GUIDE TO THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROCESS

A manual for Planning and Writing a Doctoral Dissertation at Trident University
International

College of Education
College of Health Sciences
College of Business and Administration

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Overview: Guide to Doctoral Dissertation Research

The Dissertation Handbook does not constitute a contract between students and Trident University. Rather, it serves as a GUIDE ONLY for the process and writing of proposals and Dissertations. Trident University reserves the right to amend/update the handbook at any time according to Trident University PhD program needs, accreditation requirements and/or ProQuest publication changes.

The dissertation is a requirement for receipt of the highest academic degree - the Ph.D. The dissertation is also a permanent record of original research. Trident University is committed to the preservation and dissemination of the research contributions of its students.

This handbook outlines procedures that are designed to make preparation of the proposal and the dissertation as rigorous yet as efficient as possible. Format requirements are described here to meet the specifications for publishing the dissertation with UMI/Proquest. Please read and follow these procedures carefully to avoid costly and time-consuming revisions.

This guide is organized into five main sections. The first section provides a general overview of the dissertation. The second, third, and fourth sections address the dissertation committee structure, process, and components, and are much more specific, including descriptions of the various sections of the dissertation. The final section focuses on writing and formatting issues.

General Degree Requirements

All requirements for the doctoral degree (including completion of required coursework and filing the bounded dissertation) are expected to complete the Ph.D. Program within six (6) years or 24 sessions, and must complete the degree within a period not to exceed nine (9) years or thirty-six (36) sessions.

The Ph.D. program is divided into several distinct phases:

Core Courses: All students are required to take research methods courses and theory courses in the field of your study. These courses provide the foundation for the elective courses which students may pursue in their specialized concentrations. All courses are valued at four (4) semester credits.

Concentration Courses: In addition to the required core courses there are concentration courses (electives) needed to complete the degree plan. Students may select one concentration from an offering in your college. These courses are generally in the specific area of the research that the student will pursue. All elective courses are valued at four (4) semester credits.

Comprehensive Exam. It includes written and oral qualifying exam: Students will be examined on their understanding of research methods and statistical concepts related to the research process. The
comprehensive exam will be conducted after the students have finished all of their courses via phone conference or e-conference.

**Establishing the Committee.** A dissertation Committee and dissertation chairperson will be established for each student. Each committee shall consist of three faculty members, one of whom serves as Chair of the Committee. One member of the committee or the Chairperson must be external to TUI. The Chairperson and the Committee will be responsible for guiding the student during the dissertation process.

**IRB Application.** Pursuant to Federal law and regulations, Institutional Review Board (“IRB”) review and approval is required for research involving human subjects. Accordingly, prior to the student conducting research involving human subjects, including the collecting and analyzing of data, the proposed study must be reviewed and approved by the TUI IRB.

**Dissertation Study:** Students demonstrate a synthesis of their doctoral study, knowledge and scholarship with a significant quantitative research project that contributes to general principles of knowledge in the field(s) potentially affected by the research. Following the completion of the course work including the Dissertation Proposal Seminar (DBA, DBS and DHS 699), students will work on the dissertation and register in subsequent sessions in the DBA, DBS and DHS 700 dissertation series and continuation courses.

**The Doctoral Dissertation Research**

The dissertation phase of the Ph.D. Programs has set definite milestones that students have to meet as they progress through the dissertation process. The restructuring of the Dissertation phase of the program only involves DBA, DEL, DHS 700-702 and the Dissertation Continuation Courses beginning with DBA, DEL, DHS 703 and continuing to the completion of the dissertation.

- Students enrolled in DBA, DEL, or DHS 699 Dissertation Seminar must meet specific and pre-established milestones to successfully complete the course and advance to DBA, DEL, or DHS 700.
- Dissertation series courses (DBA, DEL, DHS 700, 701 and 702) will be designated as four (4) semester credit courses and the total number of credits to complete the program will be designated as 56 Semester Credits (students will not be required to take any additional academic courses). These courses will be graded as Pass/No Pass courses. The grade received in these courses will not be considered in the overall GPA.
- Students enrolled in the 700, 701 and 702 dissertation series courses must meet specific and pre-established milestones to pass the course and advance to the next course.
- Full tuition will apply to dissertation series courses 700, 701 and 702.
- Reduced tuition of $700 will apply to dissertation continuation courses 703 and beyond.
- Dissertation continuation courses will be designated as zero credit courses. Federal financial aid is not available for zero credit courses. Students in courses 703 and beyond will be reported as full-time enrolled students.
- Students are expected to complete the Ph.D. Program within six (6) years or 24 sessions, and must complete the degree within a period not to exceed nine (9) years or thirty-six (36) sessions.
• Student progress reports will be monitored by Program Directors on a session by session basis. Students must demonstrate progress during each session as documented and reported in the required progress reports.
• Students failing to make sufficient progress during the dissertation continuation phase will be subject to an Academic Achievement Plan (AAP) in order to proceed in the program. Students failing to make sufficient progress will receive a NP grade for the session. Two consecutive NP grades may result in dismissal from the program.

Milestones for the 699, 700-702 Courses in the Dissertation Phase of the Program

All Ph.D. students must meet the minimum milestones presented below in order to advance to the next course. Student’s who fail to meet the minimum milestones for each course may repeat the 699, 700, and 701 courses up to two times until they meet the milestones before advancing to the next course (this will be enforced by the Registrar’s Office – confirm that self-registration is gated by the Registrar – if not, then this needs to be enforced by the system). Once the minimum milestones are met by a student they may continue to further develop their dissertation prospectus and/or dissertation proposal and advance more quickly to the dissertation proposal defense. The minimum milestones for each course are stated below.

DBA, DEL, DHS 699 (4 Semester Units)
A student enrolled in DBA, DEL, or DHS 699 must meet the following milestones to successfully complete the course and advance to DBA, DEL, or DHS 700:

1. Define a topic for doctoral dissertation research that addresses an issue, concept, problem statement, research question relevant to their program outcomes and/or their profession.
2. Describe the design of the doctoral dissertation research.
3. Develop conceptual framework for their study.
4. Submit a session long project for preliminary dissertation topic approval.

DBA, DEL, DHS 699 is a “PR” or “F” course. Students meeting the above milestones will receive a “PR” grade. The “PR” grade will be changed to an “A” grade once the student is advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. (successful defense of proposal and approval by administration). Students who fail this course must repeat the course and earn a “PR” grade to be allowed to advance to DBA, DEL, DHS 700. Students may pre-register for a 700 course, however registration will not be approved until the PR grade is assigned in 699. If a student fails 699 then that student repeat 699 before enrolling in a 700 course.

When a student is advanced to Candidacy, the Program Director will initiate the DBA, DEL or DHS 699 grade change by notifying the Registrar of the student’s Ph.D. Candidacy status. The Registrar will then change the student’s grade for DBA, DEL or DHS 699 to an “A” grade.

Students who fail the seminar will be required to repeat the course. Students may only repeat DBA, DEL or DHS 699 twice. Students can proceed to 700 by showing progress with a PR grade in a 699 course. If a student fails a 699, 700 or 701 course three times, then they will be academically disqualified by the university.
Unit Credits for the Completion of DBA, DEL, DHS 700, 701, and 702

Students earn 4 credits on successful completion of the objectives in each of the three dissertation courses designated as DBA, DEL, DHS 700, 701, and 702. These courses are added to the total number of credit hours required to complete the doctoral program.

DBA, DEL, DHS 700 (4 Credit Hours)
A student enrolled in DBA, DEL, or DHS 700 must meet the following milestones to successfully complete the course and advance to DBA, DEL, or DHS 701:

1. Prepare and successfully pass the Written and Oral Qualifying Examination.
2. Form dissertation committee.

As a result of their satisfactory completion of DBA, DEL or DHS 700 milestones, students are permitted to enroll in DBA, DEL, DHS 701.

Students continue to work on their prospectus and/or dissertation proposal depending on their progress made to date.

A student meeting the above milestones will receive a “P” grade. Students who fail to meet the milestones for the course will receive a “NP” (No Pass) grade and will have to repeat the course. Students are allowed to repeat the course only twice.

