Southwestern College

Doctor of Education Program

Educational Leadership

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Dissertation Handbook

Fifth Edition

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Winfield, Kansas
2015-2016

Southwestern College
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership
Dissertation Handbook

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

Southwestern College Educator Preparation Program Conceptual Framework

The Southwestern College Educator Preparation Program Conceptual Framework consists of five constructs with three recurring components. Indicators for each construct and component detail the expectations of educators prepared in Southwestern College's undergraduate and graduate education programs.

❖ **Content and pedagogy:** The educator has knowledge, skills, and dispositions in content and pedagogy that continuously grow and evolve over time.

❖ **Instruction and Assessment:** The educator has knowledge, skills and dispositions to facilitate learning for students.

❖ **Collaboration:** The educator has knowledge, skills and dispositions to interact collaboratively with students, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community members.

❖ **Leadership:** The educator has the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to act as an instructional leader, data analyst, community relations officer and change agent.

❖ **Reflection and Growth:** The educator has knowledge, skills, and dispositions to use evidence, reflection, and feedback to continually evaluate his/her practice, the effects of his/her choices and actions on others and adapt practice to meet the needs of each learner.

The Purpose of the Dissertation Handbook

The purpose of the dissertation handbook is to articulate for doctoral students the

processes and procedures of writing a dissertation in the field of Education at Southwestern College. This handbook includes formatting and procedural requirements for completing the dissertation. All college policies apply to this process.

Table of Contents

Dissertation Purpose, Scope, and Quality

Purpose of the Dissertation

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

Epistemological and ethnographic methods as well as mixed methodologies underscore approaches available for conducting the dissertation study. Within the study, the doctoral student demonstrates capability in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions requisite to original, independent research.

The development of the dissertation will concentrate efforts to:

1) identify and formulate questions that highlight a researchable problem and designing a plan to do so;
2) conduct a thorough investigation of the literature related to the problem and research questions by analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating the implications of the existing body of knowledge relative to the proposed study;
3) bring to fruition a methodological approach to gather relevant data, information, and/or historical information;
4) analyze the evidence or substantiation of the legitimacy and authenticity of historical information and its sources; and,
5) present the study's findings as guidelines or products, analyze the most important evidence collected, and state implications for further research and professional service.

Through guidance from the dissertation committee chairperson and members of the dissertation committee, students are expected to plan, carry out, and account for their research at a scholarly level. The student is expected to use the most current research that is not older than ten years. Exceptions would be the seminal research of theorists.

The dissertation is grounded through an examination of beliefs and formal knowledge gained through the program of study. The purpose for the dissertation is to place the researcher in the position of a steward to work with educators, policymakers, legislators, and the public enabling a raised level of analysis and understanding about education (Richardson, 2006).

Dissertation Scope

Butin (2010) stated that "a dissertation is an in-depth and rigorous examination of a particular issue that provides new knowledge and/or perspectives and, as such, contributes to ongoing scholarship and discussion around that issue" (p. 10).

Dissertation Quality

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

There is a clear relationship to or the development of a theory or model, and the research question(s) reflect sound conceptualization. Within the body of the dissertation, a well-organized, thoughtful review of the theoretical, historical, and research literature establishes and extends the intellectual bases for the appropriate, rigorous, and internally consistent research design and methodology. Coherence between the design and the purpose statement or hypotheses is logical and focused. The data findings and results contribute meaningfully to a cogent interpretation solidifying theory, policy, practice, and further research. Across all elements of the dissertation there is evidence of critical thinking. The dissertation will demonstrate the writer's command of the grammar and mechanics of standard written English. The use of APA style formatting (6th ed) is required. The doctoral student is expected to have full knowledge and command of APA elements.

Dissertation Development

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

Planning and Resources

The progression through the program includes the careful development of the program of study with the aid of the doctoral advisor. Each student accepted into the program is assigned to an advisor. In addition to a program advisor, the student will need to select a dissertation chair when entering EDUC 904, Dissertation Writing III. Once the student selects a dissertation chair, feedback on the dissertation process shifts to that faculty member when working on the dissertation.

Dissertation Courses

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

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

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

> **904 Dissertation Writing III.** In this course candidates work with their chair to revise and finalize the sections of the dissertation developed in EDUC 901 and 902: the introduction and significance section, the literature review, and research design. At the completion of the first three chapters and with the recommendation of the chair, students select their committee members. Candidates collaborate with the chair preparing their proposal for defense and submit their proposal to the committee members for review. Once a successful proposal defense is completed, students present their study to the IRB Board for approval and the study is conducted. A draft is written for the data collection, analysis, and conclusion sections. *Candidates must pass the course with a grade of B or higher and may repeat the course for credit. Prerequisite: EDUC 902 with a grade of B or higher.* Credit 3 hours.

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

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

Probation/Suspension
Academic Probation. When the semester grade point average falls below 2.0, or the cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0, a student is placed on academic probation and will receive notification from the academic dean's office. Any student placed on academic probation will be evaluated by the associate academic vice president for advising and student success, who will work with the student to devise a contractual plan of improvement. This plan will include monitoring by the associate academic vice president for advising and student success and may include restriction to 13 credit hours and/or enrollment in Academic Mentoring (ESKL 080). Any student placed on academic probation is subject to the conditions prescribed by the Academic Affairs Committee.
Academic Suspension. Students whose semester grade point average is below 2.0 for two consecutive semesters regardless of whether both were in residence at Southwestern College and whose cumulative grade point average is below 2.0 are regarded as not making adequate progress toward the degree and therefore will be suspended from the college. Additionally, students who complete a semester with an "F" average will be suspended. Any student who is suspended under this policy has a right to an appeal for readmission following at least one full semester's absence (fall, spring, or summer) from enrollment at Southwestern College. A request for appeal should be made by the student in writing and must be presented to the academic dean by the date specified in the notification letter. Supporting material is required to be submitted by the student prior to the appeals hearing, and should include but is not limited to letters of support from faculty and/or staff and transcripts from subsequent college coursework. The appeal will be heard by the Academic Affairs Committee, and the committee's decision shall be final.

THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The Committee Chairperson

Students are encouraged to talk with their advisor and other program faculty about the selection of a chair for the dissertation committee. The chairperson should be chosen at the end of the term in which the student is enrolled in EDUC 902, Dissertation Writing II and prior to entering EDUC 904, Dissertation Writing III. Care should be taken in selecting a dissertation chairperson. The chair should be selected based on his or her ability to effectively supervise and guide the dissertation process. Typically, the dissertation chair has expertise in the area of research, content area, and/or methodology used in the dissertation. A working relationship is needed to ensure a common understanding and communication processes are developed so they are mutually acceptable. Every student and each chairperson has multiple responsibilities and

must work collaboratively in developing an understanding of the dissertation writing process, deadlines, reviews of written materials, and areas of expertise that are all essential characteristics in selecting a dissertation committee. All doctoral committees at SC must be chaired by an education faculty member who has the appropriate graduate faculty status to chair a doctoral committee.

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

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

Committee Members

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

The selection of committee members includes guidance from the chair. The committee members are selected during the EDUC 904, Dissertation Writing III course. Often, the committee offers collective interest in the topic and provides guidance through professional interests and expertise. For ensuring support and expertise, the committee should have a member who is familiar with the proposed methodology, and other members offer writing support and expertise, and/or ability to support the student. All committee members must hold an earned doctorate from a regionally accredited university.

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

Approval of the Dissertation Committee

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

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

Dissertation Committee Work

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

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

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

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

<center>**The Dissertation Process**</center>

The Dissertation Proposal

<center>*Submit Form 2,* Approval of Dissertation Proposal</center>

Students enrolled in Dissertation Writing III (EDUC 904) prepare a formal research proposal. A draft of the proposal is developed during EDUC 901 and EDUC 902. The chair provides formal

guidance in the completion of Chapters One, Two, and Three following the Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Presentation Rubric (Appendix E).

Proposal content and format. The proposal generally parallels chapters one to three of the final dissertation format. However, the specific format and length of an individual proposal is negotiated with the dissertation chair, the committee, and the Dean of Education. The dissertation proposal conforms to the requirements of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (American Psychological Association 6th ed., 2010), as well as the Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Presentation Rubric (Appendix E) where 3s and 4s are evident in each section thereby granting Advanced to Candidacy.

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

If a student is not able to remain continuously enrolled and/or continuous progress is not being made, the advisor counsels with the student to determine a recommendation to the Dean of Education regarding advancement in the program or discontinuation of the program. Course progressions are noted in the Dissertation Writing Course Progressions (Appendix A).

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

The Proposal Defense

The primary purpose of the proposal defense is for the committee to approve the guiding research question(s), the depth of the literature review supporting the proposed research, and the data collection and analysis strategies to be used by the student in completing the dissertation. **Prior to conducting the proposal meeting, the dissertation chair and committee members must indicate to the campus community that the proposal is ready for defense. The student is responsible for contacting committee members to schedule the proposal defense meeting.** The intent of proposal defense presentation is to provide the final review of the research proposal prior to the IRB submission and approval, and prior to the collection or mining of data. Successful completion of the dissertation proposal defense will be formalized through a form signed by the dissertation chair, committee members, and Dean of Education (Form 2, Approval of Dissertation Proposal).

Proposal Defense Meeting

The Proposal Defense Meeting is a private meeting of the student and the dissertation committee. It may occur in person or via appropriate Internet meeting software that includes audio and visual representations of the materials prepared for the defense. Presentation protocol and elements to discuss are found in Appendix D. In addition, the presence of all committee members and the student through webcams is expected providing there is adequate bandwidth to support the use of webcams. At minimum, the student will present and include her/his presence in the Proposal Defense Meeting via a webcam, audio such as a conference call, and the presentation of materials through Internet meeting software. The dissertation chair reviews the procedures to be following during the meeting and invites the student to give a personal background statement and tell of the interest in the topic. The student continues with a summary of the proposal in a 15 minute presentation (Appendix D). The dissertation chair then invites the committee members to question the student. All committee members must be confident the student possesses the essential content knowledge and research skills to collect, analyze, and interpret the data to be collected or analyzed from an existing database. At the conclusion of this discussion, the student is excused so that the committee may deliberate privately. Following those discussions the student is invited back into the meeting and the committee's decision is shared with the student.

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

The Institutional Review Board Proposal

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

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

Before approval of the dissertation proposal, IRB forms, including any instruments—surveys, measures, or interview protocols, letters of consent and so on —must be approved by the full dissertation committee before the proposal is submitted to the Institutional Review Board.

Dissertation proposals must be formally approved by the Institutional Review Board before data-gathering may begin. No research proposal is exempt from IRB review.

Data Collection and Analysis

Permissions

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

Data Collection

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

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

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

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

With the approval of the chair, outside help may be employed to enter and analyze data. However, the student must have examined the raw data and must work closely with the data entry person to be certain any unclear responses are appropriately handled within the framework

of the data collection and inputting processes approved by the committee. Students may consult a statistician for suggestions on choice of statistics, interpretation of findings, and report formats. However, students must choose and apply statistical or other analytic procedures to their data, explain why they have selected those procedures rather than others, and authoritatively interpret the results. The student will be fully responsible at the defense to interpret all statistical analyses.

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

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

The Oral Defense

Timing of the Oral Defense

The oral defense occurs after the entire committee has indicated by their signatures that the dissertation is ready for defense. This agreement rarely occurs before each committee member has read multiple drafts and provided feedback. The defense occurs in the presence of the student and committee members. In rare instances where a committee member is unable to attend in person, the member may connect via technology to the dissertation defense.

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

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

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

The defense must be held on a SC campus, and the Dean of Education must be notified of the date and location of the defense at least two weeks in advance so that invitations may be sent to all college faculty members. The dissertation defense is a public presentation. A defense not on

the main SC campus must be electronically connected to the main campus for faculty who want to observe the defense.

Purpose of the Oral Defense

The purposes of the oral defense are as follows:

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

The Oral Defense Meeting

The expectation is that the dissertation is in the best possible form before defense. The student's defense is held on campus and is open to all college faculty members as well as to other interested persons with the approval of the dissertation chair. At the beginning of the meeting, the dissertation chair introduces the student and the members of the committee. The dissertation chair describes the procedures for the meeting.

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

Approval of the Defense and Approval of the Dissertation

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

Failure of the defense occurs only when a student does not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the content area and/or research methodology to competently interpret and communicate his/her

findings. Should a student fail the defense, he or she must work with the dissertation chair to reschedule another defense.

