

Dissertation Handbook

2013-2014

Effective for courses beginning on or after July 1, 2013

University of the Rockies

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QUICK GUIDE

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

	This symbol is used throughout this document to draw attention to important or critical reminders.
	This symbol is used to point out tips and tricks to help you throughout the dissertation process.
DA	Dissertation Administrator
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LOI	Letter of Intent
RRB	Research Review Board

WHERE DO I FIND OUT . . .

To find out . . .	Look in . . .
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

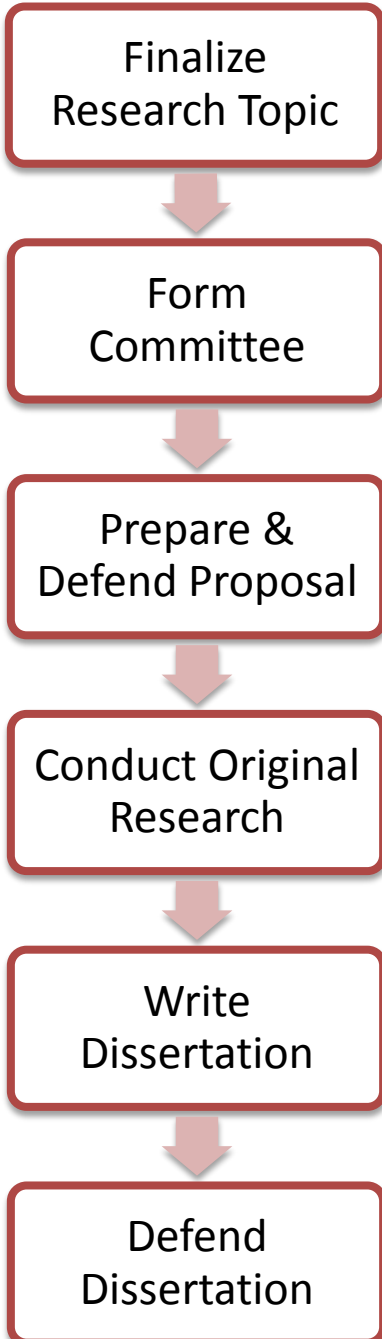
As a doctoral student, it is critically important for you to demonstrate your ability to conduct systematic investigations and examine significant issues or problems in your field of research. The dissertation is a culminating task in your degree program and allows you to demonstrate pertinent knowledge, skills, research expertise, and practical application in your discipline. As a requirement for graduation from University of the Rockies (UoR) with a degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), each student must complete and successfully defend a dissertation.

Use this Handbook to help guide you through the dissertation process. Contents include:

- Expectations of doctoral students;
- Descriptions of who's who;
- Steps in the dissertation process; and
- Required forms.

Since the Handbook outlines an important part of your doctoral journey, we suggest reading it, and all accompanying documents, at the beginning of your program, and referencing them as necessary throughout your studies. If you have any questions, please email dissertation.online@rockies.edu (online students) or dissertation.ground@rockies.edu (Colorado Springs campus and Denver Instructional Site students).

DISSERTATION PROCESS OVERVIEW



1.1 THE PURPOSE OF A DISSERTATION

A dissertation is a formal, comprehensive report that details the purpose, background research, methodology, data collection and analysis, and conclusions of an original research study. Completion and defense of a dissertation is a requirement for graduation from a University of the Rockies doctoral degree program, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), and is undertaken after all academic coursework is complete.

A Dissertation is intended to:

- Enhance your understanding of your field of study;
- Provide experience conducting formal research in your field of study;
- Develop your ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate data and conclusions in your field of study;
- Make a significant contribution to the field of study;
- Include a thorough review of associated professional literature;
- Demonstrate your ability to design and carry out an individual, original research study;
- Include advanced research design and analysis;
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of basic research principles, techniques, and ethics;
- Demonstrate evidence of your ability to analyze and synthesize data, as well as draw and evaluate conclusions; and
- Show evidence of a high level of professional competence.

It is important to keep in mind that a dissertation is not just another school assignment. A dissertation study is intended to make a significant contribution to the research literature in the field. It must be scholarly, succinct, and of sufficiently high quality to be published in part in a peer-reviewed journal. Dissertations will be cataloged and available to other researchers – seasoned professionals and academics, as well as future students – all over the world.

1.2 ACCEPTABLE TYPES OF RESEARCH

Acceptable types of research for a dissertation at the University of the Rockies include:

- Program evaluation studies (PsyD only);
- Quantitative studies (e.g., Descriptive, Correlational, Causal-Comparative, Experimental, Quasi-Experimental, Meta-Analysis);
- Qualitative studies (e.g., Basic Interpretive Qualitative Research, Phenomenological Research, Grounded Theory, Case Study, Ethnography, Narrative Analysis, Critical research); and
- Mixed-methods studies (combines qualitative and quantitative methods).

The following types of research are NOT acceptable:

- Animal research
- Medical research

All proposals must be reviewed and approved by the Research Review Board (RRB) and Institutional Review Board (IRB). The RRB will evaluate all methodologies for appropriateness, while the IRB will guarantee that the study is ethically sound.



Remember, you **may not begin** data collection prior to approval of your proposal by:

- Research Review Board (RRB),
- Dissertation Committee via the Preliminary Oral Defense, AND
- Institutional Review Board (IRB).

2.0 THE DISSERTATION PROCESS

This chapter is an overview of all the people and processes involved in completing your dissertation. It is important to familiarize yourself with this information from the beginning of your doctoral program. This chapter covers the following:

- Six phases of the dissertation process;
- Required courses, forms, and documents (student completes); Roles and responsibilities of individuals and boards involved in the dissertation process; and
- Step-by-step process to develop a dissertation.

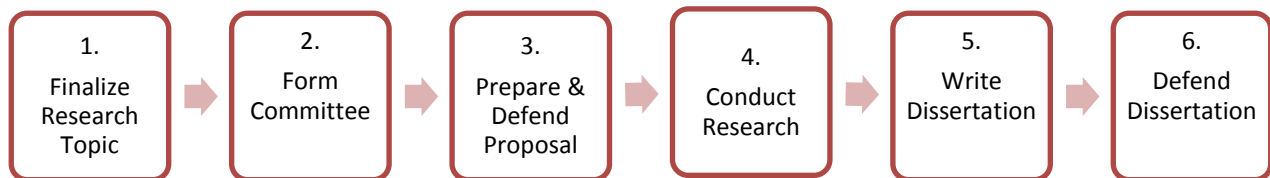
2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION PROCESS

The dissertation process is composed of 6 phases, in which there are various “Transition Points” to complete and forms to submit. The graphic provided in **Appendix G** demonstrates an overview of these elements and how they relate to each other.

2.1.1 SIX PHASES OF THE DISSERTATION PROCESS

The 6 main phases of the dissertation process are:

1. Finalize Research Topic
2. Form Committee
3. Prepare and Defend Proposal
4. Conduct Research
5. Write the Dissertation
6. Defend the Dissertation



2.1.2 COURSES, FORMS, AND DOCUMENTS

As part of the dissertation process, you will enroll in specific dissertation courses and submit specific forms and documents. A list of these is provided below. More detailed information about when each activity takes place can be found in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.

DISSERTATION COURSES

ORG/PSY 8910 Dissertation Planning I * (1 credit/9 wks)	ORG/PSY 8990 Dissertation (1 credit per term, 5 terms)
ORG/PSY 8912 Dissertation Planning II *(1 credit/9 wks)	ORG/PSY 8991 Dissertation Extension (as needed)

**This course is not required for students in the Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), Clinical Specialization.*

DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Letter of Intent (A3) • Dissertation Proposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRB Research Summary • Dissertation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

FORMS TO SUBMIT

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1: Request for Committee Candidates (as needed) • A2: Dissertation Committee Chair Request • A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent • A4: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review • A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense • A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation • IRB Request for Review (Exemption, Expedited Review, or Full Review) • IRB Research Summary • Certificate of Completion of the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Human Subjects Research Tutorial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRB Report of Change • A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review • A8: Request for Final Oral Defense • A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation • A10: Dissertation Final Submission • A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance • A12: Dissertation Committee Change Request (as needed) • A13: Approval for Non-Faculty Committee Member Participation (as needed) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



Note that throughout this document, forms that you need to fill out are listed in green. Forms labeled “A” can be found in Appendix A at the end of this document, while those labeled with “IRB” can be found in the *IRB Handbook*.