DBA, DEL, DHS 701 (4 Credit Hours)
A student enrolled in DBA, DEL, or DHS 701 must make substantial progress toward the following milestones to successfully complete the course and advance to DBA, DEL, or DHS 702:

1. Complete the prospectus.
2. Develop the initial sections of a proposal that include: a concise statement of the issue, concept, problem statement, and the rationale or purpose of the proposed research;
3. Develop the key terms and operational definitions; research questions, hypotheses;
4. Research the background of the selected topic area so that findings can be evaluated in the context of the wider body of knowledge and practice.
5. Critically evaluate prior research that serves as a foundation for the proposed research.
6. Conduct a review of literature and information sources related to the proposed research.
7. Complete a conceptual framework including a graphic model.
8. Compile a reference list related to the proposed research.

As a result of a student’s satisfactory completion of DBA, DEL or DHS 701 milestones, students are permitted to enroll in DBA, DEL, DHS 702.

Students continue to work on their prospectus and/or dissertation proposal depending on their progress made to date.

A student meeting the above milestones will receive a “P” grade. Students who fail to meet the milestones for the course will receive a “NP” (No Pass) grade and will have to repeat the course. Students are allowed to repeat the course only twice.
DBA, DEL, DHS 702 (4 Credit Hours)
As a result of their satisfactory completion of DBA, DEL or DHS 701, students enroll in DBA, DEL or DHS 702 and must make substantial progress towards one or more of the following milestones to successfully complete the course and the program:

1. Successfully complete and defend the proposal
2. Conduct data collection and analysis
3. Complete the dissertation
4. Successfully defend the dissertation

Students must continue to make significant progress beyond what was required to complete DBA, DEL or DHS 702. The student’s Dissertation Mentor will verify that this requirement has been met.

A student making satisfactory progress on the DBA, DEL or DHS 702 milestones will receive a “PR” grade. As a result of satisfactory progress in DBA, DEL or DHS 702 milestones, students are permitted to enroll in DBA, DEL, DHS 703 and continue to work on their prospectus and/or dissertation proposal or dissertation depending on their progress made to date.

Students who fail to show satisfactory progress on the DBA, DEL or DHS 702 milestones will receive a “NP” (No Pass) grade. Students who do not pass this course will be required to repeat the course. Students may only repeat DBA, DEL or DHS 702 twice.

Upon successful completion of dissertation a grade of “P” (Pass) will be changed to signify the student has successfully completed the dissertation phase and the program.

DBA, DEL, DHS 703 and above
Dissertation Continuation - continuation courses will have a $700 charge rather than full tuition. Students will no longer be eligible for financial aid once they reach this stage, but VA is available.

As a result of their satisfactory progress in 702 (DBA, DEL or DHS), candidates will be permitted to enroll in 703 (DBA, DEL or DHS) and above as dissertation continuation courses. As long as students show satisfactory progress they will received grades of “PR” and be permitted to enroll in the subsequent dissertation continuation course - 703, 704…… until completion and the successful defense of the dissertation.

Satisfactory progress may be shown through any one of the following:

1. Successfully defend the proposal.
2. Complete and submit an IRB application.
3. Conduct the research after receiving IRB approval.
4. Analyze data and interpret data and draw conclusions based on results.
5. Write results.
6. Write the discussion, conclusions, and implications and recommendations sections.
7. Complete the final doctoral dissertation research document, including appendices, reference list, acknowledgements, dedication, and table of contents.
9. Successfully defend the doctoral dissertation research.
10. Revise the document, per the committee’s recommendations.
11. Submit the final version for approval.

Time to completion of the Ph.D. Program

Students are expected to complete the Ph.D. Program within six (6) years or 24 sessions, and must complete the degree within a period not to exceed nine (9) years or thirty-six (36) sessions.

Academic Achievement Plan

When students are enrolled in DBA, DEL or DHS 703 will be required to have an Academic Achievement Plan (AAP) on file in order to proceed in the program. The academic achievement plan requirement at 703 to ensure students stay on track.

The Academic Achievement Plan (AAP) must be developed under the direction of the Program Director and in consultation with the Dissertation Mentor for each student. However, it is the student’s responsibility to complete the AAP and submit it to the Program Director for approval prior to enrollment in the next course.

The APP will identify and clarify the steps necessary for each student to complete the PhD Program within established timelines.

The AAP must provide for reasonable progress for the student to complete the dissertation given the circumstances that the student must contend with as the research is conducted and the dissertation is written.

Should a student’s progress be hindered by the faculty mentor (Internal or External), it is the responsibility of the Program Director to intercede on behalf of the student/candidate as deemed appropriate to have the matter resolved in the interest of the student and the academic standards of the University.

Students for which an AAP has been approved must contact the PhD Program Director immediately if conditions or a research situation changes that may hinder the completion of the dissertation in accordance with the approved AAP. The Director of the PhD Program may approve changes to the AAP if warranted and in the best interests of the student and proper research protocol.

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee

Committee Selection Process

After consultation with the PhD Program Director, a student may nominate an external expert in his/her area of interest to serve as a doctoral faculty mentor. The external expert may serve as a committee member or the Chairperson. The student must ensure that the nominated individual(s)
submit CVs and supporting documentation of research in refereed journals in the area of the student’s doctoral research. The required supporting documentation must be provided to the PhD Program Director for consideration.

The nominated member must meet the criteria for appointment (an earned Ph.D. with a record of scholarly research; experience supervising student research, and evident expertise in the field under consideration). In addition, the nominee must have no personal or professional conflict of interest with the student or organizational conflict of interest with Trident University.

In general, the Committee Chair will be a full-time Trident faculty member. However, under special circumstances such as a need for very specific expertise an approved external doctoral faculty mentor may be selected as Committee Chair. The term of appointment is limited to the enrollment in dissertation continuation courses (DHS, DEL OR DBA 700 series) and only for the nominating student. The Doctoral Program Director and the College Dean may, at their discretion, extend the period of appointment and facilitate the assignment of other students to the faculty member if s/he so desires and the assignments fit with other program priorities.

No more than two members of the committee can be external to Trident University. The external Committee Chair or member must be approved by the Program Director and College Dean.

The committee members must meet the following criteria:

a) The Chair of the Committee must hold a PhD Degree or equivalent terminal degree with a research background, and a record of publications.

b) The Chair and one other committee member will have academic background related to the student’s field of study.

c) All members of the committee will have at least three years of postgraduate research experience and publication record.

d) All members of the committee should have been active in their field of scholarship within the five-year period preceding their participation on the committee.

The Chair is formally appointed by the program director proposed by the student. Considerations in the recommendation will include the interests of the student, research expertise available among the faculty, and existing dissertation supervision loads.

The Doctoral Program Director will assist the student in assembling the dissertation committee. Committee members may be selected for either content or research expertise, or both, depending on the subject of the dissertation and the student’s needs. All Committees will have at least one full-time Trident University faculty member as either Chair or a committee member. If a committee is to be chaired by an external member, the full-time Trident University faculty member will be appointed as a
member at the same time as the Chair. The Trident University faculty member will serve as a standing liaison to facilitate communications and resource exchanges among all parties as needed and to provide a point of accountability for the committee.

While committee members serve without pay, they receive an appointment as a Doctoral Faculty Mentor. The external committee Chair is compensated upon the student’s successful defense of the proposal and again upon successful defense of the dissertation.

Committee/Chairperson Duties and Responsibilities

All PhD Committee Chairs are subject to a quarterly assessment of student progress and Committee activities. The assessment is conducted by the Program Director. The student/Chair/Committee relationship is one that can take many forms - there is no single pattern that uniquely characterizes successful relationships. Like all relationships, this one has ups and downs, thus, a summative evaluation of the relationship at some random point in time is neither possible nor helpful. The issue is much more one of formative evaluation and the key is creating a set of procedures whereby the parties themselves are encouraged to remain continuously aware of what is and is not working and communicate about needed improvements.

While the responsibility for progress and completion of the dissertation is that of the student, the Chairperson will have the following specific responsibilities:

- Provide guidance and supervision during the entire dissertation process.
- Provide timely first reviews of all elements of the research process.
- Communicate about the Dissertation via CourseNet – topics of communication include:
  - When the dissertation proposal or dissertation is ready for review
  - When an element is unacceptable and should be returned to the student without forwarding to the members
  - Specific constructive critique by the Chairperson including inquiry into lack of acceptable progress
- Forward committee member comments to the student. Only the chair communicates directly with the student. Committee members may not communicate directly with the student.
- Make logistical arrangements for the defenses of the proposal and completed dissertation and forward copies of each document to the relevant parties.
- Serve as Chair for the proposal and completed dissertation defenses.
- Report results of the proposal and completed dissertation defenses to the Program Director.
- Schedule and serve as Chairperson for all meetings of the full dissertation committee.

