



GSEHD

DOCTORAL HANDBOOK | 2014-2015 EDITION

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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## INTRODUCTION: OVERALL FRAMEWORK

This Doctoral Student Handbook introduces the philosophy underlying doctoral study at GSEHD, describes the several stages of progression through the doctoral program, states applicable policies and procedures, provides advice, and includes copies of the forms that need to be filed as students progress through the program. The stated policies and procedures apply to all doctoral degree programs, with the one exception noted immediately below. Each doctoral program may impose additional requirements and most do.

The PhD program in Counseling is offered through GW's Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) in collaboration with the Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD). Because of this collaboration, some requirements and procedures for that program differ from those of GSEHD's EdD degree programs. Students in that program should refer both to this handbook and the Handbook for PhD Students in Counseling.

GSEHD may change some of the policies, requirements, and procedures stated in this handbook during subsequent years. Students will be informed of important changes that affect them if their e-mail addresses are updated in GWeb. Changes will generally be applicable to all students at a specified date of implementation, but those changes will be implemented to assure no adverse consequences to current students.

This handbook also has information to orient and advise GSEHD doctoral students. While such advice is not binding, students are encouraged to give it careful consideration.

The GSEHD Office of the Dean and the Office of Student Services provide overall administration and support of all GSEHD doctoral programs. Most student contact will be with the latter office. The Office of Student Services is currently located in the GSEHD Office of Student Life townhouse at 2136 G Street, NW.

### GSEHD'S OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

*The Office of Student Services exists to assist students in complying with GSEHD's policies and procedures and can be reached at:*

202.994.9283

<http://gsehd.gwu.edu/student-services>

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development is committed to providing the highest quality educational services. We develop innovative research programs, contribute in diverse ways to local communities and the nation, and actively participate in the international community of scholarship. Our unique location in the nation's capital, a vibrant, multicultural and multinational center, offers a broad range of resources and opportunities to our diverse students and faculty. We believe that continuous self-examination and improvement are fundamental to the education and human development professions.

The mission has been translated into four bridging concepts that guide the work of the faculty in the design of programs:

- **Research and Scholarship:** Research and scholarship are prerequisite to the improvement of educational practice.
- **Leadership in the Educational Endeavor:** Leadership is critical in the reform and redesign of education and human services at all levels.
- **Reflective Practitioners:** Building reflective practitioners through the integration of theory and practice is a priority of all programs.
- **Service to the Multicultural, Multinational, and International Community of Diverse Learners:** A community of diverse learners is prerequisite to success in the education and human service professions.

## DOCTORAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The primary purpose of our doctoral programs is to prepare informed and reflective professionals in education, counseling, and human and organizational learning to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and practice in these fields.

Degree candidates are to demonstrate knowledge in the chosen field, ability to synthesize this information, and mastery of advanced research methods. Candidates are also to complete a dissertation that reports independent original research that contributes substantively to theory or practice. Neither the accumulation of factual knowledge nor the completion of advanced courses can be substituted for independent investigation and the proof of its achievement.

Learning at the advanced graduate level requires a program that enables students to pursue topics and ideas in depth. Such a program includes a required period of intensive study. Faculty members in your chosen major field determine the plan of study most appropriate to help you achieve the stated goals.

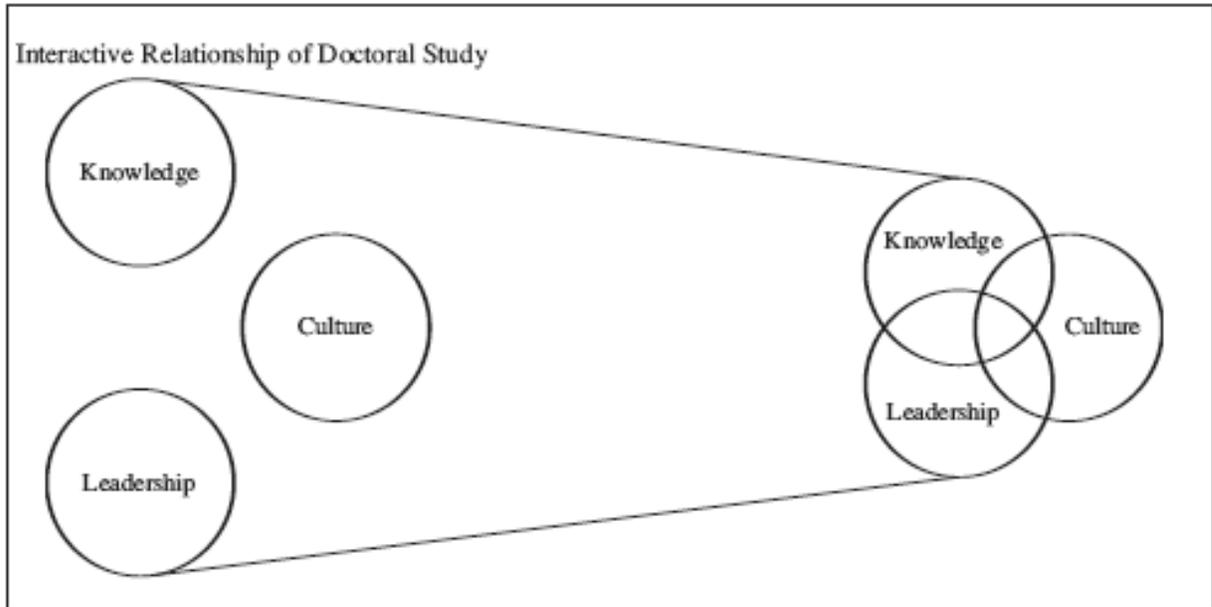
## ASPECTS OF SCHOLARSHIP

The GSEHD doctoral program reflects a framework that includes four aspects of scholarship:

- **The scholarship of discovery:** conducting disciplined, scholarly investigation, and discovering new knowledge
- **The scholarship of integration:** making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties into larger contexts, creating an integrated view of knowledge, and interpreting research
- **The scholarship of application:** applying knowledge to problems of consequence and to scholarly service
- **The scholarship of teaching:** transmitting, transforming, and extending knowledge through teaching and through inspiring scholarship

## THE LEARNING PARADIGM

Doctoral study at GSEHD is based on an integration of knowledge, culture, and leadership. Together these three themes provide an overarching, cohesive philosophical framework that guides advanced graduate study in each department. They are reflected in all aspects of program coursework as well as in related field and research experience.



### *Knowledge*

Effective professionals in education and human development seek to be well-educated content specialists in their areas of expertise. Graduate work in GSEHD's doctoral programs provides opportunities for students to build on their professional experience by engaging in scholarship and research to enhance their own knowledge and contribute to expanding the body of knowledge in their field.

Program curricula provide students with a sequenced series of core and specialty studies related to the philosophical, historical, psychological, social, and research foundations of education, administration, and human development. The curricula involve ways of generating, interpreting, and applying research and, where appropriate, a series of clinical experiences offer opportunities for relating theory to practice. Program curricula also provide students with opportunities to engage in a continuous dialogue that affirms the spirited intellectual life that is characteristic of the academic community. The doctoral program culminates with planning an original research study, conducting the research, reporting it in a dissertation, and defending the dissertation. This creates a base for personal and professional development.

### *Culture*

Advanced graduate study is a culture-contributing activity that calls for a broad, ethical vision extending beyond the narrowness of personal gain and private intellectual development. The faculty emphasizes that learning and the acquisition of knowledge occur within the wider political, economic, and social context. Professionals seeking to assume or strengthen leadership roles in education and the human services through advanced study need to understand how knowledge in their field is connected to the many crucial issues confronting the larger society. Doctoral programs in GSEHD provide opportunities for students to explore the important connections that link classroom study to community engagement.

### *Leadership*

Advanced graduate education encourages students to incorporate their study into the broader discourse related to issues of citizenship, professional performance, and democratic leadership. The acquisition and use of knowledge is not a value-free or objectively-neutral process. Effective professionals in education and the human services understand the intimate, complex interrelationship between knowledge and leadership in public and private life and how the acquisition and exercise of knowledge can either serve or impede the promotion of justice, equity, and democracy in society. Doctoral study at GSEHD provides opportunities for students to explore the connections between knowledge and leadership as reflected in their own programs of study and in their professional fields of practice.

## DOMAINS OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL

Linked to the three broad topics of knowledge, culture, and leadership are seven domains of knowledge and skill that undergird the curriculum for doctoral study within GSEHD and provide a framework for assessment of student progress. They are as follows:

### *Knowledge Foundations*

As you prepare for an increasing leadership role in education, counseling, and human and organizational learning, knowledge of the philosophical, historical, psychological, and social-political foundations of your field is required so that you will have a broad perspective for understanding the issues, problems, and controversies associated with your profession. Education and human development activities are importantly affected by the contexts in which they operate, and conversely, they have impact on those contexts. Foundation knowledge will help you to see the “bigger picture.” EDUC 8110, Group Comparison Designs and Analyses is intended to introduce you to these foundations. Some programs also have one or more other courses that specifically address these foundations. Many content courses also address contexts.

### *Critical Literature Review*

Critical analysis and synthesis of existing research within your major field and across related fields is essential preparation for preparing your dissertation. You are expected to demonstrate an ability to identify, interpret, analyze, and synthesize research. The critical analysis and synthesis of the theoretical and empirical literature are essential for planning of your dissertation proposal,

writing Chapter 2 of your dissertation, and ascertaining the implications of your findings. (See Appendix A.) A self-study website on literature reviews is available at [www.gwu.edu/~litrev](http://www.gwu.edu/~litrev). Some of your content courses will also have you read, critique, and/or conduct literature reviews.

### *Inquiry and Research Methods*

Substantial research skills are required for your dissertation research proposal and for completing and defending your dissertation. (See Appendix A.) In preparation for contributing new knowledge to the field of education and human development, you will need to become familiar with the distinct interpretive paradigms, research protocols, and analytic forms that are traditional in the field. You will be expected to demonstrate understanding of critical aspects of quantitative research, including:

- Social and behavioral science research design (experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental design)
- Sampling, both random (simple, stratified, and cluster) and purposeful
- Measurement, including levels of measurement, scales, test construction, validity, and reliability
- Data analysis methods, including descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, correlation) and inferential statistics (chi square, t-test, ANOVA)

Some of the above content is taught in EDUC 8120. Other aspects are presumed to be prerequisite knowledge gained from your master's degree study.

All doctoral students need an introduction to recent shifts in epistemological orientations that are redefining the boundaries of research methodology. Such shifts have led to several approaches for qualitative research, including ethnography, phenomenology, heuristics, hermeneutics, and systems theory. You will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of epistemological bases for qualitative research and some of the commonly used approaches. This information is taught in EDUC 8122, Qualitative Research Methods.

GSEHD offers a broad array of intermediate and advanced research methods courses in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Additional advanced methods courses are offered by other departments including statistics, history, and anthropology.

In addition, all doctoral students take a Predissertation Seminar (8998) to help them prepare their dissertation proposal.

### *Clarity of Written and Oral Communication*

You will be challenged throughout your course of study to engage in the critical, self-conscious process of exploring the relationship between reasoning and writing. Your coursework will require considerable writing. Your dissertation research proposal and your dissertation will be major written documents. In addition, you will be encouraged to publish one or more articles derived from your dissertation. Finally, your career will be substantially aided by the ability to communicate in a professional manner.

Your written products and oral presentation are expected to exhibit increasingly sophisticated thought. Major points that are not already widely accepted are to be substantiated with logical argument, reference citations, empirical evidence, or other means. Growing understanding of the literature in your field will help with this. Written products and substantial oral presentations are to be well organized, with an introduction that indicates the direction of the discussion, a body that develops the main points, and an ending that pulls these materials together.

You are to use established professional terminology, while avoiding heavy jargon that would make the writing inaccessible to interested persons from outside the field. The wording is to be precise, concise, and grammatical. Graduate students sometimes mistake “sophisticated” language and loquaciousness for profundity or cogency. You should strive to write about complexity as simply as possible.

GSEHD programs generally prefer or require that major course papers and the dissertation comply with the style specified in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Sixth Edition)*. This is often referred to as “APA style.” Warning: The APA style for reference list entries is counter-intuitive and requires careful scrutiny and practice. For instance, titles of articles and books are only initially capitalized. Buy a copy of the APA Style Manual; you will have to consult it repeatedly.

Students who have not mastered the basics of good writing can get assistance from the GW Writing Center at (202) 994-3765, [www.gwu.edu/~gwriter](http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter).

### *Professional Development*

Development of professional identity will be important for your future leadership and career. Each semester you should (a) consider your short-term and long-term goals, (b) reflect on how your schooling and other experiences have moved you toward these goals or failed to do so, and (c) plan your forthcoming semester of courses and other experiences to advance you toward those goals.

Some of your courses will directly assist you in your professional development. Your academic advisor may encourage and help you with this; if not, you should seek his or her assistance when you think it might be helpful. Attendance at professional meetings is a good way to learn professional culture and to explore career options. Discussions with other students are also helpful, particularly since a large portion of GSEHD doctoral students are mid-career professionals.

### *Technological Skills*

Effective performance in professional roles in education and human development requires you to become familiar with the commonly used technologies in the field. You are expected to demonstrate the following computer skills: using an operating system, ensuring data security, preparing an academic document using a standard word processor, transmitting documents electronically, conducting on-line database searches, accessing information from the World Wide

Web, interacting in an academic chat room, using PowerPoint or other presentation software, and using a professional statistical package or qualitative research package.

Gelman library, GW's computer labs, GSEHD's Research Methods Laboratory, some of your content courses, and some research methods courses offer introductions to these skills.

### *Knowledge of Specialty Area*

As a doctoral student, you will build upon your master's degree study and enhance your knowledge in your content-specialty area. Advanced graduate work will provide you with many opportunities to build on your professional experience by engaging in scholarship and research activities. These activities substantially build the body of knowledge relevant to your specific discipline. Effective professionals continually update their knowledge to stay current in their fields.

Your content courses will substantially help in developing knowledge in your specialty area. So will discussions with your academic advisor, dissertation committee chair, and other faculty members. Attendance at professional meetings can substantially contribute. In addition, you are expected to initiate self-directed reading on topics of interest to you.

## PHASES AND STEPS OF DOCTORAL STUDY

Doctoral work at GSEHD is divided into two phases: precandidacy and candidacy, each of which involves specific steps:

### **PHASE 1:** Precandidacy

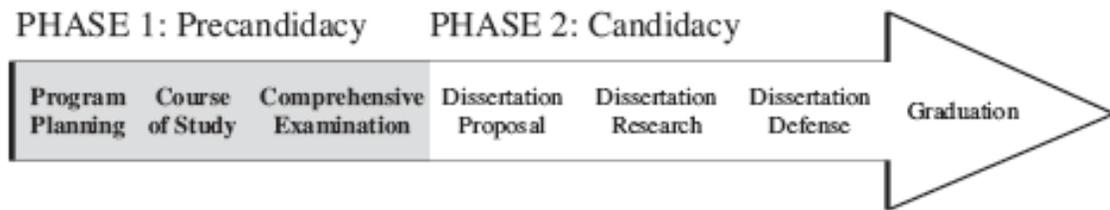
- Program Planning
- Course of Study
- Comprehensive Examination

- Dissertation Proposal
- Dissertation Research
- Dissertation Defense
- Graduation

### **PHASE 2:** Candidacy

Each of these phases and steps entails specific requirements that must be met before you can progress to the next level. Most of the rest of this handbook details the applicable policies, regulations, and procedures. It is essential that at each step you are planning in advance for the subsequent steps. Do so with the guidance of this handbook and your advisor.

## PHASE 1: PRECANDIDACY



Precandidacy is the period from formal admission and first enrollment in a doctoral program through successful completion of the comprehensive examination. Critical aspects of precandidacy include selection and work with a primary advisor, program planning, the course of study, and the comprehensive examination. Note: Students in the Higher Education Administration program must successfully defend their dissertation proposal in lieu of completing the comprehensive examination.

## PRIMARY ADVISOR: YOUR GUIDE TO SCHOLARLY DEVELOPMENT

A doctoral primary advisor provides the doctoral student with guidance through the precandidacy period. This advisor may also become the chair or a member of the student's dissertation committee and provide further guidance through the dissertation work. The term "primary advisor" is used because the [Doctoral Program Plan of Study/Residency Requirement](#) also requires approval by a secondary advisor.

### *The Role of the Primary Advisor*

The role of the primary advisor is pivotal to candidates' progress through their program of study, to their development as independent scholars, and to their readiness for dissertation research. The primary advisor's role supports the GSEHD domains for student development. Specific tasks of the primary advisor include the following:

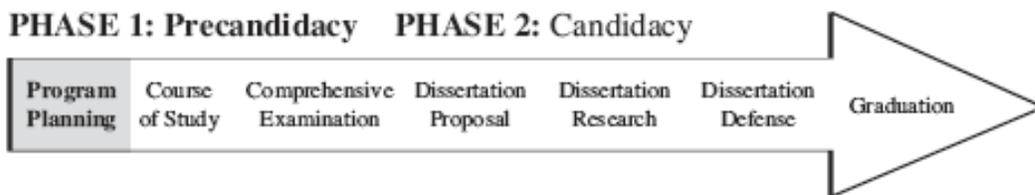
- Guide the student in the development of the program plan, the selection of interdisciplinary coursework outside the field of study, and the selection of appropriate research courses that provide a broad introduction to research traditions and tools.
- Guide the student in the selection of appropriate field, research, and publishing experiences that support scholarly development and prepare the student for the dissertation phase.

- Mentor the student in his or her development as a scholar and professional, including addressing interpersonal skills as necessary.
- Guide the student, from at least the second semester, in considering the focus of the dissertation research, exploring various potential topics and questions, and weighing the feasibility, advantages, and disadvantages of each.
- Guide the student's development in the GSEHD domains of mastery for doctoral students: knowledge of foundations, critical-literature reviews, inquiry and research methods, clarity of written and oral thought, professional development, technological skills, and knowledge of the specialty area.
- Set clear expectations and guide the student toward achieving a high level of quality in all written work.
- Guide the student's preparation for the comprehensive examination.

### *Qualifications of Doctoral Primary Advisors*

- Hold an earned doctorate.
- Be a faculty member in the program area with expertise that well matches the student's interest area.
- Have an active research agenda as characterized by the departmental personnel guidelines.
- Hold a faculty appointment, either full- or part-time, in GSEHD (research faculty appointments are acceptable).

## PROGRAM PLAN: YOUR WORKING AGREEMENT



Doctoral study is a multifaceted and complex challenge that benefits from thoughtful planning with the guidance of faculty members. It should take into account the student's entry knowledge, skills, and experiences; his or her career objectives; and the expectations of the applicable field for scholarly professionals.

### *Program Plan of Study*

The [Doctoral Program Plan of Study/Residency Requirement](#) indicates the courses (including possibly internships and independent study) that the student plans to complete during his or her doctoral study. It is a working agreement between a doctoral student and the faculty but may be modified at any time with agreement of the faculty. A program plan of study is to be prepared and approved by your doctoral study advising team (see below) and then submitted to the Office

of Student Services for final Dean's Office approval. This should be done no later than after completing three semesters or 18 credit hours—whichever comes first.

The doctoral study advising team should be assembled with advice from your primary advisor. That team will include the following advisors:

- The primary advisor
- The secondary advisor

Both are assigned at the time of admission to doctoral study. This team will assist you in determining the most appropriate course work to fulfill the requirements for your degree and to prepare you for your career objectives. Note: In some doctoral programs, the secondary advisor assumes a less formal advising role.

### *Minimum Course and Research Requirements*

All students must complete at least 36 credits of coursework and at least 12 credits of dissertation research at GW while enrolled in their doctoral program. The course and dissertation requirements are as follows:

A. Educational foundations: EDUC 8110, Advanced Study: Ideas, Issues, and Practices in Education (3 credit hours).

B. Research tool courses (9 credit hours). Students must take at least the following:

- EDUC 8120, Group Comparisons Designs and Analysis (3 credit hours)
- EDUC 8122, Qualitative Research Methods (3 credit hours)
- After completing EDUC 8120 and 8122, students are to take one intermediate or advanced “Level B” course in quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research methods (3 credit hours). The selected course should correspond with the main methodology to be used in your dissertation research. See Appendices G and H for more details on research methods courses. The intermediate/advanced methodology course requirement may also be met with courses offered by other departments (such as anthropology, sociology, and statistics) at GW or consortium universities for Foggy Bottom campus students who are part of the Consortium agreement—with approval of the student's advisor and the coordinator of the research methods courses. **Note: Students enrolled in a Level B research methods course will be charged their home campus tuition rate regardless of where the course is offered.**

- Entering students with considerable competence in the material covered by EDUC 8120 and/or EDUC 8122 may request an opportunity to “test out” of the course from the coordinator of the research methods faculty. If successful, the student will not be required to take the corresponding course(s). If a student “tests out” of one or both of these courses, he or she will be required to take two advanced methods courses rather than the normally required one. Note that “testing out” of EDUC 8120 or 8122 does not earn credit for those courses.  
(See Appendices G and H)

C. Other courses (21 credit hours). These may include program requirements and courses approved by your advisor taken outside of your program, department, and GSEHD. These courses can also include additional research methods courses, again with approval of your advisor. [If you test out of both EDUC 8120 and 8122, you must take 24 credits of these “other courses.”]

D. CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 8998, Pre-dissertation Seminar (3 credit hours). Some programs require students to complete two sections (6 credits) of 8998.

E. CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 8999, Dissertation Research (a minimum of 12 credit hours).

Individual doctoral programs usually have additional requirements. You should check with your advisor if you have not been informed of those requirements. The Ph.D. program in Counseling has additional requirements specified in the Handbook for Ph.D. Students in Counseling.

Some advanced doctoral courses presume that you have completed EDUC 8120 and EDUC 8122. Consequently, you are strongly advised to complete the EDUC 8120 and 8122 requirements during your first year of doctoral studies. The required advanced research methods course preferably should not be taken until you have decided the research questions that will be addressed in your dissertation and the most appropriate methodology(ies) for them.

### *Residency Requirement*

GSEHD requires that all doctoral candidates complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of coursework (including internships and independent study but excluding dissertation research) at GW as an admitted doctoral student (often referred to as “in residency”). Individual doctoral programs may require more credits.

For all programs, the candidate is required to complete satisfactorily 36 credit hours in degree status (“in residence”) excluding dissertation research. The term “in residence” is used in the university bulletin to mean “courses that are registered for at GW and taken at GW or through the consortium of universities” after being admitted to a degree program.

### *Course Credits Applied to the Doctoral Plan of Study*

Prior graduate credits earned at GW or another institution and not applied to another awarded degree may be included as part of your GSEHD doctoral program if approved by the advisors, with final review and approval by the Senior Associate Dean. The conditions for approval are specified in the Additional Information section near the end of this handbook, just before the appendices. These credits cannot be applied to your residency requirement.

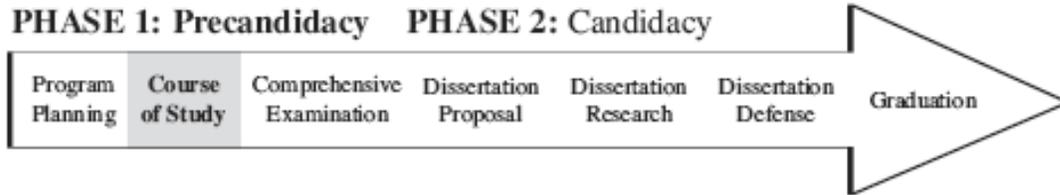
### *Filing the Program Plan of Study*

After obtaining all required signatures on your [Doctoral Program Plan of Study/Residency Requirement form](#), file the completed form with the Office of Student Services. This form also certifies that you understand the degree status requirements (36 hours minimum). The plan is to be filed no later than when you have completed three semesters or 18 credit hours—whichever comes first.

### *Making Changes to Your Program Plan of Study*

To make changes to your program plan of study, you are to complete a [Program Plan of Study Change Request form](#), which must be signed by your primary advisor and the secondary faculty advisor. If you are requesting a course-waiver, additional signatures may also be necessary.

## COURSE OF STUDY: ATTAINING NEW KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



### *Scholarship and a “Culture of Inquiry”*

Your course of study will involve the building of both knowledge and skills. Most of your coursework is determined by the needs of the profession and your specific interests. In addition, precandidacy courses require you to be engaged in research activities early in your program and throughout it, blending ultimately into your dissertation research. As a doctoral student, you will be encouraged to assist faculty in ongoing research projects. You will be expected to participate in research forums with faculty and peers and to collaborate and engage in dialogue with fellow doctoral students in other departments and schools.

### *Bridging Theory and Practice*

The doctoral program is designed to prepare you as an education or human service scholar in research, academic, and professional roles. As a scholar, you should be prepared to consider the usefulness and applications of knowledge. The development of research competence requires a conceptual framework that bridges theory and field-based practice. In order to facilitate the transfer of knowledge for improvement of practice, the doctoral program involves reciprocal relationships with the Washington area’s broader educational and human service community. Your research, therefore, may be conducted in field-based settings in the community or in area schools, community agencies, and other organizations.

### *Faculty Direction and Mentorship*

GSEHD faculty members understand students’ commitment to doctoral study and are prepared to undertake the intensive mentoring relationship. Every effort is made to match doctoral faculty and students according to their research interests. Your faculty mentor will provide direction to your research activities throughout your program of study and may serve as your dissertation chair.

### *Exploration of Possible Dissertation Topics*

Students are strongly advised to consider their dissertation topic from the beginning of their doctoral program. They should use their first year of courses to examine many topics that might be of interest and to explore some more deeply in their course assignments. By the end of the first year, they should settle on a specific topic and use the second year of course assignments to gain considerable knowledge of the topic and to identify important gaps that might be filled by dissertation research. Each gap will suggest one or more potential research questions. Many good research questions will prove inappropriate for your dissertation research. Be prepared to sift through many. The selection of research questions is discussed further in the handbook section on the dissertation proposal.

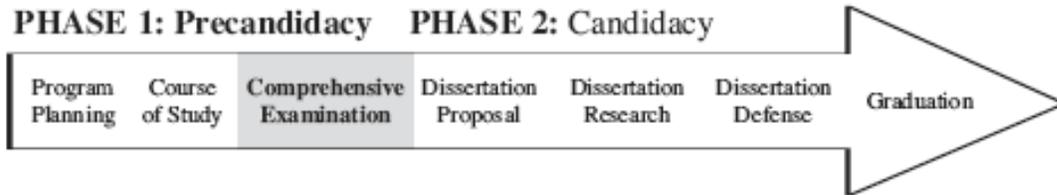
### *Academic Requirements*

No more than two grades (six credit hours) of C or a single grade of F is permitted throughout the doctoral program. Note the requirements stated below in the event of a C or F grade. Graduation requires a minimum cumulative grade-point average of B (3.0) in all coursework taken following admission to a graduate program in GSEHD. If your grade-point average falls below 3.0, the Office of the Senior Associate Dean will notify your primary advisor, and appropriate action will be taken.

In the case of receiving a grade of F, the Office of the Dean will require a written statement from you justifying your continuance at GSEHD and outlining the program to be followed. Continuation is contingent upon the Senior Associate Dean's approval. The Senior Associate Dean may seek the review and advice of the Post-Master's Appeals Committee to resolve the matter. If a grade of F is received the grade is included in the grade-point average whether or not you repeat the course.

You may repeat a course in which a grade of C- or above was received only with a written statement of permission from your department, unless the course description states that the course may be repeated for credit. If a course is repeated, the first grade received remains on your record and is included in your grade-point average. Please refer to the student appeals process explained toward the end of this handbook, before the appendices. Students in the Ph.D. program in Counseling are subject to different provisions and should refer to the Handbook for Ph.D. Students in Counseling.

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION: INTEGRATING AND ARTICULATING KNOWLEDGE GAINED



After completing doctoral-candidacy coursework, you must successfully complete the doctoral comprehensive examination. The examination must be passed within five years of beginning your doctoral program.

This examination assesses knowledge in your content area; the ability to synthesize theory, concepts, research, and practice in your discipline; and the ability to reason and critically analyze issues and problems related to your field.

To take the comprehensive examination, you must have successfully completed or be in the last semester of completing all coursework on your program plan of study except CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 8998 (whichever Pre-dissertation Seminar is applicable to your program) and/or ONE Level-B research methods course on your program plan. All students must take the comprehensive examination in their program area within two semesters after completing coursework. NOTE that individual doctoral programs may require you to complete 8998 and/or your last Level-B research methods course earlier than this school-wide policy. If you have completed ALL the course requirements of your program in the semester preceding the one in which you take the comprehensive exams, you are to register for one credit of 0940 (Continuing Research) for the semester in which you will take the exams. Students may not enroll in more than two semesters of 0940 Continuing Research while preparing for the comprehensive examination.

If you take the comprehensive exams before completing 8998 and/or one Level B research methods course, you **MUST TAKE** 8998 in the next regular semester (fall or spring) and you **MUST COMPLETE** the last Level-B course on your program plan no later than the second regular semester after your comprehensive exams. If you do not complete that Level-B course by then, you are **NOT** to enroll in 8999 and should contact the Office of Student Services to discuss your options. **Please be aware that enrolling in only 3 credits of 8998 or level B do not qualify for semester half-time or full-time certification with federal financial aid. Please plan accordingly.**

There are several important points that you should consider before deciding to delay 8998 or your final Level-B research methods course until after your comprehensive exams. They are:

It is highly desirable that you determine your dissertation research questions and methodology in consultation with your expected dissertation committee chair during the latter part of your doctoral coursework and also highly desirable that you take a Level B Research Methods course in that methodology BEFORE your comprehensive exams. That will allow you to make good progress on developing a dissertation proposal before the comprehensive exams, and experience has shown that students who do make early progress on their proposal are the most likely to complete their dissertations and earn their doctoral degrees. Only if you fall behind that schedule should you consider taking 8998 and/or your last Level B Research Methods course after the comprehensive exams.

While the school requires doctoral students to take only one Level-B research methods courses, some individual doctoral programs require two or more of these courses.

You cannot enroll in 8999 (Dissertation Research) until you have passed your comprehensive exams and completed ALL required coursework, including your last Level-B Research Methods course. Students may enroll in Dissertation Research with a grade of “IPG” in 8998, Pre-Dissertation Seminar. An instructor may enter a grade of “CR” for the 8998 course after students successfully meet the course requirements (successfully defending their dissertation proposal). At the point of dissertation defense, if a student’s 8998 course has not been assigned a credit by the course instructor, credit will be arranged by the Office of Student Services.

Taking just an 8998 course during one regular semester (fall or spring) and taking just one Level-B research methods course in a subsequent regular semester could adversely affect the visa status of international students, the repayment schedule for student loans, and other matters. Check carefully with the appropriate University offices to see how this might affect you.

Comprehensive examinations are offered by the school once per semester, usually in December, April, and July. Students must submit an [online application](#) for the comprehensive examination by the published deadline (October 1st for the fall semester, February 1st for the spring semester, and June 1st for the summer semester).

It is expected that students will take the comprehensive examination when it is scheduled in December, April, and July. On occasion, for a compelling reason, it may be necessary to schedule a special sitting of the examination. If a special sitting is needed, the [Special Sitting form](#) must be submitted to the Office of Student Services at least 10 working days prior to the desired special sitting examination date.

By signing the [Special Sitting form](#), the faculty advisor is accepting responsibility for administering the examination. The advisor is to reserve a room, provide a copy of the examination to the student, and proctor the examination. The advisor may designate a qualified person to proctor the examination, but the advisor must be available during the session in case there are any questions regarding the contents of the examination.

The doctoral comprehensive examination involves the equivalent of two days of examinations. The format and questions may vary depending on department and program area. Since the program area faculty constructs the questions and determines the criteria for satisfactory responses, students should consult with them for guidance on how to prepare for the examination and how their responses will be evaluated.

If you intend to use prior course materials as a resource, please be advised that the Blackboard course support system automatically terminates student access to the posted course materials at the end of each semester. Students may ask faculty members to reactivate access for all students, and the faculty members may do so at their discretion. Note, however, that the “Electronic Reserves” section is automatically and permanently emptied at the end of the course and that reactivation of the rest of the course materials will last only 16 months after the original close of the course. The Blackboard system does not allow subsequent reactivation.

Each examination question is read by two or more faculty members, and this process normally takes several weeks to complete. You will receive a letter from the Office of Student Services notifying you of the outcome of your examination.

If you fail one or more parts of the examination, a retake is allowed. Following a failure, you should request a debriefing by your advisor or your program coordinator to learn the major weaknesses in your response. Then you should study diligently in preparation for retaking the exam. If you will not complete the retake during a special sitting before the next fall or spring semester, you should contact the Office of Student Services to determine what you should register for the following semester.

If you fail part or all of the retaken examination, your only recourse is to petition the Post Master’s Appeals Committee to request a second retake. Approval is not assured. Students in the Ph.D. Counseling program may sit for comprehensive examination for a second time with departmental approval. They do not have an option to sit for a third time.

### ***Comprehensive Exam Guidelines***

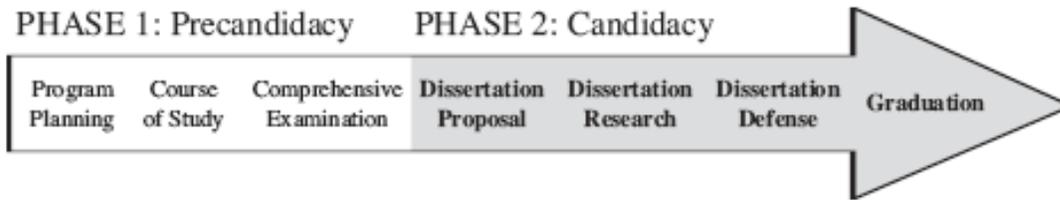
The Proctor will be in the room the exam is being given 30 minutes before the exam.

1. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to the exam start time and check in with the proctor. Please be prepared to show an ID. You may not bring in or use any outside materials. If you arrive late, the proctor will not be able to make any adjustments to accommodate your circumstances.
2. Exam proctors are available to provide administrative support only. They will designate seating, indicate the time an exam begins and ends and address concerns about technology. Please understand proctors cannot answer questions about the content or organization of the exam.
3. If you have a question that exceeds a proctor’s administrative role, a faculty member will be consulted.

4. If a proctor suspects any action inconsistent with the GWU Code of Academic Integrity, the proctor will call a faculty member or the Office of the Dean to address the concern. Proctors will not engage in any conversation with students about academic integrity.
5. In the event that an exam is interrupted by an unexpected event (e.g. fire drill, sudden illness) the proctor will consult with the Office of the Dean and advise test takers on a course of action.
6. Please electronically sign the designated box reflecting your commitment to the GW Code of Academic Integrity.

Upon successful completion of all coursework, including 8998 and the comprehensive examinations, you become a doctoral candidate.

## PHASE 2: CANDIDACY



After completing all coursework and successfully passing the comprehensive examination, you become a doctoral candidate and are ready to begin work on the dissertation research. For most doctoral students, this is the most intellectually and emotionally-challenging part of doctoral study. You are no longer allowed to learn mainly from other scholars; rather, you now have to make an original contribution to a body of knowledge. You do that by finding an important gap in knowledge and filling it.

The dissertation research and defense is the culminating, integrative, scholarly experience of doctoral study. The purpose of the dissertation research is to (a) make an original contribution to knowledge, in the candidate's field of specialization; (b) demonstrate an advanced command of research skills; and (c) demonstrate an advanced ability to communicate findings so that other researchers in the field can understand and use them.

## THE SUCCESSFUL DISSERTATION EXPERIENCE

- Allows you to integrate all your doctoral study reading, thinking, and field based experiences in an original research and writing process.
- Builds your intellectual and emotional stamina and prepares you for future intellectual work and contributions to your field.
- Provides an opportunity to demonstrate competence with the theory and methods of the discipline and gain entrée into a community of scholars.
- Provides a foundation for future research, publishing, and presentations based on the dissertation.
- Establishes an important credential for university teaching or research appointments.

### *Are You Ready for the Challenge?*

Many doctoral graduates have observed that dissertation work was one of the greatest intellectual and emotional challenges of their life.

You should consider this experience essential to your intellectual development and be prepared to make the necessary emotional, intellectual, and practical commitments. You need to be prepared to spend the necessary time, overcome the common disappointments of setbacks in the research schedule, commit to the highest standards of quality for the preparation of the document, and be open to accepting the continuous guidance and constructive critique of the dissertation committee.

The dissertation research requires more independence and more sustained work than doctoral courses. Your dissertation committee is to advise you about particularly complicated aspects of the research and writing, but their role is not to tell you how to do everything. You should make every effort to think through problems for yourself, in consultation with the applicable scholarly literature, and seek the committee's guidance only after making that effort.

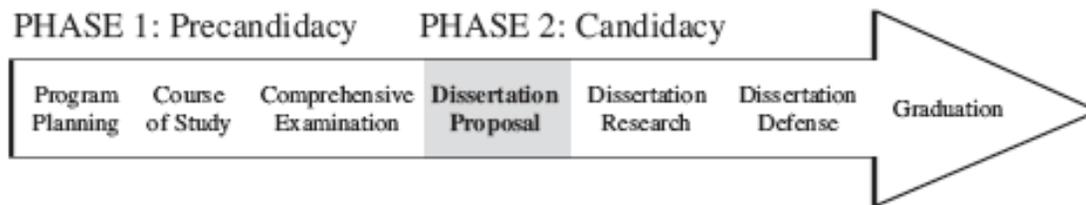
Few doctoral students complete the full dissertation process in less than two years of sustained work, although the work can begin well before your comprehensive exams. Once you have a topic, considerable immersion in the literature and deliberation is needed to frame good research questions. Then you must develop a dissertation proposal with a literature review chapter and a detailed methodology chapter. Your committee will almost certainly request revisions to the proposal draft and sometimes several rounds of revisions. Then, the Office of Human Subjects may spend three to eight weeks reviewing the proposal and perhaps require some changes. Data collection and data analysis can take many months depending on the nature of the study design. Then you must write the dissertation, although your proposal can be incorporated as chapters 1-3 with modest revisions. The dissertation will go through redrafting one or more times before approval for defense. After filing for defense, there is a 30-day wait period. After a successful defense you will usually have final revisions to make.

Time management is important in dissertation work. Since there are few specific deadlines, it is easy for candidates with jobs and families to let dissertation work slide to the "next" week. It is almost impossible to predict how long it will take to develop a good dissertation research proposal. A schedule for the data collection and analysis is more feasible. The time needed to write the dissertation is also difficult to predict.

Appendix B lists additional dissertation resources. It includes more than a dozen books on dissertation proposal-writing, dissertation research, and dissertation writing that might prove useful if you are looking for additional guidance on specific matters. You should understand, however, that the requirements for a dissertation vary among universities, among colleges and schools within universities, and among faculty members within a given school. Some of the advice from these sources may contradict the policies of GSEHD or the judgments of your dissertation committee chair and members. When unsure, check in this handbook for the GSEHD policies and check with your committee about their expectations and judgments.

There are three major phases of dissertation work: developing the dissertation proposal, conducting the research and writing the dissertation, and defending the dissertation.

## DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL: PLAN FOR ADDING TO KNOWLEDGE



Now you are to apply your accrued knowledge and skills to the development and conduct of an original research project. Dissertation work is multifaceted and complex.

The proposal is an important document, not only for you and your committee, but also for the research community and the university. It demonstrates your understanding of the theory and research associated with your research problem and your ability to apply that understanding to a plan of inquiry that can expand knowledge of the field. The candidacy phase provides an opportunity for you to create a proposal that reflects the dialogue built between you, your chair, and your committee members.

Successfully defending your dissertation proposal provides evidence that you and the committee have arrived at a sound methodology that will address worthwhile research questions. The proposal forms a working plan that can be used by you and the committee to guide the research, to evaluate progress, and to provide ongoing feedback.

This handbook sets forth the general procedures for developing a successful dissertation proposal:

- The requirements for establishing and working with a dissertation committee
- The elements of a proposal
- The process to complete before beginning your research, including the human-research review requirements

To move successfully through the dissertation process, you must take responsibility to meet deadlines agreed upon with your committee and deadlines set by the school for defense of the dissertation and graduation. Your dissertation chair and the Dean's Office will make efforts to assist you in the process, but the responsibility to meet deadlines is yours.

### *Eight-Year Limit*

The doctoral dissertation must be written and defended within eight (8) years from the time of admission to the doctoral program. Exceptions to the eight-year limit are rarely given and only with convincing evidence that the student has made all practical efforts to complete within eight years. Extensions require approval by the Post-Master's Appeals Committee.

### *Narrowing Down a Dissertation Topic and Research Questions*

As mentioned above, you are strongly advised to consider your dissertation topic from the beginning of your doctoral program. You should use your first year of coursework to examine many topics that might be of interest and to explore some more deeply in your course assignments. By the end of the first year, you should settle on a specific topic and use the second year of course assignments to gain considerable knowledge of the topic and to identify important gaps that might be filled by dissertation research. Each gap will suggest one or more potential research questions.

Only a small portion of research questions will prove suitable for your dissertation research. Some research questions will be of little potential importance to either theory or practice. Some will be uninteresting to you. Some will be of little use for your projected career. Some will require more time or funding than you can afford—such as those that cannot be answered without a five-year longitudinal study and those that require intensive observations in a national classroom sample. Some will require access that you are unlikely to gain. Some will require mastering methodologies for which you may have little preparation, talent, or interest.