2.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As you work on your dissertation, you will interact with a number of people and review boards. Major responsibilities for the following individuals/groups are described below:

- You (the student)
- Dissertation Chair
- Dissertation Committee
- Dissertation Administrator (DA)
- Research Review Board (RRB)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Dean (of the school in which you are enrolled)
- Registrar
- Student Advisor or Registrar Advising Specialist
- APA Style Editor

Role	Responsibilities
You (the student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steps in the dissertation process, in order ○ “Transition Points,” in order ○ Required courses - Dissertation Planning Courses and Dissertation credits (<i>Students in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization are required to complete PSY 7620 before starting their dissertation and are not required to enroll in Dissertation Planning courses.</i>) ○ Required forms, properly signed and submitted, either by yourself or your Chair, in a timely fashion to your DA • Work closely with your <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissertation Chair ○ Dissertation Committee
Dissertation Chair*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides student in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparing for dissertation research ○ Defining and finalizing a research topic ○ Developing a timeline to complete the Dissertation ○ Choosing committee members ○ Developing Dissertation Proposal ○ Conducting research and analyzing data • Reviews and Approves student’s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissertation Letter of Intent (A3) ○ Dissertation Proposal (in conjunction with Committee) ○ IRB Research Summary ○ Dissertation (in conjunction with Committee) • Oversees and Evaluates student’s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preliminary Oral Defense ○ Final Oral Defense ○ Dissertation • Signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A2: Dissertation Committee Chair Request ○ A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A4: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review ○ A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense ○ A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation ○ IRB Request for Review (Exemption, Expedited Review, or Full Review) ○ A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review ○ A8: Request for Final Oral Defense ○ A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation ○ A10: Dissertation Final Submission
<p>Dissertation Committee*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guides student in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing Dissertation Proposal ○ Conducting research and analyzing data ● Reviews and Approves student's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissertation Proposal ○ Dissertation ● Evaluates student's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preliminary Oral Defense ○ Final Oral Defense ○ Dissertation ● Signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation ○ A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation ○ A10: Dissertation Final Submission
<p>Dissertation Administrator (DA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ with student via the dissertation.online@rockies.edu or dissertation.ground@rockies.edu e-mail accounts ○ with the RRB, IRB, Dean, and Registrar on your behalf regarding dissertation related issues and forms ○ feedback and status updates from the RRB, IRB, Dean, and Registrar to student ● Receives and Registers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All forms ○ Dissertation process questions ○ Dissertation Proposal ○ IRB Research Summary ○ Dissertation

Research Review Board (RRB)	<p>The purpose of the RRB is to ensure academic rigor, quality, and appropriateness of a proposed research study, evaluating particularly the alignment of the research problem and questions with the research methodology and design. The RRB will review the dissertation at various stages of its development to provide approval and feedback on research methodology issues. The RRB does not act as a subject matter expert on the content of the dissertation itself, which is the responsibility of the dissertation chair and committee members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and Approves student’s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent ○ Dissertation Proposal ○ Dissertation
Institutional Research Board (IRB)	<p>The purpose of the IRB is to ensure ethical research practices among its students and faculty. Anyone affiliated with University of the Rockies who is pursuing a research project must receive approval from the IRB before commencing the study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and Approves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IRB Request for Review (Exemption, Expedited Review, or Full Review) ○ IRB Research Summary • Receives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certificate of completion of the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Human Subjects Research Tutorial
Dean (of the school in which student is enrolled)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and Approves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissertation • Signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A10: Dissertation Final Submission ○ A12: Request for Committee Change ○ A13: Approval for Non-Faculty Dissertation Committee Participation
Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and Approves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Petition to Graduate • Communicates with student about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Graduation requirements • Conducts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final graduation audit

Student Advisor (online) or Registrar Advising Specialist (Colorado Springs campus and Denver Instructional Site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advises and Helps student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enroll in online courses ○ Understand the timeline and scheduling requirements for enrolling in courses
APA Style Editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and Edits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissertation for adherence to APA style • Signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance

**See Chapter 3 for more information on Dissertation Chair and Committee responsibilities.*

2.3 DISSERTATION PROCESS AND CHECKLIST

A list of the steps in each phase of the dissertation process is provided below. More information on *how* to complete each step is provided in subsequent chapters. See Section 2.4 for more details on steps labeled as “Transition Points,” and the Appendix for all forms referenced in the checklist.

PREREQUISITES AND COURSEWORK

___1. Complete all academic coursework.

To ensure that you are fully prepared to undertake your dissertation research, you must complete **all*** academic coursework outlined for your degree program before enrolling in dissertation credits. However, you may apply for an exception to this rule. Exceptions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of the school for which you are enrolled.

**Students in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization are required to complete PSY 7620 before starting their dissertation.*

___2. Enroll in Dissertation Planning courses.*

In order to complete the dissertation process and be eligible for graduation, you must register for and complete the 2 dissertation planning courses and at least 5 dissertation credits, in addition to all of your other coursework. The Dissertation Planning courses are designed to guide you through many of the steps in Phases 1 and 2 of the Dissertation Process.

**Students in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization do not take the Dissertation Planning courses.*

- **ORG/PSY 8910: Dissertation Planning I**

In this course, you will:

- develop the advanced skills and competencies you’ll need to draft and refine your Dissertation Letter of Intent;
- search the literature to identify a researchable problem supported by a research gap and frame a feasible research purpose and scope for your dissertation research (under the supervision of the instructor);
- consider issues in conducting research with human subjects, and complete the online **Certificate of Completion of the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Human Subjects Research Tutorial**; and
- begin working on your **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent**.

- **ORG/PSY 8912: Dissertation Planning II**

In this course, you will:

- finalize the selection of a Dissertation Chair;
- continue refining your **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent** (including the refined problem and purpose statements, possible research questions, the importance of the study, proposed methodology you are considering to address the research problem, and a brief discussion of how the results will address a knowledge gap and make an original contribution to the literature and professional practice);
- begin working on your Dissertation Proposal (create an annotated outline of Chapters I and II, and an outline for Chapter III); and
- create a tentative dissertation completion plan/schedule.

By the end of the course, you should have a working draft of the **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent**.

___3. Enroll in Dissertation courses.

After completing Dissertation Planning II, you must enroll in each of the 5 dissertation credit courses, one at a time (1 credit per term, 5 terms). The Dissertation courses, which are each 9 weeks long, are designed to provide easy access to information and resources for you through the Dissertation Process (Phases 2-6) and to provide you with a forum for ongoing dialogue with and feedback from your committee as you progress on your dissertation. The online Dissertation course may be used to exchange dissertation drafts between you and your committee.

- **ORG/PSY 8990: Dissertation**

- You must enroll in at least 5 dissertation courses (1 credit per term, 5 terms), and
- You must be enrolled in a Dissertation course (or Dissertation Extension course) at the time you submit your final manuscript.

- **ORG/PSY 8991: Dissertation Extension**

If you do not complete your dissertation during the five Dissertation courses, you will need to enroll in Dissertation Extension courses until you submit your final manuscript.



You must have **A2: Dissertation Committee Chair Request** on file before enrolling in **ORG/PSY 8990: Dissertation**. Start searching for a Dissertation Committee Chair during Dissertation Planning I and finalize your Chair during Dissertation Planning II, or during practicum.

PHASE 1: FINALIZE A RESEARCH TOPIC

___1. Explore topics for your dissertation research while you are completing your coursework.

___2. Enroll in and complete **ORG/PSY 8910 Dissertation Planning I**, which will include the selection of a research topic. (*Students in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization are not required to take this course.*)

___3. Enroll in and complete **ORG/PSY 8912 Dissertation Planning II**. (*Students in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization are not required to take this course.*)

___4. Select a Dissertation Committee Chair during **ORG/PSY 8912 Dissertation Planning II** or during internship or practicum.

- If necessary, complete **A1: Request for Committee Candidates** to find out suitable committee or committee chair candidates.

- Complete and send **A2: Dissertation Committee Chair Request** to the person you are interested in. The Chair submits the completed and signed form to the DA.
- Work with your Dissertation Chair to establish a preliminary timeline to complete the rest of the stages in the dissertation process.

- ___5. Enroll in **ORG/PSY 8990 Dissertation**.
- ___6. Discuss and finalize your dissertation topic, and work on **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent**, with your Dissertation Committee Chair.
- ___7. **TRANSITION POINT I:** Complete and submit **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent** (LOI) to the DA. The form will then be sent on to the Research Review Board (RRB) for approval of the dissertation topic. Read more about Transition Point I in Section 2.4.



Work closely with your Chair:

- Colorado Springs campus students - check in with your Chair a minimum of once per month, or more frequently as necessary.
- Online and Denver Instructional Site students - adhere to weekly attendance requirements to remain active and avoid being dismissed from course and withdrawn from the University.

For more information regarding the attendance policies, please see the

PHASE 2: FORM A COMMITTEE

- ___1. Review pertinent literature and prepare a written “mini proposal” based on the Dissertation Letter of Intent (LOI) to give to prospective committee members when discussing the project with them. The mini proposal should include a draft of Chapter I and an outline of Chapters II and III of the proposal.
- ___2. Work closely with the Dissertation Committee Chair to select the other two members of the Dissertation Committee. (A non- faculty member may be approved to serve as a committee member by the Dean of the appropriate school.)
- If one of your intended committee members is not part of the University of the Rockies’ faculty, you must also submit **A13: Approval for Non-Faculty Committee Member Participation**.
 - If you want to change committee members at any point in the process, you must submit **A12: Dissertation Committee Change Request**.

PHASE 3: PREPARE AND DEFEND DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

- ___1. Write the full Dissertation Proposal (also referred to as “proposal”) (Chapter I: Introduction, Chapter II: Review of the Literature, and Chapter III: Method). See **Appendix B** and **Appendix C** of this Handbook for more details on the formatting of these chapters.
- ___2. Read the *IRB Handbook* to ensure the proposed research methods and procedures adhere to IRB requirements, and all necessary forms and steps are completed as required.
- ___3. Review the proposal with the Dissertation Committee Chair to ensure appropriateness of content and length.
- ___4. Submit proposal to other Dissertation Committee members for review.
- ___5. Revise the proposal as needed until your Dissertation Committee gives preliminary approval.
- ___6. Ensure that your Dissertation Chair has completed and signed **A4: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review**.