The dissertation committee members will have the following responsibilities:
- Provide assistance and advice as needed to the Committee Chairperson.
- Review all dissertation elements forwarded by the chair and respond with constructive critique.

The "Discuss with committee only" option in CourseNet must be used.
• Attend and participate in the proposal and completed dissertation defenses conducted as conference calls.

The Doctoral Dissertation Research Process

While there is no single set of steps, which characterize all dissertations, there are elements and procedures, which are more-or-less common to all PhD programs. These include the following:

Choosing the Dissertation Topic

Perhaps the most difficult part of the dissertation for most students is choosing a topic for their dissertation. Ideally, a dissertation should be the logical culmination of the courses and experiences, which constitute the PhD program. Usually a topic is chosen during the dissertation seminar, and a first draft of the dissertation prospectus is completed by the end of the seminar. The Dissertation topic must be in the area of your prospective college, Health, Education or Business and it should lend itself to a quantitative analysis. Students who wish to conduct qualitative analysis will be required to add a quantitative component to their dissertation and the quantitative component must involve inferential statistics. Purely qualitative research will be accepted in the program of Ph.D. Educational leadership (Appendix B).

It is possible to overdo the search for a dissertation topic that was encouraged earlier. Many students seek admission to a Ph.D. program with a dissertation topic firmly in mind. Frequently this topic is an extension of a completed Master’s level thesis. But a dissertation is much different in nature and much more extensive in scope and rigorous than a Master’s thesis or any other terminal degree. Potential and admitted students should realize that a successful dissertation topic must involve a substantial element of theory, not just a review of practices or a basic survey or evaluation study or the like. The dissertation must be clearly set within a context of theory and research in the relevant domain. The literature review that forms a significant part of the proposal and the dissertation is intended to establish this context and to place the student’s work clearly in relationship to the body of knowledge.

The nature of the research can take many forms as long as it is rigorous, well formulated according to the rules of the research mode in question, and well adapted to the nature of the research topic and questions. Again, the Trident University faculty has the full capability to support any research within this range. The nature of the research may vary with the intended career paths of the candidates.

Regardless of the nature of the research, the ultimate test of a successful dissertation research project is a determination as to whether or not the research adds meaningful information to the established body of knowledge surrounding the issue or problem area. The expectation is that all dissertations will make some contribution, however slight, to collective knowledge and theory. Trident
University expects the dissertation to be of high quality and rigor, as the Dissertation is the ultimate learning outcome of the PhD program.

**Qualifying Exam**

Students need to take qualifying exam in 700 (DBA, DEL or DHS). Qualifying exam includes written and oral qualifying exam. Students will be examined on their understanding of research methods and statistical concepts related to the research process via phone conference or e-conference.

**Completing the Dissertation Proposal Draft**

The student should work closely with the committee chair and members in preparing the dissertation proposal following proposal rubric (Appendix A).

The complete proposal should include at minimum the following elements:

- An Abstract;
- An introduction with a clear definition of the general topic area to be studied;
- Problem Statement. A description of the specific issue or problem to be studied. (The most likely method for the student to identify such an issue or problem is to review the relevant academic literature. That literature is expected to describe areas where further research is indicated or the candidate may discover published research in which the methodology or underlying elements of the research can be improved);
- The research question(s);
- A review of the literature demonstrating that the candidate has thoroughly researched the current status and the historical standing of the issue or problem;
- A conceptual framework - The theory, theories, theoretical models, or mechanisms have been identified and are relevant to the research questions and associations under study. The concepts and the relationships among the constructs/variables are presented clearly and logically. The D.V’s and I.V’s are clearly assigned in the conceptual framework and there is clarity of directionality. There is a clear graphical presentation;
- A formal hypothesis or set of hypotheses where appropriate. Must show that the hypothesis is derived from the literature; a proposed methodology to test the hypotheses. This section should include the specific steps to be followed in the research including sufficient detail to allow the committee to fully evaluate the methodology;
- How the methodology will fully test the hypotheses and address the research issue or problem. A detailed description of any data to be gathered and how that data will be gathered. A full description of any instruments (i.e., questionnaires) or other tools to be used in the research. If
indicated, a preliminary test and/or validation of any instruments should be conducted and described. A detailed description of any testing and/or other analysis of the data including specific statistical or other quantitative tests to be performed along with a justification for the selection of those tests.

To help students in completing an acceptable dissertation proposal, there are various models in the literature. Some models best-fit dissertations. It should be emphasized that there is a wide range of possible models. Whatever form it takes, the purpose of the proposal is to describe in sufficient detail and clarity what the student intends to do so that the faculty who constitute the Dissertation Committee, the Doctoral Program Director, and the VP for Academic Affairs can make an informed decision as to the acceptability of the proposed work. The dissertation proposal should represent the level of rigor and quality that is appropriate for a PhD program.

**Final Dissertation Proposal and Proposal Defense**

The dissertation committee chair will advise the student in the preparation of the proposal. All committee members will have an input to the proposal in its various stages as seems appropriate by the chair of the committee. The student will prepare a formal dissertation proposal and post it on CourseNet for review of the chair and committee members as the chair sees fit. All communications regarding the dissertation proposal should be via the CourseNet for documentation.

The committee will review the student’s dissertation proposal, and to ascertain that the student’s knowledge, skills, and conceptual framework are sufficient for undertaking rigorous inquiry into the student’s designated field. All three committee members will review the dissertation proposal. If the chair and the committee assess that the proposal is ready for defense, the defense will be scheduled so the student will defend the proposal.

The chair of the committee sends a formal e-mail to the student, committee members and the Doctoral Program Director that the proposal is ready for defense. The Doctoral Program Director must receive the notice at least two weeks prior to the scheduling of the defense. The Doctoral Program Director can review the proposal prior to the defense but will review it for official approval only after the defense.

A PowerPoint presentation describing the study and following the issues covered in the proposal should be assembled by the student and sent to the committee members 2 weeks prior to defense. This will serve as the basis and skeleton for the oral presentation.

After the defense of the proposal by the student, the committee will meet and reach one of four conclusions:

- The proposal is approved by the committee as presented (with minor adjustments only).
- The proposal is approved but with major adjustments. These adjustments must be reviewed and
approved by all committee members.

- The proposal will be approved only after significant restructuring. The proposal must be defended again after the restructuring; the second defense will be not earlier than two months following the first defense.
- The proposal is not accepted and the committee will assist the student in preparing another proposal, a second defense will be scheduled. The second defense will be scheduled not earlier than in three months following the first defense.

Upon successful defense of the dissertation proposal the committee will recommend to the Doctoral Program Director that the student advance to candidacy. The committee is not to inform the student of the decision of advancement to candidacy which can be done ONLY by the Doctoral Program Director. (Please note: If corrections are needed they must be made within 30 days of the date of defense, and posted again for the review by the dissertation chair. If the changes are not submitted within 30 days, the student must defend the proposal again). Proposal review by the Doctoral Program Director will be completed within 21 work days from the chair recommendation.

If the student could not successfully defend the proposal, a second defense can be scheduled, not earlier than after 30 days. A dissertation proposal may be defended a total 3 times. If a student failed the third defense, he/she will need to leave the program;

**Advancement to Candidacy**

- Candidacy means that the student has completed all requirements for the degree except for the research dissertation itself, it means that the dissertation proposal was successfully defended.

- All Ph.D. students should be aware of the following standard academic protocols. These protocols are rigorously respected and observed at Trident University.

- Prior to formal admission to candidacy, students should not refer to themselves as “doctoral candidates” or “Ph.D. candidates.” In a Ph.D. program, the term “candidate” has a very specific meaning and students should be careful in using the term to refer to themselves.

- No Ph.D. student or candidate should ever use the initials Ph.D. after his/her name until all degree requirements have been met and the student is notified by the university that the degree has been conferred. The same is true for using the title “Dr.” or “Doctor.”

- Students are encouraged to include their studies at Trident University in preparing resumes and vitas.
  - Students who have been admitted to candidacy should refer themselves as “Ph.D.
Candidate in Health Sciences, or Education or Business Administration Trident University, expected date of completion 20xx.”

- Students should not refer to themselves as “ABD” (“all but dissertation”) until they have been formally admitted to candidacy.