It is important to be practical, but also to seek ways around apparent barriers. For instance, some candidates have convinced an interested organization to provide access to data collection that the candidate could not have otherwise gained. Some candidates have done secondary analysis on large data sets previously collected by the government or research organizations. Some have been able to combine or partly overlap research they are doing for their job with that of their dissertation—with the approval of both their dissertation advisor and their work supervisor. Some have won external grants to support their dissertation work, allowing them travel, paid assistants, or other support that they otherwise could not have afforded. (Note: Grant proposal reviews often take four to eight months.)

Be prepared to sift through a dozen or more topics and 25 to 100 research questions before settling on those that you will address in your dissertation. Students who delay topic exploration and question-sifting until after completing their coursework usually need six to twelve months to develop their proposal. Candidates who have used their courses to explore, examine, and sift potential research questions often can prepare a draft proposal within one to three months.

### *Dissertation Committee*

You are expected to have informal conversations with your primary advisor about possible dissertation topics throughout the years of your coursework. As you near the end of the coursework, there should also be discussions of who will chair your dissertation committee and perhaps who will be the other committee members. Your primary advisor might serve as chair of the committee, or another faculty member may assume that position. The dissertation committee guides the candidate in development of the dissertation research proposal, makes final judgments about the adequacy of the proposal, is available for consultation during the research work, guides the candidate in preparation of the dissertation document, and decides when the dissertation is ready for defense.

A dissertation committee is established when the chair and student, in consultation, secure agreement of two qualified persons to serve on the committee and to begin assisting the student with the development of their proposal. The committee is *formally* constituted when all three members have signed Part I of the Dissertation Committee Membership and Proposal Approval Form and it is submitted to the Office of Student Services. All three signatures can appear on the same form or the form can be signed and submitted separately as each member is identified and agrees to serve. A copy is to be retained by the chair and given to each of the committee members.

#### *Chair of the Dissertation Committee*

The role of the dissertation committee chair is to:

- Guide the candidate in the preparation of the dissertation proposal, including specification of the research problem, the literature review that helps point the way toward the research, the questions or hypotheses for investigation, and the methodology.
- Guide the candidate in selection of two additional committee members.
- Provide guidance on the research proposal structure and content and set clear expectations for the timely completion of the proposal.
- Provide guidance on the dissertation structure and content and set clear expectations for high-quality writing.
- Set clear expectations for timely completion, and guide the candidate toward achieving a high level of quality (technical and ethical) in the dissertation research and document.
- In consultation with the candidate, select examiners for the oral defense of the dissertation.
- Prepare the candidate for the oral defense process.
- Encourage the candidate to publish his or her dissertation after successful completion.

The dissertation committee chair must have the following qualifications:

- Hold an earned academic doctorate.
- Hold a GSEHD regular status (non-visiting) faculty appointment, either full- or part-time (research faculty appointments are acceptable). Selection of dissertation chairs outside the program area requires the concurrence of the candidate's primary advisor. In this case, a member of the candidate's program faculty should participate as either a member of the research committee or the examining committee at the point of defense.
- Have expertise that well matches the candidate's topic area.
- Either (a) have experience serving as a member in no less than two dissertation committees, including the defense of the dissertation, or (b) in the absence of such experience, be mentored by an experienced GSEHD chair selected by the faculty member's department chair.
- Have an active research agenda as characterized by the departmental personnel guidelines.

Emeritus and departing faculty may continue to serve as the dissertation chair for a period not to exceed two years, assuming the student has an approved proposal. After two years the student must reconstitute the dissertation committee by selecting a new chair.

#### *Dissertation Committee Members (Other than the Chair)*

The role of the two other dissertation committee members is to guide the candidate, in conjunction with the chair, through development of his or her independent research and the achievement of a high-quality product and oral defense, as specified above for the chair of the dissertation committee.

These committee members must have the following qualifications:

- Hold an earned academic doctorate, or an earned terminal degree with an academic appointment for a period of one year prior to joining the committee
- Have expertise that well matches the candidate's topic area.
- Among the chair and the two other committee members, at least one is to be knowledgeable about the main methodologies to be used in the dissertation research and designated as taking responsibility for guiding the research methodology.
- It is strongly recommended that one committee member come from outside the candidate's home program; he or she may come from outside of GSEHD and even outside of GW.
- Committee members must not have a relationship with the candidate that poses a potential conflict of interest (for example, serving as the candidate's job supervisor, friend, or colleague).
- If not a current or former GW regular-status or research faculty member, a copy of the prospective committee member's curriculum vita must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

When a change in an established dissertation committee is proposed, a memorandum requesting the change and the reasons for it should be sent to the Office of Student Services. The chair, the candidate, and the faculty members being dropped and added should sign a memorandum indicating their concurrence with the requested change.

GSEHD sets certain requirements for the dissertation proposal and dissertation defense that will be indicated below. In addition, the dissertation chair establishes procedures regarding proposal development and dissertation draft review. In some cases, the dissertation committee may be established as you begin work on the proposal; in other cases, it may not be established until the chair thinks a draft proposal is nearly ready for review.

You should have a discussion with your research committee about their expectations for submitting drafts of your dissertation and the amount of time they will need to review the document and provide feedback. Faculty members generally require a minimum of 10 to 20 business days to review documents. More time may be needed if they receive a draft just as the semester begins, as it is ending, during winter break, or throughout the summer. It is advisable to notify committee members in advance when drafts will be submitted for review and feedback.

### *Dissertation Proposal*

As the first phase of dissertation work, the dissertation proposal is to indicate what you will study, why, and how. The proposal serves at least three purposes. It allows your committee to examine the plans for your study and suggest improvements that will enhance the merit of your dissertation. With the revisions suggested by the committee, it becomes a blueprint for your research work. It also can serve as a draft of the first three chapters of your dissertation.

The dissertation proposal should include those elements normally found in Chapters 1 to 3 and the References of the dissertation, as indicated by the Dissertation Guidelines in Appendix A. Under certain circumstances, the time needed to provide this breadth and depth of information may preclude taking advantage of a fleeting research opportunity or have other negative trade-offs. In such situations, at the request of the full committee, the Senior Associate Dean may allow approval of a proposal with less information.

Your proposal should be clear and complete so that there is no question about the rationale for your research or how you intend to complete it. The proposal should be prepared according to a recognized scholarly format, usually the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition) and the GSEHD Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines. The chair of your dissertation committee and the instructor of your Predissertation Seminar will usually provide additional guidelines for the proposal.

It should be noted that approval of a proposal does not ensure approval of Chapters 1-3 when defending your dissertation. Some revisions are likely to be needed to those chapters when preparing the dissertation. For instance, new literature that helps in the interpretation of your results may have appeared, a few additional research questions may have been added as the research progressed, there may have been some changes in the methods that were actually used,

and other limitations or delimitations may have become apparent. In addition, the dissertation oral examination committee is composed of more than the dissertation committee, and the additional members may identify some shortcoming in the first three chapters of the dissertation.

The guidelines in Appendix A introduce you to the organization and elements of GSEHD dissertations. The first three chapters provide a framework for presenting the logic of the study from the statement of the problem through the selection of procedures for conducting the study. While the descriptions of some of the sections are common for all forms of research, others contain different descriptions for quantitative and qualitative forms of research. Quantitative research may involve laboratory or field experiments, quasi-experimental studies, secondary data analyses of existing databases, and other studies that collect and analyze numeric data. Qualitative research may involve ethnographies, phenomenological inquiry, historical studies, socio-linguistic studies, and cultural studies. The research questions should drive the overall framework for the research design and the methods used, whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed.

### *Proposal Development Seminar (8998)*

Each program or department offers its own section of the Predissertation Seminar — CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 8998. All students must take the appropriate offering. Some programs require two semesters of 8998. The seminar provides guidance on the various steps of dissertation proposal preparation, dissertation research, dissertation writing, and other issues such as coping with the emotional rigors of doctoral candidacy. The goal is to bring the student as close as possible to completing his or her dissertation proposal prior to entering 8999, Dissertation Research.

The Predissertation Seminar may be taken any time before starting 8999. Consult with your advisor about when you should do so. It is normally taken toward the end of one's coursework so that it can be informed broadly by the previous courses. It is best to have identified the problem and the research questions for your dissertation prior to starting 8998, and that will usually require considerable reading of applicable literature and discussions with your dissertation advisor. Students do not receive credit for 8998 until they successfully defend their proposal. At the point of the final dissertation defense, if a student's 8998 course has not been assigned a credit by the course instructor, credit will be arranged by the Office of Student Services.

The work of preparing a proposal commonly spans at least two semesters and involves substantial time. The draft of the proposal should be saved daily to at least two media, such as the hard drive of your computer and to a flash drive. It is advisable to rename the file sequentially (such as Proposal1, Proposal2, Proposal3) after major additions. That way, if a file becomes "corrupted," you can use the next-most-recent version rather than starting over. Exercise the same precautions when writing your dissertation. Every year a few doctoral students lose months of work because they fail to make backups of key files.

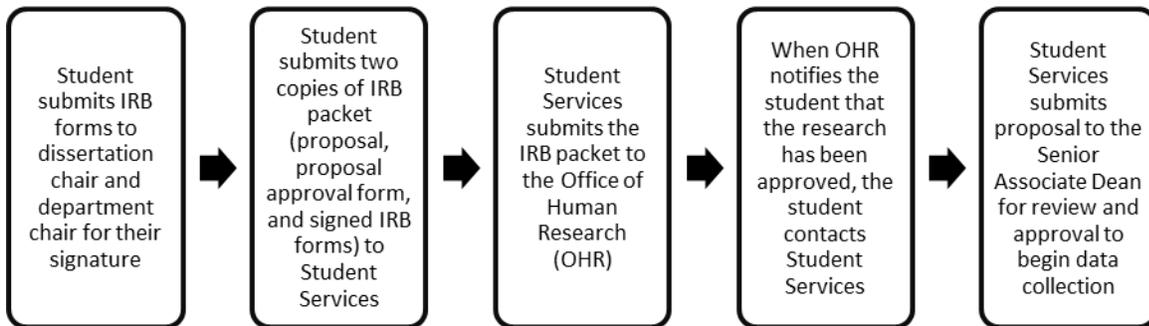
### *Proposal Approval*

Before conducting dissertation research, your research proposal must be reviewed in an open forum and approved by the following:

- Your dissertation committee
- The GW Office of Human Research
- The GSEHD Senior Associate Dean

You are NOT to begin actual data collection until you have all the necessary written approvals. Noncompliance may result in a prohibition against the use of the data in your dissertation and possibly misconduct charges.

Obtaining Permission to Collect Data after the Proposal Defense



***Dissertation Committee Approval of Proposal:*** You are strongly encouraged to obtain your committee’s approval of your proposal within the first semester of candidacy. The dissertation committee approves the proposal after a dissertation proposal defense, which is sometimes referred to as an “oral defense of the proposal.” The committee has a responsibility to review the proposal and ensure that it will produce worthwhile and high-quality research. During the defense, you may be asked about your rationale for certain aspects of the proposal, asked for more details about the literature or the proposed methods, or challenged about the appropriateness of proposed procedures. Your competency with the main research methods is to be ascertained. The “defense” is also a consultation in which the committee members suggest, and sometimes require, changes to improve the research. The proposal defense is an informal proceeding at the discretion of the dissertation chair. You should ask your chair for a briefing on the format. Note: Students must be enrolled in the semester in which they defend their proposal.

Usually some refinements are expected following the proposal defense. Those changes may be reviewed by the full committee or just by the chair. Formal approval is indicated by committee members' signatures on the [Dissertation Proposal Approval form](#).

Two clean paper copies (free from editorial comments and including an accurate table of contents) of the final proposal approved by the committee, the signed [Dissertation Proposal Approval Form](#), and all materials required by the GW Office of Human Research should be submitted to the GSEHD Office of Student Services. After a review to ensure all needed materials are in order, the Office of Student Services will submit the proposal and appended human subject materials to the GW Office of Human Research.

If your dissertation involves excluded research; that is, it does not 1.) meet the regulatory definition of research 2.) involve identifiable individuals or data that identifies individuals, or 3.) involve humans as subjects, then it is excluded from IRB review. If the proposed research is excluded, students should submit the Certification of Research Exclusion for Principal Investigators, signed by the dissertation chair and the department chair, a copy of the dissertation proposal and the Proposal Approval Form to the Office of Student Services. Dissertation proposals that involve excluded research must be reviewed and approved by the Senior Associate Dean.

***Office of Human Research Approval of Proposal:*** The Office of Human Research assesses whether (a) the proposed research will expose human subjects to risks, (b) practical precautions have been taken to minimize those risks and inform the subjects of the risks, and (c) the remaining risks are justified by the potential benefits of the research. Due to some highly-publicized abuses of human subject protections—mostly by medical researchers—the federal government is requiring more stringent precautions of all university research collecting data from or about people, even research which is not funded by the federal government.

The Office of Human Research may communicate directly with the candidate to ask for further clarifications or additional protections for human subjects. The review process could take as little as 10 days or as much as six weeks. If the protection of human subjects is judged inadequate, you should consult with the Office of Student Services and your dissertation committee chair about how to proceed.

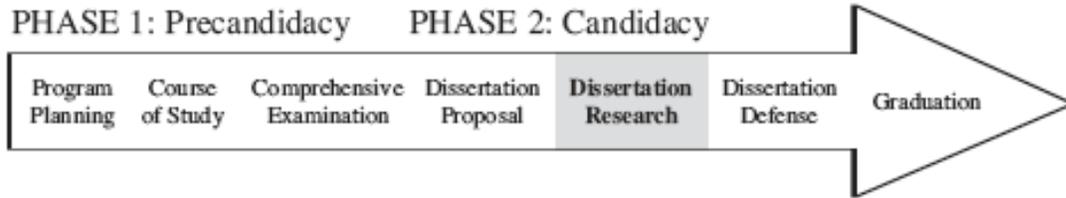
Once the IRB review is complete and communicated to the student and the dissertation chair, the student must notify the Office of Student Services in order to move forward with Senior Associate Dean approval. It is important to note at this point, that unless you successfully defend your dissertation within one year of the proposal approval, it is your responsibility to submit a Continuing Review form to the [Office of Human Research](#) every 12 months.

***Senior Associate Dean Approval of Dissertation Proposal:*** The GSEHD Senior Associate Dean grants final approval of the proposal. This approval is usually pro-forma after review of the approvals of the dissertation committee and the Office of Human Research, but if this office

detects serious problems not identified by others, it may delay approval until those problems are corrected.

**You are NOT authorized to collect data for your dissertation until you have received written approval of the proposal from the Senior Associate Dean!**

## DISSERTATION RESEARCH: EXPLORATION AND VERIFICATION



Dissertation research involves data collection, analysis, interpretation, and writing of the dissertation. Data collection can begin only after approval of the proposal by your dissertation committee, the GW Office of Human Research, and the Senior Associate Dean.

Candidates are to enroll in CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 8999 while involved in dissertation research. Candidates are to begin enrollment in 8999 the first fall or spring semester after having completed all coursework, passed the comprehensive examination, and taken the pre-dissertation seminar (8998). If the proposal has not been approved before beginning enrollment in 8999, it is expected that the proposal will be completed and approved soon after enrolling in 8999. Some programs may have other requirements (please contact your program with any questions).

### *Enrollment in 8999*

1. You must have completed all coursework, passed your comprehensive examination, and taken one semester of Predissertation Seminar 8998 prior to enrolling in Dissertation Research 8999.
2. Dissertation Research 8999 is to be taken at a rate of three to six credit hours per each fall and spring semester, for a minimum of 12 credits and until you successfully defend your dissertation or until you have enrolled for a total of 24 credits. If you need substantial advising or feedback on drafts of your dissertation during the summer, you are also to register for 8999 during the summer. (Note that for most financial assistance, three credits of 8999 can constitute “at least half-time” enrollment once you begin your dissertation research, but this requires making good progress, certification by your advisor and the GSEHD Office of Student Services, and approval by the source of the financial assistance. This assumes that you are making good progress on your dissertation.)
3. If you have not defended your dissertation after 24 credit hours of 8999, you are to register for one credit hour of Continuing Research (CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 0940) each fall and spring semester until you defend your dissertation.
4. In order to defend your dissertation, you must have registered for a minimum of 12 credit hours of 8999 by the semester of the defense (oral examination). You also must be registered for at least three credits of 8999 in the semester of the defense, including the summer semester

(these three credits can be part of the 12 credits), unless you meet one of the following two exceptions:

- You have already completed 24 credit hours of 8999, in which case you only have to register for one credit of Continuing Research (CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 0940) in the semester of the defense.
  
- You have filed a completed [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#) and all other required materials in a semester in which you are enrolled in 8999 or 0940, but the defense cannot be held until the next semester, in which case you should enroll in Continuing Enrollment (CE) during that subsequent semester in which the defense is held. To enroll in CE, you must have been enrolled in either three credits of 8999 or one credit of 0940 Continuous Research in the previous semester. Note: Students registered in CE cannot be certified as half-time for the purposes of student loans. International students are not permitted to register for CE.

**Warning:** If you have to stop work on your dissertation for a while, you can request a leave of absence for a period not to exceed two semesters. During a leave of absence, faculty members are not to help you with the dissertation and students will not have access to many of the university resources including the library. If you fail to meet requirements 2 or 3 above and have not been granted a leave of absence, you will “break enrollment” and then have to reapply to your program if you want to resume work on your dissertation and defend it. For more information, see the Additional Information section of this handbook.

### *Research*

Your research should be guided by your approved dissertation proposal; but you will have to put your scholarly skills to work throughout the process to assure a high-quality final product. Some smaller details, although not unimportant, will have to be decided as you proceed. Some matters may send you back to your books or into the library for advice. Once you have tried to determine how best to proceed, you should check with your dissertation chair or other committee members.

Some candidates make the mistake of planning their research work around the rest of their responsibilities. They often don't finish. A more successful strategy is to plan accommodations in your life to facilitate the research and dissertation-writing. Few research studies can be conducted exclusively on weekends. There often are some activities that require concerted effort and are time-sensitive.

### *Guidelines for the Dissertation*

Dissertation Guidelines are provided in Appendix A. They are designed to assist you with the development of your dissertation. It is suggested that you ask your advisor to suggest one or two strong dissertations in your field with methodological approaches similar to yours for you to examine. Use those dissertations to familiarize yourself with good dissertations, but do not use them as a model to follow slavishly. GSEHD's expectations for dissertations have evolved over the years, and almost all dissertations have some shortcomings. Your dissertation committee chair and other members of the committee may provide further guidance on the structure and the content of your dissertation.

The dissertation is to be written in good formal English. Many international students and some domestic students might need the assistance of a professional editor.

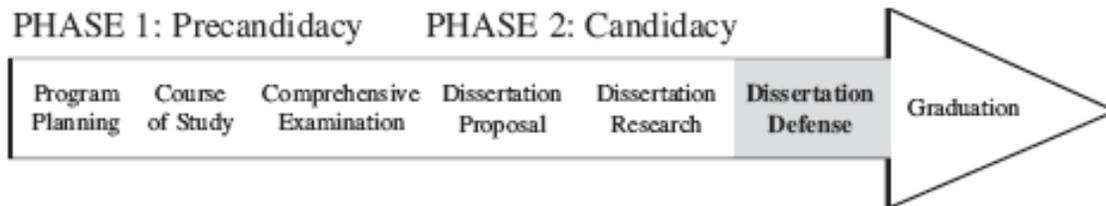
In addition, you are required to use a recognized scholarly format for the dissertation. The style of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Sixth Edition)* is preferred because it is the dominant style for educational research journals, though it may be less applicable for some other programs and fields of study. Students should also consult the GSEHD Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines, especially when formatting the preliminary pages of the dissertation.

Your approved dissertation proposal, with some updates, should provide at least a good skeleton for what is normally Chapters 1-3 of the dissertation. Some advisors require a detailed and polished proposal, and in those cases the proposal will become, with modest updating, Chapters 1-3. There will usually be several drafts of Chapters 4 and 5 before the committee will judge the dissertation ready to be defended. Often the chair will provide feedback until he or she is satisfied, and then it is sent to the other committee members for their review.

A few candidates have written strong dissertations by writing every Saturday or Sunday until they finish, but most people cannot maintain continuity of thought with six-day gaps. Most do much better if they can immerse themselves in the writing for a sustained period of time. If you work full-time, consider saving up several weeks of vacation or taking a leave of absence to produce a first draft of your dissertation. You might want to reserve another week for the second draft. After that, the refinements should be smaller and take less time.

Be aware that faculty members have many responsibilities and deadlines to meet. If you are not actively engaged for nine months and then, without advance notice, express-mail your draft, it may take a month or more for your chair be able to provide feedback. Also, when you submit a copy, be certain that it is the most recent draft of the document.

## THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE: JUSTIFICATION AND REFINEMENT



The purpose of the dissertation defense (dissertation oral examination) is to determine whether the dissertation is acceptable and whether you satisfactorily defend it. These decisions will be made at the conclusion of the examination by the dissertation oral examination committee.

The dissertation oral examination is in an open meeting that is publicly announced. The candidate may bring colleagues, family members, or friends. Other doctoral students may choose to attend. Indeed, it is advisable for doctoral candidates to attend another defense before their own to become familiar with the process. It is a courtesy to request permission to attend from the candidate or chair.

### *Dissertation Oral Examination Committee*

The dissertation oral examination committee is to include five members:

- The dissertation committee chair (non-voting)
- The two other committee members
- Two additional examiners

At least one of the five is to be from outside the candidate's home program and at least one other is to be from outside GSEHD. (Both can be from outside GSEHD.)

### *Additional Examiners*

The additional examiners are selected on the basis of their interest and expertise in the area of the candidate's research and their ability to contribute to a fair and high-quality examination process.

The dissertation chair, usually in consultation with the candidate, is to contact and secure the two additional examiners. All committee members and examiners must agree about the date and time of the defense. Please note that the Senior Associate Dean has final approval of the membership of all dissertation oral examination committees.

Qualifications: The two additional examiners must also meet the following criteria:

- Both must have held an earned doctorate for at least one year prior to the defense.
- Both must have professional background and experience that is relevant to the candidate's topic and research.

- Both must be free of relationships with the candidate that poses a potential conflict of interest (such as being the candidate's job supervisor, friend, or colleague).
- If not a current or former GW regular status or research faculty member, a copy of the person's curriculum vita must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

It is expected that the candidate and members of the examining committee will be present for the oral examination at one of GW's official campuses or centers. In the event that a member of the examining committee is unable to be at the site of the examination, the chair of the committee and the candidate may submit a request to the Office of the Senior Associate Dean asking that the committee member be permitted to participate via conference phone or a video conference hook-up. In any case, no more than one committee member may be off-site. The candidate and the chair must be present at the site of the examination. The Office of Student Services has a conference phone and video conference software that can be used for such distance participation.

### *Dissertation Defense Planning and Procedures*

The dissertation defense requires several preparatory steps, and the time required for some steps will vary depending on the condition of the dissertation draft and the schedules of the dissertation committee chair and members. Generally, you will need to have a draft that your committee considers nearly ready to defend by the start of the semester in which you plan to defend. Before having such a draft, there may be several months of redrafting in response to the chair's or committee's feedback on successive drafts.

Be sure to check with the Office of Student Services for each semester's deadlines for submitting materials and scheduling defenses. Defenses generally must be scheduled four weeks before the end of the semester with the appropriate materials submitted 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled defense. Dissertation defenses are not held in the last three weeks of December, from mid-March until the end of May, and August. If you wish to participate in May commencement ceremonies and you will graduate in the spring semester, you must submit the completed and polished dissertation and necessary forms to the Office of Student Services in early or mid-February.

The following actions are required prior to the defense:

1. Each dissertation committee member is to review the dissertation to ascertain that it is complete and polished—technically, substantively, and in format. Members are to indicate their approval by signing a [Dissertation Approval form](#).
2. The chair, usually in collaboration with the candidate, is to arrange for two examiners to join with the dissertation committee to create the dissertation oral examination committee and is to arrange a date and time for the dissertation oral examination. These steps are indicated on the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#). The chair is to submit both the [Dissertation Approval form](#) and the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#) to the Office of Student Services.
3. The candidate is to submit to the Office of Student Services the following:

- One electronic copy of the completed and polished dissertation
- One copy of the 350 (or less) word abstract should be submitted electronically as an email attachment
- Resumes for any examiners who are not current or former GW faculty members

The submissions of the defense documents must be made **no less than 30 calendar days** prior to the scheduled date of the oral examination. Once this submission is made, no changes can be made to the dissertation before the oral examination.

4. As part of the preparation for the dissertation defense, the Office of Student Services will review the student's academic history and report any discrepancies to the student. Any remaining grades of "IPG" in 8998, 8999 or 0940 will be converted to grades of "credit" as part of the review process.

5. The candidate is to provide the five dissertation oral examination committee members with a copy of the dissertation at least three weeks prior to the scheduled examination.

An Office of Student Services representative will review the membership of the proposed dissertation oral examination committee for compliance with GSEHD regulations. The office will send emails to the external examiners formally notifying them of their status and the examination. It will also arrange the room for the examination.

The dissertation defense (oral examination) is a formal proceeding conducted according to set rules. One of the committee members, other than the chair, will also serve as the presider. The presider must be a regular GSEHD faculty member (tenure track, contract, or visiting). The presider is to direct the defense according to the Instructions for the Presider in Appendix E. The committee member serving as presider shall also be an active examiner, participating in the questioning of the candidate and the votes. The chair, other committee members, or the candidate may request in confidence that the Senior Associate Dean appoint an independent presider for that defense, and in such a case, the Senior Associate Dean will do so.

Defenses are open to the public but seating for observers is usually limited to four to six people. Family members may attend, but candidates should realize that the shortcomings and limitations of their work will be discussed.

The dissertation work is not finished with a successful defense. The oral examination committee usually requests several refinements to the document. Then several auxiliary materials have to be prepared and copies of the final dissertation distributed. These requirements are discussed in the next section.

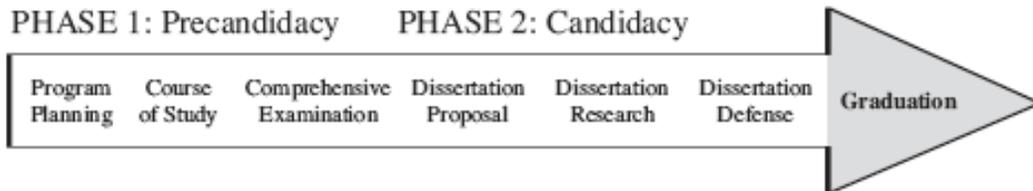
### *An Unsuccessful Final Oral Examination*

After the student has defended their dissertation, they are asked to leave the room while the committee considers the acceptability of the dissertation defense and the dissertation document.

A student whose dissertation document is accepted conditionally but is unable to make the revisions to the document required by the dissertation committee in time to meet the deadlines for degree clearance may enroll in Continuous Enrollment (CE) in the subsequent semester. CE status is limited to two semesters. A student who does not have final committee approval for their dissertation within two semesters will be terminated from the doctoral program.

Students are allowed a maximum of two dissertation oral defenses, in which they have an opportunity to successfully defend their dissertation. If the student fails both oral defenses, the student is automatically removed from the doctoral program. On the second attempt, a student must pass both the oral defense and have the dissertation voted acceptable by the committee.

## GRADUATION: THE FINAL STEP



The University confers doctoral degrees three times a year, in August, January, and May. The Commencement Ceremony and the University Hooding Ceremony are only held in the spring semester. Students must submit an online [Application for Graduation](#) in the semester in which they plan to graduate by the appropriate deadline (Fall semester: October 1<sup>st</sup>, Spring: February 1<sup>st</sup>, Summer: July 1<sup>st</sup>).

### *Final Tasks Related to the Dissertation*

1. Retrieve all paper copies of your dissertation from your committee, the examiners and the president.
2. Make any edits and revisions required by the committee in the course of the examination. Confer with the chair of the committee to make sure you have a clear understanding of what is expected.
3. After all the revisions have been made to the document, submit one final copy to the chair of your committee. After the chair determines that all revisions required by the committee have been made and he/she approves the final copy, you are ready to submit the dissertation electronically for archival.
4. GW requires all dissertations to be submitted electronically. The GW ETD website (<http://library.gwu.edu/etds/>) will guide you through the process of uploading your document into a PDF file and electronically submitting it to ProQuest, who will archive your dissertation and provide open access publishing, and to Gelman Library.

**Note:** It is very important to carefully review your document before submitting it electronically. Don't forget to use the *University Bulletin* or *GW Directory* to find the correct titles of your GW faculty committee members. Once your dissertation has been electronically submitted to ProQuest, you may make no further revisions.

5. ProQuest will assess the following fees: \$160 for open access publishing and \$65 for copyright. GW discourages students from copyrighting their dissertation unless the research has some commercial value. Please see the "Best Practices Section" on the GW ETD website for more information regarding open access and copyright.
6. Students graduating in the fall semester must complete any remaining degree requirements, submit their dissertation to the GW ProQuest ETD website, and have the document reviewed and approved for submission to ProQuest by the Gelman Library Editor and the GSEHD Office of Student Services by January 15th. To graduate in the spring, the submission deadline is April 1st. To graduate in summer, the submission deadline is August 15.

Note: Normally students have 30 calendar days to submit their dissertations and supporting documents after the defense. In the spring semester, if you defend your dissertation after March 1<sup>st</sup>, you will have less than 30 days to make revisions and upload your dissertation. There are no exceptions to these deadlines.

7. The University requires students to submit the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) before clearing you for graduation. Once you have completed the questionnaire online, please

forward the email confirming the survey has been completed to the Office of Student Services.

8. Obtain final signoffs: Show the final version with the last changes to your dissertation director, obtain his or her approval of the final version, and ensure that school or college procedures are followed. Both you and your director should also sign the [Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form](#) and submit this to the Office of Student Services.
9. Go to <http://humanresearch.gwu.edu/>, fill out the Study Closure Form to terminate your research and submit to the Principal Investigator (PI) for signature. It is your responsibility to submit the form to the IRB Office. Their telephone number is (202) 994-2715 and their fax number is (202) 994-0247.

Commencement Dates:        Spring Defenses = date of Commencement Ceremony  
                                     Summer Defenses = August 31  
                                     Fall Defenses = January 31

### *Application for Graduation*

You are to complete the online [Application for Graduation](#) for the semester in which you plan to graduate. The deadlines to submit the application to the Office of Student Services are February 1 for spring, July 1 for summer, and October 1 for fall. If a candidate does not complete their program in the semester anticipated in the initial [Application for Graduation](#), they should apply again for graduation in a later semester.

The Office of Student Services will contact you regarding all commencement matters (tickets, parking, obtaining a cap and gown, and other information) if you indicated on the Application for Graduation that you planned to attend Commencement. Information pertaining to graduation can also be found on the GW ([www.gwu.edu](http://www.gwu.edu)) and GSEHD ([www.gsehd.gwu.edu](http://www.gsehd.gwu.edu)) websites.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### *Course Credits Applied to Doctoral Program Plan of Study*

Graduate credits earned in nondegree status at GW, in other degree programs at GW, or earned from other institutions can be applied to GSEHD doctoral programs only if all the following criteria are met:

1. They were taken at an accredited college or university.
2. They were completed in the past five years.
3. They were passed with a grade of “B” or better.
4. They have not been used to fulfill requirements for another degree program, except an Ed.S. or second master’s degree completed at GW.
5. They are not used to satisfy the 36 credit hour residency requirement.
6. They have been approved by the student’s advisors as applicable to the student’s degree program.

These are the minimum general requirements for credits to be applied to doctoral program plans. Individual doctoral programs may set additional requirements.

To seek approval for application of credits to your program, write the course and number of credits earned into the [Doctoral Program Plan of Study/Residency Requirement form](#). That form must be signed by two advisors and then be submitted to the Office of Student Services. If the credits were earned at an institution other than GW and after you filed your application for admission to the doctoral program, you are to submit an official transcript showing the completion of those courses.

Students in the Ph.D. program in Counseling should consult that program’s handbook and their advisors for more information about the procedures for applying credits towards their doctoral plan of study. The procedures differ somewhat from those explained above and students must submit a [Petition Form](#) to the Colombian College of Arts & Sciences for their request to be considered.

While enrolled in a GW degree program, Foggy Bottom campus students may take courses through the Consortium. Check the GW Graduate Bulletin carefully for policies and procedures guiding consortium registration. Note: Policies are set by the Presidents of the member institutions and not by the Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

### *Maintaining Continuous Enrollment*

Maintaining continuous enrollment status generally means that the student is enrolled for at least three credits every fall and spring semester. The credits can be for courses, independent research, practicums, internships for which credit is granted, and dissertation research. Enrollment during the summer semester is allowed, but not required. Doctoral students are required to maintain continuous enrollment from their first semester of enrollment until successful defense of their

dissertation. If they “break enrollment,” they will have to reapply for admission, submitting a new application and new statement of purpose. Readmission is not automatic but is at the discretion of the faculty and school. Students who break enrollment and must reapply for admission are subject to the current criteria and regulations that have been established by the school.

Under very specific circumstances, continuous enrollment may be maintained by registering for less than three credits. The possibilities include Continuing Research (0940), Continuous Enrollment (CE), and a Leave of Absence (LOA). Each is briefly described below.

#### *Continuing Research (0940)*

Continuing research can be used in two very different circumstances. First, if you have completed all required coursework and will be taking your comprehensive examinations in the subsequent semester, including the summer semester, you are to enroll in one credit of Continuing Research (CNSL, EDUC, HOL, SPED, or CPED 0940) during that semester. NOTE: Students may not enroll in more than two semesters while preparing for the comprehensive examination. Second, if you have completed 24 credits of Dissertation Research (8999) and have not yet successfully defended your dissertation, you will register for one credit of Continuing Research each fall and spring semester until you complete your degree requirements. Note: If you defend your dissertation in the summer semester and have completed 24 credits of 8999, you must register for one credit of Continuous Research in the semester that you defend.

#### *Continuous Enrollment (CE)*

Doctoral candidates who are unable to defend in the semester in which the dissertation defense materials are filed—usually because they filed too late in the semester—may register for Continuous Enrollment in the immediately following semester and defend in that semester. Students who want to enroll in Continuous Enrollment for this reason must have been enrolled in the correct number of dissertation credits the previous semester. Continuous Enrollment may also be used during attendance at another institution (with prior approval by the Dean’s Office) or for completion of any outstanding assignments in GW courses in which a grade of incomplete was received. Students may also maintain continuous enrollment by registering for cooperative work study or study abroad with the approval of the Dean. Continuous enrollment status is limited to two semesters. To request additional semesters, the student must seek approval from the Post-Master’s Appeals Committee. Consult with the Office of Student Services regarding registration in the semester prior to when you wish to use CE. Note: International students are not permitted to enroll in CE.

#### *Leave of Absence (LOA)*

A student who, for compelling reasons, is temporarily unable to continue his or her program of studies may request a Leave of Absence using the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#). If the request is approved, the student is to register for Leave of Absence each semester. Leave of Absence status is limited to two semesters. Students who request a one-year leave of absence must submit a [Registration Transaction Form](#) for each of the two semesters. After reaching the

limit, doctoral students who wish to register for leave of absence status in additional semesters must seek approval from the Post-Master's Appeals Committee. Consult with the Office of Student Services regarding registration in the semester prior to when you wish to use LOA.

### *Registration Procedures*

Students may register for classes using the online [G-Web Information System](#). Students who wish to be enrolled in Continuous Enrollment or Leave of Absence are to fill out the appropriate form and submit to the Office of Student Services requesting this status, indicating the reason for registering in this status, identifying the semester they will be in such status, and, if appropriate, the date they plan to resume coursework. This request should be accompanied by a [Registration Transaction Form](#) signed by the advisor.

### *Financing Your Graduate Education*

GSEHD admission decisions are made without regard to financial need. Descriptions of available financial assistance are provided in [GSEHD's Funding Opportunities](#) and the [GW Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships website](#). The first three of the below listed forms of aid are available only to students enrolled at the Foggy Bottom campus. Students enrolled at other campuses or centers should contact their program faculty to determine if there is tuition support available.

### *Graduate Assistantships*

GSEHD has graduate assistantships available for full-time doctoral candidates. Each assistantship includes a stipend, salary, and tuition support. Graduate Assistants are expected to work 15 to 20 hours per week during the academic year. Contact the Director of Admissions at (202) 994-1447 for information and an application. Tuition benefits cannot be applied to courses taken off campus or through the consortium.

### *Tuition Awards*

GSEHD has a limited number of tuition awards available for both part time (six credits) and full-time (nine credits) on-campus doctoral students. Tuition awards may not be used for coursework taken off-campus or through the consortium.

Several programs in GSEHD also have tuition awards available through research or training grant funds. Contact the Director of Admissions at (202) 994-1447 for information regarding available tuition support.

### *Endowment Awards*

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development offers support from privately endowed funds. Please contact the Director of Admissions for specific information. You must submit the [GSEHD Application for Tuition Support](#), as well as a separate statement of interest.

### *Student Loans and Work Study Opportunities*

If you indicated on your application for admission that you plan to apply for a loan or for a work/study program at GW, a packet containing loan questionnaire and application information will be forwarded to you by the Office of Student Financial Assistance. If you have not received this packet, contact Colonial Central (<http://colonialcentral.gwu.edu/>). Colonial Central is located in the lower level of the Marvin Center (800 21<sup>st</sup> Street, NW).

### *Important Information Regarding Federal Student Loan Eligibility*

Federal regulations require students to maintain good academic standing and make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) in order to remain eligible to receive federal student loans. The federal standard for *making satisfactory progress* is measured three ways: cumulative GPA, Percentage of Credits Earned (PACE), and by maximum time frame.

**Cumulative GPA:** All GW students at the graduate level must have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA in order to remain in good standing and maintain eligibility to graduate. To maintain eligibility for student loans, students must maintain a 3.0 GPA each semester they are enrolled.

**Maximum Time Frame:** Graduate students are expected to complete their degree requirements in the time allotted. To maintain eligibility for student loans, students must complete all degree requirements within 150% of the published length of time of their degree programs. All courses attempted including courses where a student has withdrawn, received a grade of “I”, no grade, or a failing grade will be counted towards the maximum time frame regardless of whether or not the student received financial aid in that semester. Only audited courses do not count towards the maximum time frame.

**Percentage of Credits Earned:** (Graduate students are expected to complete 75% of the courses attempted in each semester including the summer. Any course a student drops after the drop/add period will be considered attempted credit hours. Any course a student is enrolled in after the drop/add period will be considered attempted credits hours for which academic credit will be awarded. Courses in which a student receives a grade of “I” or no grade are considered attempted credit hours, but not completed hours. Courses in which a student receives an “IPG” are considered completed hours.

**Evaluation of SAP:** Each semester the Office of Financial Aid will assess the progress towards degree completion of any student who has received financial aid while at GW. If it is determined that a student is not making Satisfactory Academic Progress, they will be notified by email at their GW email account. The first notification will be a warning and students will have one semester to bring themselves into compliance with the SAP policy.

**Appeals Process:** If students lose their eligibility to receive federal student loans, they may submit a written appeal to the OSFA Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeals Committee to be reinstated. Much like GSEHD’s appeal process, students must have a compelling reason

why they are not making satisfactory academic progress and they must demonstrate what they will do differently so that they may remedy their academic standing.

## THE STUDENT APPEALS PROCESS

GSEHD students in Ed.D. programs have the right to appeal a decision. Ph.D. in Counseling program students are not eligible for the appeals process described immediately below and should consult the Handbook for Ph.D. Students in Counseling.

### *Informal Attempts at Resolution*

Prior to appealing a decision through the Post-Master's Student Appeals Committee, the student first should attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty member(s) most directly responsible. If no resolution results, the student should then consult with the individual at the next administrative level, for example, the director of the program or the chair of the relevant department. If there continues to be no resolution, the program director, chair or student may contact the Assistant Dean of Students and solicit assistance to ensure that adequate steps are made to resolve the issues at an informal level without the complaint escalating to the status of a formal appeal. If no resolution is achieved as a result of these informal attempts, the student may appeal to the Senior Associate Dean. If no resolution is achieved at this level, the student may appeal to the Post-Master's Student Appeals Committee. Any such informal attempts will not delay the six-month time frame for filing the appeal.

### *Post Masters Student Appeals Committee: Policies and Procedures*

#### **I. The Committee**

The Post Masters Student Appeals Committee comprises one representative from each doctoral program and one representative from the research methods faculty. Committee members serve staggered two-year terms and may be re-elected. In addition, the Senior Associate Dean, Assistant Dean of Students, and the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life (OSL) serve on the committee as non-voting members.

#### **II. Charge of the PMAC**

The Post Masters Student Appeals Committee has responsibility for acting on appeals from applicants to or students in the Education Specialist (Ed.S.) and the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degrees that have been denied admission and appeals requesting exceptions to existing procedures. The committee typically meets twice a semester during the academic year. Review by the committee is considered a formal appeal and students must first attempt to resolve the dispute informally, as described in Section V below. In addition, the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Office of the Dean and/or the Doctoral Studies Committee, as appropriate, regarding policies of an academic nature related to post-masters students.