- ___7. **TRANSITION POINT II:** Submit the proposal, along with a Turnitin report and **A4 Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review**, to the DA, who reviews the submission for completeness and sends the completed submission to the Research Review Board (RRB). Read more about Transition Point II in Section 2.4.
- ___8. Revise the proposal as suggested by the RRB. Resubmit to the RRB, along with a Change Matrix, for approval via the DA, if necessary. Read more about the Change Matrix in Section 5.3.
- ___9. Submit **A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense** to the DA and schedule the Preliminary Oral Defense with your Dissertation Chair and Committee.
- ___10. **TRANSITION POINT III:** Pass the Preliminary Oral Defense to establish final approval of the proposal by the Dissertation Committee. Read more about Transition Point III in Section 2.4
- ___11. Ensure that Dissertation Chair has submitted **A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation** to the DA.
- ___12. Review the *IRB Handbook* in preparation for submission of your proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- ___13. **TRANSITION POINT IV:** If a “Pass, No Revisions” or “Pass, Minor Revisions” was received on the Preliminary Oral Defense, submit the following to the IRB via the DA by the 15th of the month for the most efficient consideration:
 - a. IRB **Request for Review** (**Appendix B, C, or D** in the *IRB Handbook*)
 - b. IRB **Research Summary** (**Appendix E** in the *IRB Handbook*)
 - c. **Certificate of Completion of the online Human Subjects Research Tutorial** (, see CITI completion report in *IRB Handbook*)
 Read more about Transition Point IV in Section 2.4. Note that Full Reviews may require a presentation to the IRB.
- ___14. Revise the proposal as suggested by the IRB and resubmit to the DA for IRB approval, if necessary.
- ___15. Receive *IRB Letter of Approval*, which should be recorded with the DA.
- ___16. If working with an outside agency that also has an IRB (or similar process), obtain approval from the outside agency after you have obtained approval from the University of the Rockies IRB.

Note: Detailed information on the IRB process, including IRB forms, is available in the *IRB Handbook*.

PHASE 4: CONDUCT RESEARCH: COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA

*Note: You **must** have IRB approval (Transition Point IV) before proceeding with research.*

- ___1. Collect data according to the research plan described in your proposal. Work with Dissertation Committee Chair and committee members as needed.
- ___2. Analyze data collected. Work with Dissertation Committee Chair and committee members as needed.



If you revise your plan for data collection, you must inform your Chair immediately, and may need to revise and resubmit your proposal for approval by the IRB.

PHASE 5: WRITE THE DISSERTATION

- ___1. Complete all chapters of the dissertation. Write Chapters IV: Results and V: Discussion, and revise Chapters I, II, and III from the proposal as appropriate. Work closely with the Dissertation Committee Chair throughout the process.
- ___2. Present a draft of the completed dissertation to all committee members. The draft should be in Microsoft Word and in current APA format. (Refer to **Appendix B**, **Appendix C**, and **Appendix F**.)
- ___3. Revise the dissertation based on the feedback from the Committee and Dissertation Committee Chair.
- ___4. Secure preliminary approval of the dissertation from the Dissertation Committee.
- ___5. **TRANSITION POINT V:** Submit your dissertation and **A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review** to the DA, who will submit to the Research Review Board (RRB) for approval. Revise the dissertation as suggested by the RRB and resubmit it for approval, if necessary. Read more about Transition Point V in Section 2.4.
- ___6. Submit **A8: Request for Final Oral Defense** to the DA to schedule a Final Oral Defense date. Coordinate this date with your Dissertation Committee Chair and your committee members.

IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THIS FINAL REVIEW PROCESS DURING ANY GIVEN 9-WEEK ACADEMIC TERM, YOU SHOULD PLAN TO HAVE YOUR FINAL DISSERTATION DRAFT APPROVED BY YOUR ENTIRE COMMITTEE NO LATER THAN THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK OF THE TERM. THAT ALLOWS ANOTHER SEVEN WEEKS IN THAT TERM TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS. THIS IS IMPERATIVE IF YOU PLAN TO WALK DURING THE CURRENT YEAR COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY. NOTE: THIS PROCESS COULD TAKE LONGER.

PHASE 6: PRESENT AND DEFEND

- ___1. **TRANSITION POINT VI:** Pass the Final Oral Defense. Ensure that your Dissertation Chair has completed and submitted **A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation** to the DA. Read more about Transition Point VI in Section 2.4.
- ___2. Submit one electronic copy of the complete dissertation to the Dissertation Committee Chair for final review.
- ___3. At the same time, submit the dissertation to an approved APA Style editor for final style compliance review. Have the APA editor sign **A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance**.
- ___4. Make any necessary revisions, maintaining APA Style.
- ___5. **TRANSITION POINT VII:** Secure final approval from the Dissertation Committee Chair and committee members.
 - a. Submit **A10: Dissertation Final Submission and A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance** to the DA **with original Committee Signatures**. The DA will send **A10** to the Dean for his or her signature.
 - b. Submit one electronic copy of the final dissertation to the DA. This document must include a cover page following the University of the Rockies template, which will need to be included in the document after it has been signed by the Dissertation Chair. Following an internal format review, the Rockies' Library will contact you regarding the upload of your dissertation to UMI Dissertation Publishing.

Note: You must be enrolled in a term of ORG/PSY 8990 Dissertation or ORG/PSY 8991 Dissertation Extension when you submit your final manuscript.

GRADUATE

- ___1. **TRANSITION POINT VIII:** Have Dissertation Committee Chair sign the **Petition to Graduate** and submit the form to the Registrar before the deadline to participate in graduation. *Note that you will **not** be able to participate in the commencement ceremony if this form is not signed and submitted.* Read more about Transition Point VIII in Section 2.4.
- ___2. Confirm with the DA that the Registrar's Office received notification of approval and submission of the final dissertation manuscript (**A10: Dissertation Final Submission**).
- ___3. Follow instructions from the Registrar's Office for final preparations for graduation.

2.4 DISSERTATION “TRANSITION POINTS”

As outlined in Section 2.3, there are many steps to the dissertation process. A number of these steps have been designated as “Transition Points.” You must pass through all of the transition points in order to graduate. You must have approval to pass through each transition point, and you must pass through them in order. The following table provides more information about each Transition Point.

Transition Point	Description	When	Must be Approved by
I. Dissertation Letter of Intent (LOI)	A preliminary proposal for dissertation research (A3)	After working with Chair; usually developed during ORG/PSY 8912 Dissertation Planning II, but may be later	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Chair • Research Review Board (RRB)
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If approval is not obtained, reasons will be provided to the student. • If the LOI is returned with “Changes Requested,” resubmission is recommended, but not required. 			
II. Proposal Research Review	Review of the Dissertation Proposal for internal consistency, appropriateness of research questions and methods, and compliance with research standards	Upon completion of the Dissertation Proposal (Chapters I, II, & III)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Committee • Research Review Board (RRB)
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Turnitin report must be submitted with the proposal (access to Turnitin in online classroom). • The Dissertation Committee must provide approval before submitting to the RRB, but only the Chair needs to sign off on the submission. • If the proposal is not approved, a “kickback” occurs. Student is expected to address reviewer comments, complete a change matrix, and have the Dissertation Chair sign off on the new submission (with approval from committee members). The resubmission will go back to the same reviewer, who will pass the proposal or “kickback” again. If kicked back for a third time, the Dean’s staff will intervene to provide further guidance. 			
III. Preliminary Oral Defense	An oral presentation by student to the full Dissertation Committee (Chair and two members) for additional feedback on the proposal and on possible areas of improvement to successfully complete the dissertation	After preliminary approval of the proposal by the Dissertation Committee and the RRB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Committee

- Notes:**
- You must submit **A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense** and schedule a room (Colorado Springs campus students) or conference call (online and Denver Instructional Site students) at least two weeks in advance of the Preliminary Oral Defense.
 - The full Dissertation Committee must attend. You will be asked to give a brief (i.e., 15-20 minute) summary of the proposed study. The Dissertation Chair serves as the moderator. Following the presentation, you will be expected to respond to questions from the Chair and Committee about any aspect of the study.
 - The full Dissertation Committee must approve passage through this gate. **(A6)**
 - Approval may require additional proposal drafts following the Preliminary Oral Defense.
 - You should consider this process consultative and collegial in nature, as the goal is to provide constructive criticism that will ultimately aid in the successful completion of the dissertation.
 - Though the proposal is written with the help of the Dissertation Chair, the student must be able to present his or her own work. The formal presentation of the proposal is a tangible milestone for the student as he or she is becoming a scholar with a voice of his or her own.
 - Dissertation Committee references **Appendix B** to ascertain that the proposal is complete and meets minimum standards.

IV. IRB Review	Review of the proposal by the IRB: a federal requirement to ensure that research participants are protected under the proposal's design and processes	After passing the Preliminary Oral Defense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Review Board (IRB)
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- Notes:**
- There are three types of IRB review: Exempt, Expedited, and Full. Please see the IRB Handbook for a full description of each of these and criteria for approval.
 - You must submit your request for review by the 15th of the month for the most efficient consideration.
 - You must submit the following as part of the IRB submittal:
 - **IRB Research Summary**
 - **IRB Request for Review**
 - CITI completion report (Certificate of completion of the online Human Subjects Research Tutorial)
 - The IRB reviews the submission and either approves it, approves it with specific conditions, or rejects the application with suggestions for major changes required for protection of human subjects.
 - Full Reviews may require the student to present to the IRB.
 - If the application is not approved by the IRB, the student is expected to address IRB comments, complete a Change Matrix, and have the Dissertation Chair sign off on a new submission. Read more about the Change Matrix in Section 5.3.
 - Once IRB approval is obtained, you will be given an IRB Letter of Approval.
 - Once IRB approval is obtained, you may begin to recruit participants and collect data.
 - If you revise your research design or make changes to the Dissertation Committee, you may need to submit an **IRB Report of Change** form.