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

Committee members sign three copies the Dissertation Defense Approval form, and a copy of the form is kept in the student's file. The originals are placed after the title page in the copies of the dissertation to be printed and distributed.

The final form of the dissertation is approved by the full committee, the dissertation chair, the Dean of Education, and after the dissertation review committee has accepted the dissertation as meeting APA and college standards.

<div align="center">**The Format of the Dissertation**</div>

Preparing the Document

Order of the document. The dissertation should contain the following elements in this order:
- Title Page
- Copyright Page
- Signature Page
- Abstract
- Dedication (optional)
- Acknowledgements (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (if applicable)
- List of Figures (if applicable)
- List of Appendices
- Preface (optional)
- Manuscript of Chapters
- References
- Appendices (each with its own title page and labeled with a capital letter
(e.g., Appendix A)

Style manual. The dissertation should be written according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition*. Where the college requirements differ from APA requirements, the college requirements are to be followed.

Font, spacing, margins, and pagination. A 12-point font size, Times New Roman font should be used throughout the dissertation in a style that is identified as acceptable by the APA manual. In figures and tables, a smaller font size may be used, but in no instance should the font size be less than eight. Figures should use a sans-serif type font such as Arial.

All text should be double-spaced with the exception of the reference list which should be single-spaced within each entry and double-spaced between entries. Printing may appear on only one side of each page.

All pages of the dissertation must observe the following uniform margins:

1.5 inch left-hand margins (must be wide for binding requirements) and 1 inch right-hand margins

Top margins: 2 inches for the Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, Dedication, Acknowledgements, Dedication, Abstract, first page of each chapter, and references; All other pages should have a 1 inch top margin.

Bottom margins: 1 inch throughout

Page numbers appear in the middle of each page at the bottom margin (in a footer) beginning with the Table of Contents. In the front matter, each page after the title page counts. The signature page is counted but does not show a page number. Pagination for front matter is in small Roman numerals; all other pages use Arabic numerals that begin on the first page of chapter one and continue through the appendices. Each appendix has its own title page that counts as a page.

No headers (and thus no running head) are used in a dissertation.

Chapter titles. The chapter and number appear two inches from the top of the page with the chapter title double-spaced below and follow Level 1 formatting (see below).

APA heading levels. SC allows three levels of headings (see *APA 6th* p. 62, section 3.03). Chapter titles start each chapter and are formatted Level 1. Subheadings within chapters are Level 2 and Level 3.

APA Headings	
Level	Format
1	**Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings**
2	**Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**
3	**Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period.**

For example, in a scientific report following APA style, a report contains three sections: Method, Results, and Discussion. Each of these sections start with level 1 headings:

Methods (Level 1)

Site of Study (Level 2)

Participant Population (Level 2)

Teachers. (Level 3)

Students. (Level 3)

Results (Level 1)

Spatial Ability (Level 2)

Test one. (Level 3)

Test two. (Level 3)

Kinesthetic Ability (Level 2)

Note: Level 3 is never included in the table of contents (TOC). Table of contents only includes chapter number and title and Levels 1 and 2.

Indention and justification. All paragraphs are indented one-half inch. The list of references utilizes a one-half inch hanging indent for each reference listed. All copy is to be left justified.

Tables and figures. Tables consist of text or data, while figures contain visual material such as diagrams, graphs, or photographs. Tables are placed at the first opportunity after they have been mentioned in the text. Tables that are smaller than a full page should appear at the top or bottom of a page and not in the middle of text. A table is never split between two pages unless it is too large for one page. Tables do not appear prior to their reference in the body of the text. Tables should be used only to help clarify and illustrate the material being presented in text format. They should never be used as a substitute for the narrative. Each table should be labeled (e.g. Table 2.1, Table 2.2). Figures should follow the same sequence and be placed as noted using APA standards and labeled as such.

Quotations. Quotations are of two types.

Short quotes. Quotations of fewer than 40 words should be incorporated into text and enclosed by double quotation marks. See *APA 6th*, p. 91.

Long quotes: Block quotes of 40 or more words should be displayed in single space with double space before and after with no quotation marks. See *APA 6th*, p. 92.

Copyright page and signature page. Signatures must be in black ink. The dissertation paper copy to be given to the library as their copy and the one copy for the Education Division must include original signature pages. Committee members' signatures on the signature page indicate that the final copy of the dissertation has been fully approved by each committee member. The copyright page precedes the signature page. The information should be centered and three-fourths of the distance down the page. See *APA 6th*, pp. 19-20.

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Abstract. An abstract between 150-200 words must be included on a separate page. The abstract is a critical element of the dissertation, for it is that part of the document that is likely to be most widely read. The abstract is page number iii. Two inches from the top of the page, center and type the following lines of information, inserting a triple space before the double-spaced abstract.

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

Corrections and paper quality. Each page of the dissertation is to be free of errors. It is not permitted to use correction fluid or correction tape. All final copies for the university library, departments, and faculty are to be submitted on acid-free 20-lb. weight paper with a minimum of 25% cotton or rag content and a shelf life of 100 years.

SUBMITTING THE FINAL COPY

Revisions and Corrections

Following the defense, the student makes necessary modifications in the written dissertation as requested by the committee. These modifications are approved by the dissertation chair and any other member of the committee who wishes to review them. This process should occur promptly, since several steps remain before the student has completed the dissertation process.

Check for APA format. The final corrected copy is then submitted to a technical reader, who checks the dissertation for compliance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and college guidelines. Students are responsible for making all technical corrections required by the reader and for paying appropriate fees for the services of the reader.

Binding. Southwestern College will not be responsible for binding. Binding will be the responsibility of the student.

Submission to the college. Two electronic copies with original signatures are required: one for the Dean of Education and one for the dissertation chair. Students may order as many personal copies as they desire. Additional original signature pages are needed to meet the individual copies desired by the student.

Submission to ProQuest/UMI

Publication submission. Students wishing to submit their dissertation to ProQuest for publication submission, will complete the Dissertation Publication Submission form and submit to the Dean of Education. The dissertation will be reviewed by a committee for publication submission approval (Appendix F). Steps for publication submission to ProQuest are explained on the form.

