Data analysis completed
Expected rubric scores of 3's with an occasional 2 per section

**905 Dissertation Defense.** This course finalizes the dissertation. Candidates complete the conclusions and implications sections for faculty review and approval. The dissertation is defended through oral presentation after the dissertation committee approves the written copy. *Candidates must pass the course with a grade of B or higher and may repeat the course for credit. Prerequisite: EDUC 904 with a grade of B or higher. Credit 3 hours.*

<b>Development of Chapters 4 &amp; 5</b>
Candidate reviews all data collected, transcribes any data based on procedures determined by chair
Chair reviews all protocols with candidate, perusing all original data collected, transcribed, and artifacts from research
Chair reviews and approves themes and findings based on data collected
Chair teaches candidate ways of presenting data-candidate researches data analysis procedures and presentation of data
Continues the development/refinement of Chapters 4 and 5
Review & feedback from Chair
Tight connection between Chapters relating back to Chapter 2 literature review and to theoretical considerations

Alignment with rubric (minimally scores of 3)
Review for APA formatting (no errors)
Adapt dissertation paper based on SC Dissertation Guidelines
Rubric review and feedback from committee. Expected rubric scores of 3's and 4's.
Dissertation Defense meeting established
Successful Dissertation Defense with a minimum of three members signatures on Form 4
Chair submits final dissertation signature page to Academic Dean for signature.
Chair helps candidate with alternatives for presentations at conferences, publications in journals, etc...
EDUC 865 Portfolio is completed after the defense with the Program Chair.
The dissertation approval form 4 and signature page signed by committee and Academic Dean.
Candidate must apply for graduation with the registrar by designated date.

**The doctoral candidate is expected to maintain continuous enrollment in the courses of study from semester to semester until the dissertation is successfully defended (See leave of absence for an exception to continuous enrollment in Dissertation Defense).**

### **1.6 Probation/Suspension**

**Academic Probation (Main Campus).** After completing six credit hours of graduate program coursework, a candidate must have a minimum GPA of 3.0, no grade below a “C”

(2.0), and positive recommendations by faculty or the candidate will be placed on academic probation. The candidate will receive notification from the appropriate academic administrator. Any candidate placed on probation is subject to the conditions prescribed by the Academic Affairs Committee.

**Academic Suspension.** Candidates who fail to make minimum progress toward the degree and who fail to maintain defined academic standards set by the Academic Affairs Committee may be suspended from the college. After completing 12 credit hours of graduate program coursework, a candidate must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 with no grade below a “C” (2.0) or the candidate will be suspended from the graduate program. Candidates may expect to have their academic status reviewed more frequently, if the appropriate academic administrator so requests.

Southwestern College reserves the right to suspend or expel a candidate from graduate study for the good of the program and the college, regardless of any published criteria.

Any candidate who is suspended has a right to an appeal. A request for appeal should be made by the candidate in writing and must be presented to the appropriate academic administrator within two weeks of the date of suspension. Supporting material should be submitted by the candidate prior to the appeals meeting. The appeal will be heard by the Academic Affairs Committee and the committee's decision will be final.

An application for re-admittance to graduate school after a suspension and/or the two week appeal period may be submitted after three semesters from the date of the suspension.

The request for re-admittance should be made to the appropriate academic administrator with supporting material. The re-admittance request will be heard by the Academic Affairs

Committee and the committee's decision will be final.

## **1.7 THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

### **1.7.1 The Committee Chairperson**

Candidates are encouraged to talk with their advisor and other program faculty about the selection of a chair for the dissertation committee. The selection of the dissertation chairperson occurs at the successful completion of EDUC 902, Dissertation Writing II and prior to entering EDUC 904, Dissertation Writing III. Care should be taken in selecting a dissertation chairperson. The chair should be a full time SC faculty member, selected based on his or her ability to effectively supervise and guide the dissertation process. Typically, the dissertation chair has expertise in the area of research, content area, and/or methodology used in the dissertation. A working relationship is needed to ensure a common understanding and communication processes are developed so they are mutually acceptable. Every candidate and each chairperson has multiple responsibilities and must work collaboratively in developing an understanding of the dissertation writing process, deadlines, reviews of written materials, and areas of expertise that are all essential characteristics in selecting a dissertation committee. All doctoral committees at SC must be chaired by an education faculty member who has the appropriate graduate faculty status to chair a doctoral committee.

Any candidate who experiences difficulty in obtaining a dissertation chair should seek advice from her/his advisor or seek guidance from the Division Chair. Once selected, the dissertation chair will advise the candidate on the selection of the other members of the dissertation committee.

The primary role of the committee chair is to advise the candidate throughout the dissertation process and facilitate communication among committee members and the candidate.

### **1.7.2 Committee Members**

The dissertation committee consists of three or more members. It includes the chair (a full time SC faculty or a SC faculty member approved by the Doctoral Program Chair) and a minimum of two additional members (at least one additional faculty member from SC; the third member may be from outside the SC institution) who guide the candidate during the development of the dissertation proposal and the completion of the dissertation process. One member of the committee may be from outside Southwestern College faculty including doctoral fellows who have experience with dissertation writing and guidance. If the third member is outside Southwestern College faculty, he/she must provide a current vita to the Doctoral Program Chair prior to approval of serving on the committee.

The selection of committee members includes guidance from the chair. The candidate and dissertation chair will select 2 committee members during EDUC 904, Dissertation Writing III course. One committee member is an SC faculty member and the outside non-SC member is selected by the candidate. The outside committee member must provide their CV and show knowledge of the dissertation topic. Often, the committee offers collective interest in the topic and provides guidance through professional interests and expertise. For ensuring support and expertise, the committee should have a member who is familiar with the proposed methodology, and other members who offer writing support and expertise, and/or ability to support the candidate. All committee members must hold an earned doctorate from a regionally accredited university.

The main role of each committee member, other than the chairperson, is to read the doctoral candidate's written work in a timely manner and provide written and/or oral critique regarding the quality of the research and writing.

### **1.7.3 Approval of the Dissertation Committee**

#### ***Submit Form 1***-Establishment of the Dissertation Committee

The committee must be approved by the dissertation chair and the Doctoral Program Chair. Form 1, Establishment of the Dissertation Committee, must be submitted to the Program Chair. If a member of the proposed committee is not a faculty member at Southwestern College, a vita for that person must also be provided to the Doctoral Program Chair along with the dissertation committee approval form. The dissertation committee approval form must be signed and in place prior to the defense of the dissertation proposal.

At any point in the dissertation process, the candidate has the right to request a change in committee membership. Such a request should be made in writing to the Doctoral Program Chair and should include an explanation of the reason for the request. Decisions regarding a change in committee membership are at the discretion of the Doctoral Program Chair.

## 1.8 Dissertation Committee Work

The dissertation committee process provides a doctoral candidate with scholarly guidance that further encourages and develops the intellectual curiosity of a researcher. Once the proposal defense is completed, the candidate becomes a doctoral candidate. If a timeline for completion has not been developed by the candidate and presented to the committee, one is necessary to reach the end of the dissertation and then to defend it. The primary reason is to chart the progress through the collection of the data, and the writing of the final chapters, scheduling the defense, and preparing for graduation from the program.

Typically, the dissertation chair works with the candidate initially and indicates when acceptable work has been achieved in any given portion of the dissertation. It is the dissertation chair's responsibility to communicate with the committee members about the progress being made on the dissertation. Each committee will establish the protocols for communication between and among committee members and the doctoral candidate. There is no one standard procedure. The progression through the dissertation is shaped by the candidate's needs and the nature of the dissertation, as well as by the preferences of the dissertation chair and committee members.

**The candidate, rather than the faculty, has primary responsibility for establishing a timeline and meeting it, for checking on deadlines and procedures, and for initiating communication with the dissertation chair and committee members.** The dissertation is not simply turned in on a particular date and approved; rather, it must be revised until it meets the standards set forth elsewhere in this handbook, using appropriate research methodology, and acceptable to the dissertation chair and/or committee

**\*\*\*An astute dissertation candidate recognizes that faculty members have other obligations, and that a careful reading of a single chapter may require many hours. Therefore, the candidate should work on other aspects of the dissertation while waiting for material to be returned.** The timeline should also allow adequate time for reading and revision by committee members and the candidate.

## Chapter 2: GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

### 2.1 Academic Integrity

Southwestern College assumes the academic integrity of its learners. In cases where academic integrity is in question, the academic integrity definitions are as follows:

Academic dishonesty is any act of cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism, abuse of resources, forgery of academic documents, dissimulation, sabotage, and any act of aiding and abetting academic dishonesty.

Cheating is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise. Examples: copying homework, copying someone else's test, using an unauthorized "cheat sheet," etc.

Fabrication is the falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise. Examples: making up a source, giving an incorrect citation, misquoting a source, etc.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words and ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. Plagiarism includes failing to give a citation for using work from another person or source. Modifications to phrasings do not reduce the requirement for giving a citation. This also applies to information obtained electronically, such as from the Internet.

Dissimulation is the disguising or altering of one's own actions as to deceive another about the real nature of one's actions concerning an academic exercise. Examples: fabricating excuses for such things as missing classes, postponing tests, handing in late papers; turning in a paper for one class that was originally written for another class (when original work is requested), etc.

Abuse of resources is the damaging of any resource material or inappropriately limiting access to resource material, which is necessary for academic work. Examples: hiding library materials, removing non-circulating material from the library, hiding or stealing another person's textbook, notes or software, failure to return library materials when requested by the library, etc.

Forgery of academic documents is the unauthorized changing or construction of any academic document. Examples: changing transcripts, changing grade books, changing grades on papers which have been returned, forging signatures, etc.

Sabotage is the damaging or impeding of the academic work of another candidate. Examples: ruining another candidate's lab work, destroying another candidate's term paper, etc.

Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty is knowingly facilitating any act defined above.



Examples of academic integrity violations also include completion of an application for any Southwestern academic program which omits or falsifies any requested information. Such violations can result in the revocation of the application, even if approval was previously granted on the basis of fabricated information.

## **2.2 Academic Integrity Violation**

The instructor shall determine if the infraction is intentional or unintentional. Any violation of the policy not under the supervision of a faculty member will be handled by recommendation of the vice president for academic affairs to the Academic Affairs Committee (main campus) or Academic Affairs Council (Professional Studies). On the first offense, violations of the academic integrity policy will result with a reprimand (written or verbal) for unintentional violations and a zero for the assignment (paper, exam, or project) for intentional or flagrant violations.

Unintentional infractions may be reported to the vice president for academic affairs at the discretion of the faculty member. All infractions deemed by the faculty member to be intentional or flagrant must be reported in writing to the vice president for academic affairs; the candidate will also be notified verbally or in writing. The vice president for academic affairs shall keep a record of reported infractions and sanctions.

A second or any subsequent intentional or flagrant violation of any part of the academic integrity policy during a candidate's academic career at Southwestern is grounds for suspension and requires a conference with the vice president for academic affairs to determine the outcome. Any candidate so suspended has a right to an appeal. If a candidate wishes to appeal, the request should be made in writing and must be received in the vice president for academic affairs office within thirty days of the suspension announcement. The appeal will be heard by the Academic Affairs Committee (main campus) or Academic Affairs Council (Professional Studies) and the committee's decision shall be final.

## **Copyright Permissions**

For material under copyright, candidates must obtain written permission to use passages of more than 200 words or any table or figure, including a photograph or chart. Such permissions must be acknowledged in the dissertation as required by APA and the copyright holder.

The demands of scholarship include, but often exceed, the requirements of copyright law. Scholars must recognize the community to which they belong by tracing and acknowledging all sources, including the originator of an idea. This principle includes, where applicable, explaining that one is replicating a study or acknowledging someone who may have recommended a study like one's own. Violation of these principles constitutes academic plagiarism, even if copyright law is observed.

## **2.3 Time Limit for Degree Completion**

Doctoral candidates are permitted 10 years from the date of initial enrollment to complete all requirements for the Ed.D. degree. Extensions beyond this deadline due to unusual circumstances may be granted at the discretion of the Division Chair of Education and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Candidates needing an extension must present their request in writing, stating the reasons for the extension and the expected date of degree completion. The dissertation chair must support such a request in order for it to be considered.

### ***Continuous Enrollment***

Candidates will enroll in EDUC 905 Dissertation Defense after (a) successful proposal defense, (b) once the IRB approval has been accepted, and (c) data collection has been completed and analyzed. If candidates do not successfully defend the dissertation during the term in which they are enrolled for EDUC 905 (Dissertation Defense), and/or if the completed manuscript is not filed prior to July 31, candidates are required to enroll in EDUC 905 each semester (fall, spring, summer) until they have successfully defended the dissertation and filed the final version of the completed manuscript.

### ***Leaves of Absence***

Should a candidate wish to interrupt dissertation work for a semester or more, he or she must apply for leave from the program. Failure to register for more than two or more consecutive semesters without applying for leave is regarded as withdrawal from the program.

A leave of absence for a stated period of time not to exceed two years is available by petition to doctoral candidates in good standing. Candidates demonstrating satisfactory progress toward the degree who must interrupt doctoral studies for a compelling reason (e.g., illness, study abroad, family conditions or crises, etc.) are eligible to submit a petition.

Requests for leave must be in writing and state both the reasons for the leave and the semester in which the candidate will re-enroll. Except in cases of an unforeseeable emergency, application must be made in advance of the semester for which the leave is requested. Leaves of absence must be approved by the Education Division Chair and Academic Dean. Typically, leaves of absence extend the total time available to candidates for completing the doctoral degree by the amount of time granted for the leave. Candidates who fail to return to enrolled status at the end of an approved period of leave are considered to be no longer in pursuit of the degree and, if they choose to continue their studies at a later time, they must reapply for admission to the program.

## **2.4 Professional Portfolio and Final Defense**

The professional portfolio EDUC 865 and the final presentation of the dissertation is a requirement for graduation. Candidates will enroll in EDUC 865 Portfolio for 1 credit hour when completing EDUC 905 Dissertation Defense.

## **GRADUATION AND BEYOND**

### **2.5 The Graduation Ceremony**

Participation in the commencement ceremony is a special cause for celebration in the life of a doctoral candidate. A formal reception for graduates and their families is held the day of commencement in May. Southwestern College holds one commencement ceremony per year. A candidate must have his/her dissertation defended and approved and accepted by Southwestern College prior to participating in the graduation ceremony.

A notice of intent to graduate must be filed with the office of the Registrar by the deadline.

Fall Graduation – November 1 deadline.

Spring Graduation – April 1 deadline.

Summer Graduation – July 1 deadline.

Once again, a candidate who has not passed the final defense of the dissertation and received approval of the dissertation by Southwestern College will not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

### **2.6 Degree Posting**

The candidate's degree is not posted until the end of the term in which the final copies of the completed dissertation have been accepted. All fees must be paid before the degree will be posted.

### **2.7 Publications and Presentations**

Candidates are strongly encouraged to report their research findings at conferences and in professional journals. Faculty members welcome opportunities to suggest appropriate venues for publication and to advise candidates in preparing for presentation or publication.

Candidates who publish aspects of their dissertation should appropriately acknowledge assistance from their committee. In particular, the contribution of the dissertation chair may be acknowledged through joint authorship of articles or presentations based on the dissertation. As noted in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2020), the candidate is always listed as the first author.

## Chapter 3: Overview of the Dissertation Process

### 3.1 The Dissertation Proposal

#### *Submit Form 2*, Approval of Dissertation Proposal

Candidates enrolled in Dissertation Writing III (EDUC 904) prepare a formal research proposal. A **draft** of the proposal is developed during EDUC 901 and EDUC 902. The chair provides formal guidance in the completion of Chapters One, Two, and Three following the Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Presentation Rubric (**Appendix K**). Candidates need to be aware that continual revisions will be required until the proposal is ready to defend.

**Proposal content and format.** The proposal generally parallels chapters one to three of the final dissertation format. However, the specific format and length of an individual proposal is negotiated with the dissertation chair and the committee. The dissertation proposal conforms to the requirements of the most recent edition of *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, as well as the Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Presentation Rubric (**Appendix K**) where 3s and 4s are evident in each section thereby granting Advanced to Candidacy.

**Candidates who do not make adequate progress of a grade of B or higher (*determined by the dissertation rubric and documentation from the chair*) will be subject to advisement with the advisor and/or Doctoral Program Chair. A determination will be made whether the candidate can be granted advancement to candidacy or discontinue the program.**

**If a candidate is not able to remain continuously enrolled and/or continuous progress is not being made, the advisor counsels with the candidate to determine a recommendation to the Education Division Chair regarding advancement in the program or discontinuation of the program. Course progressions are noted in the Dissertation Writing Course Progressions (Appendix A). If a candidate is not able to remain continuously enrolled for unforeseen reasons, a written request must be made to the Doctoral Program Chair and Education Division Chair prior to the start of the semester. Each case is considered separately based on the circumstances.**

Once Chapters 1-2-3 are formalized, the dissertation proposal must be successfully defended in EDUC 904 *or continuous enrollment in EDUC 904 occurs until the proposal is accepted by the dissertation committee*. The candidate works with the dissertation chair and other committee members to craft the proposal to a level of success where committee members are reasonably assured the candidate has sufficient wherewithal to complete the proposed study. Then, the proposal defense is held with the candidate presenting the dissertation proposal in a formal presentation. The formal presentation may be face to face or through a virtual platform, i.e. Zoom.

### **3.2 The Proposal Defense**

The primary purpose of the proposal defense is for the committee to approve the guiding research question(s), the depth of the literature review supporting the proposed research, and the data collection and analysis strategies to be used by the candidate in completing the dissertation. **Prior to conducting the proposal meeting, the dissertation chair and committee members will meet to decide if the dissertation is ready for the proposal defense. The dissertation chair is responsible for contacting committee members to schedule the proposal defense meeting.**

The intent of proposal defense presentation is to provide the final review of the research proposal prior to the IRB submission and approval, and prior to the collection or mining of data. Successful completion of the dissertation proposal defense will be formalized through a form signed by the dissertation chair, committee members, and Division Chair (Form 2, Approval of Dissertation Proposal).