V. Final Research Review	A review of the full dissertation to assess consistency and accuracy of research questions, methods, analyses, reported results, and compliance with research standards	Upon completion of full dissertation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Committee • Research Review Board
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Turnitin report must be submitted with the dissertation (access to Turnitin in online classroom). • The Dissertation Committee must provide approval before submitting to the RRB. • If the RRB approves the dissertation, the dissertation is ready for the Final Oral Defense. • If the full dissertation is not approved by the RRB, a “kickback” occurs. The student is expected to address reviewer comments, complete a Change Matrix, and have the Dissertation Chair and Committee sign off on the new submission. The resubmission should go back to the same reviewer who will pass the dissertation or “kickback” again. If kicked back for a third time, the Dean’s staff will intervene to provide further guidance. Read more about the Change Matrix in Section 5.3. 			
VI. Final Oral Defense	An oral presentation to the full Dissertation Committee for the purpose of ensuring that you have conducted an academically acceptable dissertation	After preliminary approval of the final dissertation by the Dissertation Committee, and final approval by the RRB and Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Committee
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Final Oral Defense serves as a definitive demonstration of your knowledge, skills, research abilities, and sense of practical applicability, as well as contribution to the field of study, and will be evaluated as such. Through an oral presentation, you show yourself as a scholar, ready to take your place as a contributing part of an academic community. • The RRB and Dean must provide approval of the final dissertation before scheduling the Final Oral Defense. • You must submit A8: Request for Final Oral Defense to schedule a room (Colorado Springs campus students) or conference call (online and Denver Instructional Site students) at least two weeks in advance of the Final Oral Defense. • The full Dissertation Committee must attend. You will be asked to give a 30-45 minute presentation summarizing the study. The Dissertation Chair serves as the moderator. Following the presentation, you will be expected to respond to questions from the Chair and Committee about any aspect of the study. Other attendees may also ask questions. • Approval may require additional dissertation drafts following the Final Oral Defense. • The full Dissertation Committee must approve passage through this gate. A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation must be submitted with a Pass (either “Pass, No Revisions” or “Pass, Minor Revisions”). 			

VII. Final Manuscript Review	Review of the final manuscript to ensure that it meets University requirements	After passing the Final Oral Defense, approval of the Dissertation Committee, and sending the dissertation through an APA editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation Administrator (DA) • Dean of school
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must have an APA editor signed A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance to submit to the DA, along with A10: Dissertation Final Submission, when the final manuscript is sent for review. • You will turn in an electronic copy of the full dissertation to the DA, including a University approved title page signed by the Dissertation Chair. • The DA will perform a final check and upon approval will send the electronic manuscript to the Librarian and also notify the appropriate Registrar to start Graduation audit, if appropriate. • A University librarian completes the paperwork for submission to UMI Dissertation Publishing and requests printing/binding of the manuscript. The librarian may contact you for additional information, payments, etc. • You must be enrolled in a term of ORG/PSY 8990 Dissertation or ORG/PSY 8991 Dissertation Extension when the final manuscript is submitted for review. 			
VIII. Submit Petition to Graduate	Form required to trigger preparations for graduation	Usually submitted after the Final Oral Defense; approved after Final Manuscript Review and Registrar forms review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrar • Dissertation Chair
<p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <i>Petition to Graduate</i> triggers an audit. Registrar starts an audit to make sure all forms have been received and credits recorded. • The petition also triggers preparations for participation in the commencement ceremony. • The Registrar will notify you as to what steps must be taken to officially graduate and walk in the next commencement ceremony. • Preparations for graduation may take up to two months. • In order to walk in the next commencement ceremony, you must have all the paperwork in by the date specified by the Registrar. 			

3.0 CHOOSING A DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The Dissertation Committee is composed of a Dissertation Committee Chair and two additional committee members. The Chair must be a member of the University of the Rockies faculty. The two additional committee members should be faculty members as well, unless there is a significant reason to have a committee member from outside the University. (See Section 3.4.) It is important for you to have a committee with which you work well. Any changes to committee members must be approved by the Dean of your school via [A12: Dissertation Committee Change Request](#).

We recommend that you work with your DA in choosing a Dissertation Committee. You may submit [A1: Request for Committee Candidates](#) to the DA to find out who might be suitable committee or chair candidates. This partnership with the DA will help ensure that the following criteria are met:

- The Dissertation Committee Chair should have expertise in the main topic area of the dissertation.
- The Chair should be someone with whom you work well.
- If you are a student in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization, you *must* have a Dissertation Committee Chair who is a member of the clinical Core faculty, unless approved by the Dean.
- At least one committee member must be knowledgeable and experienced in the type of research techniques you plan to apply.

3.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Dissertation Committee Chair will:

- Assess your capability to undertake the study and defend the dissertation. If necessary, the Dissertation Committee Chair may require you to address any deficiencies by taking courses, studying independently, or reading additional material.
- Determine that the proposal meets dissertation standards. The Dissertation Committee Chair should consult with the other Dissertation Committee members to provide scholarly and professional guidance of the dissertation. The Chair is responsible for the initial review and approval of chapters/proposal and will then direct you to cycle it through the other committee members for additional feedback and approval to move toward submitting to the Research Review Board and scheduling the Preliminary Oral Defense.
- Advise you on the selection of the other committee members.
- Act as a liaison between you and other Dissertation Committee members, as well as the University of the Rockies administration.
- Ensure that you have done all that is necessary to develop, conduct, and write a quality study.
- Be aware of and follow all University of the Rockies procedures, as well as ensure that you are stay on track. The Dissertation Chair is expected to reinforce deadlines and discourage postponements.
- Sign off on required forms to help you move from one step to the next in the dissertation process.



Remember – your Chair is there to guide you through the dissertation process. This Handbook may not answer all of your questions, so consult your Chair as needed.

3.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS (NON-CHAIR)

The Dissertation Committee members will:

- Review and provide feedback and comments on Dissertation Proposal.
- Attend, participate in, and evaluate Preliminary Oral Defense.
- Review the final draft of dissertation and provide feedback and comments.
- Attend, participate in, and evaluate Final Oral Defense.

The Dissertation Committee Chair may direct committee members, as subject matter experts, to engage in additional steps of the process. Committee members may be asked to:

- Mentor and advise the student on the dissertation to ensure scholarly work;
- Encourage and guide the student in solving dissertation issues and problems;
- Advise and guide the student regarding possible funding sources for the research;
- Advise and guide in the data collection and analysis process; or
- Advise and provide guidance regarding suitability for publication and promotion of collaborative writing of publication(s) based upon the dissertation.

The Dissertation Committee may also rely upon additional subject matter experts as consulting members of the Committee for research support.

3.3 CHOOSING THE COMMITTEE CHAIR AND MEMBERS

Once you have settled on a topic for your dissertation, choose a Dissertation Chair and committee members. Keep the following in mind.

1. You will be working closely with the Committee Chair. It is very important that you get along and work well with the Chair, and that you trust that he or she will be able to guide you well in your particular research study. Choosing a Chair is one of the most important decisions you will make.
2. While the Dissertation Committee Chair is the head of the Committee and the person with whom you will work most closely, the other members are also important contributors to the process and should be consulted for their expertise.
3. One of the other two committee members must be Core, Associate Core, Core Affiliate, or Adjunct Faculty; however, the third member may be a non-faculty member, chosen for his or her expertise in your topic area. The third committee member must have an earned doctorate (or the equivalent) and be recognized as an expert on the topic of study. (See Section 3.4.)
4. Provide a Dissertation Letter of Intent (LOI) or a draft of the Dissertation Proposal to prospective committee members when approaching them to serve on the Committee. This information gives potential committee members an idea of whether the proposed study is within their area of interest and expertise.

3.4 CHOOSING COMMITTEE MEMBERS FROM OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY

A student may have a Dissertation Committee member who is not a University of the Rockies faculty member. Such an individual must:

- have appropriate professional qualifications;
- be recognized for his or her professional accomplishments in the field or specialization in which you are conducting your research;
- not be personally related to you; and
- be approved by the Dean.

You must submit a copy of **A14: Approval for Non-Faculty Dissertation Committee Participation** and a copy of the proposed member's curriculum vitae to the Dean at least two months prior to the Preliminary Research Review to give adequate time for approval. Any personal or professional relationship with the individual must be disclosed when obtaining approval of this committee member. The full Committee should be in place at least four weeks prior to the Proposal Research Review.