### **III. Justification**

For matters that are not resolved informally as provided in Section V below, students may appeal in the following cases:

- A. A student may appeal an academic matter on the basis of a violation of GSEHD policies or procedures. In order to prevail on an appeal, the student must submit clear evidence of any such divergence from prescribed procedures to the Post Masters Student Appeals Committee.
  
- B. A student may appeal an academic matter on the basis of extenuating circumstances that would render the application of established policies and procedures unfair under the circumstances. Extenuating circumstances are generally an event or series of events that are beyond the student's control that prevented the student from fulfilling degree requirements in a conventional manner consistent with GSEHD policies and procedures. In order to prevail on an appeal, a student must submit clear evidence of any such extenuating circumstances.

### **IV. Committee Procedures**

- A. The Chair sends a roster of the Post Masters Student Appeals Committee members and the Committee's meeting dates for the academic year to the Dean's Office following the first GSEHD meeting of the academic year.
  
- B. Once a student files an appeal in writing, the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life coordinates communication between the student, the faculty advisor(s), the Office of the Dean, the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee Chair, and when necessary, other parties associated with the appeal. Any committee member involved in the appeal must recuse himself/herself from the committee's proceedings and subsequent deliberations to reach a decision on the appeal.
  
- C. If two letters of support are not included in the student appeals materials, the Executive Director of OSL shall request a written statement of support or non-support from the student's faculty advisor or dissertation chair.
  
- D. The Executive Director is responsible for notifying in writing the student, faculty advisor(s), and the faculty member associated with the appeal of the day, date, and time of the hearing. The student, the faculty advisor(s), and the faculty member associated with the case have the option of attending the meeting to make a personal appeal. The student and faculty member should notify the Executive Director of his/her intention to do so. The committee will be notified at least one week prior to the hearing if the student is to attend. The student may have another individual present for support but the person will not be permitted to speak or

participate in the hearing. If the individual is an attorney, the student must inform the chair no later than one week prior to the hearing.

- E. The Executive Director of OSL prepares the original and seven copies of all documents related to the appeals case, which include at a minimum:
- Executive Director summary of the reason for appeal
  - Student statement of appeal
  - Faculty Advisor statement, if any
  - Two faculty statements of support or non-support
  - Transcript record of course work

**These materials *must* be in the possession of the Executive Director, Office of Student Life no later than two weeks prior to the meeting date.**

- F. Anyone may submit written documentation to the committee, provided that these documents are relevant, in the determination of the Chair, specifically to the student's case at hand. These communications must accompany the student's letter of appeal. Further, all information pertaining to a student's case, including information contained in GSEHD files, may be utilized by the committee in the appeals process described above.
- G. One week prior to the committee meeting, the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life sends an annotated agenda for the meeting to the Chair and brings the appeals and all relevant materials to the committee meeting. The Chair or the Senior Associate Dean can request a meeting of the Chair, Senior Associate Dean, the Assistant Dean of Students, and the Executive Director prior to the meeting to review the cases on the agenda.
- H. The Chair is responsible for the conduct of the hearing. An appropriate amount of time (to be determined by the Chair) is allotted for the student to present the case followed by questions related to the case from the committee. A faculty member relevant to the case can give testimony after the student has presented his/her case. If a faculty advisor or faculty member wishes to give testimony in opposition to the student's case, the student and faculty member appear separately before the committee.
- I. The Executive Director of the Office of Student Life, the Assistant Dean of Students, and the Senior Associate Dean, sitting as ex-officio members of the Committee, may supply relevant information, either orally or in writing, to the Committee at any time during their deliberations. The Committee may use all information pertaining to the student's case, including information contained in

department or school files and from the faculty advisor, in the appeals process and may request written documentation or a personal appearance before the Committee of anyone who can provide information pertaining specifically to the issue under appeal.

- J. After the hearing, the committee will have a confidential meeting to decide on the appeal. Decisions are reached by majority vote. If the appeal is granted, it is the prerogative of the Committee to accompany the favorable decision with specific requirements the student must meet to continue in the program. The decisions are communicated in the form of written minutes by the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life in collaboration with the Chair to committee members and the Senior Associate Dean no later than 10 business days after the meeting date.
- K. The Executive Director of the Office of Student Life communicates all decisions to the student, with a copy to the program faculty, in writing within ten business days of the committee's decision. The student has the option to further appeal his/her case to the Dean. The Executive Director of the Office of Student Life informs the Office of the Dean if the student wishes to further appeal the case.
- L. The Executive Director of the Office of Student Life keeps a copy of all written records along with the committee's rulings, recommendations and justifications for the decisions. All copies of case material documents are returned to the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life and disposed of appropriately. For a period of 3 years after the date of the decision, the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life will retain all materials.

## **V. Student Procedures**

In order for an appeal to be considered by the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee, students must adhere to the following process:

- A. Submit the appeal and supporting documentation in writing to the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee through the Office of Student Life no later than six months from the decision being appealed and two weeks prior to the meeting of the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee.
  - The letter requesting an appeal must include the following information:
    - i. A description of the reason for requesting the appeal
    - ii. A detailed description and timeline of events
    - iii. A statement explaining outcome sought by student
    - iv. A clear plan of action if the appeal is approved
  - Follow up with the Office of Student Services to confirm that all documents relevant to the case (e.g., student statement, faculty member statements, transcript record of course work, and all other related documentation) have been submitted. This must include two letters from program faculty or, in the

case of some programs, one collective faculty letter in the student's program stating his/her position on the student's appeal and detailing any work with the student on the issue under appeal. Faculty have the right to submit confidential statements directly to the Office of Student Services.

- B. Once the student has properly submitted all case materials, the appeal will be placed on the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee's agenda for the next meeting during the academic year. Appeals submitted outside of the academic year will be added to the agenda of the committee's first meeting of the following academic year. Appeals submitted outside of the academic year must be submitted no later than six months from the decision being appealed. In extenuating circumstances, the Dean may request to convene the committee outside of the academic year.
- C. The student will be notified in writing of the date and time of the meeting by the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life or his/her designated staff representative. The faculty advisor of the student making an appeal shall be invited to attend the Committee meeting seven calendar days in advance. Although the student is invited to attend the hearing, it is not a requirement to attend to present the case. If planning to attend the hearing, the student must inform the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life in writing no later than one week prior to the hearing. The student may have another individual present for support, but the person will not be permitted to speak or participate in the hearing. If the individual is an attorney, the student must inform the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life no later than one week prior to the hearing. The Executive Director of the Office of Student Life will inform the Chair about any additional individuals who will accompany the student to the hearing. Students who choose to attend will be allotted an appropriate amount of time to be determined by the Chair to present the case, followed by questions related to the case from committee members. In the event that a student does not attend, the committee will base the decision on the written documentation in the case file.
- D. The student will be notified in writing of the committee's decision by the Executive Director of the Office of Student Life within 10 business days of the date of the decision.
- E. The student may appeal the decision of the Post-Masters Student Appeals Committee by submitting a written appeal to the Dean. The appeal must be written and submitted within 30 calendar days after the written date of the Post-Masters Appeals Committee decision. A delay in filing an appeal may constitute grounds for rejection of the appeal.

## APPENDICES

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
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AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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## APPENDIX A: DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

These guidelines provide a framework for thorough presentation of your research. The discussion in some parts of the chapters will differ for quantitative and qualitative research studies. The research questions normally drive selection of the methodological approach(es) and design of the research. Quantitative research includes laboratory and field experiments, quasi-experimental studies, secondary data analysis of existing databases, and other studies that collect and analyze numeric data. Qualitative research includes ethnographies, phenomenological studies, sociolinguistic or discourse analysis studies, histories, cultural studies, and naturalistic inquiry. Mixed-methods research combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches, as is common in case studies and surveys. There are no separate guidelines below for mixed methods. Dissertations using those methods will usually benefit from both the guidelines for quantitative research and those for qualitative research.

These are guidelines only. You must consult with your dissertation chair and committee members to determine the elements of your dissertation. If the dissertation chair feels there is a significant departure from the standard format, s/he should consult with the Senior Associate Dean prior to the proposal defense.

GSEHD dissertations normally are structured as follows:

Chapter 1	Introduction (Broad Overview of the Research)
Chapter 2	Review of the Literature (and Conceptual Framework)
Chapter 3	Methodology
Chapter 4	Results
Chapter 5	Interpretations, Conclusions, and Recommendations
	References
	Appendices

GSEHD requires that dissertation proposals include the elements normally found in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and the References of a dissertation.

Both your proposal and dissertation are major written documents that must convey complex ideas. It is your responsibility to present those ideas clearly and concisely. Both documents are also to comply with the style specified in *the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition).

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces and provides a broad overview of the research that is to be undertaken. Parts of Chapter 1 summarize your Chapters 2 and 3, and because of that, Chapter 1 normally should be written after Chapters 2 and 3.

Dissertation committee chairs often want students to provide a 5-10 page overview of their proposed “dissertation research” before undertaking a full literature review and detailed development of the methodology. Some may call this a “prospectus” and some may call it a first draft of Chapter 1. Whatever the terminology, the final draft of your Chapter 1 is to include accurate summaries of the final drafts of your Chapters 2 and 3.

It is important to undertake preliminary examinations of the literature before finalizing the “problem” and research questions of your proposed research. (These terms are defined below.) Exploration of the literature sometimes reveals that your initially-chosen focus has already been extensively researched. If the results are contradictory that offers you an opportunity to do research that clarifies the reasons for the contradictions. If the results consistently support or contradict your expectations, you will probably have to find other research questions that have not yet been well researched.

### *1-A Overview*

Briefly explain why the study is being undertaken and what main questions or foreshadowed problems will be addressed. Do this in a general manner, because it will be done more specifically in the following sections.

### *1-B Statement of the Problem*

Discuss the problem to be addressed in the research—the gaps, perplexities, or inadequacies in existing theory, empirical knowledge, practice, or policy that prompted the study. The problem may be a theory that appears inadequate to explain known phenomena, the lack of empirical data on a potentially interesting relationship between X and Y, or a common practice that appears ineffective. First state the problem generally, and then state the specifics that your research will address. In quantitative research, the specifics will include the constructs studied.

That your favorite reading program is rarely used in school does not constitute a problem; widespread impaired reading in inner-city elementary schools is a problem. That your favorite conjectures are not represented in prevailing theory does not constitute a problem; that the theory does not explain applicable phenomena is a problem. That a certain group has been omitted from prior studies can indeed constitute a problem because theory, policy, and practice have not been shaped by knowledge of that group.

Problems usually have underlying causes that may be well-known or the subject of speculation. They also have consequences that are often apparent. You should briefly discuss these causes and consequences.

*1-C Purpose and Research Questions*

The purpose of research is to acquire knowledge to address the problem or certain aspects of it. Quantitative research tries to fulfill that purpose by answering questions and/or testing hypotheses. Qualitative research tries to fulfill that purpose by starting with foreshadowed problems, conjectures, or exploratory questions. Mixed-methods research may use both approaches.

*Quantitative Research: Research Questions and/or Hypotheses*

Present the research questions and/or hypotheses stated in 3-B below State them fully – exactly as you state them in Chapter 3.

*Qualitative Research: Foreshadowed Problems, Conjectures, or Exploratory Questions*

Present the foreshadowed problems, conjectures, or exploratory questions stated in 3-B below. State them fully, exactly as you state them in Chapter 3.

*1-D Statement of Potential Significance*

Discuss the potential significance of the research. Significance comes from the uses that might be made of your results—how they might be of benefit to theory, knowledge, practice, policy, and future research. The potential significance should be based upon your literature review in Chapter 2.

*1-E Theoretical Foundation or Conceptual Framework*

Briefly summarize the theoretical foundation or conceptual framework(s) derived from the literature review that is reported in Chapter 2.

*1-F Summary of the Methodology*

Briefly summarize the methodology of the research that is described fully in Chapter 3.

*1-G Limitations and Delimitations*

All studies have limitations to their validity, generalizability, and applicability. You have a responsibility to forewarn readers of the limitations and the reasons for them. Some limitations arise from the delimitations of the study, boundaries to make the study manageable, such as studying only one subpopulation of interest, addressing only parts of a problem, or perhaps examining only short-term effects. Some limitations arise from accommodating ethical concerns. Others come from shortcomings in methodology.

*Quantitative Research*

State the limitations of your study. The following questions will help you to identify some common sources of limitations in quantitative research. Did you sample from a subpopulation rather than the full population of interest? Did the sampling frame coincide little, moderately or closely with the targeted population or sub-population? Were the response rates and item-completion rates substantially less than 100%? Did you measure only some of the constructs likely to be applicable? Were the informed consent materials likely to have biased some responses? Were measurement scores less than highly reliable and valid? Were the experiments perhaps biased by Hawthorne and other “experimenter effects”? Did quasi-experiments and statistical modeling fail to control for viable competing hypotheses? Were the assumptions of the statistical procedures not fully met? Did the low power from small sample sizes perhaps contribute to few statistically significant results?

*Qualitative Research Questions*

Describe the limitations of your study. The following questions will help you to identify some common sources of limitations in qualitative research. What were the boundaries of the case or unit studied? What related phenomena, events, or questions were not examined—by original plan or due to unexpected barriers? What access did the researcher seek but was unable to gain? How were informants selected, and how might that have biased or limited the information that was collected from them? How did requirements for protection of humans perhaps adversely affect the study? How did the researcher’s presence perhaps affect the phenomena being studied?

*I-H Definition of Key Terms*

Briefly define key terms in the research that might not be well understood by the readers. Cite a source for each definition derived from the literature as appropriate.

*Quantitative Research*

Key terms generally should be defined both conceptually and operationally. The latter means defined in terms of how they will be measured.

*Qualitative Research Questions*

Key terms generally should be defined conceptually in accordance with their theoretical underpinnings.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly research is always a leap from the known to the unknown. The literature review and conceptual framework are used to construct a platform of the known from which you jump. Constructed carefully, the literature review and conceptual framework can maximize the chances of your spanning the abyss and reaching something substantive when you land. Constructed carelessly, they can undermine your research.

The literature review should carefully examine prior research and thought relevant to key aspects of your anticipated research. It should be used to inform:

- a) The problem to be addressed and its significance
- b) The theoretical foundation or conceptual framework
- c) The research questions, hypotheses, foreshadowed problems, or conjectures
- d) The research paradigm and the methodology

GSEHD has a website at [www.gwu.edu/~litrev](http://www.gwu.edu/~litrev) that helps students learn to conduct high-quality literature reviews.

The subsections indicated below are of the process and components of a literature review and not necessarily subheadings of Chapter 2.

### *2-A Introduction: Topic(s), Purposes, and Methods of the Literature Review*

A literature review usually begins with an indication of the topic(s) to be covered and the purposes of the review. The methods of the review should be briefly described. Indicate the indices and other methods used to search for applicable literature, the terms searched with each, and the years searched (usually the last 10 or 20 years, plus key literature from earlier years). A review should address each topic highly applicable to the problem. For problems that are not well researched, the literature review may also address other topics that are tangentially related and might help inform the study. If the literature on a topic is voluminous—it is not uncommon to find more than 100 studies—you should be selective, covering the literature most applicable to the focus of your proposed research, as indicated by the research questions, hypotheses, foreshadowed problems, or conjectures. You should explain how selections were made as to what to include and summarize the literature—is it equivocal, is there a common methodology, are there common limitations? Consult with your advisor before beginning the literature search to make sure you are covering the topics and years of research that he or she thinks are appropriate.

### *2-B Description and Critique of Scholarly Literature*

Each major theoretical discourse, conceptual discussion, and empirical study should be described and critiqued briefly. Both the strengths and weaknesses should be identified. For theoretical discourses, indicate the source of the theory, overlaps, and disparities with other applicable theories, and whether and how well the theory has been empirically verified. For conceptual discussions, indicate the sources of the concepts, overlaps, and disparities with other applicable concepts, and whether and how well the concepts have been empirically verified. For empirical studies (including qualitative ones) indicate, the research questions, methodological strengths and weaknesses, results (both their magnitude as well as their statistical significance or extent of cross-verification), conclusions, and implications.

Organizing the written review can be a challenge because the review has several simultaneous purposes. Often the best strategy is to organize the studies under major topics, theories, constructs, research questions, or methodologies. When a given study addresses more than one organizational category, you might critique it under the first applicable category, and then briefly refer to it under each subsequent applicable category. Alternatively, in the subsequent organizational categories, you might extend the critique as appropriate for that category. When considerable literature falls within one organizational category, it might be organized within second level categories. Otherwise the description and critique of literature might be presented chronologically. Lesser literature sometimes can be described and critiqued jointly, for instance, by indicating, “Several other smaller studies found ....(Anderson, 2010; Baxter, 2012, Castro; 2005).”

You should avoid creating a biased review that only covers prior literature that supports your predispositions and disregards other literature. Similarly you should consistently critique the literature. Do not ignore weaknesses in studies supporting your predispositions and do not be hypercritical of studies that contradict your predispositions. Failure to conduct a fair-minded review is likely to compromise your research.

*2-C Inferences for Forthcoming Study*

Once you have described and critiqued the individual sources, you should analyze and synthesize across them to draw inferences applicable to your anticipated research. The inferences generally should be about: (a) the problem to be addressed in your research and its significance, (b) possible research questions, hypotheses, foreshadowed problems, or conjectures, (c) possible theoretical or conceptual framework to be used, and (d) possible research paradigms and methodologies to be used. The inferences might be stated at the end of each major topic of your review or after all the relevant topics have been discussed. The following questions may generate useful inferences: What does the literature state about the extent of the problem, its underlying causes, where it is most and least severe, and its consequences for theory, knowledge, practice, policy, and/or research? How have results of empirical studies varied according to the questions/hypotheses/conjectures that have been addressed? What conceptual frameworks have been applied and with what insights? How might the conceptual frameworks be modified or synthesized to provide new insights to this problem? Which research paradigms and methods have yielded the strongest results and which the weakest results, and why?

*2-D Theoretical or Conceptual Framework for Forthcoming Study*

The problem and research questions, hypotheses, foreshadowed problems, or conjectures were explained above under Chapter 1, but the “theoretical framework” or “conceptual framework” has not yet been explained. The conceptual framework is constructed by the student and it may include a theory or theoretical framework. (It might also be noted that as appropriate the theoretical/conceptual framework can be explicated in Chapter 1.) These are a theory or set of interrelated constructs that provide perspective or a “lens” through which the research problem is viewed and through which the choices about the research will be made. They help narrow down and focus the research. Note that a theoretical or conceptual framework works like a telescope or microscope, and thus it both enhances what you can see and also restricts your breadth of vision. For that reason, a conceptual framework should be used judiciously to help inform your study rather than to dictate all aspects of it. Sometimes important breakthroughs occur when a researcher abandons the commonly-used conceptual framework and applies one never before used with a given problem. The definition of a theoretical framework or conceptual framework may vary by disciplinary field and thus the student should consult closely with her or his chair on this section of the dissertation.

*Quantitative Research*

The conceptual framework explains the key constructs studied and presumed relationships among them. It often has implications for the subpopulations studied, the variables measured, and the data analysis techniques that are used. One example of a conceptual framework is that of human capital, which views individuals and

*Qualitative Research Questions*

The conceptual framework often defines the perspective that will be taken in the research. It usually has implications for the interpretive paradigm and methodological approaches that are selected. For instance, Piaget’s theory of intellectual development, and subsequent refinements to it, offers a theoretical

companies as inclined to invest in education and training to enhance productive capabilities and earnings, much like they would invest in new machinery.	framework that has been used in many qualitative studies of early childhood development and elementary schooling.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The methods are the procedures used to acquire empirical evidence and analyze it for purposes of answering research questions, testing hypotheses, examining foreshadowed problems, following up on conjectures, and going forward from exploratory questions. The choice of methodology should be made in light of the literature review and with careful deliberation. Small oversights can sometimes undermine a long and difficult study. Your committee will help you think through the appropriateness of proposed methods and will probably suggest some refinements.

Your approved proposal is considered a blueprint for research. You are expected to do everything indicated in that blueprint. In experimental research, it is usually expected that no changes will be made unless you encounter unanticipated problems that require modifications. In other quantitative research, such as quasi-experimental, longitudinal, and secondary data analysis, additions over and beyond the blueprint may be appropriate to deal with unanticipated opportunities. In qualitative research, the proposal outlines the broad parameters of the study, but usually several details are expected to be decided during the actual data collection and analysis. Changes in the planned research should be made only after consultation with your full dissertation committee. Changes in the collection and handling of data from humans will require the student to submit an IRB Modification Form for approval through the GW Office of Human Research.

A few important aspects of the methods cannot be known until after the study has been conducted, such as the response rates from samples, errors or accidents in carrying out the planned methods, and whether the collected data meets the assumptions of the planned statistical analyses. Consequently, whatever is written in the research proposal about methodology may have to be updated when preparing Chapter 3 of the dissertation.