#### ***Submit Form 3, Approval of Proposal Defense Meeting***

The Proposal Defense Meeting is a private meeting of the candidate and the dissertation committee. It may occur in person or via appropriate Internet meeting software that includes audio and visual representations of the materials prepared for the defense. Presentation protocol and elements to discuss are found in **Appendix I**. In addition, the presence of all committee members and the candidate through webcams is expected providing there is adequate bandwidth to support the use of webcams. At minimum, the candidate will present and include her/his presence in the Proposal Defense Meeting via a webcam, audio such as a conference call, and the presentation of materials through Internet meeting software. The dissertation chair reviews the procedures to be followed during the meeting and invites the candidate to give a personal background statement and tell of the interest in the topic. The candidate continues with a summary of the proposal in a 20 minute presentation (**Appendix I**). The dissertation chair then invites the committee members to question the candidate. All committee members must be confident the candidate possesses the essential content knowledge and research skills to collect, analyze, and interpret the data to be collected or analyzed from an existing database. At the conclusion of this discussion, the candidate is excused so that the committee may deliberate privately. Following those discussions, the candidate is invited back into the meeting and the committee's decision is shared with the candidate.

To be approved, a proposal must meet standards of sound research and ethical inquiry. The committee may approve the proposal at the first meeting, or the candidate may be asked to submit changes before committee members sign the approval form. The candidate may also be asked to make changes and schedule another proposal meeting. Responsibility for submitting the Proposal Defense Form to the Program Chair is the responsibility of the dissertation chair.

### 3.3 The Institutional Review Board Proposal

Candidates are responsible to conduct research in a manner that protects the rights, privacy, and dignity of participants; recognizes the responsibilities of colleges/universities and other organizations to their candidates and clients; and reports findings accurately and thoughtfully. This requirement includes the need to obtain permissions from individuals and institutions with whom research will be conducted as required by law, ethical guidelines, and professional courtesy.

In addition, federal law applies to research with human and animal subjects. In accordance with relevant laws and policies from the Office for Human Research Protections <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html>, Southwestern College has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that is responsible to review research involving human and animal subjects before any data are gathered. Submissions to the IRB require approval of the dissertation chair and; all IRB submissions are logged by the Doctoral Program Chair or designee.

Before approval of the dissertation proposal, IRB forms, including any instruments—surveys, measures, or interview protocols, letters of consent and so on—must be approved by the Dissertation Chair before the proposal is submitted to the Institutional Review Board. **Dissertation proposals must be formally approved by the Institutional Review Board before data-gathering may begin. No research proposal is exempt from IRB review. All IRB forms are located in Appendix H.**

### 3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

#### Permissions

All appropriate consents, individual, parental, and/or institutional, must be obtained in writing prior to conducting research. Coding systems to ensure confidentiality of the human subjects must be utilized and maintained for their protection. All signed consent forms must be retained by the candidate and the dissertation chair until seven years past the time when all signatories will have reached the age of 21.

#### Data Collection

Research is to be conducted and reported honestly and ethically. Rules associated with data-gathering decisions must be described for procedural consistency and to maintain transparency for possible replication. The candidate is responsible to confer with the dissertation chair at every step in the research process and with other committee members as needed to ensure adherence to the approved procedures and to avoid errors or irregularities. Care must be taken in analyzing and interpreting the material gathered in the investigation to ensure that the explanations of the findings are logically defensible.

**Use of outside assistance.** Dissertation research and the dissertation itself are the independent, scholarly work of a single candidate working under the direction and with the assistance of his or her dissertation committee. Outside help is to be obtained in rare instances only with prior knowledge and consent of the dissertation chair after consultation with the committee. This requirement applies even to the instances cited below that are generally acceptable in the use of outside assistance.

Candidates are to personally conduct the following aspects of their dissertation, unless permission is obtained to proceed otherwise:

1. the literature search,
2. creation of any new instruments or protocols,
3. interviewing or otherwise collecting data for a qualitative dissertation,
4. designing experimental protocols or interventions to be tested, and
5. coding of data transcripts

With the approval of the chair, outside help may be employed to enter and analyze data. However, the candidate must have examined the raw data and must work closely with the data entry person to be certain any unclear responses are appropriately handled within the framework of the data collection and inputting processes approved by the committee. Candidates may consult a statistician for suggestions on choice of statistics, interpretation of findings, and report formats. However, candidates must choose and apply statistical or other analytic procedures to their data, explain why they have selected those procedures rather than others, and authoritatively interpret the results. The candidate will be fully responsible at the defense to interpret all statistical analyses.

Areas where candidates may seek outside assistance include the following, although approval of the dissertation chair is needed for each:

1. obtaining permissions from agencies, school districts, organizations, or college/universities,
2. collecting quantitative data,
3. data entry,
4. statistical assistance, within the parameters outlined above, and
5. copying and editing.

### 3.5 The Final Defense

The final defense occurs after the entire committee has indicated that the dissertation is ready for defense. This agreement rarely occurs before each committee member has read multiple drafts and provided feedback. The defense occurs in the presence of the candidate and committee members or via Zoom.

The defense must take place prior to the May commencement with a complete and corrected manuscript due by July 31 following commencement. This timeline will allow the degree to be conferred by the end of August. **Completed dissertation submissions after:**

- a) **August 1 and before November 30 will enable the conferral of the degree at the end of December.**
- b) **December 1 and before March 31 will enable the conferral of the degree at the campus graduation ceremony.**
- c) **April 1 and before April 21 will enable the conferral of the degree at the end of May.**

The dissertation chair is responsible to contact committee members to obtain possible times and to arrange a meeting space for the dissertation defense.

The defense may be held on the SC campus, and the Doctoral Program Chair must be notified of the date and location of the defense at least two weeks in advance so that invitations may be sent to all college faculty members. The dissertation defense is a public presentation. A defense not on the main SC campus must be electronically connected to the main campus for faculty who want to observe the defense. If location of the candidate or committee members prevents the defense to be held on campus, then the defense may be conducted via technology using a virtual platform, i.e. Zoom.

### 3.6 Purpose of the Final Defense

The purposes of the final defense are as follows:

- a) for the candidate to formally present his or her research to the committee,
- b) for the committee to determine that the candidate fully understands the dissertation's context, research procedures, findings, and implications,
- c) for the committee to evaluate the dissertation in order to determine if further revisions are necessary and if the candidate may proceed to graduation, and
- d) for the doctoral faculty to be kept apprised of current research of the candidates within the program.



### **3.7 The Final Defense Meeting**

The expectation is that the dissertation is in the best possible form before defense. The candidate's defense should be held on campus unless other arrangements via technology have been made and is open to all college faculty members as well as to other interested persons with the approval of the dissertation chair. At the beginning of the meeting, the dissertation chair introduces the candidate and the members of the committee. The dissertation chair describes the procedures for the meeting.

The candidate presents an overview of the dissertation through visual formats such as PowerPoint and other appropriate visual and auditory presentation tools. The presentation should take approximately 20 minutes. Elements to be addressed in the presentation are found in **Appendix J**. Following the overview, the dissertation chair moderates a question time. Questions to the candidate are asked by committee members. At the conclusion of the question time, all guests are excused so that the committee may meet privately with the candidate for additional discussion. The candidate is then excused for the committee to meet. Following the discussions, the candidate is invited to rejoin the committee and the dissertation chair announces the committee's decision.

#### ***Submit Form 4, Approval of the Defense and Approval of the Dissertation***

The committee must unanimously approve the candidate's defense of the dissertation. Approval of the defense indicates the committee is fully satisfied that the candidate adequately understands the dissertation's context, research procedures, findings, and implications. The chair communicates the committee's decisions. If the committee requires any changes to the dissertation, the chair informs the candidate.

Failure of the defense occurs only when a candidate does not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the content area and/or research methodology to competently interpret and communicate his/her findings. Should a candidate fail the defense, he or she must work with the dissertation chair to reschedule another defense.

Candidates have two opportunities to pass the final defense of their dissertation. Approval of the dissertation signifies the dissertation is a scholarly research contribution. Committee members may approve the dissertation at the defense and rely upon the dissertation chair to withhold final approval until all requested revisions are made, or they may elect to withhold their signature until they have seen the revisions themselves.

Committee members and the Academic Dean sign the dissertation signature page to be kept in the candidate's efile. The original signature page is placed after the title page in the dissertation.

Once Form 4 of the dissertation is approved by the full committee, the dissertation chair, the Education Division Chair, the dissertation review committee signs the form and the dissertation has accepted and all revisions.

## Chapter 4: Dissertation Process Guidelines

### 4.1 RESEARCH TOPIC SELECTION

The dissertation is the culminating research project in your doctoral program, and it should demonstrate your ability to conduct original research, including gathering data, analyzing results, and contributing substantively to an existing body of knowledge. It may include qualitative research, quantitative research, or a mixed-methods design (both qualitative and quantitative research). But, the first phase in the preparation of your dissertation is careful selection of a research topic.

The process of selecting a topic begins as soon as you enroll in your doctoral program, if not before. As you proceed through your coursework, and attend your in-residence workshops, you should be thinking about what specific area of your field you are most interested in, what you plan to do in the future, and what outstanding questions you think should be answered. You will be working on your dissertation for at least one year, so you should research a topic that interests you and that you think could be an important contribution to the field. Furthermore, you should remember that you will be associated with the topic of your dissertation during the early part of your professional career, if not longer.

Selecting a topic can be a daunting task, and you are strongly encouraged to meet with members of the faculty early on in your program to discuss possible topics. Keep the following in mind while you consider topics:

#### • Content

- The topic should be related to your field of specialization, area of interest, and professional plans.
- A question or problem that you have identified on your own is more likely to keep your interest for a longer period of time than a topic provided by someone else.
- Consider the scope of the topic. Topics that are more narrowly defined are easier to study thoroughly. You should not try to cover too large a content area.
- Consider how comfortable and willing you will be to devote a substantial amount of time to the selected topic. Studying something you believe in strongly should give you sufficient motivation to complete the project.
- Consider whether the questions of interest have been addressed in other research in similar or different forms and whether these questions are worthy of further study.

#### Logistics

- Be practical. Consider the amount of time and resources necessary to undertake your proposed research, including money, location, data collection instruments, etc.

- Consider the availability of participants or secondary data.
- Once you have narrowed down your topic and considered the methodology, enumerate the tasks that need to be accomplished and the steps required to complete each task. Estimate the time needed to complete each step and anticipate challenges and potential delays.

## Strategy

- Carefully read and review professional literature in your area of interest *before* making a final decision on the topic/area of research. Keep an annotated bibliography of everything you read so you can use it for reference and as part of the reference sections of your proposal and dissertation.
- Read other dissertations in your topic/area of research and discuss them with faculty members to help you narrow your focus. High quality dissertations can be useful guides for the depth and breadth of a successful topic, as well as the methodology of the study.

A dissertation must be scholarly and succinct, and the research should be of sufficient quality to be published in part in a peer-reviewed journal. It should also make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in your discipline/specialization, but it does not need to revolutionize the field. One way to think about this is that in your dissertation you do not need to solve a huge problem, you only need to address one small piece of the larger problem. Another useful way of thinking about dissertation research is that it should be an inch wide but a mile deep, that is, narrow in scope, but in-depth and comprehensive. Note that although you will identify your topic before choosing your Chair, your Chair will be instrumental in helping you refine your research approach and finalize the research methodology.

## 4.2 THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

### 4.2.1 PURPOSE OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

In the Dissertation Proposal, you will propose the study you would like to conduct. Therefore, you must clearly present what the topic is, why it is important to study, and how it should be studied. The proposal consists of three chapters (or the equivalent): Introduction, Review of the Literature, and Method. You should work closely with your Dissertation Chair and members of the Committee while writing these chapters. Note that you will eventually be revising these chapters slightly for use in your final dissertation. **The following section describes each part of the proposal. A detailed rubric for each chapter is in Appendix K.**

## 4.2.2 PARTS OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

The proposal consists of three chapters:

- I I. Introduction
- II II. Review of the Literature
- III III. Methodology



For further details and a checklist of what to include in each chapter and section, as well as formatting requirements, please see **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**.

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the reader to the nature of the study by guiding the reader from the broad aspects of the topic to a more specific question or set of questions. Chapter I should include the content below and should be at least 20 to 30 pages long.

### *Building the Introduction to the Background*

**\*\*\*Note: You should start conducting research for and organizing Chapter II before Chapter I, as doing so will help you develop an understanding of the topic, previous research conducted on the topic, and how your research may address a gap in the literature. You will begin this literature review during your On-Campus Residency (EDUC 804) and continue in Dissertation I EDUC 901.**

The background describes the historical perspective or content and justifies the significance of the research. It should describe the broader aspect of the problem being explored or investigated. The background is grounded in the history of the topic within the literature allowing the researcher to understand the topic over time. The overview of the study rationalizes the need and builds a case for the problem statement and deficiencies or the gap found in the research. **\*\* Aside from historical and seminal research, current research includes articles within the last ten years.**

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

**The author includes the following elements in the problem statement:**

- Presents the problem statement early, clearly (i.e., the reader can recognize it), and briefly (e.g., in one paragraph).
- Answers the question: ‘Why does this research need to be conducted?’ (Lewis & Clark, p. 57).
- Identifies “the problem or knowledge gap that [the student’s] project is responding to” (Lewis & Clark, p.57).
- Clearly situates the problem by analyzing its historical, social, and/or cultural context. Why has the problem not been addressed in the past?

Draws upon multiple literature sources of information to substantiate the problem. What does literature and research say about the problem that can and should be stated? How is the historical context explored in the background and restated briefly within the problem statement, establishing a need for the study?

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This section provides a synopsis of the overall purpose of the study, and should:

- Include a Purpose Statement that describes the focus, methodology, population, and geographic location of the study;
- Define the specific area of the research and the central concepts or ideas of the study;
- Justify the method of inquiry (i.e., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed); and
- Describe possible conclusions and implications of those conclusions.

## **IMPORTANCE OR SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This section should address the importance of the research, what the research is expected to contribute to theory or practice, and the possible implications of the research. Build on and expand the Importance of the Study section you wrote for your Letter of Intent to develop this section of Chapter I. This is an important section because it informs your reader why your study is relevant and defensible. Consider how and why the findings of your study (whatever they may be) might be used to advance thinking in your field.

## **THEORETICAL OR CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This section is intended to give the reader an understanding of how the study you are proposing fits into a larger theoretical or conceptual framework described in the literature, and how it fits with other studies in the field. Include a summary of enough relevant research literature (historical, seminal, and current) to situate and justify the study based on its potential contribution to the existing body of research. You may need to refer to the more detailed discussions in the literature that you will include in Chapter II.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS (AND HYPOTHESES)**

In this section, you will identify and discuss the research questions and sub-questions that you plan to address in the study. If your study is quantitative, you will also state and elaborate on the associated hypotheses that you plan to test. This section should include an explanation of how the research questions connect to the goals of the study as described in the Purpose of the Study.

## **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN**

Briefly describe the general methodology that you plan to use and explain why it is appropriate, referring to a more detailed discussion in Chapter III.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Define any technical terms or terms that have multiple meanings or specific connotations in your research field. Operationalize key variables or constructs by describing how these will be measured or conceptualized for this study.

## **ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND DELIMITATIONS**

Assumptions are factors or statements that you will consider during your study to be valid. Include the assumptions that you will make in the study, including both research assumptions and theoretical assumptions. Since it would be difficult to take all factors

into consideration, there will naturally be certain limitations in doing the study. The major limiting factors in the study, which could possibly affect the results, should also be addressed in this section. If the limitations are considerable, provide an explanation of why you think the study should still be conducted, and what can be gained from the study despite the limitations. Also include the delimitations or researcher-imposed limitations of the study. For all parts of this section, identify steps you will take to ensure that assumptions hold true, and to mitigate the effects of limitations and delimitations.

## **SUMMARY**

In this section, you should summarize the key points of the study you discussed in the Chapter and provide an overview of information that will be presented in Chapters II and III.

## **CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **\*\*Note:**

Begin a review of the literature on your topic of interest as soon as you begin your doctoral program. As you move through your coursework, keep an annotated bibliography of resources you come across that may be of use during your dissertation.

Scholarship entails comprehensive understanding of the historical and current understanding of or beliefs about the pertinent topic, and Chapter II consists of a comprehensive review of the literature pertaining to the topic of study. While completing your coursework and selecting your topic, you will have been reading, exploring, and thinking about what others have done to better understand the concepts and issues, and identify gaps in research. To argue the legitimacy and relevance of your proposed study, you will need to have a thorough understanding of what that study will add to the most current literature on the topic. You will need to critically analyze, synthesize, and integrate the literature such that the reader understands where the proposed study fits into the current debates and academic inquiries concerning the topic. Chapter II is thus a formal summary and analysis of the literature directly related to your particular study. See **Appendix A** for a detailed Dissertation Checklist for Chapter II, which consists of the following sections:

### **INTRODUCTION**

The introduction should introduce the chapter and its purpose, and should also restate the research topic and questions.

### **SEARCH STRATEGY**

In this section, you will explain how you conducted your literature search (e.g., the databases and search terms you used) and what parameters you used to narrow down the search (e.g., publication dates and sources). It is essentially your methodology for library research.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This is the main section of the chapter and should be organized in a rational way, with sub-headings as needed.

### **The Literature Review should:**

- Be comprehensive;
- Describe related problems, questions, methods, and conclusions;
- Cover the most important theories or research findings upon which your research problem and hypotheses are based;
- Cover both historic and recent research findings;
- Present research that supports and refutes the main theories or findings of relevance;
- Compare different theories and research results;
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the research, not simply present or report it; and,
- Consist primarily of scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and book chapters (original source).

**The literature review requires a minimum of 60 different scholarly sources.**

## **SUMMARY**

This section should summarize the key points of the relationship between your research questions and the literature. It should also summarize what you hope will be your study's contribution to the literature (how it will address the identified gap in the literature). The summary should also provide a bridge to Chapter III by summarizing the literature-based arguments for choosing a methodology.

In general, Chapter II should be a minimum of 30 pages long, but the exact length will be determined by the amount of existing published research. The literature review needs to be comprehensive, and it should show an overwhelming breadth and scope of knowledge on the related research topics.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

In the Methodology chapter, you will discuss the research design and specific procedures you plan to follow when conducting the study. The specifics of the content and organization of Chapter III differs slightly from study to study depending on whether the method of inquiry is qualitative, quantitative, or mixed. See **Appendix A** for a detailed Dissertation Checklist for each type of research study.