- Admission to candidacy follows the completion and approval of the dissertation proposal (see above for its structure and content). DHS, DEL OR DBA 699 Dissertation Proposal Seminar is always taken in the last session prior to beginning of your dissertation series course DHS, DEL OR DBA 700. The Seminar provides in depth support for the preparation of a proposal draft, drawing on Internet and print resources, faculty advice, and collegial interaction. Enrollment in the Seminar ends when student completes a dissertation proposal draft.

Institutional Review Board

Approval by the Doctoral Program Director largely completes the proposal phase of the dissertation. One final step required before the student may begin to collect and analyze data is the review and approval of the proposed study by the Trident University Institutional Review Board. IRB review of all research involving human subjects is required by Federal law and regulations as well as established ethical theories and principles. To complete this review, the student submits (through CourseNet) an application summarizing the project and the human subjects protection issues that it poses (a copy of the methodology discussion and any relevant forms and/or data gathering instruments is generally attached to the application). The IRB Chair then makes the determination as to the nature and extent of the review. It is very important that students understand that they may not collect data before IRB approval is received, and if they do collect data before that approval, they may not use it in the dissertation (a certain degree of exploratory reconnaissance is allowed)

Official submission of a project to the IRB may not take place until the proposal is approved by the Doctoral Program Director; however, students are encouraged to share preliminary IRB materials with their Chair at the time of the proposal defense, and informal IRB feedback may be obtained at that time to help in speedy final approval.

Trident University has a standing committee known as the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This committee exists for the protection of human subjects and requires those students and faculty conducting research involving human subjects to submit their research proposals for review. Among others, the charge of the IRB is to ensure adherence to federal, state and local regulations as well as established ethical principles including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, as enunciated by the Belmont Report.

Respect for persons as an ethical principal includes an appreciation of persons as independent beings that are capable to voluntarily decide whether or not to choose to participate in research.
The IRB additionally addresses the issues of safeguarding individuals unable to make informed decisions, such as children or those not competent to understand the benefits or risks resulting from research. The IRB also considers procedures to ensure confidentiality of subjects. In research involving children federal guidelines mandate the use of parental consent forms and assent forms for the minor.

Beneficence regarding research is concerned with protecting subjects from harm and acting in the best interest of research subjects.

In order to prevent harm the IRB requires the researcher to carefully consider and analyze the risks and benefits of their study and then formally address them individually. The IRB Committee then has the responsibility to determine if these potential risks and benefits are clearly spelled out for both the Committee and potential subjects and whether the research can be approved based upon the listed risks/benefits analysis.

Justice as an ethical principle to be considered in human subject studies refers to the fact that subjects have the right to be aware of the potential risks of research when they are asked to participate.

It also asks the researcher to consider who or which group will benefit from the proposed research. The researcher needs to ensure that potential risks are not being taken by only one segment of the population for the benefit of other larger groups of individuals. Hospitals and other institutions where research is conducted may require further approval by their own internal IRB committees.

Following the approval of the Dissertation Proposal by the Committee (following a defense), the Director of the Doctoral Program, the Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, each student must submit the dissertation proposal to the Trident University IRB in order to maintain the timetable for completion of the dissertation. The IRB application form and instructions may be accessed and submitted via CourseNet. Students may also access the IRB policy and procedures, membership and sample forms on the university website.

The IRB application form and instructions may be accessed via CourseNet.

**Dissertation Research**

The student will complete the dissertation as approved in the proposal. During this period, the committee chair will provide supervision and assistance for the student. The other committee members will be available as needed. Each session the chair will report to the Doctoral Program Directors, on the progress of the dissertation. The Doctoral Program Director will maintain a list of all active dissertations, which is, updated each session.

When the student and the committee chair are satisfied that the research is complete, the chair will schedule a final oral defense for the dissertation.
Philosophy of the Oral Defense

The purpose of the oral defense is four-fold:

- To demonstrate that the dissertation is commensurate with the standards for original research in the field,
- To demonstrate that the ethics and standards governing research in the field have been followed,
- To demonstrate the candidate’s mastery of the research and the appropriate methodology,
- To demonstrate the candidate understands of the relationship of this work to the broader field in which it is lodged.

Procedures for the Proposal/Dissertation Oral Defense

Who Can Attend the Oral Defense? Attendance at the defense is limited to members of the Dissertation Committee, the student, and members of the Trident University academic community.

Who Must Attend the Oral Defense? All members of the Dissertation Committee must be present for the defense unless exceptions are approved by the Doctoral Program Director or by his/her designee. Absent members of the Dissertation Committee must still participate in the defense through, for example, the submission of written comments and questions. No more than one member of the Dissertation Committee can be absent from the defense.

Who Can Actively Participate in the Oral Defense? If there are others in addition to the student and the Dissertation Committee at the defense, it is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Dissertation Committee to insure that time is provided for their comments and that a portion of the defense is restricted only to participation by the members of the Dissertation Committee.

The outcome of the oral defense is decided by an open vote of the Dissertation Committee. The decision of the Committee (Pass or Fail) is determined by a majority of the committee members.

At the oral defense, only the members of the Dissertation Committee have the authority to decide whether the candidate passes or fails. Both the dissertation itself and the candidate’s performance in the oral defense are grounds for the committee’s decision to pass or fail.

Doctoral candidates may pass the oral defense but still be required to revise their dissertation. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to review and approve minor revisions to the dissertation. Dissertations that require either major revisions, minor revisions or no revisions must be submitted to the Doctoral Program Director in final form within four weeks of the concluded defense. If the dissertation is not received within four weeks of the oral defense, that defense is nullified and a new oral defense must be scheduled. When major revisions are required, the defense should be suspended.
until the majority of the members of the Doctoral Committee agree that the dissertation has been sufficiently revised and is now defendable. The time between the first defense and the second defense should be not less than 3 months, to allow the candidate a thorough revision and preparation for the second defense. At this point, the oral defense should be reconvened. All defenses, including reconvened defenses, must be announced in writing at least ten working days in advance.

An oral defense of a dissertation normally takes from 1 to 1 1/2 hours. The defense will be by teleconferencing. In consultation with the dissertation chairperson, the usual procedure is for the student to find a day and time at which it is possible for all members of the Dissertation Committee to participate.

The Components of the Doctoral Dissertation

Arrangement of Contents

The contents of the dissertation are listed below. This list indicates the order in which to place the sections of the dissertation. All sections are mandatory unless designated as optional.

- TITLE PAGE Including Approvals
- COPYRIGHT PAGE
- BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
- DEDICATION (optional)
- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
- TABLE OF CONTENTS
- LIST OF TABLES
- LIST OF FIGURES (or LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS)
- LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (optional)
- LIST OF SYMBOLS (optional)
- PREFACE (optional)
- ABSTRACT
- CHAPTERS 1 - 5
- REFERENCES
- APPENDIX (or APPENDICES)
- GLOSSARY (optional)
- INDEX (optional)

There are exceptions to the list and to the order in which the sections are placed in the dissertation. For example, some subjects require a background section to the Literature of chapter depending on the topic.
Dissertation Formatting

Page Composition

The following are guidelines for page composition. If in doubt about the acceptability of font size, legibility of equations, spacing, corrections, etc., consult with the Dissertation Adviser/Chair. Never use as a precedent a dissertation on file in the various University Libraries; requirements have changed over the years, and the binding process changes apparent margins.

Typeface

The entire text of the dissertation, including page numbers, must be produced with the same font or typeface. Exceptions are made only for tables and figures produced by different technology or by graphic artists.

The preferred typeface for APA publications is Times New Roman, with 12-point font size. Other fonts may be acceptable. Check the font with the dissertation adviser/chair.

Margins after photocopying must be at least:

- Left margin: One inch (1") or slightly larger.
- Top, bottom, right margins: One inch (1") or slightly larger.

These margins are absolutely essential so that the dissertation can be microfilmed in its entirety for interlibrary loan. These margins apply to all tables and figures. Hint: It is recommended that margins be set at 1.1 for the left margin and 1.1 for all other margins since the photocopying process may enlarge the text by as much as 2%. Use a ruler to measure the margins on each printed page.

Spacing

The dissertation must be double-spaced throughout except for quotations and footnotes. Bibliographies may be single-spaced within each entry, but must be double-spaced between each entry. The table of contents, list of tables, list of figures, and lengthy tables may also be single-spaced.