4.0 SELECTING A TOPIC

4.1 RESEARCH TOPIC SELECTION

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

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

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

- Content
 - The topic should be related to your field of specialization, area of interest, and professional plans for the future.
 - A question or problem that you have identified on your own is more likely to keep your interest for a long time than a topic provided by someone else.
 - Consider the scope of the topic. Topics that are more narrowly defined are much easier to study thoroughly. You should not try to cover too large a content area.
 - Consider how comfortable and willing you will be to devote a substantial amount of time to the selected topic. Studying something you believe in strongly should give you sufficient motivation to complete the project.
 - Consider whether the questions of interest have been addressed in other research in similar or different forms and whether these questions are worthy of further study.
 - University of the Rockies does not have animal research facilities, and thus, animal research is not acceptable. **Research involving animals as primary research subjects is not permitted.**
- Logistics
 - Be practical. Consider the amount of time and amount of resources necessary to undertake the research, including money, location, data collection instruments, etc.
 - Consider the availability of participants or data.
 - Once you have narrowed down your topic and considered the methodology, enumerate the tasks that need to be accomplished and the steps required to complete each task. Estimate the time needed to complete each step, anticipate challenges and potential delays.
- Strategy
 - Carefully read and review professional literature in your area of interest *before* making a final decision on the topic/area of research. Keep an annotated bibliography of everything you read so you can use it for reference and as part of the reference sections of your proposal and dissertation.
 - It is also helpful to read other dissertations in your topic/area of research and discuss them with your Dissertation Chair. High quality dissertations can be useful guides for the depth and breadth of a successful topic, as well as the methodology of the study.

- Review the requirements of **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent** (LOI), discussed in Section 4.2. Once you've selected your topic, complete the LOI. It is useful to start thinking about the importance of the study, the research methodology, and the specific question you want to answer with your research as you are selecting a topic.

A dissertation must be scholarly and succinct, and the research should be of sufficient quality to be published in part in a peer-reviewed journal. It should also make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in the student's discipline/specialization, but it does not need to revolutionize the field.

Note that although you may begin choosing your topic before choosing your Chair, he or she will be instrumental in helping you focus the topic and develop the research methodology.

4.2 DISSERTATION LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)

Once you have identified a topic and selected a committee chair, you will work with him or her to develop **A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent** (LOI), which you will submit to the Dissertation Administrator (DA) for approval by the Research Review Board (RRB). You will also use the LOI as the basis for a mini-proposal to present to potential Dissertation Committee Members.

Transition
Point I

4.2.1 PARTS OF THE LETTER OF INTENT

The LOI consists of five sections: Problem Statement, Purpose Statement, Importance of the Study, Proposed Research Method, and Research Questions.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem statement should consist of 1-2 paragraphs that identify a general problem in the discipline that the proposed research will address.

The problem statement should describe the research problem and should be supported by recent citations. It should briefly explain how the results of the proposed study could be used to address the research problem.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Purpose Statement should consist of 1 paragraph that provides a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study. It should succinctly describe the focus, methodology, population, and geographical location of the study. The Purpose Statement should be aligned directly to the specific research problem.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This section should consist of 1-2 paragraphs that briefly describe the importance of the proposed research, including how the study represents a unique approach to the problem, how the results may contribute to theory and/or practice in the field, the implications of the research, and any knowledge gaps that the proposed research will help fill.

PROPOSED RESEARCH METHOD

This section should consist of 1-2 paragraphs that briefly describe the research methodology for the proposed study, including the research method and research design, population and sample, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis approaches.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

This section should consist of a list of the specific research questions you plan to try to answer with the study, and any specific hypotheses you plan to test. The proposed research method and design should be consistent with the questions and hypotheses.



See **Appendix D** for a sample Letter of Intent and **Chapter 9** for Resources to help write your LOI.

5.0 WRITING AND DEFENDING THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

5.1 PURPOSE OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

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

5.2 PARTS OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

The proposal consists of three chapters:

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



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

5.2.1 CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the reader to the nature of the study by guiding the reader from the broad aspects of the topic to a more specific question or set of questions. Chapter I should include the content below, and should be approximately 15-25 pages long. (Note that you may use the subheadings below, but you are not required to do so, as long as all content is included. You may, for example, want to combine sections.)

GENERAL STATEMENT

A general statement should explain what you propose to accomplish with the study, the significance of the study, and the implications of the study. A discussion of *selected* literature should be included here, but limited to the specific studies or articles needed to explain the purpose of or need for the study. This literature review should include only those references that provide the historical framework for the statement of the problem.

(Chapter II will consist of a comprehensive review of the literature.)

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

This section discusses the general research problem and then focuses in on the specific problem that you propose to address. You should explain how and why the focus of the study is important, the potential impact of the proposed research, and how you think the study will contribute to the field.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

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

- include a Purpose Statement that describes the focus, methodology, population, and geographical location of the study;
- define the specific area of the research and the central concepts or ideas of the study;
- justify the method of inquiry (i.e., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed); and
- describe possible conclusions and implications of those conclusions.



It is recommended that you actually start writing Chapter II before Chapter I, as it will help you obtain an understanding of the topic, previous research conducted, and how your research addresses a gap in the literature.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This section should address the importance of the research, what the research is expected to contribute to theory or practice, and the possible implications of the research.

THEORETICAL (OR CONCEPTUAL) FRAMEWORK

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

RESEARCH QUESTIONS (AND HYPOTHESES)

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

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN

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

DEFINITION OF TERMS

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

ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Assumptions are factors or statements that you will consider from the beginning to be valid. Include the assumptions that you will make in the study in this section, including both research assumptions and theoretical assumptions. Because it would be difficult to take all factors into consideration, there will naturally be certain limitations in doing the study. The major limiting factors in the study, which could possibly affect the results, should also be addressed in this section. If the limitations are considerable, provide an explanation of why you think the study should still be conducted, and what can be gained from the study in spite of the limitations.

SUMMARY

In the section you should summarize the key points of the study and provide an overview of information that will be presented in chapters II and III.

5.2.2 CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Scholarship entails comprehensive understanding of the historical and current treatment of the pertinent topic, and Chapter II consists of a comprehensive review of the literature pertaining to the topic of study.

While completing your coursework and selecting your topic, you will have been reading, exploring, and thinking about what others have done in order to better understand the concepts and issues, and identify gaps in the research. In order to argue the legitimacy of the current study, you need to have a thorough understanding of what that study will add to the most current literature on the topic. You will need to critically analyze, synthesize, and integrate the literature such that the reader understands



Begin your literature review as soon as you begin your doctoral program. As you move through your coursework, keep an annotated bibliography of everything you come across that might be of use during your dissertation.

where the proposed study fits into the current debates and academic inquiries concerning the topic. Chapter II is thus a formal summary and analysis of the literature directly related to your particular study. It should consist of the following sections:

INTRODUCTION

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

SEARCH STRATEGY

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

LITERATURE REVIEW

This is the main section of the chapter and should be organized in a rational way, with subheads as needed. The Literature Review should:

- be comprehensive;
- describe related problems, questions, methods, and conclusions;
- cover the most important theories or research findings upon which your research problem and hypotheses are based;
- cover both historic and recent research findings;
- present research that supports and refutes the main theories or findings of relevance;
- compare and contrast different theories and research results;
- analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the research, not simply present or report it; and
- consist primarily of scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and book chapters.

SUMMARY

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

In general, Chapter II is 30-50 pages long, but the exact length will be determined by the amount of existing published research. The literature review needs to be comprehensive, and it should show an overwhelming breadth and scope of knowledge on the related research topics.

5.2.3 CHAPTER III: METHOD

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

Include the following in Chapter III:

- An introduction that describes the purpose and organization of the chapter, and provides a brief overview of the method of inquiry (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed), the specific research methodology, and the rationale for using it to address your research questions;
- The methodology and justification for the methodology you plan to use;

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



As you begin writing your proposal read the *IRB Handbook*, which will help make sure you are aware of the ethical and professional standards that should be considered in your study design as you are working on it.

5.3 REVIEW BY THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND RESEARCH REVIEW BOARD

Transition Point II

As you write your proposal, you will spend time revising it based on comments from your Dissertation Committee Chair and the other members of your Committee. Take these comments seriously, and keep in mind that the proposal development is a collaborative process. Your committee should offer constructive criticism to help improve the overall quality of the proposal, and increase the chances that it passes the RRB and IRB reviews, and will serve as a useful resource as you conduct your dissertation research.

When your committee thinks that the proposal is ready, have your Dissertation Chair complete and sign **A4: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review**. Next, send this form, with the proposal and a Turnitin report for the proposal, to the Dissertation Administrator (DA). The DA will send these to the RRB.

The RRB will review the proposal for academic rigor, quality, and appropriateness of the proposed research study, evaluating particularly the alignment of the research problem and questions with the research methodology and design. As with comments from the Dissertation Committee, you are required to make any



Avoid Plagiarism! You are required to submit a Turnitin report with your proposal and dissertation. You should check the proposal before submitting it to your committee. It is easy to plagiarize unintentionally, but even unintentional plagiarism is against University of the Rockies policy and can result in disciplinary actions. For more information about the plagiarism policy and tips on avoiding it, see the *Academic Catalog*.

necessary changes and resubmit the proposal, along with a Change Matrix describing the changes you made, to the RRB (via the DA) if necessary.

The following is a template that should be used to create the Change Matrix that will be submitted (via the DA) back to the RRB or IRB whenever changes must be made to the Dissertation Proposal, IRB Submission, or final Dissertation.

CHANGE MATRIX TEMPLATE:

Comment Identifier	Reviewer Comment	Page/Para. (Original Draft)	Changes Made and/or Comments	Page/Para. (New Draft)
Include comment identification code for the reviewer comment (i.e., MM1)	<i>Copy the reviewer comment.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the comment was made.</i>	<i>Describe the changes that were made, and/or comments responding to questions or concerns.</i>	<i>List the page and paragraph numbers where the change(s) was made.</i>

Transition Point III

5.4 PRELIMINARY ORAL DEFENSE

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



All PsyD, Clinical Specialization students are required to pass the preliminary oral defense before beginning their internship, and should do so before applying for internship.