Academic Integrity Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Policies for Dealing with Academic Dishonesty

The instructor shall determine if the infraction is intentional or unintentional. Any violation of the policy not under the supervision of a faculty member will be handled by recommendation of the Dean of Education to the Academic Affairs Committee. On the first offense, violations of the academic integrity policy will result in:

1. A reprimand (written or verbal) for unintentional violations
2. A zero for the assignment (paper, exam or project) for intentional or flagrant violations

Unintentional infractions may be reported to the academic dean at the discretion of the faculty member. All infractions deemed by the faculty member to be intentional or flagrant must be reported in writing to the academic dean; the student will also be notified verbally or in writing. The Dean of Education shall keep a record of reported infractions and sanctions.

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

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Copyright Permissions

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

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

Time Limit for Degree Completion

Doctoral students are permitted 10 years from the date of initial enrollment to complete all requirements for the Ed.D. degree. Extensions beyond this deadline due to unusual circumstances may be granted at the discretion of the Dean of Education and the Provost. Students needing an extension must present their request in writing, stating the reasons for the

extension and the expected date of degree completion. The dissertation chair must support such a request in order for it to be considered.

Leaves of Absence

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

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

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

Continuous Enrollment

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

GRADUATION AND BEYOND

The Graduation Ceremony

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

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

Fall Graduation – November 1 deadline.
Spring Graduation – April 1 deadline.
Summer Graduation – July 1 deadline.

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

Degree Posting

The student's degree is not posted until the end of the term in which the final copies of the completed dissertation have been accepted and filed with the college library and with ProQuest/UMI. All fees must be paid before the degree will be posted.

Publications and Presentations

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

Students who publish aspects of their dissertation should appropriately acknowledge assistance from their committee. In particular, the contribution of the dissertation chair may be acknowledged through joint authorship of articles or presentations based on the dissertation. As noted in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2010), the student is always listed as the first author.

References

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association (APA Manual).

Butin, D. W. (2010). *The education dissertation: A guide for practitioner scholars.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications

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Richardson,   (2006)…….

Appendix A

Dissertation Writing Course Progressions

EDUC 901 Accomplishments

	No Progress	Some Progress	Completed
Annotated Bibliography established for relevance, similarity, and credibility (min 60)			
Research focus/topic established			
Problem Statement developed			
Significance of the Study noted			
Research process & criteria established			
Conceptual framework established			
Theoretical framework established			
Alternative theory established			
Topical outline created that traces the argument (begins with an assertion, substantiated with statistics, and delimited to a review of related and relevant areas of the literature)			
Lit Review drafted—systematic analysis and synthesis of the literature reviewed, discusses how the studies related to, help define, or advance the theory, ends with a summary, implications and/or discussions for further research and ends with a conclusion that relates back to the introduction			
Lit Review refined			
Purpose & Research questions drafted both qualitative and quantitative formats			
APA formatting followed with no errors			

EDUC 902 Accomplishments

	No Progress	Some Progress	Completed
Chapter 1 and 3 components developed			
Chapter 1—Intro and Background of the study developed			

Chapter 3 developed: design and methodology w/ purpose and research questions established/hypotheses written as needed			
Research completed on strategies for improving validity			
Research conducted & knowledgeable on data analysis techniques			
Considered participants for study—sampling, population, context of the study			
Alignment with rubric (at least all 3s for Chapters 1, 2, and 3)			
APA formatting followed with no errors			
Identify Dissertation Chair when Sound Structure of Chapters 1-2-3 have been developed based on rubric			
Annotated Bibliography continued based on relevance, similarity, and credibility to include validity, design, methodology, data analysis process (min 75)			

EDUC 904 Accomplishments

	No Progress	Some Progress	Completed
Submits Sound structure of Chapters1 - 2-3 and Chapter 3 outline			
Submits annotated bibliography (min 75)			
Submits research matrix with databases and keywords used			
First review & feedback from Chair			
Develop Chapter 3			
Develop all supporting documents (e.g. survey questions, interview questions) as appendices			
Tight connection between Chapters 1-2-3			
Alignment with rubric (minimally scores of 3)			
Committee members identified (Form 2 signed and submitted)			

	No Progress	Some Progress	Completed
Rubric review and feedback from committee			
Preproposal Meeting with committee			
Successful Proposal Defense (Form 3 signed and submitted)			
IRB completed, submitted and approved			
Vet research questions, survey questions, etc.			
Data collection completed			
Data analysis completed			

EDUC 905 Accomplishments

	No Progress	Some Progress	Completed
Development of Chapters 4 & 5			
Student reviews all data collected, transcribes any data based on procedures determined by chair			
Chair reviews all protocols with student, perusing all original data collected, transcribed, and artifacts from research			
Chair reviews and approves themes and findings based on data collected			
Chair teaches student ways of presenting data-student researches data analysis procedures and presentation of data			
Continues the development/refinement of Chapters 4 and 5			
Review & feedback from Chair			
Tight connection between Chapters relating back to Chapter 2 literature review and to theoretical considerations			
Alignment with rubric (minimally scores of 3)			
Review for APA formatting (no errors)			
Adapt dissertation paper based on SC Dissertation Guidelines			
Rubric review and feedback from committee			
Dissertation Defense meeting established			

Successful Dissertation Defense with a minimum of three members signing off			
Chair submits final dissertation paper to Dean for signing off			
Chair helps student with alternatives for presentations at conferences, publications in journals, etc…			
Reflection Portfolio completed with Dean			
Dissertation Approval form signed by Dean for dissertation publication. Form submitted to SC library director			
Student must apply for graduation with the registrar by designated date			

Appendix B

Dissertation Alignment: Guiding Questions, Dissertation Rubric, and Chapter Headings

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
How has the problem or issue being described evolved over time? Is there a level of depthness to the problem being investigated? How has a critical reflection over the question at issue or central problem relevant to the complexities of society?	**Introduction and Background to the Study:** Does it describe the broader context of the problem being investigated? Does the rationale for the study document the need? Does the overview of the study build a case for the problem statement and deficiencies found in the studies?	**Chapter 1. Introduction** Background to the Study
Defining the Research Problem What exactly is the problem? In what way does the study deal with a significant, realistic, and meaningful problem that is researchable, answerable, and worth the effort? Is the research original? What is the general interest in the problem as noted by other scholars, researchers, and/or practitioners? What substantiates that the problem is worth solving? In what ways is the problem significant to the field of educational leadership? What are the serious implications if the problem is not resolved?	**Problem Statement:** The author presents the problem statement stated early, clearly, precisely and succinctly (i.e., the reader can recognize it), e. The statement "[answers] the question, 'Why does this research need to be conducted?'" (Lewis & Clark, p. 57). It identifies "the problem or knowledge gap that [the student's] project is responding to" (Lewis & Clark, p.57).	Problem and Problem Statement