Include the following in Chapter III:

- An introduction that describes the purpose and organization of the chapter, and provides a brief overview of the method of inquiry (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed), the specific research design, and the rationale for using this design to address your research questions;
- The justification for the methodology you plan to use;
- Research questions and corresponding hypotheses (where applicable) and how the methodology will help you address those questions;



- The type of data you plan to collect and your proposed method of data collection, including reference to an appendix that includes a detailed protocol you will use when collecting the data (i.e., interview script), and justification for that protocol;
- A description of the participants in the study, both the population and the sample;
- Your proposed sampling method and sample size, and a justification for the method and size;
- A description of each step you will follow, in order, in conducting the research, from development of the research instrument(s) up to data analysis;
- A description of the survey, research, or testing instruments and data collection forms you will use while gathering data for the study, along with the rationale for using them in terms of their reliability, validity, and utility (Note that any instruments or forms – e.g., instructions to participants, informed consent forms, surveys, etc. – proposed for the study should be included in an appendix of the proposal, and referred to in this chapter, unless the instrument or form is not available for reprinting.);
- A discussion of how the data will be analyzed, and what statistical methods or other methods of analysis will be used;
- Identification of potential threats to internal and external validity of the study results (quantitative) or issues of trustworthiness (qualitative); and
- A detailed description of how you plan to protect the confidentiality of subject data and avoid any other ethical issues.

In general, Chapter III should run about 15 to 30 pages, but the exact length will be determined by the complexity of the research approach described.

### **4.3 PROPOSAL REVIEW**

As you write your proposal, you will spend time revising it based on comments from your Dissertation Chair and the other members of your Committee. Take these comments seriously, and keep in mind that the proposal development is a collaborative process. Your Committee should offer constructive criticism to help improve the overall quality of the proposal, until the Committee decides that it is acceptable and ready to move to the Proposal Defense. Your Committee will review the proposal for academic rigor, quality, and appropriateness of the proposed research study, evaluating particularly the alignment of the research problem and questions with the research methodology and design. When your Committee agrees that your proposal is ready for the proposal defense, submit your Proposal with a SafeAssign Report to the chair.

You are required to make any necessary changes requested by the Dissertation Committee and resubmit the proposal, along with a Change Matrix (See **Appendix G**) describing the changes you made, to the DSEM if necessary.

The following is a template that should be used to create the Change Matrix that will be resubmitted whenever changes must be made to the Dissertation Proposal, IRB Submission, or Final Dissertation. (See also **Appendix G** for an example)

## CHANGE MATRIX TEMPLATE

<b>Comment Identifier</b>	<b>Reviewer Comment</b>	<b>Page/Para. (Original Draft)</b>	<b>Changes Made and/or Comments</b>	<b>Page/Para. (New Draft)</b>
<i>Consecutively number the reviewer comments you are responding to.</i>	<i>Copy the reviewer comment.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the comment was made.</i>	<i>Describe the changes that were made, and/or comments responding to questions or concerns.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the change(s) was made.</i>

### 4.4 PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL DEFENSE

Once your proposal is approved by your Committee, you should work with your Chair to schedule your Proposal Defense. The purpose of the Proposal Defense is for your Committee to give you feedback about areas of possible improvement to successfully complete the dissertation. The Proposal Defense also gives you the necessary clearance to send the proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and then proceed with the research (after receiving IRB approval). You should consider this process consultative and collegial in nature, as the goal is to provide constructive criticism that will ultimately aid in your successful completion of the dissertation. Although the proposal is written with the help of the Dissertation Chair and Dissertation Committee, you must be able to present your own work. The formal presentation of the proposal is a tangible milestone for you in becoming a scholar with a voice of your own.

Proposal Defenses will occur virtually, with your Chair and Committee using synchronous communication medium (Skype, Zoom, etc.). You will create your presentation slides (your digital slide deck) using Microsoft PowerPoint, Prezi, or other such program, and refer to your slides as you would if you were presenting at a conference.

#### 4.4.1 BEFORE THE PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL DEFENSE

You can work on creating your Proposal Defense presentation while waiting for your Proposal feedback. Although it is unlikely that you will receive a “No Pass” at the time of the Proposal Defense, oral communication is a highly-regarded skill that all doctoral students should possess. You should create a presentation where the slides are informative but not too wordy. To present in your own words and voice, you should not expect to read directly from the slides or read from a prepared script. Be prepared to complete the presentation before questions and discussion commence. Coordinate a date and time with your Chair and Committee for the Proposal Defense. The defense typically is scheduled for 60 minutes. The presentation should not be longer than 30 minutes.

#### 4.4.2 DURING THE PROPOSAL DEFENSE

The following may be used as a guide by the Chair in moderating your proposal defense:

- Call the meeting to order.
- Make sure all Committee Members are present.
- Introduce the student and format for the defense.
- Allow student to present research summary: Present digital slides reflecting the proposal for the study. Proposal Defense (approximately 30 minutes).
- Open the floor to questions.
- Excuse the student, informing him or her of when you will communicate the Committee's evaluation decision. This is typically done immediately after the decision is made.
- Discuss with the Committee Members any issues or concerns, as well as the evaluation of the student's oral defense with regards to "Approved," "Approved with Changes," or "Resubmission Required."
- Inform the student of the Committee's evaluation decision and the steps to take to obtain an "Approve" rating or to address minor revisions.

Note that agreement on the Proposal Defense evaluation result is required from the Chair and Committee Member. **(Form 3 Appendix G)**

Flexibility exists in how the deliberations between faculty members and communication to you are accomplished. Some circumstances will allow you to remain with the Committee during deliberations; other circumstances may make your absence preferable.

Flexibility also exists in how you are told of the results: Some Chairs ask you to rejoin the conference call or Zoom room (if you are absent during deliberations) to be told the results in front of the Committee and receive congratulations; other Chairs will call you separately. In any case, you should be told as soon as possible about the result of your Proposal Defense.

#### 4.5 IRB REVIEW

After you have passed the Preliminary Proposal Defense, **you must have your proposal reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before you begin soliciting participants or collecting any data.** The IRB will review the proposal to make sure the methods proposed follow ethical standards.

- IRB forms are found in **Appendix H**
- The IRB Review is not a review of your topic or your research methodology; it is a review of whether sufficient safeguards are included to protect human research participants.
- The IRB meets regularly to review student applications.
- **Expect the IRB approval process to take about two weeks; plan accordingly.**

**The IRB committee does not meet regularly during the summer months.**

\*\*

You **may NOT** begin soliciting participants OR collecting data until you have passed the Preliminary Oral Defense and your Dissertation Proposal has been approved by the IRB.

After the review, you will receive a letter with the IRB's assessment. The IRB will:

- o Approve your proposal;
- o Request revisions to your proposal; or approve the proposal with specific conditions;
- or,
- o Deny your proposal with suggestions for changes needed for protection of human research participants. If your proposal is not approved, you will be required to make changes to your proposal and submit a new IRB application with all supporting materials.

- If your proposal requires revisions, you may need to resubmit your Request for IRB Review and IRB Research Summary to the IRB for another review.
- It is not uncommon for outside agencies to have a review board like an IRB that must also approve your study before any data can be collected. If you are working with an outside organization, be sure to submit your proposal and study protocols for review to the organization's administration. Acceptance of your proposal by the Southwestern College IRB does not automatically mean another organization's IRB will approve the study proposal.
- If your study is not completed within one year, you must submit an **IRB Request for Renewal**.
- If your study requires changes affecting risk/benefit ratio, including a significant change in study population or recruitment method, or if the Chair of your Dissertation Committee changes (new Chair), then you must submit an **Addendum to the IRB**.

## 4.6 CONDUCTING RESEARCH AND WRITING THE DISSERTATION

### 4.6.1 CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Upon passing the Preliminary Proposal Defense and approval of the proposal by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), you are ready to begin your study. ***You may ONLY begin to solicit participants and collect data at this point.*** You are advised to work closely with your Dissertation Chair throughout your research. You may also wish to consult other Committee Members as needed.

Follow these guidelines while conducting the study:

1. Collect all data as described in your proposal, adhering to ethical and professional standards throughout.
2. Conduct data analysis, consulting with your Dissertation Committee as needed.
3. Consult with external editors and statisticians in a mentoring or coaching capacity only.
4. Write Chapter IV (Results) and Chapter V (Discussion).
5. As you collect data, you are responsible for adhering to the method described in your proposal. If you find that you need to revise the method, you must inform your Dissertation Chair immediately. Depending on the nature of the modifications, you may

need to revise your proposal and resubmit it to the IRB, and the equivalent organizations of any agency you are working with.

6. Use the appropriate consent or assent forms if the study involves human participants. ***Keep the original consent or assent forms signed by participants confidential and do not make them a part of any appendix of the dissertation.***

#### **4.6.2 ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT**

You may find it helpful to look at other dissertations. Dissertations are available in the Deets Library databases. Writing a dissertation may seem like an overwhelming task, but it can be made more manageable by breaking it into smaller sections. Good organization throughout the writing process will facilitate this task greatly. Remember, the entire dissertation must be in APA style, following the *APA Publication Manual, 7th Edition*, except as specified in **Appendix C**.

Keep in mind that you have already written a large portion of the dissertation in preparing the proposal (Chapters I, II, and III). You will need to revisit those chapters and make revisions, as needed, when completing the final dissertation.

#### **Organization of Final Dissertation**

1. Title Page
2. Copyright notice
3. Abstract
4. Acknowledgements (optional)
5. Table of Contents
6. List of Tables and Figures
7. List of Appendices
8. Chapter I: Introduction
9. Chapter II: Review of the Literature
10. Chapter III: Method
11. Chapter IV: Results
12. Chapter V: Discussion
13. References
14. Appendices

Dissertations follow a very specific layout, and typically include similar types of content. The dissertation consists of five chapters, plus front matter and back matter. These are described in more detail below. For further details, consult **Appendix A**, **Appendix B**, and **Appendix K**.

#### **TITLE PAGE**

The title page should include the title of the dissertation, your name, the date, the name and credentials of the Chair and Committee Members, along with other statements, and be formatted according to the template in **Appendix E**. (See **Appendix E** for a template and example of what should be included on the Title Page).

## **COPYRIGHT PAGE**

To copyright your work (which must be done within 5 years of publication), a statement of copyright must be included on a separate page (**preliminary page ii**) directly following the title page. You should have your work copyrighted, especially if you intend to publish any part of it later.

## **ABSTRACT**

The body of the finished dissertation begins with a brief (350 words or less) abstract of the research conducted and the results obtained. This section should be headed with the word “Abstract,” centered, at the top of the page. Keep in mind that a reader should be able to determine from the abstract your research topic, questions, sample, methodology and design, overall results, and conclusions. An abstract is a summary of the actual points in the dissertation. The abstract should:

- State the problem briefly.
- Describe the methods and procedures used in gathering or studying the problem.
- Give a condensed summary of the findings of the study.
- Include a list of key words to be used by other researchers to search for and identify information in various subject areas.

Refer to Section 3.3 of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for guidance in what should be contained in your Abstract.

### **Example of heading:**

ABSTRACT  
Complete Title of Dissertation  
Candidate Name  
Doctor of Education, Year  
Southwestern College  
Dissertation Chair: [Name and Degree]

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

In this section, you may give appropriate recognition to those individuals and organizations that have made some significant contribution to the research project. While this is an optional component, most students include it, and you may wish to use this section to acknowledge your Committee Members and other important supporters among your family and friends. If you have received mentoring or coaching from someone other than a member of your Committee, you may wish to acknowledge that person’s contributions to your success in this section.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

The Table of Contents should include the Chapter Titles, Headings, and Sub-headings, along with the page number where each begins.

**\*\*Note:** Use the Styles and Table of Contents tools in Microsoft Word to help you automatically format headings and create and update the Table of Contents

### **LIST OF TABLES AND LIST OF FIGURES**

The List of Tables and List of Figures are lists of the titles and page numbers of graphics, including illustrations, diagrams, graphs, charts, and tables. Tables and figures should be listed in order and the titles should be descriptive. Review guidelines for formatting tables and figures in Chapter 7 of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for guidance.

### **LIST OF APPENDICES**

On this page is a list of the titles and page numbers of all appendices. Appendices, which are labeled such as “Appendix A: Title of Appendix,” should be listed in order of references to them in the text and the titles should be descriptive.

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is simply a revision or extension of Chapter I of the proposal. Keep in mind that you will need to revise the proposal chapter such that it refers not to what you proposed to do, but what you did do. In your proposal, the language of the chapter is in future tense—this is what you propose to do in your study. In the final dissertation, you should change the verb tense to past tense, indicating what you did. Update any information that changed between the acceptance of the proposal and the completion of the study.

## **CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Chapters I, II, and III should be revised from the language in the Dissertation Proposal. Make sure the language now focuses on what was done, not what you plan to do, and is in the **past tense**.

This chapter is likely to be a light revision of Chapter II of the proposal. It should include the literature review of the proposal, along with a review of any additional literature that you came across or that was published while you were conducting your dissertation research. As in the proposal, Chapter II should be a formal summary and analysis of the literature.

## **CHAPTER III: METHOD**

In the Method chapter, you will discuss the overall research design and the specific procedures you followed while conducting the study. Again, this is a modification of Chapter III of the proposal. Be sure to revise Chapter III according to what was actually done during the study, not what you proposed to do. In your proposal, the language of Chapter III is written in future tense—this is how you plan to conduct your study. In the final dissertation, you should change the verb tense to past tense, indicating what you did,

and updating any procedures that changed between the acceptance of your proposal and the completion of the study. For example, if you proposed to recruit 20 participants and you only recruited 18, you should leave the original language indicating what was proposed and update the information indicating what transpired during the implementation of the study.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The Results chapter focuses on the data gathered and data analysis you conducted for the study. Like Chapter III, the exact content and organization of the chapter will depend on the type and details of the study you conducted. Please see **Appendix A** for more details.

Unlike the first three chapters, Chapter IV will be completely new. Chapter IV should include the following (note that these are not subheadings, but are descriptions of the content of the chapter):

- An introduction that describes the purpose and organization of the chapter, and restates the research questions;
- A discussion of any pilot study, results, and resulting modifications to the main study;
- A detailed overview of the sample (i.e., demographics);
- A discussion of the theory/theoretical model in detail, if the dissertation is theoretical in nature;

**\*\* Note:** The Results chapter should include processed data and statistical analyses only. It should **NOT** include raw data or interpretation of the data or analyses. Leave interpretation and conclusions to the Discussion chapter.

- A discussion of all available data, the statistical methods used, significance levels (if relevant), and whether the hypotheses were supported by the data, if the study was quantitative or mixed; or a discussion of resulting themes with quotations as evidence, if the study was qualitative;
- The results of the analyses;
- The inconsistencies and contradictions in the findings;
- Any graphic or visual representation of data gained from the study, such as data tables, scatterplots, ANOVA tables, or process diagrams, following APA requirements for formatting and inclusion (see Chapter 7 of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for guidance); and,
- An explanation of any graphics in the body of the chapter so it is clear why they are included and what information they provide to the reader.

Except for qualitative studies, this chapter is relatively straight-forward and technical for most dissertations. The facts should be provided without interpretation. In this chapter, you should avoid citing sources. Simply state what you did without defending it with the literature.



## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

In this chapter, you will interpret the results and discuss the implications of the results from Chapter IV, and how they relate to your field and/or subfield. Chapter V is generally around 15-25 pages and should include the following:

- An introduction that describes the purpose and organization of the chapter;
- Interpretations of the data and analyses;
- References to results reported in Chapter IV;
- Conclusions that address the research questions;
- Discussion of findings that do not fully support the hypotheses (if appropriate);
- Limitations affecting the validity, generalizability, or trustworthiness of the study;
- Implications for theory and future research;
- Implications for practice;
- A discussion of how your findings converge with or diverge from previous research;
- Recommendations for further research; and
- A strong conclusion statement.

**\*\*\*The end of your dissertation should include the following sections:**

### REFERENCES

List *all* references cited in the dissertation alphabetically, using the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for guidance on APA Style for listing references. **Do not** list any references that were not actually cited in the dissertation.

### APPENDIX (OR APPENDICES)

Include all additional information or materials that support but are not a part of the text in Chapters I-V. Examples include:

- Copies of solicitation letters/emails and instructions for participants;
- Copies of Informed Consent forms;
- Permissions obtained from organizations or agencies to use resources, materials, or facilities;
- Descriptions of any special conditions of the research;
- Tables that are too big to fit fully on one page of the document from Chapter IV or V; and,
- Additional tables or graphs that supplement but do not provide data gained from the study.

### 4.6.3 WRITING SUGGESTIONS

See **Appendix C** for more tips on writing a dissertation.

As you write, keep in mind that your work will be judged by not only the quality and rigor of your research, but also according to your writing style. Regardless of the merit of the research and conclusions, readers tend to come away with a favorable impression of a professional, well-written dissertation and an unfavorable impression from a sloppy or casually-written dissertation. Here are a few tips to keep in mind throughout the writing process:

- Use Microsoft Word tools to organize and format the dissertation.
- Save the document in at least two places (e.g., thumb/flash drive, removable hard drive, etc.). This will prevent data loss in the case of technical difficulties. Consider saving the dissertation in the Cloud, an internet accessible site (Carbonite, Dropbox, etc.), as well. Note, however, that raw data and any information that could be identifiable or linked to your research participants may never be uploaded to Cloud storage.
- Stay organized. Keep all materials and references handy. Maintain a user-friendly filing system, such as separating reference materials by subtopic or the chapter in which they are used.
- Utilize bibliographical software (RefWorks, EndNote, etc.) to keep track of your references and assist in formatting your citations and reference list. Make sure to use a system compatible with the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.
- Devise a logical file naming and folder system. Create a system that allows you to keep old versions of files but minimizes version control problems.
- Read and follow the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, except for formatting style guidelines in **Appendix B**.
- Prepare an outline. It is easier to put words together when following a detailed outline.
- Aim for a concise and continuous flow of ideas. Use headings to organize and clarify the structure of the document.
- Update the References list as you write instead of completing the entire list at one time.
- Read over everything you write and everything you revise before sending it to anyone to review. Your reviewers should be making constructive comments, not commenting on careless mistakes or grammatical errors.
- Use tools like Grammarly and Microsoft Word Spelling and Grammar check to verify language, grammar and word choice. Send chapters to the Writing Center for review and feedback.
- **Expect to write several drafts. Most students revise the dissertation multiple times before it is approved by the Dissertation Chair and ready to submit to the Committee Members for review.**
- **The candidate is expected to ask an outside person to read the document and make editing suggestions regarding grammar, spelling, and syntax. It is highly suggested to use a professional editing service for APA formatting and style. The candidate is responsible for all related fees.**

- Give the Dissertation Chair a draft of each chapter as it is completed. This helps the Chair review your work and allows you to receive faster feedback. Chairs may request drafts of chapters in progress as well, so be prepared to demonstrate your progress at all times.