5.4.1 SCHEDULING THE ORAL DEFENSE

To schedule your preliminary oral defense, do the following at least two weeks in advance of your desired date.

- Work with your Dissertation Chair and Committee to schedule a date and time.
- Submit **A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense** to the DA.

5.4.2 PROCESS DURING THE ORAL DEFENSE

- The Dissertation Committee Chair serves as the moderator.
- Give a brief (15-20 minute) summary of your proposed study. Use of PowerPoint to assist with the presentation is encouraged.
- After your presentation, you will meet with the committee for a question-and-answer session wherein all committee members may question any aspect of the study

- You will then be excused and the committee will convene to complete the **A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation**
 - The Dissertation Committee Chair will bring the Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation to the preliminary oral defense or will submit it electronically to all committee members if you are an online student.
 - On this form, the committee may direct you to revise, expand, or delete portions of the proposal and will give you details of the requested information or changes.
- You will be informed of the committee’s decision after the evaluation has been completed.
 - There are three possible outcomes: “Pass, No Revisions,” “Pass, Minor Revisions,” and “Major Revisions Needed.”
 - If you “Pass, Minor Revisions,” or receive “Major Revisions Needed,” your Dissertation Chair will advise you of the revisions needed to proceed. Submit the evaluation to the DA by the Chair. If revisions are required, submit an updated evaluation to the DA by the Chair.

5.5 REVIEW BY THE IRB

Transition Point IV

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

- It is useful to review the IRB Handbook before requesting the IRB Review, even though you should have reviewed the *IRB Handbook* while writing the proposal.
- Submit the following to the DA, who will pass them along to the IRB:
 - **IRB Request for Review (Exemption, Expedited Review, or Full Review)** (Appendix B, C, or D of the *IRB Handbook*)
 - **IRB Research Summary** (Appendix E in the *IRB Handbook*)
 - **CITI Certification** (see *IRB Handbook*, Section 4.2)
- If you require a Full Review, you may also need to make a presentation to the IRB.
- This is not a review of your topic or your research methodology, it is a review of whether or not sufficient safeguards are included to protect human research participants.
- The University of the Rockies IRB meets regularly to review student applications.
 - *Requests must be submitted by the 15th of the month for the most efficient consideration.*
- Expect the IRB approval process to take two to five weeks; plan accordingly.
- Refer to the IRB Handbook for more details about submission to the IRB. After the review, you will receive a letter with the IRB’s assessment. The IRB will:
 - approve the proposal;
 - approve the proposal with specific conditions; or
 - deny the proposal with suggestions for major changes needed for protection of human research subjects.
- If your proposal requires revisions, you may need to resubmit it to the IRB via the DA for another review.
- It is not uncommon for outside agencies to have something similar to an IRB that must also approve the study before any data can be collected. If you are working with an outside organization, be sure to submit the proposal and protocols for review to their administration.
 - This must be done **after** the study has been approved by the University of the Rockies IRB, but **before** any data is collected.
 - Approval of the study by external agencies and their respective IRBs should be sent to the IRB.



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

6.0 CONDUCTING RESEARCH AND WRITING THE DISSERTATION

6.1 CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Upon passing the Preliminary Oral Defense and approval of the proposal by the University of the Rockies RRB and IRB, the study is ready to commence. ***You may begin data collection only at this point.*** You are advised to work closely with the Dissertation Committee Chair throughout your research. You may also wish to consult other committee members as needed.

Follow these guidelines while conducting the study:

1. Collect all data as described in your proposal, adhering to ethical and professional standards throughout.
2. Conduct data analysis, consulting with your Dissertation Committee as needed.
3. Consult with external editors and statisticians in a mentoring or coaching capacity only.
4. Write Chapters IV (Results) and V (Discussion).
5. As you collect data, you are responsible for adhering to the method described in your proposal. If you find that you need to revise the method, you must inform your dissertation chair immediately. Depending on the nature of the modifications, you may need to revise your proposal and resubmit it to the RRB, IRB, and the equivalent organizations of any agency you are working with.
6. Use the appropriate consent or assent forms if the study involves human subjects. (See **Appendices K, L, and M** of the *IRB Handbook* for instructions for preparing consent/assent forms.) ***Keep the original consent or assent forms signed by participants confidential and do not make them a part of any appendix of the dissertation.***

6.2 ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

Writing a dissertation may seem like an overwhelming task, but it can be made more manageable by breaking it into smaller sections. Good organization throughout the writing process will facilitate this task greatly. Remember, the entire dissertation must be in APA style, following the *APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition*, except as specified in **Appendix C**.



It may be helpful to look at other dissertations. Dissertations are available to peruse via ProQuest in the “Interdisciplinary Dissertations and Theses” database.

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

Organization of Final Dissertation

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

14. Appendices
15. Tables
16. Biographical Statement (optional)

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

FRONT MATTER

TITLE PAGE

The title page should include the title of the dissertation, your name, the date, the name and credentials of the Chair and committee members, along with other statements, and be formatted according to the template in Appendix D.



See **Appendix D** for a template and example of what should be included on the Title Page.

COPYRIGHT PAGE

In order to copyright your work (which must be done within 5 years of publication), a statement of copyright must be included on a separate page (preliminary page ii) directly following the title page. You should have your work copyrighted, especially if you intend to publish any part of it at a later date. (This can be done by UMI Dissertation Publishing after you submit the final manuscript.)

ABSTRACT

The body of the finished dissertation begins with a brief (1 page or less) abstract (or summary) of the research conducted and the results obtained. This section should be headed with the word “Abstract”, centered, at the top of the page. Keep in mind that a reader should come away from the abstract knowing your research topic, questions, sample, methodology and design, overall results, and your conclusions. An abstract is a summary of the actual points in the dissertation. The abstract should:

- state the problem briefly
- describe the methods and procedures used in gathering or studying the problem
- give a condensed summary of the findings of the study
- include a list of key words to be used by other researchers to search for and identify information in various subject areas

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In this section you will give appropriate recognition to those individuals and organizations that have made some significant contribution to the research or project. While this is an optional component, it is customary to include.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

The List of Tables and Figures is a list of the titles and page numbers of graphics, including illustrations, diagrams, graphs, charts, and tables. Tables and figures should be listed in order and the titles should be descriptive.



Use the Table of Contents tool in Microsoft Word. This tool helps you automatically create and update the Table of Contents.

LIST OF APPENDICES

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

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter is simply a revision or extension of Chapter I of the proposal. Keep in mind that you will need to revise the proposal chapter such that it refers not to what you proposed to do, but what you actually did do. Read more about what should be included in Section 5.2.1.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is likely to be a light revision of Chapter II of the proposal. It should include the literature review of the proposal, along with a review of any additional literature that you came across or that was published while you were conducting your dissertation research. As in the proposal, Chapter II should be a formal summary and analysis of the literature. Read more about what should be included in Section 5.2.2.



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

CHAPTER III: METHOD

In the method chapter, you will discuss the overall research design and the specific procedures you followed while conducting the study. Again, this is a modification of Chapter III of the proposal, and you can use it as a base. Be sure to revise it according to what was actually done during the study, not what you propose to do, updating. Read more about what should be included in Section 5.2.3.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

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



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

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

- an introduction that describes the purpose and organization of the chapter, and restates the research questions;
- a discussion of any pilot studies, results, and resulting modifications to the main study;
- a detailed overview of the sample (i.e., demographics);
- a discussion of the theory/theoretical model in detail, if the dissertation is theoretical in nature;
- a discussion of all available data, the statistical methods used, significance levels (if relevant), and whether or not the hypotheses were supported by the data, if the study was quantitative or mixed;
- the results of the analyses;
- the inconsistencies and contradictions in the findings;
- any graphic or visual representation of data gained from the study, such as data tables, scatterplots, ANOVA tables, or process diagrams, following APA requirements for formatting and inclusion; and
- explanation of any graphics in the body of the chapter so it is clear as to why they are included and what information they provide to the reader.

With the exception of qualitative studies, this chapter is relatively straight-forward and technical for most dissertations. Just give the facts without interpretation.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

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

- an introduction that describes the purpose and organization of the chapter,
- interpretations of the data and analyses,
- references to results reported in Chapter IV,
- conclusions that address the research questions,
- discussion of findings that *do not* fully support the hypotheses,
- limitations affecting the validity, generalizability, or trustworthiness of the study,
- implications for theory and future research,
- implications for practice,
- how your findings converge with or diverge from previous research,
- recommendations for further research, and
- a strong conclusion statement.

BACK MATTER

The end of your dissertation should include the following sections:

REFERENCES

List **all** references cited in the dissertation alphabetically, using APA Style for listing references. **Do not** list any references that were not actually cited in the dissertation.

APPENDIX (OR APPENDICES)

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

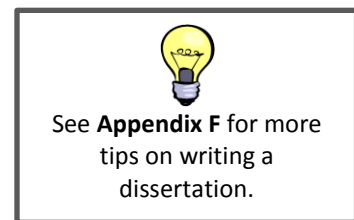
- copies of instructions for participants,
- copies of consent forms,
- permissions obtained from organizations or agencies to use resources, materials, or facilities,
- descriptions of any special conditions of the research , and
- additional tables or graphs that supplement but do not provide data gained from the study.

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT (OPTIONAL)

You may wish to include a brief statement about yourself: your educational background, reasons for choosing the particular field you are in, and special interest in the topic of study.