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
Does the topic have important theoretical implications?		
Will the study produce a rich, substantial body of data?		
Have you made a precise statement that begins with the purpose of my research proposal is to study/formulate/describe/evaluate/test/compare/understand/determine (choose an action verb) a set of procedures for (choose the intervention-method of inquiry) such as increasing student time on-task during (choose the participants as the unit of analysis or research site) fifth grade guided reading instruction time? Does the purpose statement provide an accurate and concrete understanding of the goal or objective(s) to be covered? Have you adopted a realistic purpose that is aligned to your goals /objectives to be studied? What is the significance in pursuing this purpose statement? Does the purpose have important practical implications? Is the purpose relevant to a significant problem?	**Purpose:** The author presents a purpose statement, which clarifies the goals and objectives of the study, signifies the intent and rationale that supports the purpose. It is a precursor to the research questions. The purpose is concise, to the point. It includes words denoting the method of inquiry to be used and the unit of analysis or research site.	Purpose of the Study
Is the researchable problem 'unpacked' through clear and concise research questions? For qualitative, is each question unique yet connected to the others to establish an ample investigation that flows from the problem? Which parts of the sub-questions are embedded in the main question? Are the questions relevant to the overarching question? Have I stated one primary question with two related secondary questions? Are the questions written in an open-ended format?	**Research Questions or Hypotheses:** The author includes research questions or hypotheses which will allow the author to explore or examine his/her stated problem of interest, which align with the author's methodology. In addition, the research questions or hypotheses are "evocative," and the	Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
For quantitative, have I established an overarching question that develops a relationship or correlation? Have I established two related questions in a yes/no format? Are the hypotheses well formulated to enable the testing of the null hypothesis	study is doable.	
in quantitative or mixed methods studies? Are both the null and alternative hypotheses stated for each question? Has a significance level been established?		
Who or what entities will benefit from the research findings? How do the findings contribute to the field of knowledge or have practical applications within the field?	**Significance of Study:** The author indicates the potential implications, benefits, usefulness, contributions of his/her study in relation to research, theory and practice. The significance section reflects on how "results of the study may affect scholarly research, theory, practice, educational interventions, curricula, counseling, policy," etc. (Lewis & Clark, p. 57).	Significance (i.e., importance) of the study
What methodology will be used in the study and why is the methodology appropriate for the study?	**Overview of Methodology:** An overview of the methodology presents a summary and rationale of the research design. Each section is brief and includes: research questions/hypotheses, design, subjects, method of assessment, observation or	Overview of Methodology

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
		evaluation and data analysis procedures.
What are the assumptions that frame the inquiry? How are the assumptions shaping your perspective? What are the limitations of the study?	**Limitations and Delimitations:** The author presents limitations and delimitation of the study. For limitations, the author thoughtfully identifies "potential weaknesses of the study" (Lewis & Clark, p. 57). For delimitations, the author clearly states how his/her study is bounded.	Assumptions, Limitations/ Delimitations
Are there technical terms associated with study? Are they clearly defined?	**Definitions:** The author defines key terms, either within the text as they arise, or in a separate section.	Definitions of terms (especially variables)
Have you introduced and described the theory(ies) that explains why the research problem exists? Is the theory chosen appropriate or relevant to the research problem you are investigating?	**Theoretical Framework:** The author provides a brief overview of theories and/or a theoretical framework that guides the study (where appropriate). The theories and/or framework described are suitable for the problem of study and the author's stated purpose. **(can be embedded in Background of Study)**	Theoretical Framework
Does Chapter 1 include an Organization of the Study section?	**Organization of Study:** Author describes the	

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
Do subsequent chapters begin with an introductory organization of each chapter and conclude with a summary of each chapter that reinforces the organization and flow of the dissertation?	format of the dissertation and the content in the subsequent chapters.	
		Chapter 2. Review of the Literature
Has an introductory section been provided that includes an overview of Chapter 2 that addresses the conceptual framework, the purpose of the study and foundation for the research questions and methodology?	**Introduction to the Lit Review:** Author provides an overview of what is in the chapter beginning with the conceptual framework for the study with established boundaries. The purpose of the study is supported. The foundation for the research questions, methodology and conceptual framework is provided. (The conceptual framework "explains the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs, or variables – and the presumed relationships among them.)	Introduction/Lit Review organization
Have you stated your epistemology, beliefs, values, professional/personal experiences that you will draw upon to help guide your study or help with the understanding of the people or issues that you want to study? Have I engaged in reflective thinking that has helped establish goals for my study by answering such questions as, Why is my study worth doing? What issues do I want to clarify or influence? Why do I want to conduct this study, and why should the reader care about the results?	**Conceptual and Theoretical Framework:** The author presents a conceptual framework which explains or provides an explanation of the main things to be studied- the key ideas, constructs, experiences and facts and the presumed relationships among them. The developed conceptual framework is	Conceptual Framework (includes the Theoretical Framework)

What theory(ies) and prior research findings will guide or inform my research? Have you introduced, using seminal works, and described the theory(ies) that explains why the research problem exists? Is the theory chosen appropriate or relevant to the research problem you are investigating? Have I considered a competing or alternative theory? And have I answered why the chosen theory a better fit?	based on theory, research, professional knowledge and experience. The author presents a theoretical framework which provides a brief overview of theories that guides the study. The theories and/or framework described align to the problem statement and purpose of the study	
Guiding Questions	**Dissertation Rubric**	**Dissertation Chapter Headings**
Literature Review Is the conceptual, historical, theoretical framework presented within the extent of the study? How does the existing body of knowledge and varying opinions on it impact the framework? Is the literature review comprehensive including both classical and contemporary information? Is the knowledge-base relevant in its entirety to the stated problem? If not, what substantiates that some information is not directly related to the study? If the literature is thin, can pertinent information be associated from other areas in the field? Is the literature review crafted through primary sources that are refereed, legitimate sources of information? Are they relevant? Similar? And Credible? Are secondary sources respected collections in the body of knowledge? Is there evidence of a systematic analysis and synthesis of the literature reviewed from broad to narrow focus? Does the review trace the argument (the assertion)?	**Lit Review Organization:** The literature review is organized into headings and subheadings-from broad to specific. Topic areas speak to the research questions or hypotheses. The ideas and concepts build upon each other within each section. Transitions between all sections are evident. AND **Body of the Lit Review:** The context of the lit review synthesizes the scholarly research relative to the dissertation topic. The body of the lit review may explore any or all of the following: competing	**Synthesis and Discussion of the Literature**