#### **4.7 DISSERTATION REVIEW**

The Dissertation Committee will individually review and evaluate the completed dissertation using the dissertation rubric. If the committees' rubrics show no major revisions needed, the chair and candidate will schedule the final defense.

The dissertation will go through several drafts before the Chair and Committee will approve it and meet all APA standards.

- Send each chapter when completed to the Chair for review and comment. When the Chair is satisfied with the quality of the chapter, the Chair will send it to your Committee members. This will help to obtain immediate feedback on necessary revisions and changes to satisfy all Committee members.
- When the Chair and candidate has reviewed and revised the completed dissertation, the Chair will submit the full dissertation to the Committee Members for review.
- If the full dissertation is not approved or approved with revisions, the Change Matrix Template (See pp. 30-31) will be used to make the required changes and submitted back to the committee.

#### **4.8 FINAL DEFENSE**

Once your dissertation is approved by the Dissertation Chair and Dissertation Committee, you are ready to defend it formally in an oral presentation to the Committee. The Final Oral Defense is intended to make sure that you have conducted an academically acceptable dissertation and can communicate your knowledge of the dissertation's research topics and findings to others.

##### **Goals of the Final Defense**

- Gauge your knowledge of the area studied;
- Serve as a definitive demonstration of your knowledge, skills, research abilities, and sense of practical applicability and contribution to the field of study;
- Answer/address all questions proposed in the study;
- Test your ability to make an oral presentation and respond sufficiently to questions in a public forum;
- Provide a medium through which the university community can be made aware of the study undertaken; and
- Serve as a forum for members of the Dissertation Committee, as well as the academic community at large, to provide input into the study.

Final Defenses will occur virtually, with the Chair and Committee Members using synchronous communication medium (Skype, Zoom, etc.). The candidate will create your Final Defense presentation slides using Microsoft PowerPoint, Prezi, or other such presentation software, and refer to the slides as if the candidate were presenting at a conference. The slides are not to be read word for word. At this point, the candidate is the research expert and is sharing their study as if telling a story.

#### **4.8.1 BEFORE THE FINAL DEFENSE**

- You can work on creating your Final Defense presentation while waiting for your dissertation feedback. Though it is unlikely that you will get a “No Pass” at the time of the Final Defense, oral communication is a highly-regarded skill that all doctoral students should possess. You should create a presentation where the slides are informative but not too wordy. To present in your own words and voice, you should not expect to read directly from the slides or read from a prepared script. Be prepared to complete the presentation before questions and discussion commence
- Coordinate first with your Chair and then with your Committee Members to find a date and time for the Final Defense. The final defense is typically scheduled for 60 minutes, but may be scheduled for a timeframe determined by the Chair.
- You should communicate with your Chair as to the date/time agreed upon.
- Send your digital slide deck presentation to the Chair and Committee in advance of the scheduled Final Defense.
- Faculty, students, and guests are invited to the Final Defense. They are excused for committee questions and when the committee convenes.

#### **4.8.2 DURING THE FINAL DEFENSE**

The following activities usually occur during the Final Oral Defense:

1. Dissertation Committee Chair serves as the moderator.
2. Deliver a 30- to 40-minute presentation summarizing the study (**See Appendix J**) and respond to questions from the audience, if present.
3. After your presentation, you will meet with the Dissertation Committee for a question-and-answer session during which Committee Members may question any aspect related to the results, your interpretation of the results, or implications of the study. Guests are excused.
4. The candidate is excused so that Committee Members can evaluate the defense.
5. After the committee convenes, the candidate is informed of the Committee’s decision. The Committee may direct the candidate to revise, expand, or delete portions of the dissertation and will give details of the requested information or changes. A result of “No Pass, Major Revisions Needed” will require that the candidate repeats the final oral defense.

**\*\*Note:** Southwestern College retains the right to consider the Final Oral Defense a “Fail” if you do not make the changes required by the Committee or are found to have committed any scientific, ethical, or professional misconduct in the study.

### **4.8.3 AFTER THE FINAL DEFENSE**

- The candidate will be informed of the Committee’s decision after the evaluation has been completed.
- There are three possible outcomes: “Approve,” “Approve with Changes,” and “Resubmission Required.”
- If you receive a rating of “Approve with Changes,” or “Resubmission Required,” the Dissertation Chair will advise the candidate of the revisions needed to proceed.
- Following the defense, the candidate makes necessary modifications in the written dissertation as requested by the committee. These modifications are approved by the dissertation chair and any other member of the committee who wishes to review them. This process should occur promptly, since several steps remain before the candidate has completed the dissertation process.
- The final corrected copy is then submitted to a technical reader, who checks the dissertation for compliance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and college guidelines. Candidates are responsible for making all technical corrections required by the reader and for paying appropriate fees for the services of the reader. Corrections and paper quality. Each page of the dissertation is to be free of errors. It is recommended that candidates hire an editor to review the final draft for APA formatting and errors. An editor well versed in APA is required if the candidate wants to submit their dissertation to ProQuest through the college library. All final copies are to be submitted electronically.
- Once revisions are made and approved, the Committee will sign off using Form 4 and the Dissertation Signature Page. The candidate submits a final PDF copy to the Chair and Doctoral Program Chair.

### **4.9 EDUC 865 Portfolio**

- Once the final defense is scheduled, the candidate will receive the reflective portfolio requirements for EDUC 865. The portfolio cannot be completed until after a successful defense. The portfolio is a requirement for graduation.

#### **4.10 GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**

The candidate has the responsibility to stay in touch with their Doctoral Program Advisor to make sure everything is complete for graduation and for attending the commencement ceremony. Graduation will be conferred according to requirements by the Registrar's Office. The candidate must apply for graduation with the registrar's office if the final defense and portfolio will be completed prior to May graduation. Degrees are conferred if completed by the summer semester in August. Hooding will occur the following May's graduation. Degrees completed in the fall semester will graduate the following May.

**Binding.** Southwestern College will not be responsible for binding. Binding will be the responsibility of the candidate if a printed copy is desired by the candidate.

**Publication submission.** Candidates may submit their dissertation to ProQuest for publication submission by completing the process required by ProQuest. The information can be found on their website. Submission cannot be completed until all requirements are met for degree conferral and the committee has signed the final dissertation forms.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to ensure that all aspects of the Proposal, and later, the Dissertation, are sufficiently addressed.

### DISSERTATION TEMPLATE

\_\_\_\_\_ Uses the Dissertation Template for all drafts of the Proposal and Dissertation, including (in order):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Title Page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright notice
- \_\_\_\_\_ Abstract
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acknowledgments (optional)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Table of Contents
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of Tables and Figures
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of Appendices
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter I: Introduction
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter II: Review of the Literature
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter III: Method
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter IV: Results
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter V: Discussion
- \_\_\_\_\_ References
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appendices

\_\_\_\_\_ Begins each chapter on a new page, headed with the word “Chapter” followed by the chapter number and title of the chapter.

### GENERAL WRITING GUIDELINES

\_\_\_\_\_ Proposal and dissertation drafts must be in full compliance with APA formatting.

\_\_\_\_\_ A person acting as the APA Style editor must review and verify review of the final dissertation draft prior to its submission.

\_\_\_\_\_ Proposal/dissertation follows a standard form and has a professional, scholarly appearance.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling according to chapters 4, 5, and 6 in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

\_\_\_\_\_ Include citations for direct quotations, paraphrasing, facts, and references to research studies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use quotations and secondary sources sparingly, if at all.

\_\_\_\_\_ Include all in-text citations in the reference list.

Write the proposal in future tense; Write the dissertation in past tense.

\_\_\_\_\_ Proposal/dissertation is written clearly in scholarly language.

\_\_\_\_\_ Writing is clear, precise, and avoids redundancy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Statements are specific, and topic sentences are established for paragraphs.

\_\_\_\_\_ Flow of language is smooth and clear.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ideas transition smoothly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Proposal/dissertation is organized logically and comprehensively.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chapters add up to an integrated document.

\_\_\_\_\_ Subheadings identify the logic and movement of the dissertation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Transitions between chapters are smooth and coherent.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tables and Figures



- \_\_\_\_\_ Use APA formatting (Chapter 7 in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition), except for specifications in **Appendix C**;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contain (or illustrate) content that is informative, relevant, and concise;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are placed in context with narrative text;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have long tables that are included in an appendix;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Include unique titles that are brief but clear and explanatory;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have figure numbers and titles that are placed **above the actual figure**;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have table numbers and titles that are placed **above the actual table**; and
- \_\_\_\_\_ Show copyright permission for any non-original content (if not in the public domain).

## TITLE PAGE

- \_\_\_\_\_ Title of the dissertation: centered, all caps, single-spaced
- \_\_\_\_\_ Name of student
- \_\_\_\_\_ Date
- \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Dissertation Chair, including degree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Names of Committee Members, including degrees
- \_\_\_\_\_ Required Text: See **Appendix D**

## ABSTRACT

- \_\_\_\_\_ Consists of one double-spaced page (350 words) or less.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a concise description of the study, a brief statement of the problem, statement of purpose or importance, and a brief summary of methods and procedures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a summary of sample size, findings, and implications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow guidelines for writing an abstract in section 3.3 of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

*Introduces the reader to the nature of the dissertation by moving the focus of attention from a broad aspect to a more specific heading. This chapter should be written in present tense for the proposal, in past tense for the dissertation.*

Suggested sections include the following [Other formats are acceptable if all the content described is included]:

### [NO INITIAL HEADING]

- \_\_\_\_\_ Introductory paragraphs introduce the general topic area.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT [OR BACKGROUND OF STUDY]

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes a practical problem and the need for it to be addressed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supports the existence and impact of the practical problem with documentation.

#### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies a general research problem that will address the practical problem. What do you want to know that you don't know (that nobody knows) that will help to solve the practical problem?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Focuses in on a specific research problem that the study proposes to address.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly and logically demonstrates how the focus of the study is an important problem, worthy of study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Impact of the research problem is fully documented and supported.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses how the research study represents a unique approach to the research problem, adds to the research literature, and contributes to practice in the field.

\_\_\_\_\_ Explains how the study proposes to address the specific research problem.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

\_\_\_\_\_ Provides a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Connects the **Purpose of the Study** as addressing the specific research problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a single-sentence Purpose Statement that succinctly describes the focus, methodology, population, and geographical location of the study.

Ex: *The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand the experience of Generation X women in the Los Angeles area who desire to obtain their first executive position in the financial services industry.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly defines and delimits the specific area of the research.

\_\_\_\_\_ Foreshadows the hypotheses to be tested (if quantitative) or the questions to be raised as well as the importance of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Clearly identifies and defines the central concepts or ideas of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the unit of analysis in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Justifies the general method of inquiry used in the study: qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method.

#### **For a quantitative study:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Specifies at least two variables and a conjectured relationship between them to describe what will be studied.

#### **For a qualitative study:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the phenomenon, situation, or factors of interest.

\_\_\_\_\_ Indicates and justifies which qualitative methodology will be used.

#### **For a mixed methods study:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the specific type of mixed method design--explanatory, exploratory, or triangulation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reflects whether the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study are sequential or simultaneous.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Answers the following in a logical, explicit manner:

\_\_\_\_\_ What is the importance of this research?

\_\_\_\_\_ What will it contribute to theory and practice in the student's field of specialization?

\_\_\_\_\_ What are implications of the research?

#### **THEORETICAL [OR CONCEPTUAL] FRAMEWORK**

\_\_\_\_\_ Places the study within a particular theoretical area in the field under investigation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Situates the study among other research studies within the theoretical area.

\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly summarizes enough relevant research literature (historical, seminal, and current) to situate and justify the study based on its contribution to the existing body of research, referencing the more detailed discussions in Chapter II.

\_\_\_\_\_ Articulates the theoretical base (quantitative only) or the conceptual framework (qualitative only) to show connection to a certain body of literature. (Mixed method--addresses both theoretical and conceptual framework.)

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS [AND HYPOTHESES]**

\_\_\_\_\_ Clearly presents specific research questions and sub-questions to be addressed, referencing the more detailed discussions in Chapter III.

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes research hypotheses for each research question and sub-question (quantitative only).

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes research questions that are identified for the qualitative and quantitative phases (mixed method only).

\_\_\_\_\_ Questions and hypotheses are elaborated on in a discussion format, not simply listed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Connects the research questions to the **Statement of Purpose**, showing how these questions will address the goals of the study.

### **OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN**

\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly describes the general methodology and design, including data collection method, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis, with references to more detailed discussions in Chapter III.

\_\_\_\_\_ Shows how the particular research design is the most appropriate to address the goals of the study.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Defines important terms as used in this study, especially those that may otherwise have multiple meanings.

\_\_\_\_\_ Uses citations to support the origin of the definitions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Defines important technical terms that may be unknown to a reader.

\_\_\_\_\_ Operationalizes key variables or constructs.

### **ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND DELIMITATIONS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes the scope and bounds of the study (delimitations are study boundaries the researcher has set).

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses major limiting factors in the study that could possibly affect the results. (If limitations are considerable, explains why the study is being conducted.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Articulates assumptions about facts that are not actually verified.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses steps that will be taken to ensure assumptions are met and to mitigate limitations, if possible.

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses potential weaknesses of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses generalizability of the study findings.

### **SUMMARY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes key points of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Gives an overview of the content of the remaining chapters in the study, bridging to Chapter II.

\_\_\_\_\_ Meets the recommended minimum length of 20 to 30 pages for Chapter I.

## **CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

*Scholarship entails comprehensive understanding of at least one academic community's historical and current treatment of the pertinent topic. To argue the legitimacy of the current study, a thorough understanding of what that study will add to the most current literature on the topic is necessary. Literature will be critically analyzed, synthesized, and integrated to produce a*

*story that brings the reader along to understand where the study fits into the current debates and academic edges concerning the topic. Existing and historically seminal literature will provide a contextual framework within which the research design is situated. Additionally, a part of the literature review will provide an academic foundation for the methods and research design chosen. This chapter should be written in past tense.*

**[INTRODUCTION] NO HEADING NEEDED**

\_\_\_\_\_ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the dissertation, and the organization of the chapter.

\_\_\_\_\_ Frames the review by restating the topic and research questions.

**SEARCH STRATEGY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes the strategy used to collect relevant literature.

\_\_\_\_\_ Indicates which search engines were used.

\_\_\_\_\_ Lists which search terms were used.

\_\_\_\_\_ Indicates strategy for identifying historically seminal (classic) studies and theorists' writings.

\_\_\_\_\_ Justifies most appropriate time interval for current sources (last 2–3 years? Last 5 years?).

\_\_\_\_\_ If applicable, explains the lack of currency of the most recent publications.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reviews strategy for focusing in on empirical research that most closely resembles the current study.

**[REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE]**

*(The rest of the literature review should include logical headings that aid the reader in understanding the content and organization of the chapter. The actual headings will differ for each student's work.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ The review is an integrated, critical analysis and synthesis of the relevant research and other scholarly literature published on the topic.

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes the most current scholarship and important historical theory and research, when appropriate, to situate the topic.

\_\_\_\_\_ Synthesizes prior research to illustrate what is currently known about the research problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ Compares different theories and research results.

\_\_\_\_\_ Evaluates previous research and related theory.

\_\_\_\_\_ Integrates various studies and theories to relate a story of the historical and current state of knowledge on the topic.

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses how the proposed research fits in the context of research to date.

\_\_\_\_\_ Draws mostly from published journal articles in peer-reviewed journals or sound academic books containing primary material; provides justification for using other sources.

\_\_\_\_\_ Has a specific organization for the review. For example, organizes the review around major ideas or themes or organizes the review historically.

\_\_\_\_\_ The literature review needs to be *comprehensive*, covering the most important theories or research findings upon which the research problem (and hypotheses) was based.

\_\_\_\_\_ Relates the study to previous research.

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies how the study will extend current knowledge.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Defines the most important aspects of the theory that will be examined or tested (for quantitative studies).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Substantiates the conceptual framework for the study (for qualitative studies).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly relates the review of the related research and literature to the **Statement of Problem** as expressed in the:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ research questions
  - \_\_\_\_\_ hypotheses (quantitative)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ population
  - \_\_\_\_\_ context/setting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a discussion of differing and common methodologies previously used to study the research problem, including their strengths and limitations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a literature-based description of the research variables (quantitative studies) or central phenomenon, situation, or factors of interest (qualitative studies).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes literature pertaining to the population and context or setting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reviews literature related to research method and research design, including major and foundational sources in that design and its application to the research problem.

### **SUMMARY**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes key points of the relationship between the study's research question(s) and the literature.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes the study's contribution to the literature.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bridges to Chapter III by summarizing literature-based arguments for choosing a particular methodology.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meets the recommended length of at least 40 to 60 pages for Chapter II.

### **CHAPTER III: METHOD**

*The method chapter discusses the procedures to be followed in conducting the study (in the final draft, the methods that were followed) and the overall research design. The content and format of Chapter III will vary depending on whether the study is a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods study. This chapter should be written in future tense for the proposal, in past tense for the dissertation.*

#### **[INTRODUCTION] NO HEADING NEEDED**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the dissertation, and the organization of the chapter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the method of inquiry used (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed method).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the specific research methodology chosen and how it derives logically from the **Statement of Problem** and the research questions.

#### **[QUALITATIVE]**

##### METHODOLOGY SELECTED

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes which qualitative methodology will be used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Justifies choice of methodology using major and foundational sources.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Explains why other possible choices would be less effective.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes specific research questions and sub-questions (where appropriate) that are:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Clear and succinct
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Congruent with the **Statement of Problem**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Answerable
- \_\_\_\_\_ Few in number
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly stated
- \_\_\_\_\_ Open-ended (not yes/no questions)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the role of the researcher in the data collection procedure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses the potential impact and minimization of researcher bias through methodological approaches.

#### **STUDY PARTICIPANTS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies the context (including site) for the study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly defines both the general study population and the specific population.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrates (and documents) the ability to access the population.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies the sampling approach.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes how the characteristics of the sample population align with the general population.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discusses how the sample selection impacts the generalizability of the study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies strategies for recruiting participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Specifies appropriate criteria for selecting participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses the relationship between the researcher and the participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Justifies the number of participants.

#### **DATA COLLECTION**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies the data collection method(s) (e.g., interview, focus group, observation).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses what types of data will be collected and the unit(s) of analysis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes detailed protocol(s) in appendix for data collection (e.g., interview protocol/script, focus group protocol/script, etc.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Justifies contents of data collection protocols by connection to the research questions posed in relation to the qualitative paradigm chosen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly describes the process by which the data were generated, gathered, and recorded.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly describes the systems used for keeping track of data and emerging understandings (research logs, reflective journals, and cataloging systems).