Equations and Formulas

Equations may be inserted from a non-matching font as well. All subscripts and superscripts must be large enough to be read on microfilm. To ensure readability on microfilm, test a page with sub- or superscripts by photocopying the page using a 25% text reduction. If the sub-or superscripts are still readable, then they are probably large enough.

Widows and orphans
Avoid "widows" (short lines ending a paragraph at the top of a page) as much as possible. A heading or subheading at the bottom of a page that is not followed by text is called an "orphan." A dissertation will not be accepted if it contains "orphans."

**Justification**

If one is using a computer or word processor, use justified margins only if the printer does this well, i.e., does not separate punctuation from characters and does not leave large gaps in the text. Usually, a left justification should be used.

**Titles of Sections**

The following sections must be titled accordingly, and should be in all capital letters. All titles are centered for the preliminary pages.
- BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
- TABLE OF CONTENTS
- LIST OF TABLES
- LIST OF FIGURES (or LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS)
- LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS
- LIST OF SYMBOLS
- PREFACE
- ABSTRACT (scroll down for further information regarding abstract)
- BIBLIOGRAPHY (or REFERENCES, or WORKS CITED)
- APPENDIX

Do not write the following titles on their respective pages: Title Page, Copyright Page, and Dedication. Although the sections must be titled as described above, chapter headings may be included which conform to the standard of the student's academic field.

**Pagination**

The following plan of page numbering has been standardized and must be observed.

**Pagination for preliminary pages**

Preliminary pages include all the sections that precede the text. They are arranged and numbered according to the following format, using lower case Roman numerals, in the same size font as the text, centered between the margins, at least 1/2 inch from the bottom of the page:

**Pagination Example**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preliminary Pages</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Pagination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Page counted but not numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH</td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION (optional)</td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Page(s) counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vii</td>
<td>Page(s) counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES or LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>ix</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF SYMBOLS (optional)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE (optional)</td>
<td>xi</td>
<td>Page counted and numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Page(s) not counted, and not numbered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the dissertation contains tables, figures, or illustrations, the appropriate list must be included in the preliminary pages. If any of the above sections are more than one page in length, each page is given the next Roman numeral, e.g., the first page of the Biographical Sketch is on page iii; subsequent pages of the Sketch would be iv, v, etc. All Roman numerals must be at the bottom of each page, centered between the margins, whether or not the page starts a new section.

**Pagination for the body of the dissertation**

The body includes:
- Text
- References
- Appendix (or Appendices)

Use continuous Arabic numbers for these sections, beginning with page 1. The Arabic numbers start in the text and the numbering continues through the appendices and the bibliography. Chapters begin on new pages. There should not be breaks between sections or before tables or figures, unless they occur naturally. On pages carrying major headings, such as the first page of a chapter, the first page of each appendix and the first page of the bibliography, the number is centered between the margins, no less than one-half inch (1/2") from the bottom of the page. Exception: If the bibliography is placed at the end of each chapter, a page break needs to be placed at the end of the text and the bibliography started on the next page. The page number stays at the top of the page, since it is considered part of the entire chapter and not a separate section.
Page numbers are placed at the top of the page for charts, maps, illustrations, all pages after the first page of the references, and all pages after the first page of each chapter and each appendix. The page number is placed either at the top centered between the margins, (one-half inch [1/2"] clearance from the top of the page), or at the top right corner (one-half inch [1/2"] clearance from the top of the page, and one inch from the right edge of the page). Be consistent—select a format and stick with it. There should always be at least a double space between the page number and the text.

All pages, beginning with page one of the text, must be numbered consecutively.

Two Volume Dissertations

Measure the thickness of the dissertation to determine if it is one or two volumes. Approximately three inches of paper will fit in one volume.

In dissertations with two volumes, the second should continue the numbering of the first part. Each volume should contain a title page with the words Volume I (or Volume II) added to the page, directly beneath the title. Include this information in the Table of Contents. The title page of the second volume is counted as a text page in the Arabic numeral counting, but a page number is not typed on the page. Subsequent pages should reflect this count.

Dissertation Writing

Title Selection

The words in the title of the dissertation should be selected carefully to represent as accurately as possible the subject content. The words in the title are important access points to researchers who may use computerized keyword search techniques to identify works in various subject areas.

Authors of scientific and engineering dissertations or theses should use word substitutes for formulas, symbols, superscripts or subscripts, Greek letters, etc. Examples: "Chromosomal Localization of the Alpha- and Beta-globulin of the Chicken, Gallus domesticus" and "A Study of High Critical Transition Temperature Superconductivity in the Neodymium-barium-copper Oxide System." (From Publishing Your Dissertation, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, Inc., 1997)

Title Page Format

The title is in all capital letters, centered within the left and right margins, double-spaced, about 1 1/2 inches from the top of the page. At the vertical and horizontal center of the margins and double-spaced are the following five lines (all centered):

Example of Dissertation Title with specific details explained follows on next page.
FULL TITLE OF DISSERTATION PRESENTED HERE IN BOLDED UPPERCASE AND LOWER CASE AND CENTERED IN THE UPPER QUARTER OF THE PAGE

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the College of
of Trident University International
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in
by
Your Name
Cypress, California
201X
(Defended Month Day Year)

Defended August 15, 2013

Approved by:
Office of Academic Affairs
Date of degree conferral
Dean: Name
Director, PhD Program: Name
Committee Chair: Name
Committee Member: Name
Committee Member: Name

Example
Business Administration

Example
In Health Sciences

Example
September 22, 2013

Example
Office of Academic Affairs

Example
Director, PhD Program: Name

Example
Committee Chair: Name

Example
Committee Member: Name

Example
Committee Member: Name
Student's Name

The student's name must appear as it is on file in the University Registrar's Office. The date on the title page should be the date of degree conferral, not the date the dissertation is submitted. The dissertation title and the student's name must be exactly the same wherever they appear in the dissertation: title page, copyright page, abstract page for doctoral dissertation, and Approval Form.

Students submitting two-volume dissertations should refer to the page that describing two-volume dissertation, for further instructions regarding the title page.

Copyright and Registration

Copyright law involves many complex issues that are relevant to the graduate student both in protecting his or her own work and in referencing the work of others. Discussion of copyright in this publication is not meant to substitute for the legal advice of qualified attorneys. A more detailed discussion of the copyright law can be found in the publication from University Microfilms, Inc. entitled Copyright Law and the Doctoral Dissertation: Guidelines to Your Legal Rights and Responsibilities by Kenneth D. Crews. Copies of this publication can be found at in many on-line libraries or can be found at http://www.proquest.com/assets/downloads/products/UMI_CopyrightGuide.pdf.

Copyright protection automatically exists from the time the work is created in fixed form, and the copyright immediately becomes the property of the author. Registration with the United States Copyright Office is not required to secure copyright; it is a legal formality to place on public record the basic facts of a particular copyright. Although not a condition of copyright protection itself, registering the copyright is ordinarily necessary before any infringement suits can be filed in court. If a student chooses not to copyright, s/he must insert a blank page behind the title page and does not need to sign the bottom of the Dissertation Approval and License to Use Copyrighted Material form.

A doctoral student may authorize University Microfilms, Inc. (UMI) to file, on his or her behalf, an application for registration. This request is made on the UMI form and requires payment of a fee. This expense is the responsibility of the PhD candidate. Whether you decide to register the copyright or not, a notice of copyright should appear as the sole item on the page immediately following the title page. The page is counted, but the number is not typed on this page. The copyright notice is centered vertically and horizontally within the margins as follows: © 201__ Student's Name

The copyright symbol is a lower case "c", which must be circled. On Macintosh computers, the symbol is generally obtained by pressing the "option" and "g" keys simultaneously. If the font does not have the © symbol, type the "c" and circle it by hand. On PC's, specifically, Microsoft Word, go to the “Insert” menu and select Symbol and click on the © symbol. It will be inserted onto your copyright page as identified by the cursor placement. The student's name must appear exactly as it is on file at the Registrar's Office and throughout the dissertation. The date on this page is the year of conferral of degree.
Additional information and forms from the U.S. Copyright Office are available on the Web. Forms may be downloaded and printed for use in registering or renewing a claim to copyright. The forms and the information may be accessed and downloaded through the Copyright Office homepage.