The subsections indicated below are the components of the methodology and not necessarily subheadings of Chapter 3. Mixed-methods studies may benefit from the guidelines below for both quantitative research and qualitative research.

*3-A Overview of Methodology*

<p><i>Quantitative Research</i></p> <p>Briefly re-introduce the problem and provide an overview of the methodological approach.</p>	<p><i>Qualitative Research Questions</i></p> <p>Briefly indicate the epistemology and theoretical perspective that will shape the study, re-introduce the problem, and indicate the methodological approach to be used.</p>
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*3- B*

<p><i>Quantitative Research: State Research Questions/Hypotheses</i></p> <p>State the specific research questions and/or hypotheses to be investigated. Research questions orient the researcher to the immediate task and are the basis for selection of the research design and methods. There are four basic classes of research questions: descriptive (e.g. “What is the achievement level of a given group of students?”); associational (e.g. “Is self-concept related to achievement?”); causal (e.g. “Does low self-concept depress educational achievement?”); and cost-benefit (e.g. “Do the benefits of an innovative program exceed the costs?”).</p> <p>A study may have one or more general questions with several subquestions nested under each. To answer the questions, you need to state the questions operationally (in terms of specific measures) and collect data on those measures. For instance, an operational statement of the above associational question is, “Are scores on the Dangerfield Self-Esteem Inventory correlated with the Iowa Test of Basic Skills?”</p> <p>Hypotheses are used in experimental research and sometimes in quasi-experimental research and non-experimental research. They create a bridge between the theoretical considerations that underlie the questions and the ensuing</p>	<p><i>Qualitative Research Questions: State Foreshadowed Problem, Conjectures or Exploratory Questions</i></p> <p>State the foreshadowed problems, conjectures, or exploratory questions that guided the inquiry. The conjectures or exploratory questions can be descriptive, associational, and process-oriented. Qualitative research answers questions in a holistic manner based on all or most of the available information, cross-verifying among several sources of information. The process often involves continual drawing of tentative inferences throughout the ongoing data collection and verifying those inferences with the subsequently-collected data.</p> <p>In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative studies may result in emergent hypotheses articulated at the conclusion of the study during the interpretation phase (Chapter 5).</p>
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<p>research process designed to answer the questions. Hypotheses are deduced from theory or induced from accumulated knowledge. They are predictive statements about the answers to research questions. For instance, there could be a hypothesis that, “Administration of Therapy A will raise scores on the Dangerfield Self-Esteem Inventory.” Hypotheses should be based on the relevant literature</p>	
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### *3-C Research Procedures*

<i>Quantitative Research</i>	<i>Qualitative Research Questions</i>
<p>Include a statement of the research design. Describe in detail the sampling, data-collection, and data-analysis procedures. Generally the description should be thorough enough that other skilled researchers could replicate your study from the description. The APA Publication Manual indicates that the methods section should normally have subsections for “participants,” “apparatus” (or “materials”), and “procedure.” That will work for experimental studies but may be awkward for some other types of quantitative studies.</p> <p>a) For the design, describe the timing of data collection relative to any naturally occurring or induced intervention, the groups from whom data will be collected, any random assignment there might be to groups, and any statistical controls that will be used to control for possible initial differences in comparison groups. For descriptive and associational research questions, the designs are usually simpler than for causal questions, which require experimental or quasi-experimental designs.</p> <p>b) For the sampling, describe the population of interest, the sampling frame used and how well it corresponded with the population, the sampling procedures and sample size, the</p>	<p>Include a statement of the research design. Describe in detail how the inquiry was undertaken. Generally the description should be thorough enough that other skilled researchers could approximately replicate your study from the description.</p> <p>a) Introduce the epistemology or research paradigm that will guide the inquiry.</p> <p>b) Explain the theoretical perspective that will drive the research, and why it was selected.</p> <p>c) Indicate the methodology used, and why it was selected.</p> <p>d) Indicate the specific methods used, and the justification for them. How were sites, cases, and informants selected? Why? Describe the methods used to collect your data. Why? What verification procedures were used in the field? How did you protect against imposing your biases on the data? Describe and append any interview guides, protocols, or rubrics used to assist in the data collection.</p> <p>e) Indicate how you managed your qualitative data. Did you take notes or make audio/video recordings? Was any data not analyzed?</p>

<p>response rates, and missing data rates. Give the rationales for the decisions that you made about sampling, including any power estimates that were made. Indicate what you did in an effort to secure high response rates and to minimize missing data. Describe anything else that might have biased the sample.</p> <p>c) For the data collection, indicate whether you used established instruments or created your own, and why. A good place to look for established instruments is <a href="http://ericae.net">http://ericae.net</a> use the advanced search capabilities) and <a href="http://www.unl.edu/buros/">http://www.unl.edu/buros/</a>. Indicate available reliability and validity data for scores from established instruments and why this should hold for your data. Indicate procedures used to develop, field-test, and determine the reliability and validity of scores from created instruments. Append copies of all instruments except: (a) those developed by others and for which you cannot secure permission to include from the copyright holder, and (b) those that must be kept secured. Describe how data collectors were trained, monitored, and perhaps retrained. Describe manual data editing procedures. Report any irregularities known to occur during the data collection and the likely effects of irregularities.</p> <p>d) For the data analysis, indicate coding procedures used for open-ended responses and precautions used to ensure valid coding. Indicate data entry and verification procedures and computerized checks for suspicious data. Indicate any data transformations and computation of scale scores and checks made to assure those were correctly programmed. Indicate what data analysis procedures were used (they should correspond with the type of research question), why, and checks made to ensure that the data met the assumptions of the analytic procedures</p>	<p>Why?</p> <p>f) Indicate how you analyzed and interpreted your data, making sure the analysis was consistent with the selected methodology. Indicate when/whether data analysis influenced subsequent data collection. If you inferred themes, explain how. If you coded the transcripts, explain the coding system and checks for coding reliability and validity. How did you analyze the data from the coding? How did you triangulate or otherwise verify findings? How did you interpret the full set of data?</p> <p>g) Articulate a subjective statement summarizing who you are in relation to what and whom you are studying. The statement should be informed by, but not limited to, your personal history, identification/identity, cultural worldview, and professional experiences. The purpose is to articulate how such factors may affect the research in terms of credibility, authenticity and overall quality or validity. Qualitative research in itself does not require evidence of validity, but for the purposes of a dissertation evidence of validity is expected. As such, procedures to be used should be articulated in chapter 3, and the evidence of those provided in chapter 4.</p>
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### *3-D Human Participants and Ethics Precautions*

Summarize potential risks to humans from whom data is collected in your research, and summarize precautions taken to ensure informed consent (when needed) and to minimize the risks to participants in your research. This information can be drawn from the [GW Office of Human Research Internal Review Board \(IRB\)](#) Submission Form that must accompany your proposal when it is submitted to the GSEHD Office of Student Services. (Reminder: You must have approval from the GW Office of Human Research and the GSEHD Senior Associate Dean before beginning data collection from or about humans!) Also address other ethical issues, such as your possible conflicts of interest and personal biases that could have influenced the research, and how you minimized their effects. After approval of your proposal, if events occur during the research that raise new risks to human participants, those should be reported to the GW Office of Human Research and should also be described here briefly.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Data analysis, whether quantitative or qualitative, is intended to summarize a mass of information to answer the research questions, test the hypotheses, examine the foreshadowed problems, and explore the conjectures. The results are generally reported in Chapter 4 and then interpreted in Chapter 5. That is not possible for some modes of qualitative research, where analysis and interpretation are closely intertwined, but even then, the interpretation in Chapter 4 should be at a low level, with higher level, overall interpretations reserved for Chapter 5.

The text should tell a story and teach the result in an order that will be intuitive, interesting, and easily understood by a reader not previously informed about the subject. The text should highlight and emphasize what is most important. It should present more briefly the less-important results. Deciding which results are most important should be based on consideration of: (a) the epistemology, theoretical foundation, or conceptual framework that guided the study, (b) the main questions, hypotheses, or conjectures of the research; (c) the magnitude and statistical significance or cross-validation of results, effect size as well as any necessary post hoc tests, as well as when results were strongly predicted and not found, which is also an important finding; (d) the consistency of the results across multiple measures of a construct and across similar constructs; and (e) the potential implications for theory, knowledge, practice, policy, and future research. Do not bury your reader in a flood of computer-generated statistics. That is likely to confuse them and make nothing memorable. Important results should generally be shown in a table, chart, or graph and mentioned in the text. They may also be illustrated with an example or two. Less important results might be shown in a table, but not mentioned in the text, or presented briefly in the text and not shown in a table or graph. If there are less important results whose complex details may be of interest to a few people, put those results in an appendix and have the text briefly reference the appendix.

Standardize key terminology in this chapter and throughout the dissertation. While the use of synonyms for key concepts and variables can minimize irritating repetition, it may also leave readers unsure whether the differing terms represent somewhat different things.

The results need to be reported in sufficient detail to justify any subsequent conclusions and recommendations, which are normally reported in Chapter 5. When you sit down to write Chapter 4, review both the guidelines for it herein and the guidelines below for Chapter 5. Then, as you write Chapter 4, keep a separate list of points that might be discussed in Chapter 5.

The subsections indicated below are about various aspects of the reported results and would not be used as subheadings in Chapter 4.

*4-A Organization*

<p><i>Quantitative Research</i></p> <p>Generally the results should be presented in the order in which the research questions or hypotheses were stated in 3-B above. If data on the setting of the study or demographics are not needed to answer the research questions or test the hypotheses, they are usually presented near the beginning or at the end of the chapter. Note that a good order for items in an interview or survey will often not be a good order for presenting the results. The results should be ordered so that they can easily be understood by a reader naive to the subject</p>	<p><i>Qualitative Research Questions</i></p> <p>The structure of chapter 4 should be determined by the purposes of the study and needs of a reader naive to the subject. This may include organization by research question(s), emergent analytic themes, and conventions of particular research methodologies.</p>
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*4-B Text*

<p><i>Quantitative Research</i></p> <p>The text should focus on the most important results and devote less attention to the less important results. All results should be indicated, but not necessarily reported individually. For instance, if you did a series of analyses relating the outcomes to demographic characteristics and there were no statistically-significant results and that was not surprising, it may be preferable to say that in one sentence rather than report each of those individual results. The text should also note patterns and inconsistencies among the various results. Make sure to briefly report response rates and item-completion rates for each data-collection effort.</p>	<p><i>Qualitative Research Questions</i></p> <p>The critical challenge for most qualitative research is distilling down hundreds of pages of notes or transcripts to a manageable presentation for readers, most of whom will be less engrossed in your topic than you have been. The text should focus on the most important results and devote less attention to the less important results. It is common in qualitative research to report chunks of the raw data. These should be used judiciously and selectively to aid in the presentation of the important results. The chunks should be shortened as much as possible while still illustrating the intended points. A few short examples will generally be more convincing than one long example. Make sure that your reporting does not violate representations made in your Informed Consent materials. The text should reveal both patterns and inconsistencies in the results.</p>
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#### 4-C Reporting Statistics

<i>Quantitative Research</i>	<i>Qualitative Research Questions</i>
<p>Mean values should almost always be accompanied by their standard deviations, and the “n”s (unless the “n” is consistent for all analyses). For main results, it is desirable to report both the “p values” (of statistical significance) and indications of the magnitude of the results, including mean differences and effect sizes indicated by omega squared, r squared, etc. When results are not significant, discuss whether low power of the statistical analysis may have obscured real differences or relationships</p>	<p>For some qualitative methodologies, descriptive statistics of frequencies and correlations may be used to summarize coded data derived from field notes and transcripts. Usually it will be inappropriate to report statistical significance because the sampling that is commonly used in qualitative research does not meet the assumptions of statistical significance.</p>

#### 4-D Tables, Graphs and Charts

<i>Quantitative Research</i>	<i>Qualitative Research Questions</i>
<p>Tables are a good way to present many results in a condensed format, but most people find large tables of data overwhelming, so the text should highlight the most important results. You might also bold the most important results in the table. Graphs and charts naturally highlight results, if kept reasonably simple and presented well. In every case, there should be preceding text introducing a table, graph, or chart. There may also be text afterward, discussing additional points. Tables, graphs and charts should be formatted in accordance to APA formatting guidelines.</p>	<p>For some qualitative methodologies, summaries of codings derived from field notes and transcripts may be presented in tables, graphs, and charts. In every case, there should be text before each such presentation introducing it and highlighting the most important findings. There may also be text afterward, discussing additional points.</p>

#### 4-E Raw Data

<i>Quantitative Research</i>	<i>Qualitative Research Questions</i>
<p>Raw data for individual participants is usually not reported in the dissertation, unless there were only a small number of participants. Some illustrative quotes are, however, often included. Make sure that your use of quotes does not violate representations made in your Informed Consent materials. This seems most pertinent for mixed methods studies where you have open-ended responses. When the full data set can be printed on a few pages, it may be included in an appendix.</p> <p>Note: The APA Manual indicates that raw data should be kept for at least five years, and that you are generally obligated to make your data available to others for reanalysis.</p>	<p>Full transcripts are rarely included in a dissertation. See section 4-B above about reporting chunks from the transcripts.</p> <p>Note: The APA Manual indicates that raw data should be kept for at least five years, and that you are generally obligated to make your data available to others for reanalysis.</p>

## CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the chapter in which you give meaning to the results partly by tying them to past theory, research, policy, and practice and partly by extrapolating them to future theory, research, policy, and practice. Chapter 5 is a time for imagination and boldness, but with scholarly caution. The interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations must have some basis in your study and are more credible if also based on prior literature.

Chapter 5 is often the weakest one in the first draft of the completed dissertation. Students often are exhausted from the prior work and are rushing to finish Chapter 5 by a deadline. They usually fail to appreciate that Chapter 5 requires a change in mindset. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 require the student to progressively narrow the focus and then Chapter 5 requires them to broaden their perspective.

Try to take a break of at least several days after completing Chapter 4 before you start writing Chapter 5. Prepare for writing Chapter 5 by reading the guidelines below; your statement of the problem, significance, and limitations in Chapter 1; your literature review in Chapter 2; your entire Chapter 4; and your notes made when writing Chapter 4 of points that should be included in Chapter 5.

The subsections indicated below are of the common components of Chapter 5 and not necessarily the subheadings of the chapter.

### *5-A Opening*

Begin with a very brief summary of the problem addressed and the main results of your research.

### *5-B Interpretation (Discussion of Findings) and Conclusions*

The results should be interpreted in light of the full set of results, the applicable literature, the theoretical foundation or conceptual framework used, and the limitations of the study and literature. What do the results mean and what do they not mean? What are the possible causes of the results? What are the possible consequences of the results?

When addressing these questions it is useful to distinguish what was learned with reasonable assurance, what was suggested only tentatively, and what was not learned. When the evidence is overwhelming, make your statements authoritatively. When the evidence is only suggestive, add caveats to your statements such as, “The results suggest ...,” “It appears ...,” or “It could be that ...” Informed speculations are appropriate and useful in the interpretations, as long as you signal the reader that you are speculating.

The interpretation of statistically significant and large results is usually straight forward. Interpretation of statistically significant and small results is often bungled by doctoral students and even sometimes by mature scholars. Statistical significance only means that some association or difference probably (with a small chance of error) exists in the population, NOT that it is important. Statistically significant small associations or differences may be of little or no use for organizational or programmatic purposes. On the other hand, if an expensive program or structure has provided little improvement, it may be important to know this so that efforts are made to improve the program or structure or to redirect the resources to better uses. Finally, the failure to find statistically significant results may be due to low power and may hide a real association or difference in the population.

While statistical significance is rarely tested in qualitative research, the underlying principles expressed in the above paragraph are applicable. It is important to assess the magnitude of the results. Small results may be useful for refining theory or informing management, but they should not be touted as means of making large improvements in practice.

Conclusions are generalizations and contextually grounded statements (in the case of qualitative inquiry) that tie back to the existing literature. The conclusions may be about the problem that was addressed or about theory, conceptual frameworks, policy, practice, or research. Conclusions indicate what is now known when your results and the prior literature are considered together. Conclusions are not the same as research findings/results and should not be a restatement of the findings/results from Chapter 4. A conclusion should be broader and more encompassing than a specific result/finding, and several findings may be incorporated into one conclusion. For each conclusion, you should briefly cite the results and literature that support it—either before stating

the conclusion or after stating it. Double check each conclusion—while some of your results may support a given conclusion, some of your other results may actually contradict it. If the literature reports results similar to yours from studies with different populations or settings, that can be a basis for cautious generalization beyond your population and setting. On the other hand, if there are no other studies similar to yours, or the other studies' results contradict yours, be careful not to over-generalize your results. Conclusions may be included in the Interpretation section or a separate following section.

### *5-C Recommendations*

Recommendations are suggestions for action that are based upon the results and the applicable literature, with consideration for the limitations of both. The recommendations can be for modifications or new initiatives in theory, practice, and policy. They can also be for future research—new problems that have become apparent, new research questions raised by the results, and conceptual frameworks and methodologies that seem to hold promise or should be avoided in the future. When formulating recommendations, try to anticipate implementation difficulties and unintended negative consequences. There always can be multiple recommendations for a given purpose, and the first recommendation that you generate may not be the best one. The tone of recommendations can range from tentative to advisory to exhortative, although the latter is inadvisable in dissertations because they are considered the work of neophyte scholars.

## APPENDIX B: DISSERTATION RESOURCES

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) Washington DC: Author.

Balian, E. S. (2011). *The graduate research guidebook: a practical approach to doctoral/masters research*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Bolker, J. (1998). *Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day: a guide to starting, revising, and finishing your doctoral thesis*. NY: Holt.

Brohaugh, W. (2007). *Write tight: how to keep your prose sharp, focused, and concise*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc..

Coley, S. & Scheinberg, C. (2000). *Proposal writing*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Cone, J. D. & Foster, S. L. (2006). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: psychology and related fields*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Davis, G. B. & Parker, C. A. (1997). *Writing the doctoral dissertation: a systematic approach*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's.

Ernst, M. O. (1981). *A guide through the dissertation process*. NY: E. Mellen Press.

Evans, D. G. (1995). *How to write a better thesis or report*. Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.

Fitzpatrick, J., Secrist, J. & Wright, D. J. (1998). *Secrets for a successful dissertation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gardner, D.C. & Beatty, G. J. (1980). *Dissertation proposal guidebook: how to prepare a research proposal and get it accepted*. Springfield, IL: Thomas.

Joyner, R.L., Rouse, W.A., & Glatthorn, A.A. (2012). *Writing the winning thesis or dissertation: a step-by-step guide*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Glavan, Jose (2006). *Writing literature reviews*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Los Angeles: Pycszak Publishing.

Henson, K. (1994). *The art of writing for publication*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

- Krathwohl, D. R. (1988). *How to prepare a research proposal: guidelines for funding and dissertations in the social and behavioral sciences*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Lock, L F., Spirduso, W. W. & Silverman, S. (2007). *Proposals that work: a guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Long, T. J., Convey, J. J. & Chwalek, A. R. (1985). *Completing dissertations in the behavioral sciences and education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Madsen, D. (1992). *Successful dissertations and theses: a guide to graduate student research from proposal to completion*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Martin, R. (1980). *Writing and defending a thesis or dissertation in psychology and education*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.
- Preece, R. A. (1994). *Starting research: an introduction to academic research and dissertation writing*. NY: Pinter Publishers.
- Rudestam, K.E. & Newton, R.R. (2007). *Surviving your dissertation: a comprehensive guide to content & process*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Teitelbaum, H. (1994). *How to write a thesis: a guide to the research paper*. NY: Macmillan.
- Turabian, K. L. (1996). *A manual for writers of term papers, theses and dissertations*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Van Til, W. (1986). *Writing for professional publication*. Newton, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Inc.
- Yates, B. T. (1982). *Doing the dissertation: the nuts and bolts of psychological research*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.
- Zerubavel, E. (1999). *The clockwork muse: a practical guide to writing theses, dissertations, and books*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

## APPENDIX C: DOCTORAL STUDENT CHECKLIST

### PHASE 1: Pre-Candidacy

- Connect with Doctoral Study Advising Team (listed on your admission letter).
- Complete any prerequisite work (or other conditions of admission) as listed on your admission decision letter.
- Work with your advisor to create a [Program Plan of Study/Residency Requirement Form](#) within completing 18 credits of coursework or 3 semesters in the program, whichever occurs first. Once signed by your advisors, **please submit your Program Plan to the Office of Student Services.**
- Ensure that you are enrolled (or in a leave of absence) each fall and spring semester. Summer enrollment is not required.
- Complete all course requirements on your Program Plan of Study, with the possible exception of the Proposal Development Seminar (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8998), your level B research methods course. You will enroll in Dissertation Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8999) AFTER all other coursework is completed.
- Complete the [Comprehensive Examination Application](#) by the appropriate deadline (Fall semester: October 1st, Spring semester: February 1st, Summer semester: June 1<sup>st</sup>).
- Be actively enrolled in at least one credit hour during the semester in which you intend to sit for the comprehensive examination. **Consult with your academic advisor and student services representative to determine the best course of enrollment for the semester in which you take the comprehensive exam.**
- Successfully complete the comprehensive examination.
- Successfully complete the Pre-Dissertation Seminar (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8998) and your level B research methods course, if not previously completed. **Please be aware that enrolling in only 3 credits of 8998 or level B do not qualify for semester half-time or full-time certification with federal financial aid.** Please plan accordingly.