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
Does the reviewed literature discuss how the studies related to the assertion, help define, or advance the theory? Does the section end with a summary, implications and/or discussions for further research and ends with a conclusion that relates back to the introduction which builds a case for your study? Is the gap in the knowledge-base leading naturally to the research questions? How does the literature review support the selected methodology including the study's research design, data collection, and data analysis? Has the literature review been written in past tense? (With the conceptual and theoretical sections written in first person).	perspectives (different theoretical perspectives related to study), conceptual framework, theoretical framework (theoretical framework connects to the problem statement and addresses these questions: (1) How does the theory provide an explanation for what you believe is happening? (2) What other theory(s) provide an alternative explanation that explains your problem	
Is the current edition of the APA style guide being utilized with fidelity?	of interest and purpose of study.	
Does the section end with a summary of the related literature reviewed, implications and/or discussions for further research and ends with a conclusion that relates back to the introduction which builds a case for your study? Is the gap in the knowledge-base leading naturally to the research questions?	**Summary of the Research:** The author summarizes the research presenting their opinion of the literature's strengths and weaknesses. The gaps are further identified and an argument is built on how the study is based on the author's beliefs that will close some of the gaps. **AND** **Conclusion to the Lit Review:** The author presents an overall summary to the literature and transitions to why the	Summary and Conclusion to the Lit Review

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
	study is important to investigate. The author transitions to the next chapter.	
Is the current edition of the APA style guide being utilized with fidelity?	**Introduction** Author introduces (and defines) the overall methodological approach for each problem or question. The purpose statement, research questions or hypotheses are restated from Chapter 1. Author provides a rationale for the selection of the methodology with a clear indication of why the approach is most suitable for answering the research questions and "how the approach fits	**Chapter 3. Methodology**
	the overall research design."	
Research Design What is the research design? Is it fully described and substantiated? Is the research design a logical extension of the study and research questions? Is the rationale for the methodology fully and clearly articulated? What are the relationships between the rationale, the research problem, the current body of knowledge, and the implications for the study? How do the research design and data collection align with the research problem? Why are the data collection instruments appropriate for the study?	**Research Design:** The author provides a structure of the study, detailing the methods selected to collect and analyze with detailed descriptions for replication. Author draws upon the literature on the particular methodology to support the rationale, such as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. The author explains why the specific design is appropriate for the study.	Research Design

What data analysis will be conducted in the study? Does the analysis provide data relevant to the research questions/hypotheses? Is the information provided sufficient for replication of the study? Are all sections supported with evidence that ensures best practices for the design and methodology for the study? For the data analysis process?		
Has the role of the researcher been detailed?		Description (quan) Intervention Plan and Role of the Researcher
How have the participants been identified or recruited? Have I included the demographics on the participants? Have I addressed how confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study?	**Sampling Strategy and Sample Description:** The author identifies the participants of the study, how and why they were chosen, how identified and recruited, the required characteristics for being included, how participants were screened, the number of participants and why, and how confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study.	Rationale (quan) Research Setting and Context of the Study (includes demographics and participants)
Have I provided the general demographics over the research setting and context? Have I stated why the site was selected? Have I stated specific rationale for the selection of participants?	**Research Setting and Context:** The author describes the location where the study will take place and why the site was selected. Contextual issues that may be present are explained at the time of data collection that may influence the research.	Population and Sample (quan) Selection Process (including the rationale)
Have you determined at least three data collection strategies that will answer each research question for the purposes of triangulation?	**Data Collection Strategies:** For qualitative how many strategies were used to	Instrumentation/Measures/Protocols (quan) Data Collection Procedures (including

Have you considered the instrument development process (including pretesting and piloting of questions)?	collect data and the duration for each; for quantitative-new or existing data is explained. The procedures for how the instrument for data collection was designed, the instrument chosen and why are explained. The author describes what was learned from the pilot test, changes to be made, if any, and recommendations for improvement of the study based on the pilot testing. The author explains how the data collection strategies align with the conceptual and theoretical framework	rationale) as related to each research question
Have I provided a detailed, evidenced based method for data analysis that includes the coding, data cleaning, quality control procedures, etc)?	**Data Analysis:** The author describes the process for analyzing the data. Qualitative: Coding	Description (source or development procedures, validity,
Guiding Questions	**Dissertation Rubric**	**Dissertation Chapter Headings**
Ethical concerns including confidentiality/anonymity, IRB procedures have been included in my description? The study's timeline (general in the narrative) & (detailed timeline as an appendix), resources needed, and management issues have been discussed in this section?	is used describing the process in detail and the trustworthiness is addressed. Quantitative: the data analysis is described in detail in conjunction with the reliability and validity. The author draws upon appropriate literature to support his/her description of and rationale for data analysis. The research questions, purpose statement, research methods, and types of data are all connected.	reliability); Rationale; Procedures (quan) Plan for Data Collection and Analysis (including coding process)

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
Has internal/external validity been addressed based on the type of study? Has trustworthiness, reliability, and generalizability been addressed?	**Increasing Validity:** Includes a description of the types of validity chosen that are applicable to your study along with a justification, and have explained the strategies/methods used to increase each of the chosen types of validity; as well, an explanation is included that links the types of validity chosen to the purpose of the study.	Increasing Validity (including types of validity, definitions of such, and the strategies to be used within the study)
	Summary: A summary of the methodology is provided	Summary
Findings Are the data analysis processes presented clearly? Are the findings articulated clearly through tables, graphs, and narratives that are logical and comprehensible? Are there patterns or trends emerging from the data analysis? Do the findings relate to the research questions/hypotheses?		**Chapter 4. Results** (quan) Data Analysis (organized by research questions (quan) Findings (quan) **Chapter 4.** Findings and Analysis
What do the findings contribute to answering the questions or accepting or rejecting the hypotheses? Can the findings be generalized to a larger population? Is it possible to get an approximately random sample, rather than a convenience sample? For qualitative, what thematic coding process or procedures have been used that are supported by best practices in qualitative methods?		Summary of Literature Review Purpose of Study and Research Questions Methodology and Research Design Participants Thematic Coding and Analysis Procedure