Biographical Sketch

The biographical sketch must be written in the third person and contain the student's educational background. It may contain additional biographical facts. The heading is the phrase "BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH" in all capital letters, centered within the margins at the top of the page. Font, margin, spacing, and paper quality requirements remain the same as those of the text. The page is numbered at the bottom of the page, centered within the margins, using lowercase Roman numerals.

Dedication

The dedication is optional. It does not have a heading, is usually centered on the page, can be in italics or regular type. The page is numbered at the bottom center of the page, using lowercase Roman numerals.

Acknowledgments

The acknowledgments may be written in the first person. Students whose research has been funded by outside grants should check with the principal investigator of the grant regarding proper acknowledgment of the funding source. Most outside funding sources require some statement of acknowledgment of the support; some also require a disclaimer from responsibility for the results. The heading is the phrase "ACKNOWLEDGMENTS" in all capital letters, centered within the margins at the top of the page. The acknowledgments page (s) should use the same fonts, margins, spacing, and paper quality as the text of the dissertation. The page is numbered at the bottom of the page, centered between the margins, using lowercase Roman numerals.

Table of Contents

Any standard format may be used for the table of contents. The only requirements are that the same font is used as in the text; page numbers must be listed for each chapter (sections may be included, as well); and that each page of the table of contents is numbered at the bottom of the page, centered between the margins, using lowercase Roman numerals. The heading is the phrase "TABLE OF CONTENTS" in all capital letters, centered within the margins at the top of the page. In most cases the preliminary sections, except for the title page, copyright page, and abstract are listed in the table of contents.
Lists of Figures, Tables, or Illustrations

There must be separate pages for LIST OF FIGURES, LIST OF TABLES, or LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS, even if there is only one example of each. Lists must contain enough of the titles or descriptions so that readers can locate particular items using the list. Lists must contain the page number on which each table, figure, or illustration is found, as in a table of contents. It may not be necessary to include entire figure captions or table headings. The page is numbered at the bottom of the page, centered between the margins, using lowercase Roman numerals. The page heading is the phrase "LIST OF ______" in all capital letters, centered between the margins, at the top of the page.

Abstract

The abstract should state the problem, describe the methods and procedures used, and give the main results or conclusions of the research. University Microfilms, Inc. requires that the abstract be typed (double-spaced) with the same typeface as the dissertation and that it not exceed 350 words. The abstract may not be more than two pages, even if fewer than 350 words long. All paper quality, font, margin, and spacing requirements that apply to the text apply to the abstract also. The abstract pages are neither numbered nor counted. The heading of the dissertation abstract is as follows:

**TITLE OF DISSERTATION**

Student's Name, Ph.D.

Trident University International 201__ (year of conferral)

Begin the title about 1 1/2 inches (or at least 1 inch) down from the top of the page. The dissertation title is centered between the left and right margins and appears in all capital letters. The student's name must appear as it is on file in the University Registrar's Office. The title and name must be exactly the same wherever they appear in the dissertation. The date on the abstract page should be the year of conferral, not the date the dissertation was submitted. Skip one double-spaced line and begin the abstract on the same page.

Footnotes

Textual notes that provide supplementary information, opinions, explanations, or suggestions that are not part of the text must appear at the bottom of the page, i.e., footnoted. That placement ensures that they will appear as close as possible in the microfilm to the referenced passage. Lengthy footnotes may be continued on the next page. Placement of footnotes at the bottom of the page is necessary since all dissertations are microfilmed. Note: footnotes may be single-spaced in a 10-point size but must be in the same font as the text.

Footnote numbering can be continuous throughout the dissertation or may start again for each chapter or page, but the method must be consistent. Inserted footnotes may not be numbered 25a, for example.
The footnotes following the insertion must be renumbered.

**Figures, Tables, Photographs, and Foldouts**

Foldouts are discouraged. However, if large tables, illustrations, etc., cannot be placed in the regular 6 1/2 x 8 1/4 inch format, then 8 1/2 x 11 inch archival (if available) paper may be used. The same margin requirements apply: 1 1/2 inches on the left and one inch on the top, bottom, and right. This leaves the remaining area to be filled with text. The student should not fold these pages; roll them and put them in a mailing tube. If material is larger than 8 1/2 x 11 inches, such as a map or drawing, it should be placed in a tube with the student's name, degree, and year of conferral written on the tube. If possible, those insertions should also be on archival paper. Follow these guidelines when including figures, tables, photographs and foldouts in the dissertation. Formatting these items may be difficult, and students are urged to consult the dissertation Adviser/Chair.

**Tables and Figures**

Tables and figures must be placed as close as possible to their first mention in the text. They may be placed on a page with no text above or below, or they may be placed directly into the text. If a table or figure is placed directly into the text, text may appear above or below the table; no text may wrap around the table. If a table or a figure is alone on a page (with no narrative) it should be centered within the margins on the page. Tables and figures may not be placed at the end of the chapter or at the end of the dissertation. Figure and table numbering must be either continuous throughout the dissertation. There cannot be two figures numbered 5, for example, in a dissertation.

Headings of tables should be placed at the top of the table. While there are no specific rules for the format of table headings and figure captions, a consistent format must be used throughout the dissertation.

Captions of figures should be placed at the top of the figure. If the figure takes up the entire page, the figure caption should be placed alone on the preceding page and centered vertically and horizontally within the margins. Each page receives a separate page number. When a figure title is on a preceding page, the second and subsequent pages of the figure should say, for example, Figure 5 (Continued). The first page of data does not have the caption with the word "Continued". In such an instance, the List of Figures will list the page number containing the title. The word 'figure' should be written in full (not abbreviated), and the 'f' should be capitalized, for example: Figure 5.

If a table or figure is more than one page, the second and subsequent pages should say at the top either Table 5 (Continued) or Figure 5 (Continued), and the caption is omitted.

Horizontal figures and tables must be positioned correctly: they will be bound at the top (i.e., the top of the figure or table will be at the left margin). Figure and table headings/captions are placed with the same orientation as the figure or table when on the same page. When on a separate page,
headings/captions are always placed in vertical orientation, regardless of the orientation of the figure or
table. Page numbers are always placed as if the figure were vertical on the page.

Hint: To paginate a table in landscape orientation (in a separate document), insert a blank page
at the appropriate point of your dissertation (under the Insert menu, chose Break, and select Page
Break). Then print your landscape table without a page number. You can feed the same piece of paper
into the printer twice (once to print the landscape table, once to print the page number), or you can
tape the page number onto the bottom of the landscape page and photocopy the page.

If a graphic artist produces the figures, the College will accept lettering done by the artist within
the figure. Figures produced with software are acceptable if the figures are clear and legible. Legends
and titles produced by the same process, will be accepted if they, too, are clear and legible and at least
10 or 12 characters per inch. Otherwise the legends and captions should be printed with the same font
that is in the text. The use of colors should be avoided, because they are not reproduced well on
microfilm. Other techniques for indicating differences within graphs, charts, maps, etc., such as cross-
hatching, should be used.

All graphs, diagrams, line drawings, manuscript facsimiles, maps, chemical formulas, computer
printouts, musical scores, etc., included in the body of the dissertation must be on archival paper and
must be produced by acceptable permanent methods. Pages should not vary from the standard size of 8
1/2 x 11 inches. Plan the illustrative materials so they can be reduced to meet this specification. They
should be centered between the margins on a page with no text above or below. Exceptions to this rule
are discussed in the section on foldouts.

For reduction of material, always use machines that can reduce one percent at a time. If figures
or tables are too large to be reduced satisfactorily, they should either be split into several pages or be
redone. Long tables may be single spaced, and text may be slightly reduced. Page numbers and headings
must not be reduced. All lettering must be clear, readable, and large enough to be legible on microfilm.
The rule of thumb is that all lettering, including subscripts, must still be readable when reduced 25%
beyond the final version. The white space around the text or figures must meet all margin requirements.

References

Trident University-College of Health Sciences, College of Education and College of Business
Administration recommends that the student follows the Publication Manual of the American

Bibliographies may be single-spaced within each entry, but must be double-spaced between
each entry. On the first page of the bibliography, the page number is placed at the bottom of the page,
centered between the margins.
Acknowledging the Work of Others

Students are responsible for acknowledging any facts, ideas, or materials of others in their work. Students must follow the guidelines for acknowledging the work of others in the "Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others".