### PHASE 2: Candidacy

- Begin registering for dissertation research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8999) at a rate of 3 or 6 credits each semester.

- If you have not already done so, establish a doctoral dissertation committee and file the [Dissertation Committee Membership and Proposal Approval form](#) with Part I Completed. Review the criteria for establishing a committee on pages 24-25 of the [Doctoral Handbook](#).
- Obtain your dissertation committee's approval of your proposal. Complete Part II of the [Dissertation Committee Membership and Proposal Approval](#) form. Submit completed form to the Office of Student Services.
- Following IRB approval, submit the final document to your student services representative in order to receive written approval from the Senior Associate Dean and proceed with research.
- Submit drafts of your dissertation to your dissertation chair and committee members for review and feedback, as requested by the chair. Work with your chair to establish a timeline for degree completion.
- Enroll in a minimum of 12 credit hours of Dissertation Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8999). If you have not completed all degree requirements and graduated by the time you reach 12 credit hours of Dissertation Research, you must continue to register for Dissertation Research at a rate of 3-6 credits until you either successfully complete all degree requirements or reach 24 credits. If you reach 24 credits of Dissertation Research, you will become eligible to register 1 credit a semester of Continuing Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 0940).
- Submit an online [Application for Graduation](#) in the semester in which you plan to graduate by the appropriate deadline (Fall semester: October 1<sup>st</sup>, Spring: February 1<sup>st</sup>, Summer: July 1<sup>st</sup>).
- Establish a dissertation oral examination committee with the assistance of your dissertation chairperson. See the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#) and [Doctoral Student Handbook](#) pg. 34-35.
- Submit the [Dissertation Approval Form](#), the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination Form](#), one electronic copy of your completed dissertation and one electronic copy of the abstract (Word format, 350 words) to the Office of Student Services. **This must be done at least 30 calendar days before the scheduled defense.**
- Prepare six copies of the dissertation. Deliver five copies to the members of the examining committee and retain one copy for yourself. **This must be done no less than 20 working days prior to the scheduled date of the oral examination.**
- Successfully defend your dissertation in the oral examination.

- Make any revisions requested by the oral examination committee, submit final documents to the Office of Student Services, and have your document uploaded and accepted by both the Gelman Library and the Office of Student Services **within 30 calendar days from the date of your final oral examination or by the ProQuest submission deadline for the semester in which you defend (whichever comes first)**. Deadlines can be found on the Office of Student Services [Critical Dates webpage](#).
- Submit [ETD Approval Form](#) signed by you and your dissertation chair (student services will sign as the school official) and evidence you have completed the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) to the Office of Student Services.
- Close the IRB study by submitting the Study Closure Form directly to the [Office of Human Research](#).
- Walk across the stage at graduation!!!

## APPENDIX D: FORMS

Photocopies of these forms may be submitted.  
Faxed or scanned signatures are acceptable.



DOCTORAL PROGRAM PLAN OF STUDY/RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT, PAGE  
1 OF 2

(Due by the end of 18 credits or 3 semesters, whichever occurs first)

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please see the other side of this form and your Student Handbook for details.*

**Required Courses:**

*All courses must be completed prior to the comprehensive examination except Program Area 8998, Level B Research Methods course, and 8999.*

*Credit Hours*

___ EDUC 8110	___
___	___
___	___
___	___
___	___
___	___

**Total Credit Hours** \_\_\_\_\_

**Research Tool Field:**

\_\_\_ EDUC 8120 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ EDUC 8122 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Advanced Methodology Course: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dissertation:**

\_\_\_ Program Area 8998  
\_\_\_ Program Area 8999

**Total Credit Hours** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Credit Hours** \_\_\_\_\_

\*If a student is exempted by examination from EDUC 8120 or EDUC 8122, the signature of the coordinator of the research faculty is required

DOCTORAL PROGRAM PLAN OF STUDY/RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT, PAGE  
2 OF 2

**The signature of the advisor indicates willingness to accept the above-named candidate for preparation for the comprehensive examination in the stated program area and indicates approval of specified requirements.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Advisor\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Advisor\*

\*Assigned at the point of admission

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development requires that all doctoral students complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of coursework plus at least 12 credits of dissertation research at The George Washington University as an admitted student in residence. Courses already completed as part of a previous Master's or Education Specialist degree program that are program requirements should be listed on the form but cannot be used to fulfill the Residency Requirement (36 credits). The candidate and the primary advisor are responsible for seeing that one of the following options is fulfilled.

The candidate is required to satisfactorily complete **36 credit hours in residence excluding dissertation**. The term "in residence" is utilized in the catalogue to mean, "courses that are registered for at The George Washington University (GWU) and taken at GWU or through the consortium of universities."

I understand I must complete my program plan according to the requirements of my program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



GSEHD

**PROGRAM PLAN OF STUDY CHANGE REQUEST**  
(Due whenever making changes to the already filed program plan)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Plan:

Proposed Changes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Primary Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Secondary Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\*If a change is made in the research sequence, the signature of a research faculty member is required.

Research Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Senior Associate Dean: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND PROPOSAL APPROVAL**

**PART I:** Upon establishing the dissertation committee, complete Part I. Provide a copy of the completed form to all committee members. Attach the C.V. of committee members who are not GW faculty members and submit the form to the Office of Student Services. Also keep a copy of the completed form to submit again after the proposal defense, with Part II filled in. After initial filing of this form, changes to the committee are to be requested in a memo from the chair to the Office of Student Services, signed by the chair, the person stepping down, and the new person joining the committee.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic area: \_\_\_\_\_

**The following Dissertation Committee has been established for the above indicated student:**

**Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Committee Member:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Committee Member:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**PART II:** At the time that the dissertation proposal is approved, complete Part II. Please use a copy with Part I already filled in. Two copies of this completed form, two copies of the approved proposal, and two copies of the IRB paperwork signed by the Chair of the Department are to be submitted to the Office of Student Services. Once IRB has approved your research, the Senior Associate Dean will review your proposal. **Data collection is not to begin until a formal letter of approval is sent by the Senior Associate Dean's Office. The Committee met on \_\_\_\_\_ and approved the dissertation proposal:**

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

Significance of this topic to the Program Area: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Committee Member:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Committee Member:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**\*\*Data collection is not to begin until you have written approval from the Senior Associate Dean.\*\***

CERTIFICATION OF RESEARCH EXCLUSION  
FOR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS  
Graduate School of Education and Human Development

Name of Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Study:

- Dissertation  
 Sponsored  
 Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

After reviewing the following *Excluded Research Checklist for GSEHD*, it was determined that the proposed research is excluded because of the reason(s) checked below:

**1. Is the activity a systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge?**

No  Yes

*If YES, continue to question #2.*

*If NO, this research is excluded, do not submit to the IRB for review.*

**2. Does the research involve obtaining information about living individuals?**

No  Yes

*If YES, continue to question #3.*

*If NO, this research is excluded, do not submit to the IRB for review.*

**3. Does the research involve intervention or interaction with the individuals?**

No  Yes

*If YES, continue to question #5.*

*If NO, proceed to question #4.*

**4. Is the information individually identifiable? (i.e., the identity of the subject is or may be readily ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information)**

No  Yes

*If YES, continue to question #5.*

*If NO, this research is excluded, do not submit to the IRB for review.*

**5. The research is collecting information about those individuals?**

\_\_\_\_\_ No    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

*If YES, send an application to the GWU Office of Human Research for IRB Review.  
Forms are available on the OHR website:*

*<http://www.gwumc.edu/research/human/index.html>*

*If NO, this research is excluded, do not submit to the IRB for review.*

**\*\*\* If after following this checklist you still have questions, consult with the IRB Office.\*\*\***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Important Information About Dissertations**

- As a reminder, if your research is excluded you must still submit one hard copy of this form, your dissertation proposal, and the proposal approval form to Valin Jordan ([docgsehd@gwu.edu](mailto:docgsehd@gwu.edu)) in the Office of Student Services. Your dissertation is not officially approved and you may not begin data collection until you receive a letter from the Senior Associate Dean.
- If your research requires review by the IRB you should submit two hard copies of your IRB paperwork (with necessary signatures including the department chair), your dissertation proposal, and your proposal approval form to Valin Jordan ([docgsehd@gwu.edu](mailto:docgsehd@gwu.edu)) in the Office of Student Services. She will submit them to the IRB office on your behalf. Once you receive final approval from the IRB office, forward her a copy of the approval email. She must have this in hand before the Senior Associate Dean will approve your dissertation research.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING A DISSERTATION ORAL EXAMINATION

When a dissertation committee chair reaches the decision that a candidate is ready for the dissertation oral examination, the following actions are required prior to the examination.

### **Step I: Chairperson's Responsibilities**

Assist candidate in completing and submitting the following forms to the Office of Student Services no less than 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the exam.

- a) **Request for Dissertation Oral Examination Form**
- b) **Approval to Defend Dissertation**

Before signing the Approval to Defend Dissertation Form, committee members should be satisfied that the document is ready to defend. Once the dissertation is submitted to the Office of Student Services, no changes can be made to the document before the oral examination.

The dissertation oral examination is conducted by the dissertation committee chair, the two other committee members, and two "additional examiners." At least one of the five members shall be outside of the candidate's home program and one shall be outside of GSEHD. (Both of these can be from outside GW). The two "additional examiners" must also meet the following criteria: (1) Both must have held an earned doctorate for at least one year prior to the defense or hold a terminal degree in their field and an academic appointment; (2) Both must have professional background and experience that is relevant to the candidate's topic and research; (3) Both must be free of relationships with the candidate that pose a potential conflict of interest (such as being the candidate's job supervisor, friend, or colleague); (4) If not a current or former GW regular status or research faculty member, a copy of the person's curriculum vita must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

### **Step II: Doctoral Candidate's Responsibilities**

1. Complete and deliver items (a) and (b) below to the Office of Student Services. These must be prepared in complete and polished form and delivered no less than 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the oral examination.
  - One electronic copy of the dissertation, the Dissertation Approval Form, and the Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form.
  - The Abstract of the Dissertation as an email attachment. This must be no more than 350 words in length typed, double spaced, and entitled, "Abstract of the Dissertation."
  - Resumes of the additional examiners who are not current or former GW regular status faculty members.
2. Distribute copies of the dissertation to all five members of the oral examination committee at least three weeks before the examination. A sixth copy should be kept by the candidate.

**By submission of this form, the candidate and chair represent that all members of the oral examination committee have agreed to the date of the exam. NOTE: no more than one committee member may participate from a distance.**

REQUEST FOR DISSERTATION ORAL EXAMINATION  
(Due 30 calendar days prior to the defense)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day/work): \_\_\_\_\_ (Home): \_\_\_\_\_

Please see your Doctoral Handbook for details. This form must be submitted at least 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the Dissertation Oral Examination.

Date and Time of Defense \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred GSEHD Campus or Center: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson (Name & Exact Title) \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members (Names & Exact Titles)

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_

(These three individuals are the dissertation committee. Please supply contact information for any member who is not a GW faculty member)

The dissertation oral examination committee consists of the dissertation committee and two additional examiners. At least one of the five members must be outside of the candidate's home program and one must be outside GSEHD (both can be outside of GW). Please see below for qualifications of the additional examiners.

Examiner 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Exact Title of Job: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Exact Title of Job: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria for the Additional Two Examiners**

Two additional examiners are selected on the basis of their experience and interests in the candidate's topic area and must meet the following criteria:

- Both must have held an earned doctorate or a terminal degree in their field and an academic appointment for at least one year prior to the defense.
- Both must have professional background and experience that is relevant to the candidate's topic and research.
- Both must be free of relationships with the candidate that might pose a potential conflict of interest (such as being the candidate's job supervisor, friend, or colleague).
- If not a current or a former GW regular status or research faculty member, a copy of the person's curriculum vita must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.



**DISSERTATION APPROVAL FORM**  
(Due 30 calendar days prior to the defense)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please see your Doctoral Handbook for details

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The above named candidate has submitted the final copy of this dissertation to me. I have examined it. It has my approval and I recommend that the oral examination be held. I will confer with the Office of Student Services concerning the arrangements for the oral examination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Chairperson Date

The following committee members have examined the final copy of this dissertation. Those members who “concur” recommend that the examination be held and agree to participate as an examiner. Those who “non-concur” feel that in their judgment, this dissertation is not ready for oral examination and recommend postponement of the examination pending acceptable revision(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member Signature Date  Concur  
 Non-concur

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member Signature Date  Concur  
 Non-concur

**All committee members must sign this form.**  
**At least the chair and one other member must concur that the dissertation is adequate for the oral examination.**

## APPENDIX E: INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRESIDER

TO: Presider  
FROM: Valin Jordan, Advanced Degree Program Coordinator  
DATE:  
RE: Presiding at Doctoral Oral Examination

FOR:  
DATE:  
TIME:  
PLACE:

### *Routine for Presiding at Doctoral Oral Examination:*

Thank you for agreeing to preside at the upcoming oral examination. I hope the following will be helpful. I have bracketed instructions. Other statements may be used verbatim.

#### A. Prior to Examination

1. Check set-up of room
  - a. Candidate and chairperson at one end of table, presider at other end, examiners along sides, any observers along walls.
  - b. Put an announcement at each place.

#### B. Opening of Examination Session

1. Open the examination by including:
  - a. This is the final examination for the degree of Doctor of Education for (name of the student).
  - b. The purpose of the examination is to determine:
    - i. Whether the dissertation is acceptable, and
    - ii. Whether the candidate satisfactorily defends it. That decision will be made at the conclusion of the examination by the four examiners. (The chair is present but does not participate in the examination or the decision.)
  - c. Since a decision to accept the dissertation stipulates that all errors of an editorial or typographical nature will be corrected before the final copies of the dissertation are submitted, it is not necessary to question the candidate concerning matters of this sort. The candidate and chairperson will appreciate receiving notes on these errors, either in the text, or separately. Therefore the examiners can address their questions to matters of substance.
  - d. Each examiner will be given an opportunity to introduce questions. Once a question has been introduced, any other examiner who is interested in the

same general area may feel free to enter the questioning at that point. It is hoped that the initial questioning will proceed expeditiously enough that there will be an opportunity for a second round, in which examiners may introduce questions they have been reserving or which may have occurred to them in the course of the examination.

2. Ask the chairperson to present the candidate to the examiners: "Dr. (**Advocate's name**) could you present the candidate to the examiner please?"
3. Permit the candidate to make a brief introductory statement: (Student's name) you now have the opportunity to make a brief introductory statement. I would suggest that it is not necessary to summarize the content of the dissertation. Rather you may tell the examiners anything that may be helpful to them in understanding the research, the candidate's background, or the relationship between the two. Keep statement to about five minutes (optional).

C. Question Period

1. [Call on examiners, in turn.] As is our custom, I usually begin with a faculty member and then alternate between faculty examiners and outside examiners for purposes of examining the candidate. The questioning will begin with (see insert) examining the candidate.

Examiner	1	2
1		
2		
3		
4		

2. [If time, call on examiners again. It is good if questions are completed within 1½ hours from the start, but 1¾ is acceptable.]
3. [Ask if anyone has any final questions.]
4. [Ask if any observers want to ask questions.]

D. Decision Period

1. [Have candidate and all observers leave.]
2. [Consider the acceptability of the dissertation.]
  - i. Possible decisions:

- a. Accept: All errors are corrected, and recommendations which had consensus in the course of the examination are incorporated. The examiners delegate to the chairperson the responsibility for seeing that this is done.
  - b. Accept conditionally: Any examiner who cares to do so may withhold his or her signature until the revised document has been submitted to him or her and is approved.
  - c. Reject conditionally: The examiners establish conditions under which the dissertation may be reconsidered and accepted. This may or may not include another oral.
  - d. Reject: The dissertation is judged totally unacceptable. The candidate has no alternative except to produce a new study, if permitted to continue.
- ii. [Get a motion. Discuss. Vote.] Two negative votes defeat a motion
3. [Consider the acceptability of the defense.]
- i. Possible decisions: Accept or not accept. If not accepted, a second oral is called for.
4. If a dissertation has been accepted, have all examination personnel sign the copies of the acceptance form (some perhaps withholding signature if acceptance is conditional).\* **THE ADVOCATE SHOULD NOT SIGN THE DOCUMENT UNTIL CORRECTIONS/MODIFICATIONS HAVE BEEN REVIEWED BY THEM.**
- E. After Decision is Made
1. While this is going on, bring the candidate in and announce results.
  2. Give candidate copies of final instructions and necessary forms.
  3. Please return presider folder with signature memos to Valin Jordan, Advanced Degree Program Coordinator, at 2136 G Street. Thank you.

## APPENDIX F: DISSERTATION COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The three-member dissertation committee includes a dissertation chair and two additional committee members. Prior to the dissertation defense, two additional examiners join the committee. Out of the five members, one must be outside the candidate's home program and one must be outside GSEHD.

### Three-Member Dissertation Committee

#### DISSERTATION CHAIR (NON-VOTING AT THE TIME OF DEFENSE)

- Hold an earned doctorate.
- Hold a full-time or part-time GSEHD faculty appointment (regular status, non-visiting) including research faculty (appointment outside program area requires approval of candidate's primary advisor).
- Have expertise in candidate's topic area.
- Have an active research agenda as characterized by the departmental personnel guidelines.
- Either (a) have experience serving as a member on no less than two dissertation committees, including the defense of the dissertation, or (b) in the absence of such experience, be mentored by an experienced GSEHD dissertation chair selected by the faculty member's department chair.

#### TWO ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS (VOTING)

- Hold an earned doctorate, or a terminal degree and an academic appointment, for at least one year.
- Have expertise that matches the candidate's topic area and research.
- Among the chair and the two other committee members, at least one will be knowledgeable about the main methodologies to be used in the dissertation research and designated as taking responsibility for guiding the research methodology.
- It is strongly recommended that one member come from outside the candidate's home program (Counseling, C & I, Ed Admin & Policy Studies, HEA, HOL, and SPED).
- Committee member cannot have a relationship with the candidate that might pose a conflict of interest.
- If a member does not hold a GW faculty appointment, he/she must submit a copy of his/her curriculum vita to the Office of Student Services.

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### Two Additional Examiners for the Defense of Dissertation

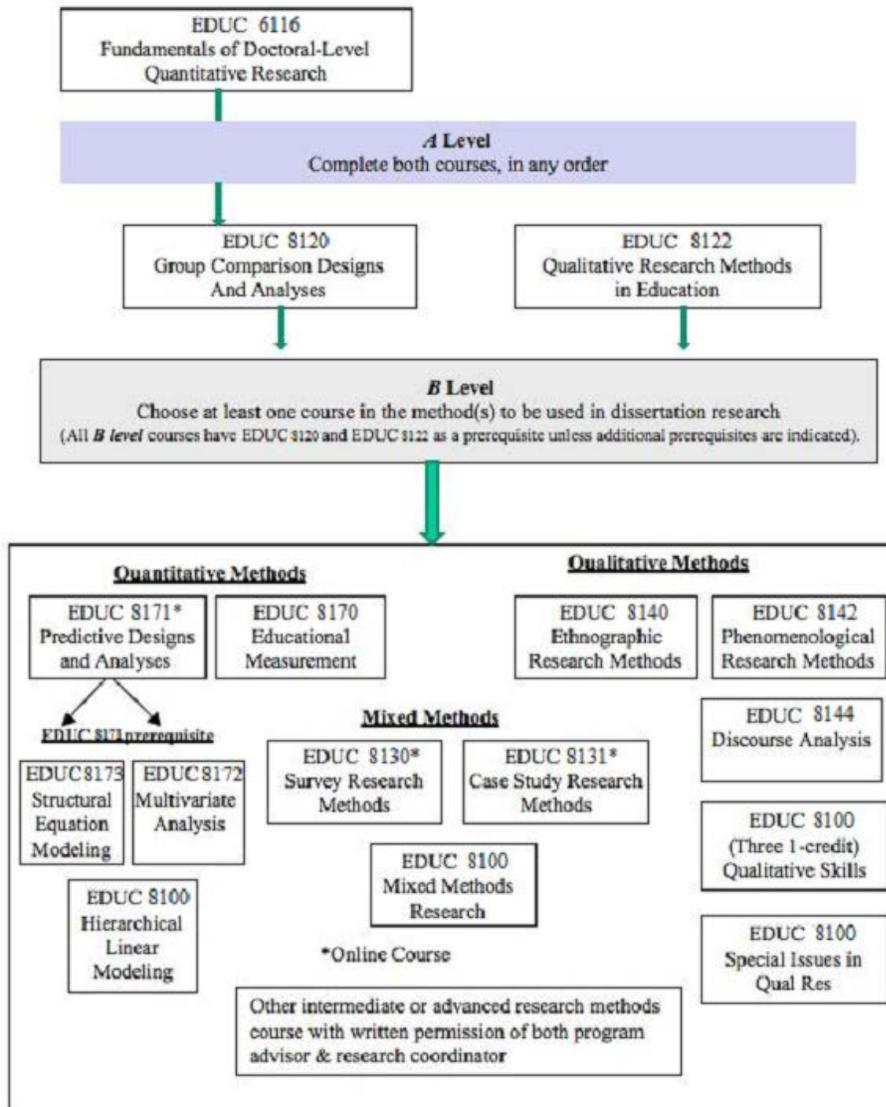
#### TWO ADDITIONAL EXAMINERS FOR THE DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION (VOTING)

**Two additional examiners are selected on the basis of their expertise and interest in the candidate's topic area**

- Hold an earned doctorate for at least one year prior to the defense.
- Have a professional background and experience that is relevant to the candidate's topic area.
- Committee members must not have a relationship with the candidate that might pose a conflict of interest.
- If not a current or former GW regular status or research faculty member, a copy of their curriculum vita must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

Out of the five members, one must be outside the candidate's home program and one must be outside GSEHD.