6.3 Writing Suggestions

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



- Use Microsoft Word tools to organize and format the dissertation.
- Save the document in at least two places (e.g., thumb/flash drive, hard drive, paper copy, etc.). This will prevent data loss in the case of technical difficulties. Consider saving the dissertation in the cloud, an internet accessible site, as well.
- Stay organized. Keep all materials and references handy. Use a user-friendly filing system, such as separating reference materials by subtopic or the chapter in which they are used.
- Come up with a logical file naming and folder system. Create a system that allows you to keep old versions of files, but minimizes version control problems.
- Read and follow the most current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.
- Prepare an outline. It is easier to put words together when following a detailed outline.
- Aim for a concise and continuous flow of ideas. Use headings to organize and clarify the structure of the document.
- Update the References list as you write instead of completing the entire list at one time.
- Read over everything you write and everything you revise before sending it to anyone to review. Your reviewers should be making constructive comments, not commenting on careless mistakes.
- Expect to write several drafts. Most students revise the dissertation several times before it is approved by the Dissertation Chair and ready to submit to the committee members for review.
- Ask an outside person to read the document and make editing suggestions regarding grammar, spelling, and syntax. It is acceptable to use a professional editing service for this purpose, but you are responsible for all related fees.
- Give the Dissertation Committee Chair a draft of each chapter as it is completed. This helps the Chair review the work and allows you to receive faster feedback.
- You must have the final draft of the dissertation reviewed, edited, and certified by an approved professional APA Style editor prior to its submission. You are responsible for all related fees.



It is your responsibility to obtain letters of permission from copyright holders to reproduce copyrighted material (e.g., published tables, graphs, measurements) in your dissertation, and to submit copies of approvals to UMI/ProQuest when submitting your dissertation for publication. In addition, reproduced (or adapted) tables or figures must be accompanied by a note at the bottom of the reprinted table (or in the figure caption), giving credit to the original author and to the copyright holder.

7.0 DISSERTATION REVIEW AND FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

Once you have written your dissertation, it will need to be reviewed by your Dissertation Committee and by the Research Review Board. Once approved, you will then go on to present and defend the dissertation.

7.1 REVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

Your dissertation will need to go through a number of reviews before you can defend it formally.

Transition
Point V

- When you finish writing your dissertation and have reviewed and revised it on your own with the help of your Dissertation Chair, submit it to your committee members for review. Expect several rounds of revisions.
 - Once your Chair and Committee have approved the dissertation, you will need to have your Chair sign **A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review**.
- After approval from your committee, the dissertation needs to be reviewed by the Research Review Board (RRB). The RRB will review the dissertation for consistency and accuracy of research questions, methods, analyses, and reported results, and compliance with research standards. Send the following to the DA, who will then pass them along to the RRB:
 - **A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review**,
 - approved full dissertation, and
 - a Turnitin report for the dissertation.

Note: If your full dissertation is not approved by the RRB, it will be sent back. You are expected to address reviewer comments, complete a Change Matrix indicating all the changes you made, and have your Dissertation Chair and Committee sign off on the new submission. The resubmission to the DA will prompt the dissertation to be sent to the same reviewer, who will pass the dissertation or “kickback” again. If it is kicked back for a third time, the Dean’s staff will intervene to provide further guidance. Read more about the Change Matrix in Section 5.3.

Transition
Point VI

7.2 FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

Once your dissertation is approved by the Dissertation Chair, Dissertation Committee, and the RRB, you are ready to defend it formally in an oral presentation to the Committee.

7.2.1 GOALS OF THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

The Final Oral Defense is intended to make sure that you have conducted an academically acceptable dissertation and can communicate your knowledge of the dissertation’s research topics and findings to others.

Goals of the Final Oral Defense

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

7.2.2 SCHEDULING THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

After your dissertation is approved by the Dissertation Committee, Chair, RRB, and Dean, do the following to schedule the final oral defense.

- Submit **A8: Request for Final Oral Defense** to the DA to schedule a Final Oral Defense date, location (Colorado Springs campus students), or conference call/teleconference (online and Denver Instructional Site students) at least two weeks in advance of the final defense; and
- Coordinate this date with your Dissertation Committee Chair and committee members.

7.2.3 DURING THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

The following activities usually occur during the Final Oral Defense:

1. Dissertation Committee Chair serves as the moderator.
2. Give a 30-45 minute presentation summarizing the study and respond to questions from the audience, if present.
3. After presentation, you meet with the Dissertation Committee for a question-and-answer session wherein committee members may question any aspect related to the results, your interpretation of the results, or implications of the study.
4. You are excused and committee members will convene to evaluate your defense and complete the **A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation**. *It is the Chair's responsibility to bring this form to the preliminary oral defense or to submit it electronically to all committee members (if you are an online student).*
5. After they have convened, which is typically within the hour following the defense, you will be informed of the Committee's decision. The Committee may direct you to revise, expand, or delete portions of the dissertation and will give you details of the requested information or changes. A result of "Major Revisions Needed" will require that you repeat the final oral defense.

Note: University of the Rockies retains the right to consider the Final Oral Defense a "Fail" if you do not make the changes required by the committee or are found to have committed any scientific, ethical, or professional misconduct in the study.

8.0 FINAL SUBMISSION AND GRADUATION

Transition Point VII

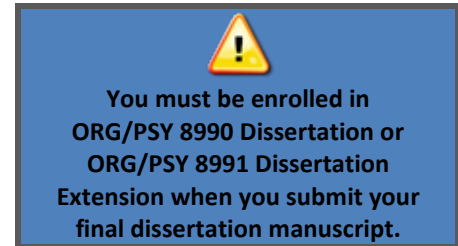
8.1 FINAL SUBMISSION

After you pass the Final Oral Defense, you are ready to prepare your dissertation for final submission.

8.1.1 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

Before submitting the final version of the dissertation, make sure it includes all parts, in the correct order:

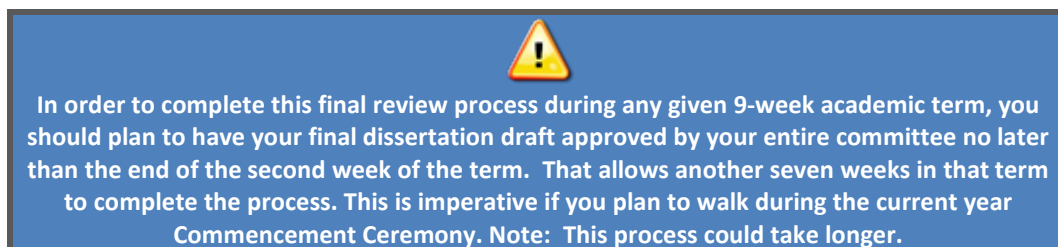
1. Title Page
2. Copyright Page
3. Abstract
4. Acknowledgements (optional)
5. Table of Contents
6. List of Tables and Figures
7. List of Appendices
8. Chapter I: Introduction
9. Chapter II: Review of the Literature
10. Chapter III: Method
11. Chapter IV: Results
12. Chapter V: Discussion
13. References
14. Appendices
15. Tables (if not included in the text of Chapter IV)
16. Biographical Statement (optional)



8.1.2 PROCESS

There are several steps in this process of preparing the final dissertation.

1. Submit an electronic copy of the full dissertation to the Dissertation Committee Chair for final review of all revisions (if required) and for formatting, and make any revisions necessary.
2. At the same time, submit the dissertation to an approved APA Style editor for final style compliance review. Have the APA editor sign **A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance**. *You are responsible for all related fees.*
3. Make necessary revisions and maintain APA Style. Secure final approval from the Dissertation Committee Chair and members. Have the Chair and committee members sign **A10: Dissertation Final Submission**.
4. Submit **A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance** and **A10: Dissertation Final Submission**, along with an electronic copy of the final dissertation to the DA *with original Committee Signatures*. This document must include a scan of the cover page, following the University of the Rockies template, and the Dissertation Chair's signature. The DA will send the form to the Dean for his or her signature.



8.1.3 BINDING AND PUBLISHING THE DISSERTATION

Once the dissertation has been completed and formally approved by the Dissertation Committee Chair, it must be printed and bound. To facilitate this process, the fee for binding one copy is included in the graduation fee and the Rockies Library will complete the process for you.

Steps to Bind Dissertation

1. Submit an electronic copy of the final dissertation to the Office of Academic Services and the Library (Colorado Springs campus) or one electronic copy to the DA (Devner Instructional Site & online students) who will forward a copy to the Library. Note: This document must include a title page, scanned into the document after it has been signed by the Dissertation Committee Chair.
2. The Library uploads the dissertation to UMI Publishing. You may be contacted by the library during this process for additional information. A copy of the bound dissertation is automatically sent to University of the Rockies. Note: The fee for this service is included in your graduation fee.
3. If you would like to order personal copies of the dissertation, copyright the dissertation, or register it with the Library of Congress, you must log onto UMI Dissertation Publishing at <http://dissertations.umi.com> and pay for these services.



It is your responsibility to make sure these stages are completed before the posted deadline date of the year in which you intend to graduate, if you plan to participate in that year's Commencement Ceremony.

8.2 GRADUATION

Once you have submitted the final dissertation *and completed all of your other non-dissertation related graduation requirements as noted in the University of the Rockies Academic Catalog*, you can prepare for graduation.