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
		Emerging Themes Emerging Themes Summarized as Findings Overview of the Findings as Related to the Research Questions Summary
		Chapter 5. Conclusions (quan) **Chapter 5. Discussion of the Findings**
Are there discrepancies in the study? How are discrepancies presented? Do they explain idiosyncrasies without undermining the integrity of the problem?		Discussion/ Interpretation (quan)
Have you related the significance of your study with connections from the literature review section or extended beyond to additional research conducted or extended theories?		Significance of the Study and contributions/connections (from the literature review and/or extended)
Conclusions and Next Steps Refer to the limitations in Chapter 1. Do the limitations expressed in Chapter 1 align to those now considered in your study? Also have you considered how might your results and conclusions be wrong?		Limitations
Can the conclusions and recommendations be substantiated from the findings? Are the implications of the study addressed? Are they reasonable for the scope of the proposed study?		Implications for Policy and Practice Theoretical Considerations

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
What generative impact will this work have on practice, policy, and/or future research? What impact does this work have on the future work and agendas of the scholar practitioner? How does this work demonstrate the scholarly practitioner's ability to solve or contribute to the solution of problems of practice? (The last three questions in this section Retrieved from http://cpedinitiative.org/dissertation-practice-year-award).		
What are the implications from the research study relative to existing practice, the knowledge-base, and/or changes in what is known and accomplished in the field of study/service?		Recommendations for Action
What are the implications/next steps for future research?		Areas for Further Research Summary
Have I followed APA manual?		References
Does each appendix have a header page? Does each appendix have a title?		Appendices
Have I followed APA guidelines?		Tables (e.g., Participant Demographics)
Have I included the Informed Consent Forms, IRB documents, Video/Photography Release Statements, etc.		Examples (e.g., Consent Forms)
Did I receive permissions from the appropriate authors to use their work?		Permissions
Guiding Questions	**Dissertation Rubric**	**Dissertation Chapter Headings**
Have all surveys, guiding questions for interviews, focus groups, protocols and proposed narratives for facilitating been included?		Data Collection Tools (e.g., Surveys)
Form and Style	**Narrowing of Topic:** Is the topic researchable: Who will the topic focus	

Guiding Questions	Dissertation Rubric	Dissertation Chapter Headings
Is the dissertation well written in English, grammatically correct, and scholarly? Does the writing flow smoothly and without redundancy? Are verb tenses in present tense for research findings, principles, and so on that are still accepted, while those that are outdated are expressed in the past tense? Data collection and analysis are expressed in past tense. First person is acceptable for the role of the researcher during data collection. Is the dissertation written in accordance with the current APA style guide? Are citations correctly referenced and fully articulated in the reference section of the dissertation? Is the dissertation organized systematically, logically, and rationally with appropriate headings?	on, what does it take into account, who will it impact, what location is considered, who will this work for, and other variables that might matter?	
Have I considered why this topic is of interest to me? To my future career goals?	**Interest of Topic:** Is there personal interest for a larger audience, could the topic be publishable, does the study fill a void in education, and contribute to career goals?	
Have I provided a succinct overview of the study? Does it describe the objectives and the procedures?	**Abstract:** Does it contain the following in order: the issue or problem, the purpose of the study, what data will be collected, themes or statistical results that may surface, and the	

	practical implications of the study? Is it between 150-200 words?	
Is my title precise? Does my title echo the objective, purpose and direction of the study?	**Title of Study:** Is it brief, less than 12 words and uses only essential words?	
Does the title align with the problem or purpose statement and the variables described within each?	**Title of Study:** Does it present the focus of the study's research and a sense of the importance of the study? Does it synthesize the key issues and/or findings?	
Have you followed the latest edition of APA? Has the conceptual framework section been written in first person? Has the literature review been written in past tense? Have I proofread my entire document several times or had someone proofread it for me? Is my paper error free? (Please note that your dissertation will be posted on the web at the UMI ProQuest Website for the world to see).	**Writing Conventions:** Author demonstrates appropriate use of grammar/mechanics/style; use of transitions; proper tense, etc. and APA format/references.	
Have I used at a minimum 60 empirical research studies that are similar to my study, relevant to my student, and are of credible sources? Have the 60 sources mentioned above occurred within the past 10 years?	**Number of scholarly resources:** The author has a minimum of 60 empirical research articles (focusing on relevant studies) addressed in the literature review within the past 10 years with at least 25-30 pages.	

Appendix C

Elements to be Discussed during the Dissertation Proposal

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

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

Appendix D

Elements to be Discussed during the Dissertation Defense

The learner should present the defense in the following steps:

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

Appendix E

**Southwestern College Dissertation Proposal and Presentation
Rubric**

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

Dissertation Title:
Key:

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

<u>Submit the completed form to the Southwestern Education Department with the signed Proposal Approval form.</u>

Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Topic Selection, Abstract and Title	1	2	3	4
Narrowing of Topic: Is the topic researchable: Who will the topic focus on, what does it take into account, who will it impact, what location is considered, who will this work for, and other variables that might matter?				
Interest of Topic: Is there personal interest for a larger audience, could the topic be publishable, does the study fill a void in education, and contribute to career goals?				
Abstract: Does it contain the following in order: the issue or problem, the purpose of the study, what data will be collected, themes or statistical results that may surface, and the practical implications of the study? Is it between 150-200 words?				
Title of Study: Is it brief, less than 12 words and uses only essential words?				
Title of Study: Does it present the focus of the study's research and a sense of the importance of the study? Does it synthesize the key issues and/or findings?				
Writing Conventions: Author demonstrates appropriate use of grammar/mechanics/style; use of transitions; proper tense, etc. and APA format/references.				
Overall Rating				

Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 1 (Introduction and Framing the Problem)				
Introduction and Background to the Study: Does it describe the broader context of the problem being investigated? Does the rationale for the study document the need? Does the overview of the study build a case for the problem statement and deficiencies found in the studies.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Problem Statement: The author presents the problem statement stated early, clearly (i.e., the reader can recognize it), and briefly (e.g., in one paragraph). The statement "[answers] the question, 'Why does this research need to be conducted?" (Lewis & Clark, p. 57). It identifies "the problem or knowledge gap that [the student's] project is responding to" (Lewis & Clark, p.57).				
Purpose: The author presents a purpose statement, which clarifies the goals and objectives of the study, signifies the intent and rationale that supports the purpose. It is a precursor to the research questions. The purpose is concise, to the point. It includes words denoting the method of inquiry to be used and the unit of analysis or research site.				
Research Questions or Hypotheses: The author includes research questions or hypotheses which will allow the author to explore or examine his/her stated problem of interest, which align with the author's methodology. In addition, the research questions or hypotheses are "evocative," and the study is doable.				
Significance of Study: The author indicates the potential implications, benefits, usefulness, contributions of his/her study in relation to research, theory and practice. The significance section reflects on how "results of the study may affect scholarly research, theory, practice, educational interventions, curricula, counseling, policy," etc. (Lewis & Clark, p. 57).				
Overview of Methodology: An overview of the methodology presents a summary and rationale of the research design. Each section is brief and includes: research questions/hypotheses, design, subjects, method of assessment, observation or evaluation and data analysis procedures.				
Limitations and Delimitations: The author presents limitations and delimitation of the study. For limitations, the author thoughtfully identifies "potential weaknesses of the study" (Lewis & Clark, p. 57). For delimitations, the author clearly states how his/her study is bounded.				
Definitions: The author defines key terms, either within the text as they arise, or in a separate section.				
Theoretical Framework: The author provides a brief overview of theories and/or a theoretical framework that guides the study (where appropriate). The theories and/or framework described are suitable for the problem of				
Organization of Study: Author describes the format of the dissertation and the content in the subsequent chapters.				
Overall Rating for Chapter 1				

Comments and Suggestions:

Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 2 (Literature Review)				
	1	2	3	4
Introduction to the Lit Review: Author provides an overview of what is in the chapter beginning with the conceptual framework for the study with established boundaries. The purpose of the study is supported. The foundation for the research questions, methodology and conceptual framework is provided. (The conceptual framework "explains the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs, or variables – and the presumed relationships among them.)				
Lit Review Organization: The literature review is organized into headings and subheadings-from broad to specific. Topic areas speak to the research questions or hypotheses. The ideas and concepts build upon each other within each section. Transitions between all sections are evident.				
Body of the Lit Review: The context of the lit review synthesizes the scholarly research relative to the dissertation topic. The body of the lit review may explore any or all of the following: competing perspectives (different theoretical perspectives related to study), conceptual framework, theoretical framework (theoretical framework connects to the problem statement and addresses these questions: (1) How does the theory provide an explanation for what you believe is happening? (2) What other theory(s) provide an alternative explanation that explains your problem of interest and purpose of study.				
Conceptual and Theoretical Framework: The author presents a conceptual framework which explains or provides an explanation of the main things to be studied- the key ideas, constructs, experiences and facts and the presumed relationships among them. The developed conceptual framework is based on theory, research, professional knowledge and experience. The author presents a theoretical framework which provides a brief overview of theories that guides the study. The theories and/or framework described align to the problem statement and purpose of the study.				
Synthesis of the Research: The author integrates what is learned from the literature and indicates how the research either supports or does not support existing theories. The author formulates questions that need further research and identifies areas of controversy founded in the literature. The author makes sense of the research, identifies gaps, patterns, themes and common findings. The balance of the selected research is from peer-reviewed journals.				
Summary of the Research: The author summarizes the research presenting their opinion of the literature's strengths and weaknesses. The gaps are further identified and an argument is built on how the study is based on the author's beliefs that will close some of the gaps.				
Conclusion to the Lit Review: The author presents an overall summary to the literature and transitions to why the study is important to investigate. The author transitions to the next chapter.				
Number of scholarly resources: The author has a minimum of 60 research articles (focusing on relevant studies) addressed in their literature review in at least 25-30 pages.				
Overall Rating for Chapter 2				

Comments and Suggestions:

Dissertation Proposal Rubric – Chapter 3 (Methodology)				
Introduction	1	2	3	4
Author introduces (and defines) the overall methodological approach for each problem or question. The purpose statement, research questions or hypotheses are restated from Chapter 1. Author provides a rationale for the selection of the methodology with a clear indication of why the approach is most suitable for answering the research questions and "how the approach fits the overall research design."				
Research Design: The author provides a structure of the study, detailing the methods selected to collect and analyze with detailed descriptions for replication. Author draws upon the literature on the particular methodology to support the rationale, such as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. The author explains why the specific design is appropriate for the study.				
Research Setting and Context: The author describes the location where the study will take place and why the site was selected. Contextual issues that may be present are explained at the time of data collection that may influence the research.				
Sampling Strategy and Sample Description: The author identifies the participants of the study, how and why they were chosen, how identified and recruited, the required characteristics for being included, how participants were screened, the number of participants and why, and how confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study.				
Data Collection Strategies: For qualitative how many strategies were used to collect data and the duration for each; for quantitative-new or existing data is explained. The procedures for how the instrument for data collection was designed, the instrument chosen and why are explained. The author describes what was learned from the pilot test, changes to be made, if any, and recommendations for improvement of the study based on the pilot testing. The author explains how the data collection strategies align with the conceptual and theoretical framework.				
Data Analysis: The author describes the process for analyzing the data. Qualitative: Coding is used describing the process in detail and the trustworthiness is addressed. Quantitative: the data analysis is described in detail in conjunction with the reliability and validity. The author draws upon appropriate literature to support his/her description of and rationale for data analysis. The research questions, purpose statement, research methods, and types of data are all connected.				
Increasing Validity: Includes a description of the types of validity chosen that are applicable to your study along with a justification, and have explained the strategies/methods used to increase each of the chosen types of validity; as well, an explanation is included that links the types of validity chosen to the purpose of the study.				
Summary: A summary of the methodology is provided				
Overall Rating for Chapter 3				

Comments and Suggestions:

Instructor or Committee Chair Signature   Date

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The dissertation submission for publication is the final stop towards graduation. Use the checklist below to help you with the dissertation completion process. Once the final copy has been submitted to the Dean of Education, an outside review committee will read the dissertation for publishing quality and determine whether the dissertation will be published for an internal audience at Southwestern College (to access on campus only), or if the dissertation will be published and made available to a global audience. **The approval of the dissertation for publishing is not a graduation requirement.** The student may choose to submit their work for consideration to publish their dissertation on ProQuest through the Deets library website.

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