#### **PROCEDURES FOLLOWED**

- \_\_\_\_\_ States the sequence of steps followed in conducting the research from development of the research instrument(s) to data analysis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Details all steps in a way that another researcher could follow the steps to reproduce the study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Explains the relation of the pilot study to the full study, if applicable.

#### **TRUSTWORTHINESS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shows evidence of quality by discussing how procedures will be/were followed to assure the accuracy of the data and lessen the impact of researcher bias (e.g., trustworthiness, member checks, triangulation, etc.).

### **ETHICAL CONCERNS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Provides adequate measures for ethical protection of participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes detailed information about the informed consent process and how informed consent will be obtained.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes Informed Consent Letter in Appendix.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes detailed information about how confidentiality is addressed.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Articulates how and when the data will be or were analyzed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Aligns the detailed data analysis plan with the specific research design to generate answers to the research questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes procedures for dealing with discrepant cases.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If a software program was used to aid analysis, clearly describes how it was used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gives details about the coding procedure and how themes or categories were developed.

## **[QUANTITATIVE]**

### **METHODOLOGY SELECTED**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a description of the research design and approach.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provides justification for using the research design and approach.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrates that the research design and approach derive logically from the problem or issue statement.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supports the research design and its application with major and foundational sources.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes specific research questions and hypotheses (where appropriate) that:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Are clear and succinct
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Are congruent with the **Statement of Problem**
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Are answerable/testable
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Correspond to the number of variables of interest
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Have hypotheses that correspond to research questions
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Are clearly stated

### **POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies and describes the source of the specific population and the population's characteristics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies that permission has been obtained to access the population, if relevant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the sampling method, its appropriateness, and the sampling frame.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the sample size as sufficient in terms of statistical power to support the analyses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the criteria for selecting participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the sample characteristics.

### **ETHICAL CONCERNS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies procedures for protection and ethical treatment of human participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the informed consent process in detail, including how human participants will provide their informed consent, where applicable.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes Informed Consent Letter in Appendix.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes procedures to protect confidentiality and anonymity in data collection, analysis, reporting, and storage.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Where applicable, describes in detail any treatment or intervention to which human participants will be exposed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies concealment or deception as part of the treatment, if used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the process for debriefing human participants following use of concealment or deception.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies if a control group will be used, if the group will receive a standard intervention, and the nature of that intervention.

### **INSTRUMENTATION**

List and describe the survey, research, or testing instruments and data collection forms (to be) used in gathering data for the study. The reason for the use of these instruments should also be given. Defend the choice of instruments and address reliability, validity, and utility of the instruments.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes in detail all instrumentation or data collection tools, including:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument name, if using an existing instrument
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Specific type of instrument
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument's measures in terms of constructs, concepts, or variables

Scoring of scales, subscales, typologies and their interpretation

- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether a new instrument is developed or an existing instrument is modified and describes its use.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Published reliability and validity statistics for existing instruments OR a detailed plan for statistically assessing the reliability and validity of new or modified instrument(s) or existing instruments without established reliability or validity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a copy of any instruments used in an appendix.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a detailed description of data that comprises each variable in the study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes operational definitions of variables.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provides a clear explanation of how the value of each variable will be derived from the instrument.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the level of measurement (NOIR) for each variable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Either describes established (published) reliability and validity statistics or a clear plan to statistically validate the instrument (for modified or created instruments).

### **DATA COLLECTION**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes any pilot study results, if applicable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ States the sequence of steps followed in conducting the research from development of the research instrument(s) to data analysis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Details all steps such that another researcher could follow the steps to reproduce the study.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Addresses how the data will be/was analyzed. What statistical methods were used?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a detailed analysis plan that explains the descriptive and/or inferential analyses proposed or used.



- \_\_\_\_\_ Descriptive statistical procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether the data are normally distributed or the distribution is skewed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parametric and/or nonparametric statistical procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Statistical power

#### **VALIDITY**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses internal and external validity threats and how they will be or were addressed.

### **[MIXED METHOD]**

#### **METHODOLOGY SELECTED**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a description of the specific mixed method research design and approach.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Research questions reflect the two phases, qualitative and quantitative, and the ordering of the two phases consistent with the specific mixed method design (explanatory, exploratory, or triangulation); hypotheses correspond to quantitative research questions, where appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provides justification for using the specific research design and approach.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shows that the research design and approach derive logically from the problem or issue statement.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supports the research design and its application with major and foundational sources.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes specific research questions and hypotheses (where appropriate) that:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are clear and succinct
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are congruent with the **Statement of Problem**
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are answerable/testable
  - \_\_\_\_\_ correspond to the number of variables of interest
  - \_\_\_\_\_ correspond to research questions (if they are hypotheses)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are clearly stated
  - \_\_\_\_\_ are open-ended (not yes/no questions)

#### **POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies and describes the source of the specific population and the population's characteristics for both phases.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies that permission has been obtained to access the population, if relevant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes for both phases the sampling method, its appropriateness, and the sampling frame.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the sample size as sufficient in terms of statistical power to support the quantitative analyses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the sample size as sufficient in terms of data saturation for the qualitative phase.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the criteria for selecting participants for both phases.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the sample characteristics for both phases.

#### **ETHICAL CONCERNS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies procedures for protection and ethical treatment of human participants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the informed consent process in detail, including how human participants will provide their informed consent, where applicable.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes Informed Consent Letter in Appendix.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes procedures to protect confidentiality and anonymity in data collection, analysis, reporting, and storage of data.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes in detail, where applicable, any treatment or intervention to which human participants will be exposed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If concealment or deception will be used, identifies that as part of the treatment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies the process for debriefing human participants following use of concealment or deception.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies if a control group will be used, if the group will receive a standard intervention, and the nature of that intervention.

## **INSTRUMENTATION**

List and describe the survey, research, or testing instruments, interview or observational protocols, and data collection forms used in gathering data for the study. The reason for the use of these instruments should also be given. Defend the choice of instruments, and address reliability, validity, and utility of the instruments.

### ***Quantitative phase:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes in detail all instrumentation or data collection tools, including:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument name, if using an existing instrument.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Specific type of instrument.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument's measures in terms of constructs, concepts, or variables.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Scoring of scales, subscales, typologies, and their interpretation.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Whether a new instrument is developed or an existing instrument is modified and describes its use.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Published reliability and validity statistics for existing instruments OR a detailed plan for statistically assessing the reliability and validity of new or modified instrument(s) or existing instruments without established reliability or validity.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Includes a copy of any instruments used in an appendix.

### ***Qualitative phase:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies data collection method(s) (e.g., interview, focus group, and observation).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Justifies choices about which data to collect, including:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Addresses what types of data will be collected and the unit(s) of analysis.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Includes detailed protocol(s) in appendix for data collection (e.g., interview protocol/script, focus group protocol/script, etc.).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Justifies contents of data collection protocols by connection to the research questions posed in relation to the qualitative paradigm chosen.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes any pilot study results, if applicable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ States the sequence of steps followed in conducting the research, from development of the research instrument(s) to data analysis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Details all steps such that another researcher could follow the steps to reproduce the study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes the role of the researcher in the qualitative data collection procedure.

Addresses through methodological approaches the potential impact and minimization of researcher bias.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Addresses how the data were analyzed. What statistical methods were used?

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes an explanation of descriptive and/or inferential analyses used in the study, such as:

\_\_\_\_\_ Level of measurement (normal, ordinal, interval, or ratio) for each quantitative variable

\_\_\_\_\_ Description of parametric, nonparametric, or descriptive analytical tools used

\_\_\_\_\_ Distribution of the quantitative data

\_\_\_\_\_ Statistical power

\_\_\_\_\_ A detailed explanation of how qualitative data will be or were analyzed, procedures used, and units of analysis used.

\_\_\_\_\_ Data analysis reflects the phases in alignment with the simultaneous or sequential mixed method design and explains how analysis of qualitative and quantitative data will generate or generated answers to the research questions.

### **QUALITY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses internal and external validity threats.

\_\_\_\_\_ Addresses trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

### **[FOR ALL METHODS OF INQUIRY]**

#### **SUMMARY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes key points in the chapter.

\_\_\_\_\_ Transitions to Chapter IV.

\_\_\_\_\_ Conforms to the recommended length of 15 to 30 pages for Chapter III.

### **CHAPTER IV: RESULTS**

*This chapter focuses on presentation of the results of the analysis of data gathered through the procedures detailed in Chapter III. The data analysis reported in Chapter IV must align with the processes detailed in Chapter III. The data are not presented as “raw” data. Instead, the student presents the results of the analyses conducted, aligned with the research questions and, if used, hypotheses. Presentation of the results places the findings in the context of the research questions and/or hypotheses. The format and content of this Results chapter differs greatly depending on whether the study is qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method. The checklists below are labeled accordingly. Write Chapter IV in past tense.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Organizes all results such that they are easily understood by the reader (do not just present masses of data for the reader to analyze).

\_\_\_\_\_ Leads the reader carefully through the findings, highlighting the most important observations.

Presents a simple, clear, and complete account of the results.

\_\_\_\_\_ Uses APA-formatted tables, charts, graphs, and/or illustrations for clarity.

\_\_\_\_\_ Does not just copy and paste the outputs of statistics or other programs.

\_\_\_\_\_ Omits discussion of the findings (which is presented in Chapter V).

### **[INTRODUCTION]**

\_\_\_\_\_ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, shows how it fits in the dissertation, and discusses the organization of the chapter.

\_\_\_\_\_ Re-establishes the purpose of the study and the research questions [and hypotheses].

#### **PILOT STUDY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses details regarding conducting the pilot study, if applicable.

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies modifications to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test.

### **[QUALITATIVE]**

#### **SAMPLE**

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents a description of the sample participants and sample demographics or other appropriate characteristics of the unit(s) of study.

#### **DATA COLLECTION**

\_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes the actual logistics of the data collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes unusual circumstances encountered during data collection.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents the results of analysis, rather than raw data, illustrated with selected representative quotes in a way that makes sense to the reader.

\_\_\_\_\_ Clearly presents the findings.

\_\_\_\_\_ Builds logically from the problem and the research design.

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents the findings, reflecting analysis consistent with the specific research design—goes beyond reporting percentages of who said what or just identifying themes and patterns.

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents the findings by major themes and sub-themes using section headings that are representative of the themes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents findings in a manner that addresses the research questions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Supports all findings with data.

\_\_\_\_\_ Accounts for all salient data in the findings.

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes discrepant cases and non-confirming data in the findings.

### **[QUANTITATIVE]**

#### **SAMPLE**

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents description of the sample and sample demographics or other appropriate characteristics of the unit of study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Does not present raw data; presents results of descriptive and inferential analyses in a way that makes sense to the reader.

#### **DATA COLLECTION**

\_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes the actual logistics of the data collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes unusual circumstances encountered during data collection.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Organization of results aligns with and addresses research questions and hypotheses.

\_\_\_\_\_ Findings are presented by major themes and sub-themes, using section headings that are representative of the themes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrates rigorous methodological approaches.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reflects appropriate and correct use of data collection instruments.

\_\_\_\_\_ Uses research conventions and standard language/terminology to describe measures.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reports results of pilot tests, if used.

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies modifications to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test.

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes how any modifications affect instrument scoring and/or interpretation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Results of data analyses:

\_\_\_\_\_ Uses appropriate tools and approaches to display results.

\_\_\_\_\_ Makes interpretation and explanation of results consistent with the analyses.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reflects alignment with the specific research design, the research questions or hypotheses, and the theoretical or conceptual framework of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Makes the organization and presentation of results correspond to and address each research question and hypotheses, when used.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reports results of hypothesis testing and indicates support for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis when hypotheses are used.

\_\_\_\_\_ Develops sound analyses with appropriate use of statistics.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reports results that reflect conventional research language and format.

\_\_\_\_\_ Highlights findings that approach statistical significance, such as  $p < .10$ .

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies any inconsistencies or contradictions reflected in the findings and suggests plausible explanations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes additional findings.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Concludes by logically and systematically summarizing the results pertaining to the research questions and hypotheses.

## **[MIXED METHOD]**

### **SAMPLE**

\_\_\_\_\_ Presents description of the sample and sample demographics, or other appropriate characteristics of the unit of study, for both phases of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Does not present raw data; presents results of descriptive and inferential analyses and analysis of qualitative data in a way that makes sense to the reader.

\_\_\_\_\_ Description of the sample reflects sample size and characteristics for each phase of the research (qualitative and quantitative).

### **DATA COLLECTION**

\_\_\_\_\_ Summarizes the actual logistics of the data collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ Describes unusual circumstances encountered during data collection.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Organization of results aligns with and addresses the research questions and hypotheses, consistent with the type of mixed method design.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Findings are presented by major themes and sub-themes, using section headings that are representative of the themes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Presents the approaches and results for both phases (qualitative and quantitative).
- \_\_\_\_\_ For an explanatory design, presents quantitative results first, describes how these findings were explored in the qualitative phase, and then presents the qualitative findings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ For an exploratory design, presents qualitative results, explains how these findings informed the quantitative phase, and then presents the quantitative findings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In a triangulation design, presents both sets of data and triangulates the findings from the two phases.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstrates rigorous methodological approaches.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reflects appropriate and correct use of data collection instruments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses research conventions and standard language and terminology to describe measures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reports results of pilot tests, if used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes and justifies modifications to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes how any modifications affect instrument scoring and/or interpretation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Results of data analyses:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Uses appropriate tools and approaches to display results.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Interprets and explains results consistent with the analyses.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Reflects alignment with the specific mixed method research design, the research questions or hypotheses, and the theoretical or conceptual framework of the study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Makes the organization and presentation of results correspond to and address each research question and hypotheses, when used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reports results of hypothesis testing, and indicates support for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis when hypotheses are used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develops sound analyses with appropriate use of statistics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reports the results that reflect conventional research language and format.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Highlights findings that approach statistical significance, such as  $p < .10$ .
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identifies any inconsistencies or contradictions reflected in the findings and suggests plausible explanations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes additional findings.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Concludes by logically and systematically summarizing the results pertaining to the research questions and hypotheses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recommended length of Chapter IV is variable, based on the nature of the data.

## **CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION**

*The discussion chapter is where you interpret the importance of your findings for research and practice and discuss your results within the context of other research on the topic. You may want to go back and update Chapter II with any new research studies that may now seem important to the study. In Chapter V, you will address the extent to which your results converge with or diverge from previous research. You will revisit the research you reviewed in your introduction and review of literature, and any other pertinent literature, and discuss how your results add to the knowledge on the topic. You should also discuss any limitations of your research (e.g., generalizability issues or measurement limitations). Finally, you will discuss the implications of*

*your results and applications to practice, if appropriate, and provide suggestions for future research. [Section headings below are only suggestive.] Write Chapter V in past tense.*

### **[INTRODUCTION]**

\_\_\_\_\_ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the dissertation, and the organization of the chapter.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reviews the need for the study, the purpose of the research, the research questions that guided the study, and briefly restates the findings presented in Chapter IV.

\_\_\_\_\_ A restatement of the research problem is helpful to provide context.

### **INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes an overview and interpretation of the major findings of the study.

Includes conclusions that address all the research questions and/or hypotheses.

\_\_\_\_\_ Carefully examines all findings, including those that do not support or only partially support the hypotheses (quantitative only).

\_\_\_\_\_ Contains references to all results reported in Chapter IV.

\_\_\_\_\_ Is comprehensive in terms of addressing the range of findings.

\_\_\_\_\_ Is bound by the evidence collected.

### **LIMITATIONS OF STUDY**

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses limitations that may affect the validity, generalizability, or trustworthiness of the results.

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes a reflection on the researcher's experience with the research process (qualitative only).

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses possible personal biases or preconceived ideas and values.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses the influence of the researcher on the participants or the situation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reflects on student's changes in thinking because of the study.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND RESEARCH**

\_\_\_\_\_ Situates the findings in a larger body of literature on the topic, including the conceptual/theoretical framework.

\_\_\_\_\_ Considers the findings in juxtaposition with published research studies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses implications of the current study findings as pertinent to current theory.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discusses implications of findings that support, extend, and refute prior knowledge.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes implications of the current study's findings for professional practice or applied settings (if applicable).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the findings of the current study:

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifies topics that need closer examination and may generate a new round of research questions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Recommends alternative research methods and design.

## CONCLUSION

- \_\_\_\_\_ Closes with a strong conclusion statement that makes the “take-home message” clear.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conforms to the recommended length of 15 to 25 pages for Chapter V.

## REFERENCES

- \_\_\_\_\_ Alphabetically lists **all** references cited in the dissertation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association* for APA style for listing references.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Does not** list references that were not cited in the dissertation.

## APPENDIX (OR APPENDICES)

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes all additional information or materials that support, but are not a part of, the study in Chapters I–V.

Examples include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ • Copies of instructions for participants;
- \_\_\_\_\_ • Permissions obtained from organizations or agencies to use resources, materials, or facilities;
- \_\_\_\_\_ • Copies of informed consent forms and instrumentation;
- \_\_\_\_\_ • Descriptions of any special conditions of the research, etc.; and
- \_\_\_\_\_ • Tables or graphs that supplement, but do not provide primary data gained from the study (subject to recommendations made elsewhere in this document).

\_\_\_\_\_ Student has permission from copyright holder to include previously copyrighted materials such as tests and measures.

\_\_\_\_\_ Redact (black out) phone numbers and email addresses of student, chair, and participants where appropriate.



## APPENDIX B: FORMATTING GUIDELINES

The dissertation is a scholarly document, creating a permanent record of original research. Both the content and the style of the document reflect on the student, the Dissertation Committee, and Southwestern College. To appear as a scholarly publication and to have some uniformity with other dissertations from the university, please follow the formatting specifications presented here.

While the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association provides a style guide for submitting manuscripts, Southwestern College has its own style guide for dissertation publication, as described in this Dissertation Formatting Specifications Appendix. The college uses the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.) as the basic style guide for all papers as well as dissertations, and it should be used as a guide for all style and formatting issues not addressed in the following.

Recommendation: Begin using the required specifications on drafts of your dissertation as early as possible to become familiar with proper formatting and style.

### GENERAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES

<b>Font – main text</b>	Times New Roman, 12-point
<b>Font – footnotes</b>	Times New Roman, 10-point
<b>Margins (all pages, including those with tables and figures)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 in. margins</li> </ul>
<b>Justification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Left: justified</li> <li>•Right: ragged (not justified)</li> <li>•No hyphenation at the right margin</li> </ul>
<b>Spacing (lines)</b>	<p>•Double-space all pages, including abstract, except for the following, which should be single-spaced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headings, subheadings, and table or figure captions <i>exceeding one line in length</i></li> <li>• Table of contents entries <i>exceeding one line in length</i> (double-space between entries)</li> <li>• Footnotes (although individual footnotes are single-spaced, double-space between each separate footnote if more than one appears on a page)</li> <li>• Long, block-indented quotes or narrative</li> </ul>

	<p>List entries (double space between numbers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual entries of more than one line in the Reference section (although individual reference entries are single-spaced, double-space between each separate reference)</li> <li>• Table titles, table column and row headings, table text (double-space between rows), table notes</li> <li>• Lengthy material in tables and appendices</li> <li>• References List</li> </ul>
--	--

<b>Spacing (sentences)</b>	<i>Single-space</i> after all punctuation except internal periods in abbreviations (e.g., i.e., U.S.).
<b>Spacing (headings, tables)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Headings may have an extra space above to enhance readability. Be consistent throughout the manuscript in spacing around headings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Add an extra space above and below a table or figure to separate it from paragraphs or other tables/figures on the page.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Paragraphs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Each paragraph should be indented one-half inch</i></li> <li>• <i>No extra spaces between paragraphs</i></li> </ul>
<b>Headings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Headings should conform to the style described in the Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (7th ed.), except as noted below.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Footnotes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>List consecutively at the bottom of the page where they first appear; or</i></li> <li>• <i>Place footnotes in consecutive order on a separate page titled End Notes, following the Reference section.</i></li> </ul>

<b>Page Numbering</b>	Use the page number 1 on the title page. Use the automatic page-numbering function of your word processing program to insert page numbers in the top right corner of the page header.
<b>Headers and Footers</b>	Placement of Page Numbers are placed in either the upper right-hand corner within the header (flush with the right margin) or bottom center of page within the footer. Double-space to the line of text. Placement of numbers should be consistent throughout the document. The APA "running head" is not included in the dissertation.
<b>Tables and Figures</b>	Follow guidelines in Chapter 7 of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition.

## ARRANGEMENT

In its final form, the dissertation should be arranged in the following order: *preliminary pages* (title/signature page, abstract, copyright page, acknowledgements/dedication, table of contents, list of tables and figures, list of appendices), *text* (introduction, main body of text, summary or conclusion), and *references and supplemental sections* (footnotes, appendices, etc.).

### TITLE PAGE

Each copy of the dissertation must include a title page prepared in accordance with the example shown in **Appendix E**. The title page begins with page number 1, flush right in the headers. The title is double spaced beginning on Line 15, the candidate's full legal name as it appears in the Southwestern College records, College, and month/year.

### COPYRIGHT PAGE

This page consists of the following information centered on the bottom of the page. It follows the title page:

Copyright by
FULL LEGAL NAME OF STUDENT
Year the degree will be conferred

### SIGNATURE PAGE

The signature page follows the copyright page stating the dissertation approval by the committee and the Academic Dean. All members electronically sign the document on the appropriate signature line as in **Appendix F**.

## **ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS**

An abstract (preliminary p. iii) must be included in each dissertation. The abstract should contain the title of the dissertation and the student's name in full, as follows:

Full Title of the Dissertation
by
Full Name of Student
Abstract

Text of the Abstract...
-------------------------

Followed by:

Key Words...
--------------

- Abstract should be 350 words or less.
- Use the same paragraph formatting as used in the full manuscript, but without an indented first sentence of each paragraph.
- At the bottom of the abstract, include key words. The key words are used by other researchers to search for and identify information in various subject areas. The best way to determine this is to think about your own dissertation and what key words you would use to search for it.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/DEDICATION**

The Acknowledgements and Dedication pages should follow the Abstract (as preliminary pages iv, v). Center the heading at the top of the page.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

A table of contents is required and must reflect the outline and organization of the dissertation. If your dissertation includes tables, figures, and appendices, these must be noted on separate pages as List of Tables and List of Figures and List of Appendices (identified by number and title). Short lists can be presented on the same page. Lists should include page numbers. The heading should be centered at the top of the page. List

your chapter headings flush to the left margin and subheadings indented beneath them. Corresponding page numbers should be inserted in a column on the right side of the page.

## **TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION**

The text of the dissertation follows the Table of Contents. The first page of the text is page 1, followed by page 2, and so on, through the end of the manuscript. Page numbers should be in Arabic numerals, centered in the bottom center of each page, in 12-point font.

## **HEADINGS**

Chapter headings should be shown in all caps, (CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION) with chapter numbers in capital Roman numerals (CHAPTER II, CHAPTER III, etc.). Subsequent headers in each chapter should follow the APA style guide requirements for subsequent levels of headings/subheadings, with the first heading in a chapter being a Level 1 heading. See Section 2.27 “Heading Levels” in the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)**:

- The first heading used (after the Chapter Title) should be a Level 1 heading: Centered, Boldface, Capitalizing the first letter of each non-trivial word.
- A second level heading is formatted the same as a first level heading except it is positioned flush left.
- Third level headings are flush left, boldface, and italicized.
- Fourth level headings are indented, boldface, capitalizing the first letter of each non-trivial word. End the fourth level heading with a period and start the first sentence of the section on the same line.
- While each chapter should include introductory text, do not include a heading called “Introduction,” which is understood.
- Do not include a level of heading unless there is more than one section within that level.

## **CREDITING SOURCES**

In-text citations using an author-date citation system must be included for all ideas that are not the student’s own or are not common knowledge.

- In-text citations should conform to APA style, generally, author and date for paraphrased information and author, date, and page number for direct quotations (See chapter 8 of the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)**).
- If the names of the authors and/or the date are included in the text, only the remaining required information is included in parentheses.
- Indirect sources (sources referenced in a secondary source) are indicated in the in-text citation, and the secondary source is listed in the reference list at the end of the paper (See section 8.6 of the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)**).
- Use quotations and secondary sources sparingly, if at all.

- All citations in the text have a corresponding reference in the reference section at the end of the dissertation (except for personal interviews, personal email, or other online postings that are not retrievable).

## **REFERENCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL SECTIONS**

### **Reference Section**

- Start the references list on a new page following the body of the manuscript.
- The word “References” should appear bolded and centered at the top of the page.
- References should be arranged alphabetically by last name of the first author.
- Arrange multiple entries by the same author(s) by year of publication, with the earliest first.
- Note that the reference section contains only those references directly cited in the text; it is not a bibliography.
- Individual references should be single-spaced with a double-space between each individual reference entry.
- Each reference entry should be formatted with a hanging indent, meaning that the first line of each entry is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented .5" from the left. Use the Microsoft Word paragraph formatting pane to set “Spacing” to “Hanging.”

Consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.) for specific examples of proper formatting of reference entries for each type of document or electronic material.

## **APPENDIX MATERIAL**

If your paper has more than one appendix, label each one with a capital letter (Appendix A, Appendix B) in the order in which it is mentioned.

- Each appendix must have a title.
- Note that you must have permission from the copyright holder to include previously copyrighted materials such as tests and measures.

## **TABLES AND FIGURES**

- Place tables and figures as close as possible to the first mention within the text. If small enough, place the table or figure below the first mention, or begin on the page immediately following the first mention by number. (Note: Tables and figures provide the means by example for developing the text argument, but they do not constitute the argument; thus, they must be interpreted in your written text.)
- Separate tables and figures from text by triple space at top and bottom of table.
- Number tables and figures sequentially throughout the manuscript (e.g., Table 1, Table 2, etc.; Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.). Do not use chapter numbers or letters to identify tables

(e.g., Table 4-1, Table 4-A) except in the Appendix (e.g., Appendix A might contain one or more tables titled Table A-1, Table A-2, etc.).

- Use dissertation margin requirements for tables and figures. If necessary, print tables or figures that exceed the margins using landscape format.
- Do not break a table or figure between two pages unless it is impossible to include the entire table or figure on one page. If a table or figure is too large to fit on one page, use an abbreviated heading on the following page (e.g., Table 1 - Cont'd.) or place the entire table or figure in an Appendix.
- Tables and figures may be reduced, though titles and captions should remain in 12-point font.
- Limit lines in a table to those that are necessary for clarity (usually only those separating headings from columnar data), and do not use vertical lines. Use generous spacing between columns and rows, as well as strict alignment to clarify relationships within a table. Individual entries in rows and columns should be single-spaced, with a double space between each separate entry.
- Format tables using the Table function in Word, and then eliminate lines between columns and rows. This prevents the use of tabs and spacing to place information within the table that may change the format of the table depending on the version of Word being used to review the document.
- Note that authors must obtain permission to reproduce or adapt all or part of a table (or figure) from a copyrighted source (see "Inclusion of Previously Published Material" below). If you plan to include copyrighted material in your dissertation, you must include letters of permission when you submit your final manuscript to UMI/ProQuest.

**Tables** - Tables consist of material contained in a tabular format of columns and rows. Table titles should be brief, but clear and explanatory. Table numbers and titles are placed above the actual table.

**Example of Table heading format:**

**Table 1**

*Errors for Younger and Older Groups by Level of Difficulty*

Actual Table Here

**Figures** - Figures commonly consist of pictorial elements, including charts, graphs, drawings, maps, and photographs. Figure numbers and titles are placed *above the actual figure*.

**Example of Figure caption format:**

**Figure 1**

*Title of figure here* ACTUAL FIGURE HERE

## REFERENCES AND CITATIONS

### EXAMPLES OF CITATIONS WITHIN THE TEXT

- 1) At end of quoted material in text (closing punctuation outside parentheses):  
"I feel strengthened by it, like a ship that's been through hard winds, torrents, and then finally comes to a harbor" (Marshall, 1992, p. 36).
  
- 2) At end of block quote of 40 words or more in text (closing punctuation precedes parentheses):  
Mindfulness, as a dispositional trait, should be added to the family of protective factors and positive psychological characteristics that counseling psychologists research and seek to promote in the clients they serve. Counseling psychologists are well positioned to examine how mindfulness may or may not relate to or interplay with other better understood positive psychological characteristics. (Goldberg, 2018, p. 329)

## PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED MATERIAL

Students must gain permission from copyright holders and provide citations directly beneath copyrighted material being used. For example,

Actual Figure or Table
---------------------------

**Note. Adapted from Title of Book (p. 103), by A. N. Author and C. O. Author, 1994, Publisher. Copyright 1994 by the Name of Copyright Holder. Reprinted [or Adapted] with permission.**

This is a single example. Follow the guidelines in Chapter 7 of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

## PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Cite in the text as (J. Doe, personal communication, January 1, 1998).
- Do not include in Reference section.

Refer to Chapter 9 of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.



## **REFERENCE LIST PREFERENCES**

- Single-space each reference.
- Double-space between individual references.

## **JOURNAL ARTICLES**

Include a doi when available. If retrieved from a library database, do not include “Retrieved by” location or date. Format the doi per the instructions in section 9.35 of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

- Only the first word of the article’s title and subtitle (the first word after the colon), proper nouns and acronyms are capitalized.
- Italicize the name of the journal, but not the title of the article.
- Capitalize major words in the name of the journal and italicize the name of the journal.
- Italicize the volume number (if any).

## **BOOKS**

- Only the first word of the book’s title and subtitle (the first word after the colon), proper nouns and acronyms are capitalized.
- Italicize book title.
- Do not include the location of publication.
- Omit superfluous terms such as Publishers, Co., or Inc.; retain the words Books and Press.

## APPENDIX C: DISSERTATION WRITING TIPS

1. Avoid words that imply absolutes, such as *the research proves*. Instead, scholarly terminology such as *the research data or findings suggest* or *imply* is more appropriate.
2. Use of vague or colloquial expressions that one might use in normal conversations should not be used in scholarly writings. Avoid the use of jargon and expressions that are not scholarly. Examples inappropriate for dissertations: *nevertheless, on one hand, in other words, corner the market, otherwise, at the broadest level, Catch-22, ripple effects, fills the gap, as a bonus, closed the loop, bringing up the rear, bridging the gap*.
3. Ensure that the referents for all pronouns are clear. Avoid the use of pronouns such as *this, that, their, them, those, its*, etc. unless the referent is clearly and specifically known. **For example, this sentence could be confusing:**

When communicating with subordinates, leaders should always make sure they are understood, or they risk becoming disenfranchised.

Leaders should make sure who is understood? The leaders themselves or the people with whom they are communicating? And, who risks being disenfranchised? The leader or the subordinates?

### **Instead, write:**

When communicating with subordinates, leaders should always make sure their words are clear and concise so that subordinates understand the message, or subordinates risk becoming disenfranchised.

4. Watch the use of singular and plural in the same sentence. Subject, verb, and object should all be either singular or plural. Be consistent, even between sentences. Note, however, that in APA 7th edition, the use of the plural “they” or “them” or “their” is an acceptable substitution for using either he or she when the gender of the individual is unknown.
5. The word *data* is plural; the singular is *datum*. Thus, *data are, not data is*.
6. Do not use an apostrophe when referencing events occurring within a specific year of a given decade. For example, when referring to events that occurred within the year 1980, one should write 1980s and not 1980’s.
7. Avoid absolute phrases such as *will contribute* or *will show*. It is recommended that learners use phrases such as *may* or *might contribute*. Researchers are rarely, if ever, certain of outcomes.
8. Always use specific references to time. Vague references, such as *today, recent, currently*, and *this* should be avoided because some readers may not read the dissertation until sometime in the future.
9. All paragraphs should contain 3–5 sentences that support a **single idea**. Many learners inappropriately construct paragraphs containing only one or two sentences. Conversely,

many learners inappropriately have very long paragraphs that are composed of unrelated sentences.

10. Students often overuse the words *this researcher* when it may be more important to state what occurred in the study. Instead of *this researcher placed the mouse in the tub*, say *the mouse was placed in the tub*. Focus on the action taken rather than on yourself as the performer of the action. The use of first person may be permitted for clarity.

11. Avoid anthropomorphisms (attributing human characteristics to an inanimate object). *Research cannot demonstrate or show* (or actually do much of anything). *Research results can indicate*.

12. Avoid stringy sentences. Stringy sentences are so long the reader forgets the beginning of the sentence before reaching the end. Break long sentences into shorter sentences. A good rule of thumb is that sentences should be no more than 40 words. Longer sentences should be revised for succinctness and clarity.

13. Past tense should be used to describe previous research or when referencing quotes, as the process has already been completed. An example of the appropriate use of past tense might be: *Jones (2005) defined* or *Smith (2004) published*.

14. Proposals and dissertations should be written in scholarly language. Non-scholarly words that begin sentences may be redundant with other words or ideas in the sentence. Revise to scholarly tone and presentation. See section 4.5 in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Examples may include, among others: *Additionally, As a result, Accordingly, Because of, Clearly, Consequently, Essentially, Finally, Furthermore, For example, However, In addition, In spite of, It was found, Moreover, Nevertheless, Overall, Therefore, and Thus*.

15. Place periods and commas within closing quotation marks. Colons and semicolons are placed outside closing quotation marks. Question marks and explanation points should be inside the quotation marks only if they are part of the quoted material.

## APPENDIX D: CHANGE MATRIX TEMPLATE

<b><i>Comment Identifier</i></b>	<b><i>Reviewer Comment</i></b>	<b><i>Page/Para. (Original Draft)</i></b>	<b><i>Changes Made and/or Comments</i></b>	<b><i>Page/Para. (New Draft)</i></b>
<i>Consecutively number the reviewer comments you are responding to.</i>	<i>Copy the reviewer comment.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the comment was made.</i>	<i>Describe the changes that were made, and/or comments responding to questions or concerns.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the change(s) was made.</i>

Add as many rows as you need...

**Example:**

<b><i>Comment Identifier</i></b>	<b><i>Reviewer Comment</i></b>	<b><i>Page/Para. (Original Draft)</i></b>	<b><i>Changes Made and/or Comments</i></b>	<b><i>Page/Para. (New Draft)</i></b>
<i>Consecutively number the reviewer comments you are responding to.</i>	<i>Copy the reviewer comment.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the comment was made.</i>	<i>Describe the changes that were made, and/or comments responding to questions or concerns.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the change(s) was made.</i>
Chapter I Purpose of the study Comment 1	The purpose should be consistent across the proposal in terms of the focus, intent, and specific population. The purpose must align fully with the research questions. In some places, it does, but the language fluctuates.	Throughout the entire chapter	Aligned the purpose statements so that they are all the same.	iii, abstract 7, para 2 13, para 1 72, para 2 73, last para

<p>Chapter I Overview of Research Design Comment 2</p>	<p>The student provided detail about the data sources and techniques but is missing the research design description and justification. The student should briefly describe and justify the choice of a qualitative single exploratory case study design and its appropriate address the purpose and research questions.</p>	<p>Entire section</p>	<p>Created a description of research design and justification.</p>	<p>Pages 13 last para 14-15 in entirety Page 72 para 2 73 last para  74 para 1 and 2</p>
<p>Chapter III Ethical Concerns Comment 3</p>	<p>The student should address procedures to confidentiality and confidentiality collection, reporting, and storage (APA recommends 5 years).</p>	<p>Chapter III</p>	<p>Added that I will keep the data for 5 years and then destroy it.</p>	<p><b>Page 101 para 1</b></p>
<p>Chapter III Data Analysis Comment 4</p>	<p>The student should discuss explicitly how the results will be triangulated within and across the units of analysis and multiple data sources in the proposed study to reveal patterns of convergence and divergence and generate answer the research sub-questions.</p>	<p>Chapter III</p>	<p>Created a more detailed section on triangulation.</p>	<p>Page 17 last para Page 18 1st para Page 91 para2 and 3 92 para 1</p>

# APPENDIX E: Title Page

1

## **The Role of Compulsive Texting in Adolescents' Academic Functioning**

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of  
Montclair State University in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

John P. Smith

Montclair State University

Upper Montclair, NJ

August 2020

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Michael S. Silverman



## APPENDIX F: Signature Page

Dissertation Title

I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Educational Leadership, Emphasis area (**Building Leadership, District Leadership, Higher Education, or Educational Leadership**)

---

Committee Chair name

---

Committee Member name

---

Committee Member name

Accepted for the College of Education, Southwestern College

---

Academic Dean (name) and title



## **APPENDIX G: Dissertation Committee Forms 1-4**



FORM 1

ESTABLISHMENT OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

A MINIMUM OF THREE COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDING THE CHAIR IS REQUIRED.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Division Chair, Education Department

FOR: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of doctoral Candidate	Signature	Date
------------------------------------	-----------	------

CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name	Signature	Date
--------------	-----------	------

MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name	Signature	Date
--------------	-----------	------

MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name	Signature	Date
--------------	-----------	------

MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name	Signature	Date
--------------	-----------	------

MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name	Signature	Date
--------------	-----------	------

MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name	Signature	Date
--------------	-----------	------

Dissertation Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name and Signature of Education Division Chair	Date
--	------

\*Off-campus persons must be approved. Be sure to attach vita for each off-campus committee member. Signatures for chair and members confirm willingness to serve on doctoral committee.