# APPENDIX G: GSEHD DOCTORAL RESEARCH METHODS SEQUENCE



## APPENDIX H: QUICK GUIDE TO INTERMEDIATE/ ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS COURSES

GSEHD offers a substantial number of “Level B” intermediate and advanced research methods courses. All doctoral students must take at least one of these courses; they may take more with the approval of their advisor.

The intermediate/advanced methods courses are intended to provide students with good preparation in the main methodology to be used in their dissertation research. Students should decide on their research questions and the appropriate method(s) after reviewing the applicable literature and consulting with their advisor. While there may be more than one methodology that is well-suited for answering a given research question, not all are suited for a given question.

The intermediate/advanced methods courses offered are described below. Not all courses will be available at the off-campus sites, and some courses will be available on-campus only once a year or once every two years.

Three of the courses are currently taught only by Web-based distance learning technologies, as indicated below. Students need only basic Web browsing skills to take these courses.

### **Preparatory (Optional)**

*EDUC 6116. Fundamentals of Doctoral-level Quantitative Research.* This course will cover the fundamentals of quantitative research in terms of design, measurement, and data analysis. It is intended for entering doctoral students who do not have prior preparation in quantitative social science research methods or may not feel prepared for EDUC 8120.

### **A Level (Required)**

*EDUC 8120. Group Comparison Designs and Analyses.* Designs and analyses to assess differences for more than two groups when compared on one dependent variable. Fixed, random, and mixed effects ANOVA and ANCOVA models and multiple comparison tests will be discussed. Nonparametric tests are introduced. SPSS or equivalent will be utilized for analyses. Required of all GSEHD doctoral students. Prerequisite: EDUC 6116 or equivalent.

*EDUC 8122. Qualitative Research Methods in Education.* A general introduction to several major qualitative research traditions (e.g., biography, grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenology, and case study). Application of qualitative research design and procedures, including preliminary data collection, analysis, and writing. Popular qualitative data analysis software will be introduced. Required of all GSEHD doctoral students.

### **B Level (1 Required)**

#### **Quantitative Courses**

*EDUC 8170. Educational Measurement.* The course will focus on classical measurement theory and also introduces item response theory, generalizability theory, and factor analysis. Covered topics are related to test development and test validation. Interpretation of test scores and assessment of instrument adequacy will be addressed.

*EDUC 8171. Predictive Design & Analyses.* Techniques used to assess how the variability in independent variables is related to variability in one dependent variable. The course will begin with simple regression, focus on multiple linear regression, and introduce logistic regression. Appropriate research questions, data interpretation, and design will be discussed. SPSS or equivalent will be utilized. Prerequisite: EDUC 8120.

*EDUC 8172. Multivariate Analysis in Education.* Techniques used when the research questions require one to assess the relationships among multiple independent variables and multiple dependent variables. The course will cover multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), discriminant analysis, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). SPSS or equivalent will be utilized. Prerequisite: EDUC 8171.

*EDUC 8173. Structural Equation Modeling.* Multivariate techniques used when research questions call for an assessment of structural (causal) relations among latent (unobserved) variables with multiple observed indicators: observed and latent variable path analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. Latent means analysis and latent growth modeling will be introduced. LISREL or equivalent will be utilized. Prerequisites: EDUC 8171.

#### **Qualitative Courses**

*EDUC 8140. Ethnography Research Methods.* Techniques used to examine systematically the contemporary daily life of a given group in its natural setting. It usually focuses on culture--the recurring patterns of thought and social relations. It involves issues of research design and data collection and analysis. Prerequisite: EDUC 8122.

*EDUC 8142. Phenomenological Research Methods.* Techniques used to delve into and understand subjective perceptions, interpretations, motives, expectations, and imaginations of people. It involves the framing of appropriate research questions, data collection and analysis, and the statement of conclusions. Prerequisite: EDUC 8122.

*EDUC 8144. Discourse Analysis.* Techniques used to examine people's verbal and nonverbal communication to understand identity, beliefs, intentions, relationships, and culture. Framing appropriate research questions, and both data collection and analysis are covered. Prerequisite: EDUC 8122.

**Mixed Methods Courses**

*EDUC 8130. Survey Research Methods.* Techniques used to collect efficiently an array of information from a large number of people through structured interviews, mailed or emailed questionnaires, or Web-based questionnaires. The course begins with defining the research question and design, and covers sampling, survey development, data collection procedures, pretesting, and data handling. Prerequisites: EDUC 8120 and EDUC 8122.

*EDUC 8131. Case Study Research Methods.* Techniques used to examine one or a few complex cases, collecting data from several types of sources and usually by several methods. The course will cover design, data collection, and data analysis/integration. Prerequisite: EDUC 8122.

## APPENDIX I: GSEHD Style Manual: Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of the guidelines is to help students prepare master's theses and doctoral dissertations. The guidelines are designed to produce documents that are uniform in style, but they also allow for the particular requirements of the various disciplines.

You are required to use a recognized style format such as the American Psychological Association style (preferred) for the dissertation or thesis. The GSEHD Doctoral Student Handbook contains guidelines that describe the chapters in the dissertation applicable to both quantitative and qualitative research.

This guide is divided into 5 sections: (1) organization of the manuscript; (2) preliminary pages; (3) text: format and appearance; (4) references; and (5) final manuscript. In addition, sample pages, helpful links, and sources are provided.

## **Organization of the Manuscript**

### Arrangement of Pages

1. Title page (no page #)
2. Certification Page (for doctoral dissertations only)
3. Copyright page (optional)
4. Dedication page (optional)
5. Acknowledgment page (optional)
6. Abstract of the Dissertation
7. Table of Contents
8. List of Figures (if used)
9. List of Charts and Tables (if used)
10. Text (5 chapters)
11. References
12. Appendices

## **Preliminary Pages**

### The Title Page

The first line of the title should begin one inch from the top of the page. This page includes the date of your degree clearance (January 31 for fall, date of Commencement for spring and August 31<sup>st</sup> for summer.) The name of your Dissertation Director and their academic titles should also be included on the title page. Please refer to the University Bulletin or the GW Directory for exact titles. Do not use suffixes such as Ph.D. or Ed.D. Words are underlined (to indicate italics) in the title only when they themselves are titles or when they are scientific terms that are customarily underlined (see Sample A for sample title page).

### The Certification Page

This page certifies that the dissertation submitted electronically is the final version approved by the faculty. Page numbering should start on this page as ii. The dissertation title should reflect the same style used on the title page. The names of your three member proposal research committee and their academic titles should be included on the certification page. Do not use suffixes such as Ph.D. or Ed.D (see Sample B for sample certification page).

### The Copyright Page

The candidate may choose to copyright the dissertation. Information regarding copyright protection and application for copyright may be obtained from the U.S. Copyright Office, (202) 707-3000. As the author of a thesis or dissertation, you may be interested to know that you own the copyright to your work just by virtue of being its author. Most authors will not find themselves in a situation in which someone infringes on or violates the copyright by using it without providing proper credit. If you are concerned that this may happen, however, it might be worthwhile to pay the extra fee in order to register your copyright. Here is what registering the copyright accomplishes:

1. It is a prerequisite for filing an infringement action against someone in court and serves as prima facie evidence of copyright validity.
2. A copyright owner can recover statutory damages and attorney's fees only if the work is registered prior to infringement or within three months of publication.
3. If the infringement occurred prior to registration, the copyright owner can still file an action, but it is limited to actual damages and injunctive relief (the ability to stop the infringement). In other words, you could register the copyright after you find out about the infringement and still take action against the violator.
4. By paying the registration fee to ProQuest, you are paying ProQuest to register the copyright on your behalf. The fee for registration is \$55.00.
5. For further information about the copyright policy visit the website of the Office of the Vice President for Research: <http://www.gwu.edu/~research/>

### The Dedication Page

This page provides the student with an opportunity to give a special tribute to persons, organizations, or others that provided encouragement during the student's academic career. If such a page is used, the word "Dedication" should be centered without punctuation two inches from the top of the page. Text should be double spaced.

### The Acknowledgments Page

An acknowledgments page in which the student expresses recognition of and appreciation for any special assistance is optional, but is customarily included. The acknowledgments page is obligatory if special permission has been granted to use published or unpublished material. If such a page is used, the word "Acknowledgments" should be centered without punctuation one inch from the top of the page. Text should be double spaced.

### The Abstract

The abstract consists of an essay-style summary of the thesis or dissertation, a statement of the experiment or problem, the procedure followed, the results, and the conclusion. The abstract of doctoral dissertations should follow scrupulously the instructions given here since it will be published in Dissertation Abstracts without revision or editing. The maximum length for a dissertation abstract is 350 words. In the bound copy it serves the purpose of a summary, to give potential readers an overview of the contents. (See Samples C, D, and E for sample abstracts). The abstract should begin with the words "Abstract of Dissertation" centered one inch below the top of the page. The text of the abstract is double-spaced throughout.

### Table of Contents/Tables/Figures

This page should be headed "Table of Contents," with the heading centered without punctuation one inch from the top of the page. The titles of chapters or parts or sections, must be listed and worded exactly as they appear in the body of the manuscript. The page number for each part is listed flush against the right margin and below the heading "page." Any space between the last word of a section title and the page number should be filled with spaced periods. A separate list of tables and list of figures follow the table of contents. The format for the "List of Tables" and the "List of Figures" is the same as that for the table of contents.

## **The Text: Format and Appearance**

### The Text

The text should be double-spaced, but long tables, long quotations (defined as 40 words or as stipulated within the student's discipline and applied consistently), footnotes and multiline captions should be single-spaced (see sample page F for sample text page). The type size should be 12 points. The pages of the text should be numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals from the first page of the text through the references.

### Margins

The following minimum margins should be observed: top and bottom margins = 1 inch; left and right margin = 1.25 inches. The first page of each chapter or section should have a top margin of 1 inch. All tables and figures should conform to this margin requirement. Photographic reduction, where necessary, is acceptable and must be made on the same quality paper as the rest of the manuscript.

### Number Placement and Sequence

Preliminary pages (title page, certification page, table of contents, list of tables, etc.) are numbered in lowercase Roman numerals (e.g., ii, iii, iv, etc.). The title page is counted as the first page, but does not carry a number. The copyright page, if used, is numbered. All text pages following the preliminary pages should be numbered with Arabic numerals beginning with "1" on the first page of text and continuing to the end of the thesis/dissertation. All text pages, illustrations, and legends must be numbered. The text page numbers should be placed at the bottom center of the page, one inch from the bottom so that the number rests on the bottom margin.

### Tables and Figures

The word "table" designates tabulated numerical data or text used in the body of the thesis or dissertation and in the appendices. The word "figure" designates all other nonverbal material such as illustrations, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, drawings, and diagrams. All tables and figures must be of reproducible quality. They should be inserted as near as possible to the portion of the text that they illustrate. Two or more small tables or figures may be grouped on a single page. The table or figure, including the captions, is placed on the page inside the prescribed margins. Text and tables or figures may be combined on the same page as long as the layout is professional and looks clear. When text is used on the same page, it should be separated from the table or figure by a triple space. Tables and figures are numbered in separate series. Each table and figure, including any in the appendix, must be numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals. The captions for figures and tables must be identical with those used in the list of tables and the list of figures in the preliminary pages.

A table caption is placed at the top of the table, whereas a figure caption is placed below the figure. Full-page tables and figures are numbered in the same format as the text. Computer-generated graphs should be on the same quality paper used in the rest of the thesis or dissertation. Graphs and line drawings must be of professional appearance.

## **References**

### Reference Materials

The reference section should begin with a cover sheet headed "References." This page is counted and numbered. The heading should be 1 inch down from the top, centered, and without punctuation.

### Appendix

An appendix contains supplementary information (discussions too extensive for notes; translations) that would interrupt the main text of the thesis or dissertation. A single appendix may simply be titled "Appendix" with a subtitle, both centered. If the appended material consists of multiple categories, each category should have a separate appendix. Appendices should be counted and numbered in the pagination. All material must fall within standard margins. If necessary, photo reduction may be used.

### Electronic Reference Format

The American Psychological Association has developed electronic reference formats and includes: citing electronic mail communications; citing a web site; citing specific documents on a web site; citing articles and abstracts from electronic databases; and web citations and quotations in text (<http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html>). All references begin with the same information that would be provided for printed sources. If no publication date is available for a document, use "n.d" (stands for "no date") in its place. The Web information is then placed in a retrieval statement at the end of the reference.

## **The Final Manuscript**

### Submitting Final Copies

As of spring 2008, GW requires all dissertations to be submitted electronically. The GW ETD website (<http://library.gwu.edu/etds/>) will guide you through the process of uploading your document into a PDF file and electronically submitting it to ProQuest and Gelman Library.

ProQuest will assess the following fees: \$0 for traditional publishing, \$95 for open access publishing. If you want to ProQuest to file for copyright of your dissertation on your behalf, there will be an additional \$55 fee.

Students graduating in the fall semester must submit their dissertation to the GW ProQuest ETD website and have it approved for submission to ProQuest and complete all other requirements for graduation by January 15th. To graduate in the spring, the deadline is April 1st. To graduate in summer, the deadline is August 15.

Note: Normally students have 30 calendar days to submit their dissertations and supporting documents after the defense. In the spring semester, if you defend your dissertation after March 1<sup>st</sup>, you will have less than 30 days to make revisions and upload your dissertation.

## **Helpful Links**

Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Student Services Resource Page

<http://gsehd.gwu.edu/resources>

APA-Style Helper (software)- <http://www.apa.org/pubs/software/>

PhinishedD: ABD Discussion and Support Group- [www.phinished.org](http://www.phinished.org)

Advice on Research and Writing- [www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/user/mleone/web/how-to.html](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/user/mleone/web/how-to.html)

Association for Support of Graduate Students- [www.asgs.org](http://www.asgs.org)

Electronic Reference Formats Recommended by the American Psychological Association-  
[www.apa.org/journals/webref.html](http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html)

### **Sources Consulted**

George Mason University- Dissertation and Thesis Web Guide

The George Washington University - Columbian School of Arts & Sciences

The George Washington University - The Graduate School of Education and Human Development

[Doctoral Student Handbook](#)

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)

Electronic Reference Formats Recommended by the American Psychological Association-  
[www.apa.org/journals/webref.html](http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html)

*Sample A: Title Page*

Top Margin 1"

***School-Based Management in Prince William County***

By Mary Smith

B.S., Sociology, May 1980, The University of Florida  
M.Ed., Secondary Education, May 1982, The American University

A Dissertation Submitted to

The Faculty of  
The Graduate School of Education and Human Development  
of The George Washington University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Education

Date of Graduation

Dissertation directed by

John Jones  
Professor of Special Education

*Sample B: Certification Page*

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development of The George Washington University certifies that [student's full name] has passed the Final Examination for the degree of [Doctor of Education or Doctor of Philosophy] as of [date of dissertation defense]. This is the final and approved form of the dissertation.

[Title of the dissertation in initial caps and small letters]

[Student's name]

Dissertation Research Committee

[dissertation director's full name, academic title, and the label  
Dissertation Director-**USE Graduate Bulletin for correct listing**]

[if a co-director: his/her full name, title, and the label Co-Director after both co-directors]

[committee member's full name, title, Committee Member]

[committee member's full name, title, Committee Member]

Sample C: Abstract

Abstract of Dissertation

The Influence of Group Guidance on the Self-Esteem,  
Acceptance of Disability, and Academic Achievement  
of Children with Learning Disabilities

This study was designed to determine whether or not differences existed between pre- and post-treatment with acceptance of learning disability scores, self-esteem scores, and academic achievement scores for student with learning disabilities. The study also examined the interrelationships among the three sets of post scores. The study population included children with learning disabilities in middle childhood in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

The study used the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT) to determine the specific level of academic achievement. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI), Form B, was utilized to assess the level of self-esteem. The Acceptance of Learning Disability Scales (ALDS) was used to assess levels of self-acceptance of learning disability and the impact of counseling. The PIAT, the SEI, and the ALDS were administered to 28 children between the ages of seven and twelve in special class placements. To assess the impact of counseling, the 28 subjects were administered group guidance intervention. The ALDS and the SEI were administered after group counseling. The dependent t-test and Pearson correlations were used to test the hypotheses. The Fmax test was used for determining homogeneity of variance among pre- and post-treatment scores for each of the dependent variables. Some decreases in variance were significant ( $p < .05$ ).

The study's results provided evidence that the subjects scored significantly higher in post-treatment than in pretreatment with respect to acceptance of learning disability, self-esteem, and academic achievement. These results support the conclusion that group counseling can influence

these areas. Examination of the correlations among the dependent variables indicated a negative, significant relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement, which was unexpected. It may be that the Coopersmith SEI is inappropriate for this population, since these subjects tend to respond idealistically on this measure.

Sample D: Abstract

Abstract of Dissertation

A Study of the Criteria Used in Evaluating Adjunct Faculty  
Within the Virginia Community College System

This study identified criteria and methods used to evaluate part-time faculty for making academic personnel decisions. The study also ranked the most effective criteria and identified the best methods for measuring part-time faculty performance.

Study data was collected by asking division chair people about their judgments on the following subjects: quality of teaching performance, sources of evaluation data, use of systematic evaluation forms, satisfaction with current policies and practices, and use of different criteria for part-time and full-time faculty. Using the Delphi technique, two questionnaires were administered to the division chair people at each of the 23 community colleges in the Virginia community college system.

The study found that most respondents believed they were making sound academic decisions without the benefit of established evaluations policies or procedures. Data analysis also identified critical criteria for evaluating part-time faculty performance, classroom teaching, curriculum course development, professional development, personal attributes, and consideration of others. Primary sources of information used in the community college system included systematic student ratings, students' opinions, and administrators' evaluations. Quality teaching was considered most important by 99.7% of the respondents when evaluating classroom policies and procedures (or lack thereof) for evaluating part-time faculty. Respondents indicated that different criteria and practices should be used for evaluating part-time and full-time faculty.

Sample E: Abstract

Abstract of Dissertation

An Examination of the Impact of a Mentoring Program  
on Inner City, Seventh-Grade, Minority Students'  
Attitudes Toward Learning and Other Selected Variables

This study examined the impact of the mentoring programs, Efficacy D.C. on inner city, seventh-grade minority students' school attendance patterns, self-esteem, academic achievement, attitudes toward learning, and perceptions of the program.

The study population consisted of 126 seventh-grade students during the school 1991-1992 at an inner city public junior high school in the District of Columbia. All of them were African-American males and females 12-14 years old. Students were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. The experimental group was administered Efficacy D.C. for twelve weeks. All students were administered pretests and posttests in order to assess their levels of self-esteem and attitudes toward learning. All students' school records were reviewed to collect data relevant to school attendance patterns and academic achievement. A sample population randomly selected from the experimental group was interviewed to ascertain their perceptions of the program. Descriptive statistics, t-test, and chi square were used to analyze the data.

Statistically significant study findings showed that participants in Efficacy D.C. (the experimental group) had higher grade point averages; higher self-esteem in families; higher total verbal scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills; and better attitudes toward learning, class-work, and school.

Sample F: Text Page  
Top Margin 1"

Chapter Headings

TEXT

Left margin  
1.25"

Right  
Margin  
1.25"

Bottom Margin 1"