Copyrighted Material

If a student uses any copyrighted material in the dissertation, it is the student's responsibility to give full credit to the author and publisher of work quoted. The acknowledgment should be placed in a footnote. Additionally, the student must determine whether use of the material can be classified within "fair use" guidelines. If the student has included material beyond the concept of "fair use", then the student must obtain written permission from the copyright owner. Two copies of each permission letter should be submitted with the dissertation. University Microfilms, Inc. has specific requirements for the content of the permission letter. For these guidelines, consult Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form, published by University Microfilms, Inc.

For a more detailed discussion of "fair use", see Copyright Law and the Doctoral Dissertation: Guidelines to your Legal Rights and Responsibilities, published by University Microfilms, Inc. or The Chicago Manual of Style published by the University of Chicago Press.

If one has already published, or had accepted for publication, part of one's own dissertation material in a journal, it is necessary to write to that journal and obtain written authorization to use the material in one's dissertation.

Reference Sources for Style and Format

Although formats vary among fields, Trident University strongly encourages adherence to accepted standards of usage in matters of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. A student should check with his or her field for specific requirements of format. If the field has none, then use Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 6th ed. Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association, 2009.

Appendix

Materials which are peripheral but relevant to the main text of the dissertation should be placed in appendices. These may include survey instruments, additional data, computer printouts, details of a procedure or analysis, a relevant paper written by the student, etc. Appendix material must meet the same requirements of page composition, pagination, legibility, and paper quality as the text itself. On the first page of each appendix the page number is placed at the bottom of the page, centered between the margins.
Completing the Dissertation

During the phase of the dissertation continuation, the candidate will gather the data for the study, perform any indicated tests and/or analysis, support or reject the hypotheses, and describe the implications of the research. Finally, the candidate will prepare a formal written document describing all elements of the research. Throughout this process, the candidate and the committee will be guided by the approved dissertation proposal.

If at any point in the process, it becomes clear to the student and the committee that the proposal needs revision in order to complete the research with optimal results, the committee shall determine the seriousness of such revision. If the revision is minor, the committee will approve the revision and assist the candidate in proceeding with the revised research. If the revision is of a serious or major nature, the committee will inform the Doctoral Program Director. The Doctoral Program Director will either approve the revision or, at his/her discretion, forward the proposed revision to the College Dean for further review.

During the collection and analysis of the research data, the candidate will report to the committee through the Chair on each of the following phases and will proceed to the next phase only after receiving feedback and approval from the committee. This approval is necessary to ensure that the candidate does not undertake major efforts that would need to be redone should there be problems with a previous element in the research:

- Final approval of the research methodology.
- Collection of the research data.
- Application of any statistical tests or other analytical procedures.
- Interpretation of the statistical tests or other analytical procedures.
- Implications of the research.

The candidate will write descriptive chapters for each element of the research. The sum of these chapters will comprise the complete written dissertation. Reasonable flexibility is allowed and encouraged to meet specific needs of each dissertation, but the majority of dissertations will follow this chapter outline. The first 4 chapters will draw heavily on the approved dissertation proposal, although they need to be revised as needed to reflect any changes that take place in the project between its approval and its completion (including issues as simple as changing the tenses from future to past, in most cases). Significant modifications of the general content need to be approved by the Chair and the Committee.

I. **Chapter 1 – Introduction, Problem Statement and Research Questions.** This chapter will introduce the general topic and explain why the candidate chose this particular topic. This chapter will also identify the specific issue or problem in the topic that will be the subject of the research, and define the research questions that guide the study. The candidate should explain the process that led him/her to this specific issue or problem. There should be adequate references in this chapter to the literature to justify the selection of the issue or problem. (These
two chapters can be and often are combined into a general Introduction).

II. **Chapter 2 – Literature Review.** In this chapter, the candidate will include all relevant literature to fully develop any theoretical background and conceptual framework necessary to conduct and discuss the research. This chapter will describe the current state of research related to the issue or problem. The formal hypotheses are generally introduced and discussed in this chapter, since they should be based on the literature.

III. **Chapter 3 – Research Methodology.** The candidate will describe in detail the specific methodology to be used to conduct the research and will justify that selection. Any instruments or tools to be used will be fully described and justified in this chapter. If preliminary tests were indicated, the tests will be fully described, the results explained, and any modifications resulting from them discussed. The nature of the research site(s), the sampling arrangements, and the procedures followed in the research are also covered in this chapter. The candidate will describe any statistical tests and/or other analytical procedures used in the analysis of the data collected. The selection of the statistical tests and/or other analytical procedures will be justified.

IV. **Chapter 4 – Data Analysis and Presentation of Results.** Here, the candidate will apply to the data the statistical tests and/or analytical procedures established in Chapter 4, and draw conclusions as to the fate of his/her hypotheses or research questions. Complete results will be described and support or rejection of the hypothesis(es) will be described and explained.

V. **Chapter 5 – Discussion and Implications of the Research.** In this final chapter, the candidate will discuss the findings in relation to the research questions, and explain the implications of the research, including a clear description of the implications for theory and the addition to the body of knowledge in the issue or problem area; recommendations for further research are almost always included, and recommendations for practice are highly desirable.

Trident University has generally standardized on “APA style” as the most commonly used and generally accepted format. Many different print and online sources provide information as to the requirements of this style. In addition, there are utilities in programs such as Microsoft Word that automate significant parts of the maintenance of citation databases and preparation of bibliographic entries, as well as stand-alone programs available for purchase or sometimes as shareware. Trident University does not collectively endorse or support such programs, but many have found them helpful.

The style of the writing should be academic in nature. Again, the candidate is referred to the leading academic journals in his/her specific area. It is inappropriate to include logos, clip art, and other non-academic trappings that are becoming commonplace in non-academic literature.

The dissertation should be 100-350 pages in length. Each of the requirements identified above (and specifically required by the dissertation committee) should be fully met. On the other hand, the dissertation should include no discussions that are not relevant to the research. There should be no
effort on the part of the candidate to unnecessarily add to the length of the dissertation.

The completed dissertation should have each of these elements:

I. A title page.
II. A table of contents.
III. A listing of tables.
IV. A listing of figures.
V. An abstract consistent with the requirements of the leading academic journals in the particular field.
VI. All chapters of the dissertation.
VII. References, each work cited throughout the dissertation should be included in this section.
VIII. Appendix

**Final Editing and Submission of the Dissertation**

Note: All expenses related to the dissertation including data analysis, typing, copying, binding, use of software, registration fees etc. are the sole responsibility of the Ph.D. candidate.

Almost all dissertations require at least minor editing after the oral defense. As mentioned above, the student has four weeks from the date of the oral defense to complete these editorial changes and make sure that the dissertation is properly formatted. When post-defense changes have been implemented, the committee chair must notify the Doctoral Program Director. Once the dissertation has been successfully completed, the candidate will be granted the degree. Procedurally, these steps will take place:

Following the approval of the dissertation by the Office of the VP for Academic Affairs, the Doctoral Program Director will send an e-mail to the candidate indicating the approval of the dissertation.

The candidate should know that your proof of degree will come in an e-mail from the Registrar’s Office and will be a PDF letter that you can add to the package that you send to UMI/ProQuest.

The dissertation copies that we need at Trident will be the bound copies prepared and copied by UMI/ProQuest, as they must be officially published copies. Once they publish them, they will send them back to you and then you should send 2 copies to us at Trident and send other copies to your committee members.

The dissertation copies submitted to Trident University must be hardbound in black with a stamped title on spine gold labeling. The dissertations should be sized to 6 x 9 inches. The interior must be printed on acid-free archival quality paper, 20 lb weight, for library circulating collections and archives.
It can take about two months for UMI/ProQuest to complete the publication process. Once you have submitted your dissertation package to them, they will assign you a publication number and it will be possible to call and check on the status of your dissertation. Their Author Relations department is 800.521.0600 ext. 77020.

When you receive your bounded copies of the dissertation from ProQuest/UMI you must distribute the copies as follows:

- Send one copy to the TUI Librarian. The Librarian will notify the Registrar that you published and bounded dissertation has been received. In addition, include a copy of the bounded dissertation to each Trident faculty that served on your committee and are located in Trident University’s Cypress location.
- Provided one copy of the bounded dissertation directly to each committee member located off-site.
- Upon receipt of these copies and confirmation of your degree clearance, you will then be awarded the degree and diploma.

In the meantime, if you need proof that you have completed your PhD degree, you can request an official transcript from the Registrar’s Office, after they have sent you the letter indicating your degree completion. Then, once we receive the necessary published dissertations from you, your official diploma and complementary transcript will be sent to you. The candidate will be invited to participate in the next scheduled Trident University graduation ceremony.