FORM 2

Dissertation Committee Approval (Pre-Proposal Meeting)

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidelines:

1. The Committee must consist of 3 or more persons. Each member must be from a department of Southwestern College or from an appropriate graduate program at another academic institution; if from another academic institution **please supply committee member's CV**
2. **All coordination among the Dissertation Committee members is the student's responsibility**

Dissertation Title:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members

Signature	Printed Name	Date
Chair	_____	_____
Member	_____	_____
Member	_____	_____
Member	_____	_____

The Dissertation Committee listed above is approved and the student may proceed to prepare and defend the Dissertation Proposal.

\_\_\_\_\_ Education Division Chair

Please submit this completed form to the Education Department Office, 100 College, Winfield, KS 67156



FORM 3

Approval of Dissertation Proposal

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidelines:

1. The Committee must consist of 3 or more persons. Each member must be from a department of Southwestern College or from an appropriate graduate program at another academic institution or be approved to serve as a guest member.
2. **All coordination among the Dissertation Committee members is the student's responsibility**

Dissertation Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members

Signature/Printed Name	Approved	Not Approved
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chair _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Dissertation Committee listed above is approved and the student may proceed to prepare and defend the Dissertation Proposal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Education Division Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

If you do not approve this Dissertation Proposal please attach the reason.



FORM 4

Approval of Dissertation Defense

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Date of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Field of Concentration for Ed.D. \_\_\_\_\_

**Dissertation Title:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Date of Examination \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By:

Signature/Printed Name

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Member

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Member

\_\_\_\_\_

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Member

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Member

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Education Division Chair

---

Submit one signed copy to the Education Division

Distribution: Committee Chairperson, Dean of Teacher Education, Academic Dean, Registrar

## **APPENDIX H: IRB Forms**

## *Sample Debriefing Statement for Adult Participants*

### **SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY**

#### *Facial Symmetry and Trust*

Previous research has shown that people with high facial symmetry are deemed to be more attractive. The study in which you participated investigates the connection between facial symmetry and trust. You were shown a series of photographs from a database of people with pre-determined facial symmetry and then decided whether or not the individual appeared to be trustworthy. By answering the questions we hope to add to the accumulating research on how appearance affects how people are treated.

As explained prior to the procedure, your responses will remain anonymous; there will be no way to link your name with your responses on the questionnaire. Further, we are interested in the combined responses of all participants in the study rather than in individual responses. Therefore, all participants have completed the same questionnaire and the data will be analyzed as a whole. In order to protect the integrity of the data, it is very important that future participants arrive unaware of the purpose of this study. Please help us obtain valid data by not discussing this study with anyone who may participate at a later time. Also, please retain or dispose of this statement in a location where it will not likely be read by future participants.

If your participation in this study has raised any issues or concerns you would like to pursue, or if you would like to receive a summary of the results of this study, please contact David Smith at 620-555-5555 prior to May 2, 2013. Thank you for participating and contributing to the growing body of knowledge on this topic.

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David A. Smith  
Primary Investigator

**SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE**  
**Human and Non-Human Animal Subjects Research Committee**  
**Graduate Studies Research Proposal**

*Submission Form for Graduate Research Proposal*

You may proceed with data collection after this proposal has been approved by your faculty mentor/instructor and the Human and Non-Human Animal Subjects Research Committee. Complete this *Submission* form, the *Participant Information* form and attach copies of the *Consent to Participate*, *Debriefing Statement* and all project materials.

Primary Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Mentor/Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Funding Agency (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

If the Project is Part of a Course Requirement List the Course Code and Number (e.g. EDUC 531) \_\_\_\_\_

Project Overview:

Projected data collection dates: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that data collection may not begin until the project has been approved by the Human and Non-Human Animal Subjects Research Committee. It is also understood that approval may require changes to the proposal.

List all research assistants who may have contact with the participants.

Name:	Telephone:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

By signing below, I agree to conduct the project described in this document in accordance with the guidelines for the treatment of human and non-human participants provided by the American Psychological Association and by Southwestern College. I understand that I am responsible for the ethical conduct of all research assistants as well as for myself.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Primary Investigator or Typed Name for Electronic Submissions) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Faculty Mentor/Instructor or Typed Name for Electronic Submissions) (Date)



*Sample Consent to Participate Form for Minors*

**CONSENT FOR MINORS TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH  
SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE**

**PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR:** Jane Eyre, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Southwestern College, Winfield Kansas (620-555-5555)

**TITLE OF STUDY:** Classroom Behavior and Rewards

**PURPOSE:** Your child, or the minor under your legal guardianship, will be asked to complete questionnaires for a research study on classroom behavior and rewards. The researchers will also record changes in classroom behavior based on whether a reward of 10 minutes extra recess time is given. We hope to gain from this study a more accurate picture of whether or not a reward system improves classroom behavior.

**PROCEDURES:** Children will complete five minute questionnaires at the end of each day for three weeks. The researchers will also record changes in classroom behavior based on whether a reward of 10 minutes extra recess time is given, but this will not require any effort or time from the children.

**TIME INVOLVED:** We anticipate this study to take approximately 10 minutes per school day for three weeks.

**RISKS:** We do not anticipate any risk of serious physical or psychological harm as a result of participating in this study.

**BENEFITS:** By participating in this study, your child or the minor under your legal guardianship will have contributed to advancing our knowledge of some of the factors that affect classroom behavior. In addition, all participants in the study will receive a debriefing, and overall results of the experiment will be made available upon request.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** The identity of the participants will be known only to the researchers involved in the study. Participants will be specifically requested not to enter their name or any other identifying marks on any materials. Because this consent form will be returned separately from the study materials, the name and responses will never be linked. All names and responses will be held in the strictest confidence to the full extent of the law. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, since research documents are subject to subpoena.

**RIGHT TO REFUSE OR WITHDRAW:** The participation of your child or minor under your legal guardianship in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to allow the minor to participate at this point or change your mind about participating in this study at any point along the way. No one will be penalized in any way for a decision to withdraw from the study.

**QUESTIONS:** If you have any questions about this study, please ask the experimenter. If you have additional questions later, or if you want to receive a summary of the results of the study, you may contact Dr. Jane Eyre, 657 Mossman Hall, Southwestern College, Winfield, KS 67156-2499, 620-555-5555.

**Your signature below will indicate that you have decided to allow the minor named below to be a research participant and that you have read and understood the information provided above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name of Minor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name of Parent/Legal Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## ***Sample Debriefing Statement for Minor Participants***

### **SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY**

#### *Classroom Behavior and Rewards*

Good classroom behavior is known to promote learning, so researchers and instructors are looking for ways to improve classroom behavior. The study in which your child, or minor under your legal guardianship, participated in investigates whether or not a reward of 10 minutes of extra recess improves classroom behavior. The results of this study may be used in larger groups depending on the outcome of the study.

As explained prior to the procedure, all responses will remain anonymous; there will be no way to link any name with a response on a questionnaire or data form. Further, we are interested in the combined responses of all participants in the study rather than in individual responses. Therefore, all participants have completed the same questionnaire and the data will be analyzed as a whole. In order to protect the integrity of the data, it is very important that future participants arrive unaware of the purpose of this study. Please help us obtain valid data by not discussing this study with anyone who may participate at a later time. Also, please retain or dispose of this statement in a location where it will not likely be read by future participants.

If participation in this study has raised any issues or concerns you would like to pursue, or if you would like to receive a summary of the results of this study, please contact Dr. Jane Eyre at 620-555-5555 prior to May 2, 2013. Thank you for participating and contributing to the growing body of knowledge on this topic.

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Dr. Jane Eyre, Ph.D.  
Primary Investigator

## **APPENDIX I: Dissertation Proposal Outline**

### Elements to be Discussed during the Dissertation Proposal

The learner should present the proposal defense in the following steps:

1. Background
2. Problem Statement
3. Purpose
4. Research questions
5. Significance to Study
6. Overview of Methodology
7. Limitations/Delimitations
8. Theoretical Framework (to include competing perspectives)
9. Key Research
10. Emerging themes/connection to theory
11. Methodology (to include):
  - a. Research Design
  - b. Setting and Context
  - c. Participants
  - d. Data Collection Strategies
  - e. Validity/Reliability

## APPENDIX J: Dissertation Final Defense Outline

### Elements to be Discussed during the Dissertation Defense

The learner should present the defense in the following steps:

1. Introduction to the study
2. Need for Study
3. Purpose
4. Conceptual/Theoretical Framework/Lit Review
  - a. The learner demonstrates their understanding for the conceptual and theoretical framework
  - b. The conceptual/theoretical framework aligns with the Lit Review
5. Research Questions
  - a. Research questions developed from the Lit Review
  - b. Research questions seeking what the research is not saying
6. Methodology (to include): (should be in past tense)
  - a. Research Design
  - b. Setting and Context
  - c. Sampling Strategy Described
  - d. Data Collection and Analysis
  - e. Increasing Validity
    - i. Methodology is clear and precise
    - ii. Methodology align with research questions
7. Findings
  - a. Findings per research question
  - b. Additional findings
    - i. Do the findings answer the research questions?
    - ii. Do the findings connect back to the research?
8. Conclusions
  - a. Do conclusions align with gathered data? If not, why?
9. Recommendations for Future Research
  - a. Explanation of “why does this matter” and “what can be done with the findings”?

## **APPENDIX K: Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Defense Rubric**

### **Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Presentation Rubric**

**Note to Committee:** Please assess the following elements of the dissertation proposal and specify any changes or revisions required in the comment chapter following each chapter.<sup>1</sup> Any chapter or element within a chapter rated as ‘Emerging’ or ‘Insufficient’ must be successfully revised as ‘Proficient’ before the proposal can receive a ‘Pass’ by the committee, and the student thereby ‘Advanced to Candidacy.’

**Submit the completed form to the Southwestern Education Program Chair with the signed Proposal Approval form.**

**Please note: Typical expected scores for EDUC 901 and 902 are primarily “2’s” with an occasional “3”.** It is also understood an occasional score of “1” should be expected during coursework. These courses are designed to help students become academic writers at the highest level of study in the field of education. **Therefore, pervasive or consistent scores of “3” and “4” are only expected when a student’s work indicates a readiness for the Dissertation Defense.**

**Rubric score of 1 means:**

- Lack of understanding of required elements
- Elements are not covered and/or incorrectly described
- Lack of sufficient material to understand elements

<b>1=Insufficient</b>	<b>2=Emerging</b>	<b>3=Proficient</b>	<b>4=Exemplary</b>
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

<b>Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Topic Selection, Abstract and Title</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Narrowing of Topic:</b> Is the topic researchable: Who will the topic focus on, what does it take into account, who will it impact, what location is considered, who will this work for, and does the narrowing represent the scope of the topics presence in the literature over time?				
<b>Interest of Topic:</b> Is there personal interest for multiple stakeholders, could the topic be publishable, does the study fill a void in education, and contribute to career goals?				
<b>Abstract:</b> Does it contain the following in order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The issue or problem</li> <li>● The purpose of the study</li> <li>● The data to be collected</li> <li>● The themes or statistical results that may surface</li> <li>● The practical implications of the study</li> <li>● The abstract is no more than 250 words</li> </ul>				
<b>Title of Study:</b> Is it brief, less than 12 words, and uses only essential words?				
<b>Title of Study:</b> Does it present the focus of the study's research and a sense of the importance of the study? Does it synthesize the key issues and/or findings?				
<b>Writing Conventions:</b> Author demonstrates appropriate use of grammar/mechanics/style; use of transitions; proper tense, etc. and APA format/references.				
<b>Overall Rating</b>				

<b>1=Insufficient</b>	<b>2=Emerging</b>	<b>3=Proficient</b>	<b>4=Exemplary</b>
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

**Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 1 (Introduction and Framing the Problem)**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction and Background to the Study:</b> Does it describe the broader context of the problem being investigated or explored? Is the background grounded in the history of the topic within the literature allowing the researcher to understand the background of the topic over time? Does the rationale for the study document the need? Does the overview of the study build a case for the problem statement and deficiencies found in current research? Please note current research includes articles within the last ten years with the exception of historical or seminal works.				
<b>Problem Statement:</b> The author includes the following elements in the problem statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Presents the problem statement early, clearly (i.e., the reader can recognize it), and briefly (e.g., in one paragraph).</li> <li>● Answers the question: ‘Why does this research need to be conducted?’ (Lewis &amp; Clark, p. 57).</li> <li>● Identifies “the problem or knowledge gap that [the student’s] project is responding to” (Lewis &amp; Clark, p.57).</li> <li>● Clearly situates the problem by analyzing its historical, social, and/or cultural context. Why has the problem not been addressed in the past?</li> <li>● Draws upon multiple literature sources of information to substantiate the problem. What does literature and research say about the problem that can and should be stated? How is the historical context explored in the background and restated briefly within the problem statement, establishing a need for the study?</li> </ul>				
<b>Purpose:</b> The author presents a purpose statement, which clarifies the objectives of the study, signifies the supporting rationale that supports the purpose. The statement serves as a precursor to the research questions. The purpose is concise, to the point. It includes words denoting the method of inquiry to be used and the unit of analysis or research site.				
<b>Research Questions or Hypotheses:</b> The research questions point back to the purpose statement as a precursor to the research questions. - Merriam & Tisdell (2016) state “This gap then becomes the purpose of the study followed by research questions exploring different aspects of the overall and more general purpose”- p. 82. In addition, the research				

questions or hypotheses are significant and provoking. Qualitative studies will have one primary question and two or three secondary questions. <b>The questions connect to the theory(s) from the theoretical framework.</b>				
<b>Significance of Study:</b> The author indicates the potential implications, benefits, usefulness, contributions of his/her study in relation to research, theory and practice. The significance of the study reflects on how “results of the study may affect scholarly research, theory, practice, educational interventions, curricula, counseling, policy,” etc. (Lewis & Clark, p. 57).				
<b>Overview of Methodology:</b> An overview of the methodology presents a brief summary and rationale of the research design. It presents the case how the methodological choice is the best choice to answer the research questions and address the problem statement. Quantitative studies justify in terms of the problem statement and variables for data collected. Qualitative studies justify how the research questions will answer the phenomenon to be studied.				
<b>Limitations and Delimitations:</b> The author presents limitations and delimitations of the study. For limitations, the author thoughtfully identifies “potential weaknesses of the study” (Lewis & Clark, p. 57). For delimitations, the author clearly states how his/her study is bounded.				
<b>Definitions:</b> The author defines key terms, either within the text as they arise, or in a separate chapter. All definitions are cited.				
<b>Theoretical Framework:</b> The author provides a brief overview of theories and/or a theoretical framework that guides the study (where appropriate). The theories and/or framework described are suitable for the problem of study and the author’s stated purpose. <b>(can be embedded in Background of Study)</b>				
<b>Summary and Organization of Study:</b> Summarizes key points from chapter one and describes the format of the dissertation and the content in the subsequent chapters.				
<b>Overall Rating for Chapter 1</b> <b>Comments and Suggestions:</b>				



<b>1=Insufficient</b>	<b>2=Emerging</b>	<b>3=Proficient</b>	<b>4=Exemplary</b>
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

<b>Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 2 (Literature Review)</b>				
<b>Introduction to the Lit Review:</b> Author provides an overview of what is in the chapter beginning with the conceptual framework for the study with established boundaries. The purpose of the study is supported. The foundation for the research questions, methodology and conceptual framework is provided. (The conceptual framework “explains the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs, or variables – and the presumed relationships among them.)	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Lit Review Organization:</b> The ideas and concepts build upon each other within each chapter. Transitions between all paragraphs are evident. The literature review is organized into headings and subheadings-from broad to specific. Topic areas speak to the research questions or hypotheses. Key words identified from literature search help outline the sections of the literature review.				
<b>Body of the Lit Review:</b> The context of the lit review synthesizes the scholarly research relative to the dissertation topic. The body of the lit review may explore any or all of the following: competing perspectives (different theoretical perspectives related to study), conceptual framework, theoretical framework (theoretical framework connects to the problem statement and addresses these questions: (1) How does the theory provide an explanation for what you believe is happening? (2) What other theory(s) provide an alternative explanation that explains your problem of interest and purpose of study.				
<b>Conceptual and Theoretical Framework:</b> The author presents a conceptual framework which explains or provides an explanation of the main things to be studied- the key ideas, constructs, experiences and facts and the presumed relationships among them. The developed conceptual framework is based on theory, research, professional knowledge and experience. The author presents a theoretical framework which provides a brief overview of theories that guides the study. The theories and/or framework described align to the problem statement and purpose of the study.				

<p><b>Epistemology</b>  <b>The author presents evidence of Epistemological understanding through:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflection on personal integration of information based on rational inquiry (includes: asking what is needed as well as how things work &amp; why).</li> <li>● Integration of personal experience &amp; reflection (perhaps generating new paradigms, insights, and judgments).</li> <li>● Showing evidence of listening to others without losing ability to 'hear' own voice.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Synthesis of the Research:</b> The author integrates what is learned from the literature and indicates how the research either supports or does not support existing theories. The author reveals questions that need further research and identifies areas of controversy founded in the literature. The author makes sense of the research, identifies gaps, patterns, themes and common findings. The “gap” or “need” is described from the literature and how it leads to the identified topic and problem statement. (Information from this section should help expand the Background to the Problem in chapter 1). The balance of the selected research is from peer-reviewed journals.</p>				
<p><b>Summary of the Research:</b> The author summarizes the research presenting their opinion of the literature’s strengths and weaknesses. The gaps are further identified and an argument is built on how the study is based on the author’s beliefs that will close some of the gaps. It addresses how research has changed over the last five years, key findings from the research, and limitations on previous studies and defines future needs.</p>				
<p><b>Conclusion to the Lit Review:</b> The author presents an overall summary to the literature and transitions to why the study is important to investigate. The conclusion is a restatement of the purpose and why the study is significant. The author provides for a robust transition to the methodology.</p>				
<p><b>Number of scholarly resources:</b> The author has a minimum of 60 research articles (focusing on relevant studies) addressed in their literature review in at least 25-30 pages.</p>				
<p><b>Overall Rating for Chapter 2</b>  <b>Comments and Suggestions:</b></p>				

<b>1=Insufficient</b>	<b>2=Emerging</b>	<b>3=Proficient</b>	<b>4=Exemplary</b>
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

<b>Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 3 (Methodology)</b>				
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Author introduces (and defines) the overall methodological approach for each problem or question. The purpose statement, research questions or hypotheses are restated from Chapter 1. Author provides a rationale for the selection of the methodology with a clear indication of why the approach is most suitable for answering the research questions and “how the approach fits the overall research design.”				
<b>Research Design:</b> The author provides a structure of the study, detailing the methods selected to collect and analyze with detailed descriptions for replication. Author draws upon the literature on the particular methodology to support the rationale, such as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. The author explains why the specific design is appropriate for the study.				
<b>Research Setting and Context:</b> The author describes the location where the study will take place and why the site was selected. Contextual issues that may be present are explained at the time of data collection that may influence the research.				
<b>Role of the Researcher</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The role of the researcher is described in terms of past/current professional roles at setting, past/current professional relationships with the participants, and how these past/current roles and relationships are likely to affect data collection.</li> <li>● Methods of establishing a researcher-participant working relation are appropriate. The researcher’s experiences or biases related to the topic are described.</li> <li>● Researcher bias is explained</li> </ul>				
<b>Sampling Strategy and Sample Description:</b> The author identifies/describes the participants of the study, required characteristics for being included, the sample size for each type of data collation including interviews, observations, artifacts etc., and how confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. Methods for ethical protection of participants are clearly explained step by step. Procedures for gaining access to participants are described.				

<b>Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 3 (Methodology)</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Case Study:</b> Guideline: The type of case study determines the number of participants. Learners should strive for a minimum of 10 participants or cases in the final sample for interviews. Learners should pursue a minimum 20 individuals to recruit to account for attrition; minimum of three sources of data; must demonstrate triangulation of the data across two sources for each RQ. Case study interviews may include closed-ended questions with a dominance of open-ended questions; should be no less than 30 minutes; no less than five pages of <u>participant responses/speech</u> in the transcribed data <u>per interview</u>, single spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman. A minimum of 50 questionnaires if the questionnaires will be used for thematic analysis. The size for other sources (e.g., number of documents or artifacts, observations, etc. should also be identified. Refer to Robert Yin (2018) for case study descriptions.</p>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Phenomenology:</b> Guideline: Phenomenologists are interested in the analytical and descriptive experience of phenomena by individuals in their everyday world. Research Moustakas (1994) for the application of Phenomenology. Choose one established set of methodological procedures and follow the guidelines inherent in the specific approach. There are many misapplications of the methodology when numerous phenomenological approaches are meshed into one study. Creswell and Poth (2018) specify Moustakas as a structured approach for novice researchers and Patton (2015) also discusses how convoluted the application of phenomenological studies has gotten in recent years on page 117- His suggestion in Exhibit 3.5 pg 118 is to “choose one methodologist and stick with the logic proposed by the methodologist).</p>				
<p><b>Descriptive:</b> Guideline: A descriptive study attempts systematically to describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or programme, or provides information about, say, the living conditions of a community, or describes attitudes towards an issue”. The researcher asks respondents about their knowledge relevant to a particular phenomenon. The phenomenon that the researcher is addressing has happened sometime in past and the researcher cannot find any other way to describe it.</p>				
<p><b>Narrative:</b> Purpose is a collection of stories around a phenomenon. Protocol offers questions that get the participant to tell their personal story regarding a phenomenon including the roles of stakeholders. Guideline: Minimum of 8 interviews. Learners should pursue 12 participants to account for attrition. Interviews should be 60-90 minutes. There should be no less than 12 pages of transcribed data, single spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman, per interview. Interview questions must be open-ended.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> A key criterion for selecting a sample size for a narrative study is to elicit long, in-depth of stories about the phenomenon which may be hours long.</p>				
<p><b>Grounded Theory:</b> Guideline: Grounded theory is a qualitative method that enables you to study a particular phenomenon or process and discover new theories that are based on the collection and analysis of real world data.</p>				

<p><b>Data Collection Strategies (Qualitative):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Procedures for gaining access to participants are described</li> <li>● Methods of establishing a researcher-participant working relationship are described</li> <li>● Data collection methods is described</li> <li>● Data Triangulation is built into the data collection and analysis</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Data Collection Strategies (Quantitative):</b>          Descriptions of instrumentation tools include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Name and type of instrument/data to be collected</li> <li>● Concepts measured by instruments and/or data</li> <li>● How scores/responses are calculated/rated and meaning is explained</li> <li>● Process for assessing reliability and validity of instruments or internal validity/reliability.</li> <li>● Where raw data are e.g. appendices, tables, or by request.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Quantitative continued</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Procedure for participants to complete instrument</li> <li>● Where raw data will be available e.g. appendices, tables etc.</li> <li>● Includes a detailed description of data that comprises each variable in the study</li> <li>● Mixed methods-Analysis occurs within the quantitative approach and the qualitative approach, or between the two approaches.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Data Analysis:</b> How the data was analyzed is articulated. Procedures for dealing with discrepant cases are described. If a software program is used in the analysis, it is clearly described. Data analysis procedures after coding are described. Data analysis procedures are consistent with the methodological approach and overall research design description from chapter 3.</p>				
<p><b>Increasing Validity:</b> Includes a description of the types of validity chosen that are applicable to your study along with a justification, and have explained the strategies/methods used to increase each of the chosen types of validity; as well, an explanation is included that links the types of validity chosen to the purpose of the study. <b>Qualitative: Trustworthiness: Transferability, dependability, confirmability, credibility. Bias and ethics can be included.</b></p>				
<p><b>Summary:</b> A summary of the methodology is provided</p>				
<p><b>Overall Rating for Chapter 3</b> <b>Comments and Suggestions:</b></p>				

<b>1=Insufficient</b>	<b>2=Emerging</b>	<b>3=Proficient</b>	<b>4=Exemplary</b>
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

<b>Chapter 4: Descriptive Findings</b>				
This section provides a narrative summary of the population or sample characteristics and demographics.				
<b>Population Characteristics/Demographics: Quantitative-</b>				
Presents the "Sample (or Population) profile," using statistics for the demographics collected from or retrieved for the actual sample or population.				
If the actual sample is smaller than the <i>a priori</i> sample, the learner must discuss consequences (e.g., limitations, change of statistical analysis procedures, possibly even change of design).				
Variables of interest-For composite continuous variables, reliability coefficients computed on the study data precede the descriptive statistics and have to be compared with coefficients reported by instrument authors and prior users. Low reliability (< 0.7) may require changes in design and analysis (dropping variables with unreliable data). In case of changes of statistical analysis that became necessary during the computation of descriptive statistics, the learner will present and justify the new statistical procedures.				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>Population Characteristics/Demographics: Qualitative-</b>				
Presents the "Sample (or Population) profile," using statistics for the demographics collected from or retrieved for the actual sample or population. Includes a narrative summary of data collected (e.g., for qualitative studies, samples of collected data should be included in an Appendix.) Uses visual graphic organizers, such as tables, histograms, graphs, and/or bar charts, to effectively organize and display coded data and descriptive data.				
<b>Visuals (charts, graphs etc.) Quantitative:</b>				
Sample-level frequencies and descriptive or graphic comparisons of study groups. If the intended analysis involves parametric procedures, tests of assumptions are required to evaluate sample distribution (skewness and kurtosis data and charts) normality and homogeneity of variance. If nonparametric procedures are used, justification must be provided.				
<b>Visuals (charts, graphs etc.) Qualitative:</b>				
Visuals used should be selective and only included to enhance the readers' understanding of the data gathered and draw connections between the data analysis and discussion.				

1=Insufficient	2=Emerging	3=Proficient	4=Exemplary
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

<b>Chapter 4: Data Analysis-</b>			
This section presents a description of the process that was used to analyze the data.			
<b>Data Analysis Procedures-Qualitative:</b> Coding procedures must be tailored to the specific analytical approach; they are not generic.  Start discussion of data analysis procedures by identifying and describing the analytical approach (e.g., thematic analysis, Phenomenological analysis).  Describes coding process, description of how codes were developed, how categories were developed, how these are related to themes. Provide examples of codes and themes with corresponding quotations, demonstrating how codes were developed into themes. Provides evidence of initial and final codes and themes in text or an Appendix.  Describes in detail the data analysis procedures.			
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Data Analysis Procedures-Quantitative Studies:</b> The preparation of the data file is presented BEFORE the Descriptive Findings. If the analysis is run as planned, the learner will present the results of the statistical procedures . If the analysis had to be changed, the learner will present the results of the new procedure(s) Results tables have to be included in text. For each question, the learner will comment on the relevant statistics and will draw a conclusion in terms of accepting the null or the alternative hypothesis stated for that question. It is possible that a single statistical procedure may generate the statistics needed to answer multiple RQs—in that case, the learner will present the analysis results, with appropriate table(s), and then state and answer the RQs in due order. Explains and justifies any differences in why data analysis section does not match what was approved in Chapter 3 (if appropriate).			
<b>Quantitative Studies continued:</b> Changes in the analysis have to be justified earlier (as recommended above). In a rubric, the order of evaluation criteria is not important, BUT in the TEMPLATE, it is very important (changes may have to be made at different points in data processing for different reasons). Provides validity and reliability of the data in statistical terms for quantitative research OR describes approaches used to ensure validity and reliability for qualitative data including expert panel review of questions, practice interviews, member checking, and triangulation of data, as appropriate. Justifies how the analysis aligns with the research question(s) and hypothesis(es) and is appropriate for the research design.			

<p><b>Quantitative continued</b> :Identifies sources of error, missing data, or outliers and potential effects on the data. Discuss the limitations this places on the study results. Describe Power Analysis and Test(s) of Assumptions (as appropriate) for statistical tests.</p> <p>Justifies how the analysis aligns with the research question(s) and hypothesis(es) and is appropriate for the research design.</p>			
<p><b>Qualitative</b></p> <p>Justifies how the analysis aligns with the research question(s), and how data and findings were organized by chronology of phenomena, by themes and patterns, or by other approaches as deemed appropriate.</p>			



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chapter 4: Results-</b></p> <p>This section, which is the primary section of this chapter, presents an analysis of the data in a non-evaluative, unbiased, organized manner that relates to the research question(s) and/or hypotheses.</p>			
<p><b>Quantitative data</b> are organized by research question and/or hypothesis. Findings are presented by hypothesis using section titles. They are presented in order of significance if appropriate.</p>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<p><b>Qualitative data</b> may be organized by theme, participant and/or research question.</p> <p><b>Qualitative Studies:</b> Results of analysis are presented in appropriate narrative, tabular, graphical and/or visual format. If using thematic analysis, coding and theming process must be completely described in the results presentation. Integration of quotes in the results presentation to substantiate the stated findings and build a narrative picture is required. Data analysis should include narrative story for narrative analysis; case study summary for case study; model or theory for grounded theory.</p> <p><b>Qualitative Studies:</b> Results of analysis are presented in appropriate narrative, tabular, graphical and/or visual format. Learner describes thematic findings mostly in own words in narrative form as if they are telling their story or summarizing their experiences, and then use selected quotes (ideally one or few sentences, no longer than one paragraph) to illustrate.</p>			
<p><b>Quantitative Studies:</b> Results of each statistical test are presented in appropriate statistical format with tables, graphs, and charts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tables and/or figures are included for descriptive findings.</li> <li>• Tables and/or figures are included for assumption checks.</li> <li>• Tables and/or figures are included for and results.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Qualitative Studies:</b> Tables are presented for initial codes, themes and theme meanings, along with sample quotes.</p> <p>Sufficient quantity and quality of the data or information appropriate to the research design is presented in the analyses to answer the research question(s) and or hypotheses. Evidence for this must be clearly presented in this section and in an appendix as appropriate.</p>			
<p><b>Quantitative Studies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss quantity in relation to the actual sample (or population) size,</li> <li>• Discuss quality in relation to sampling method, data collection process, and data completion/accuracy.</li> </ul>			

<p><b><u>Quantitative Studies:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Inferential statistics</u>, require tests of normality, tests of assumptions, test statistics and <i>p</i>-value reported for each hypothesis.</li> <li>• <u>Control variables</u> (if part of the design) are reported and discussed.</li> <li>• <u>Secondary data</u> treatment of missing values is fully described.</li> <li>• <u>Outlier responses</u> are explained as appropriate.</li> </ul>			
<p>Appendices must include qualitative or quantitative data analysis that supports results in Chapter 4 as appropriate (i.e. source tables for t test/ANOVA; or coding and theming process or codebook, if not included directly in Chapter 4).</p>			

<p><b>Chapter 4: Summary</b></p> <p>This section provides a concise summary of what was found in the study. It briefly restates essential data and the data analysis presented in this chapter, and it helps the reader see and understand the relevance of the data and analysis to the research questions or hypotheses. Finally, it provides a lead or transition into Chapter 5 where the implications of the data and data analysis relative to the research questions and/or hypotheses will be discussed. (</p>			
<p><b><u>Quantitative Studies:</u></b> Summarizes the statistical data and results of statistical tests in relation to the research questions/hypotheses.</p>	1	2	3
<p><b><u>Qualitative Studies:</u></b> Summarizes the data and data analysis results in relation to the research questions. Summarizes data across research questions for case studies, narratives, and grounded theory.</p>			
<p>Discusses limitations that emerged based on data analysis and how the interpretation of results may be effected by the limitations. Data limitations are added to Chapters 1, 3, 5 and discussed as appropriate.</p> <p>Provides a concluding section and transition to Chapter 5.</p>			

**Chapter 4 Mixed Methods**

2. The systems used for keeping track of data and emerging understandings is clearly described

3. The findings:

- A. Build logically from the problem and the research design.
- B. Are presented in a manner that addresses the research questions.
- C. Are consistent with the research questions or hypotheses and the underlying theoretical/conceptual framework of the study.
- D. Are clearly reported (e.g., findings support or fail to support . . .) and are supported by the data.
- E. Do not contain any evident statistical errors

4. Tables and Figures for both the qualitative and quantitative data:
- A. Are as self-descriptive as possible, informative, and conform to standard Doctoral Study format.
  - B. Are directly related to and referred to within the narrative text of the chapter.
  - C. Have immediately adjacent comments.
  - D. Are properly identified (titled or captioned).
  - E. Show copyright permission (if not in the public domain).

5. The structural approach for presenting and analyzing the data are appropriate and consistent with the chosen strategy (sequential, concurrent, or transformative).

6. In a concluding section of Chapter 4, outcomes are logically and systematically summarized and interpreted in relation to their importance to the research questions and hypotheses. Patterns, relationships, and themes described as findings are supported by the data.

7. A discussion on Evidence of Quality shows how this study followed procedures to assure accuracy of the data (trustworthiness, member checks, triangulation, etc.).  
Appropriate evidence occurs in the appendixes (sample transcripts, researcher logs, field notes, etc.).

1=Insufficient	2=Emerging	3=Proficient	4=Exemplary
Element is not covered or is incorrectly described	Element is covered, but is limited in scope and/or writing demonstrates partial understanding of the element	Element is adequately covered and demonstrates understanding of the element	Element is thoroughly covered and writing demonstrates deep understanding of the element

<b>Chapter 5: Summary of Findings and Conclusions</b>			
This section is organized by research question/hypothesis, and it conveys the specific findings of the study. It presents all conclusions made based on the data analysis and findings of the study. It relates the findings back to the literature in chapter 2, and the Significance of the Study section in Chapter 1. It also discusses the significant themes and findings relative to the body of knowledge covered throughout Chapter 2			
Organizes Chapter 5 using the same section titles as Chapter 4, by research question(s)/hypothesis(es) or by themes. Significant themes/ findings are compared and contrasted, synthesized and discussed in light of the existing body of knowledge covered in Chapter 2	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Summarizes study findings. Compares, contrasts and synthesizes study findings in context to prior research on the topic (Chapter 2). Provides a cogent discussion on how the study is aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic.			
Illustrates that findings are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3.			
Illustrates how findings are supported by the data and theory, and how the findings directly align to and answer the research question(s). An added consideration to how findings are linked to theory: Ravitch and Carl (2020) discuss how researchers develop deep understandings of the theoretical perspective during research and that such depth of knowledge then contributes to the researcher’s ability to “speak back theory” so that studies are not simply “derived from or informed by formal theory” (p. 46) but also used as a method for exploring and refining the theory’s manifestation and use within the specific context being studied. Candidates explore how the data helps to reaffirm or extend the understanding of the theory’s application in the specific study context.			
Discusses significance (or nonsignificance) of findings and relates each of the findings directly to the Significance of the Study section and Advancing Scientific Knowledge section of Chapter 1.			
Refrains from including unrelated or speculative information in this section.			
Provides a conclusion to summarize the findings, referring back to Chapter 1, and tying the study together.			

Section is written in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, uses correct sentence structure, uses correct punctuation, and uses correct APA format.				
<b>Chapter 5----Discussion</b>				
1. The chapter begins with a brief Overview of why and how the study was done, reviewing the questions or issues being addressed and a brief summary of the findings	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
2. The Interpretation of Findings A. includes conclusions that address all of the research questions, B. contains references to outcomes in Chapter 4, C. covers all the data, D. is bounded by the evidence collected, and E. relates the findings to a larger body of literature on the topic, including the conceptual/theoretical framework, F. includes a discussion of the practical applications of the findings.				
3. The Implications for Social Change are clearly grounded in the significance sections of Chapter 1 and outcomes presented in Chapter 4. The implications are expressed in terms of tangible improvements to individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, or societies.				
4. Recommendations for Action. A. should flow logically from the conclusions and B. state who needs to pay attention to the results, and C. indicate how the results might be disseminated.				
5. Recommendations for Further Study point to topics that need closer examination and may generate a new round of questions.				
6. For qualitative studies, includes a reflection on the researcher's experience with the research process in which the researcher discusses possible personal biases or preconceived ideas and values, the possible effects of the researcher on the participants or the situation, and her/his changes in thinking as a result of the study.				
7. The work closes with a strong concluding statement making the "take-home message" clear to the reader				

## REFERENCES

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- Dissertation Handbook: The University of Arizona Global Campus (2021).
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