Please read on the following forms, and you will find the most updated information from UMI.

Guidelines for Dissertations Publishing:

The UMI/ProQuest Dissertations Department can be contacted at: 1-800-521-0600, ext. 77020 disspub@proquest.com

Here is the information of submitting your dissertation to ProQuest:

Aspire, Believe, Achieve

Trident University International
5757 Plaza Drive Cypress, CA 90630
Phone: (714) 226-9840
Fax: (714) 229-5062
Appendix A: Proposal Rubric

Title Page

- Clearly identifies main constructs
- Committee members listed

Abstract

- Concise, brief, rational statement of what will be done in the study (150-200 words)

Introduction

- Presents the context and the knowledge gap, the study purpose, what will be done in the study and how it will fill the knowledge gap.
- Brief, clear and specific to the topic.
- Study feasibility.

Problem Statement and Research questions

Problem statement

- Novel and significant study.
- Problem clearly identified; knowledge gap, study significance and novelty clearly addressed
- Study purpose and aims stem clearly from the problem statement and knowledge gap.
- Clearly presented, focused and specific
- Theory-based

Research questions

- Question(s) clear, articulated and specific corresponding exactly to the study purpose
- Thought provoking; provide original insights to the issues
- Promise of contribution to discipline, and or communities is clear and compelling
- Clearly addressing the knowledge gap
- Comprehensive in scope. Includes main and sub questions
- Refers to the main constructs and their relationships (relationships to be investigated in the study)
Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Literature review
- There is a relevant synthesis of empirical and theoretical literature
- Critical understanding of literature is evident in style, organization and content
- Mastery of appropriate canon is evident. Sources cited are rich and diverse.
- Recent publications.
- Clearly identifies and discusses the knowledge gap
- Comprehensive in scope.
- Key issues are included. Addresses all the components of the research question/s (main constructs and their associations)
- Multiple citations from diverse literature are woven together cogently.
- Reframes existing controversies or issues in the literature in novel terms.

Conceptual framework
- The theory, theories, theoretical models, or mechanisms have been identified and are relevant to the research questions and associations under study.
- The concepts and the relationships among the constructs/variables are presented clearly and logically
- The D.V’s and I.V’s are clearly assigned in the conceptual framework and there is clarity of directionality
- There is a clear graphical presentation

Hypotheses
- The hypotheses correspond to the research questions
- The hypotheses are relevant and flow logically from the theory used
- The hypotheses are accurately stated
- The hypotheses are testable based on operationalized variables

Methodology

Research Design
- The design is accurately identified and described
- The design is appropriate and it will answer the study's hypotheses
- Includes sufficient protection for Human Subjects

Study Population
• Populations have been identified and described, i.e. who, where, accessibility
• Recruiting and sampling procedure have been identified
• Power analysis, effect size have been calculated, are sufficient and correctly presented

Data Collection Tools

• Measurement instrument, etc are valid, reliable, and correctly presented
• Plan for data collection and analysis is appropriate
• Measures exist for all variables

Variables - Independent and Dependent Variables

• Operationalized variables are identified and discussed
• Each variable described based on type (nominal, continuous etc.) and role in the analysis (IV/DV)

Statistical Analysis

• There is a correspondence between the research questions-measures-variables-analysis
• Multivariate statistics is required and description is specific to the type of DV and IV
• The study is feasible (cost, time, resources, approvals, etc.)

Limitations, delimitations, significance

• Limitations/delimitations are detailed
• Potential biases are detailed
• Potentially confounding factors are described, and methods to address impact are discussed
• Methods for missing data are detailed
• How the study will advance the field is discussed

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

• Confidentiality/privacy discussed
• Time table of research activities
• References
• Number of pages – 35-45
Appendix B: Qualitative Dissertation in the Program of Ph.D. Educational Leadership

Previously our Ph.D. program only accepts quantitative or mixed study approach as the dissertation. A benchmarking process with other WASC accredited education Ph.D. programs has been done. Other Ph.D. programs in Education allow both quantitative and qualitative dissertation format. Based on the results of benchmarking and external reviewer’s recommendation we add qualitative methodology to current dissertation format. This is due to the highly specialized work that some of the students in the Ph.D.E.L. Program is in, including special education. Students in special education and other areas may have difficulty obtaining large sample sizes necessary for quantitative research, but have access to a unique population that may lend itself to high quality qualitative research. The modification to our dissertation requirement, will enrich our student’s learning experience and this may broaden the appeal of our program to some highly qualified students and increase student success without sacrificing quality.

Methodology in Qualitative Study

Designing Qualitative studies is quite different from quantitative studies. Qualitative research is defined as research devoted to developing an understanding of human systems, be they small, such as one or small group of students / classroom, or large, such as a cultural system. Qualitative research studies typically include ethnographies, case studies, and generally descriptive studies. Of the qualitative methodologies, presently only the case study is accepted in the Ph.D. E. L. program.

Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. (Soy, 2006). The Case Study will be individual/group studied for a specific period of time. Usually the study includes interviews (individual/group), data, and observations to triangulate conclusions and answer research questions.

Primary Goal of Your Dissertation

The primary goal of the dissertation is to make an original and significant contribution to the body of knowledge with practical applications.
Characteristics of Qualitative Research

- It provides views that reality is constructed and supported by individuals interacting with their social worlds.
- The researcher decides the primary instrument for data collection and analysis.
- It usually involves fieldwork.
- Primarily employs an inductive research strategy.
- The product of a qualitative study is richly descriptive.
- For most, the design is emergent, flexible, and responsive to changing conditions of the study.

Methodology

- Development of Methodology
  I. Process used to bring about the product, and the design of the product
  II. How was the process validated? Experts? Field Testing? Or Evaluation methodology of the results?
- Evaluation of Methodology
  I. Process of identifying if a product is doing what it is supposed to be doing; reaching its goals and/or objectives
  II. Sources are experts, and statistical procedures are appropriate.

Analysis of Qualitative Methods

New technologies to analyze qualitative data and to report findings of qualitative studies include Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis programs:

1) Nvivo 8


2) Transana

http://www.transana.org/about/Tour/index.htm
Validity, Reliability, and Ethics

- Validity
  - Internal validity vs. Credibility
  - External validity vs. Transferability
- Reliability vs. Dependability
  - Explanation, triangulation, audit trails
- Ethics
  - Autonomy, beneficence, justice

Six Steps of Conducting Qualitative Study

- Determine and define the research questions
- Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques
- Prepare to collect the data
- Collect data in the field
- Evaluate and analyze the data
- Prepare the report

Criteria for Evaluating Qualitative Studies (AECT, 2001)

- Is the problem clearly stated? Does it have theoretical value and currency? Does it have practical value?
- Is the problem or topic situated in a theoretical framework? Is the framework clear and accessible? Does the document contain competing epistemologies or other basic assumptions that might invalidate claims?
- Is the literature review a critique or simply a repetition? Is it relevant? Does it appear accurate and sufficiently comprehensive?
- Are the theses stated in a clear and coherent fashion? Are they sufficiently demonstrated in an accessible manner? Are there credible warrants to claims made about the theses?
- Does the method fit the problem, and is it an appropriate one given the theoretical framework?
• Do the data collected adequately address the problem? Do they make explicit the researcher's role and perspective? Do the data collection techniques have a "good fit" with the method and theory?
• Are the data aggregates and analysis clearly reported? Do they make explicit the interpretive and reasoning process of the researcher?
• Does the discussion provide meaningful and warranted interpretations and conclusions?

Qualitative Dissertation Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction

• Background of the Problem
• Statement of the Problem
• Purpose of the Study
• Research Questions
• Importance of the Study
• Scope of the Study
• Definition of Terms
• Delimitations and Limitations

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Chapter 3: Research Methods

• The Qualitative Paradigm
• Qualitative Methods
• The Researcher's Role
• Data Sources
• Data Collection
• Data Analysis
• Verification
• Ethical Considerations
• Plan for Narrative OR Pilot Study Results
Chapter 4: Research Findings

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Discussion, and Suggestions for Future Research

- Summary
- Conclusions
- Discussion
- Suggestions for Future Research

Recommended References


Recommended Data Base:

ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (PQDT) database: Login in to Coursernet, click “ProQuest” on the left navigation bar.