Transition
Point VIII

- Have your Dissertation Committee Chair sign the **Petition to Graduate** and submit the form to the DA prior to the deadline set by the Registrar. The DA will pass the form along to the Registrar's Office. *Note that you will **not** be able to participate in the commencement ceremony if this form is not signed and submitted.*
- Follow instructions from the Registrar's Office for final preparations for graduation.

9.0 RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

The following resources and references may be helpful as you prepare your dissertation.

9.0.1 UNIVERSITY OF THE ROCKIES RESOURCES

LIBRARY

The Library will be a necessary resource as you conduct a literature search for previously published articles on your dissertation topic and chosen methodology. Rockies' Librarians may be useful if you are having difficulty finding a particular article or locating research on a particular topic. In addition, you may access former students' (Rockies or other universities) dissertations via the ProQuest "Interdisciplinary Dissertations and Theses" database. Access the Library via the Student Portal.

ROCKIES RESEARCH CENTER

The Rockies Research Center (RRC) is an online resource with information to assist Doctoral students with dissertation research, links to additional outside resources, an open forum for discussions and sharing information related to research, and a place to ask questions about the dissertation and research processes. The RRC also provides information on research methodologies, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, and includes a link to SAGE Research Methods Online. Access the RRC via the Student Portal.

Sage Research Methods

SAGE Research Methods is a collection of resources to help in the understanding and utilization of various research designs and methodologies, including ethics, implementation, data collection, and data analysis. SAGE resources are available to faculty and students, and include the following:

- Books (e.g., textbooks, "Little Green Book", and "Little Blue Book" series)
- Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and handbooks
- Journal articles
- Videos
- Methodspace (discussion forum)

To access SAGE Research Methods, go to the University of the Rockies Library. Click on the **Find Articles & More** link on the main menu. Click on **Databases A-Z**. Jump to the **S** listings by clicking on the letter. Then click on **SAGE Research Methods**.

SMARTLAB STATISTICS PRIMER

SMARTLab is designed to give students a refresher on basic statistics. It includes straight-forward explanations and practice of statistical methods in a real-world context. This may serve as a refresher before embarking in the statistical analyses for your study. Access SMARTLab via the Student Portal.

WRITING CENTER – WRITER'S PEAK

Writer's Peak, the University of the Rockies Writing Center, may be a useful resource to improve your writing skills as you work on the literature review or other sections of the dissertation. Even though the Writing Center will not review or provide feedback on drafts of your dissertation, you may submit previous assignments or writing samples so you can get general guidance from a Writing Coach, which you can use to improve your overall writing skills. Access The Writing Center via the Student Portal.

9.2.0 REFERENCES

DISSERTATION PREPARATION AND DEFENSE

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- Martin, R. P. (2001). Preparing and defending theses and dissertations. In S. Walfish & A. K. Hess (Eds.), *Succeeding in graduate school: The career guide for psychology students* (pp. 303 – 315). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
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APPENDIX A: DISSERTATION FORMS
FORMS CHECKLIST

Form	When to Submit	Who Signs	Date Submitted	Notes
A1: Request for Committee Candidates (as needed)	as needed to find a Chair	You		
A2: Dissertation Committee Chair Request	after you choose a Chair	You & Chair		
A12: Dissertation Committee Change Request (as needed)	as needed to change a committee member	You		
A13: Approval for Non-Faculty Committee Member Participation (as needed)	as needed to include a non-faculty member on the committee	You & Chair		
A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent	when you finalize your topic and complete your LOI	You & Chair		
A4: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review	when your proposal is ready for RRB review	Chair		
A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense	when you are ready to schedule your Preliminary Oral Defense	Chair		
A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation (to be submitted by the Dissertation Chair)	after you defend your proposal	Chair & Committee Members		
IRB Request for Review (Exemption, Expedited Review, or Full Review)*	after you pass your Preliminary Oral Defense	You & Chair		
IRB Research Summary*	with the IRB Request for Review	N/A		
Certificate of Completion of the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Human Subjects Research Tutorial*	with the IRB Request for Review	N/A		
A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review	after your full dissertation is ready for RRB review	Chair		
A8: Request for Final Oral Defense	after your full dissertation is approved by the RRB	Chair		
A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation (to be submitted by the Dissertation Chair)	after your Final Oral Defense	Chair & Committee Members		
A10: Dissertation Final Submission	when your committee approves the full dissertation	Chair & Committee Members		
A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance	when your committee approves the full dissertation	APA Style Editor		
Petition to Graduate	when you complete dissertation & all graduation requirements	You & Chair		

*Forms available in the *IRB Handbook*.

Submit this form to obtain names and/or contact information of faculty to be possible dissertation chair or committee members. Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Date: _____

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Program: PsyD PhD Specialization: _____

Description

Provide a problem statement and short description of your proposed Dissertation study and the specific aims of your research (maximum 350 words).

Proposed Methods

Check all that apply:

Qualitative

- Phenomenology
- Grounded Theory
- Ethnography
- Case Studies
- Delphi
- Other (please specify) _____

Quantitative

- Experimental
- Quasi-experimental
- Descriptive

Mixed Methods

Purpose of this Request

Students completing a Dissertation are required to identify a Dissertation Committee Chair and two additional committee members to support their Dissertation research. Students should send this form to the faculty member they have requested as their committee chair to confirm their interest and intent to serve as chair. A signed Dissertation Committee Chair Request form for the dissertation Chair must be on file before the student will be permitted to enroll for Dissertation credits.

Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567
Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567
Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Preferred Method of Contact: Email Telephone

Dissertation Working Title: _____

Provide a brief description of your proposed Dissertation research.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

For Faculty Use Only

Faculty Name: _____

Faculty Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Check one:

Initial submission

Resubmittal – include a Change Matrix with form

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Proposed Area of Study

Dissertation

Working Title: _____

Problem Statement:

In a cogent paragraph or two, identify a general problem in the discipline that supports the need to conduct the proposed research and describe a specific research problem that the research will address. Describe what is problematic, how, and for whom, supported by recent citations. Briefly explain how the results of the study could be used to address the specific research problem. (1-2 paragraphs)

Purpose Statement:

Provide a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study. Align the **Purpose of the Study** to address the specific research problem. In one concise paragraph, succinctly describe the focus, methodology, population, and geographical location of the study. (1 paragraph)

Importance of the Study

Briefly describe the importance of the proposed research, including how the study represents a unique approach to the problem, how the results may contribute to theory and /or practice in the field, and the implications of the research. Identify any knowledge gaps to be addressed by the proposed research. (1-2 paragraphs)

Proposed Research Method

Briefly describe the research methodology for the proposed study, including the research method and research design, population and sample, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis approaches. (1-2 paragraphs)

Research Questions (and Hypotheses-if quantitative)

Present specific research questions to be addressed, consistent with the proposed research method and design. If hypotheses will be tested, include them as well.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dissertation Chair Name: _____

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Administrative Use Only:

- Approved
- Changes Requested
- Document attached

In lieu of non-electronic signature, Dissertation Chair must email the completed form from their University of the Rockies email address, with a copy to the student.

Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Check one: Initial submission Resubmittal - include a Change Matrix with form**Student Information**

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Email: _____

This is to certify that (student name) _____, Program: PsyD PhD
Specialization: _____ is deemed to have completed a Proposal for a
Dissertation (dissertation title), _____, which
meets the criteria for, and represents the quality of Doctoral-level work as specified in the *University of the Rockies
Dissertation (and Proposal) Guidelines* document.

The attached Turnitin report has been reviewed, and all work is considered the student's own in accordance with the University of the Rockies Plagiarism Policy.

Please attach:

 Full Proposal (.doc or .docx format; Formatted according to University of the Rockies Dissertation Formatting Guidelines) Turnitin report Change Matrix (if resubmittal)

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

Electronic signature accepted

Please complete this form and submit at least two weeks prior to the desired preliminary oral defense date.

In lieu of non-electronic signature, Dissertation Chair must email the completed form from their University of the Rockies email address.

Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Date: _____

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Student ID: _____ Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Program: PsyD PhD Specialization: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

We are requesting that the preliminary oral defense be scheduled for:

Day: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Venue on campus in Colorado Springs Venue at the Denver Instructional Site

Telephone conference line needed

Other needs: _____

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature accepted

Dissertation Chair to complete this form; keep a copy for your records. Refer to distribution instructions below.

Colorado Springs Campus Students

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567 and send a copy to the student.

Denver Instruction Site Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Check one:

Initial Evaluation

Reevaluation

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Date of Preliminary Oral Defense: _____

Instructions

Please rate this student's demonstration of ability to successfully complete the dissertation.

The Committee's evaluation should be based on the *University of the Rockies Dissertation (and Proposal) Guidelines* and incorporate such areas as the student's ability to:

- Propose a study that is theoretically, empirically, and practically sound.
- Critically analyze and synthesize historically important and current research studies and theoretical literature.
- Discuss theoretical and scientific issues cogently, relevantly, and defensibly.

Based upon the proposal, the student should consider the following recommendations in order to successfully complete a doctoral-level dissertation:

Evaluation of Student's Preliminary Oral Defense: (Committee consensus is required.)

Pass, No Revisions

Pass, Minor Revisions

No Pass, Major Revisions Needed

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dissertation Committee Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dissertation Committee Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

In lieu of non-electronic signature, Dissertation Chair must email the completed form from their University of the Rockies email address, with a copy to the student.

Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Check one: Initial submission Resubmittal - include a Change Matrix with form**Student Information**

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Email: _____

This is to certify that (student name) _____, Program: PsyD PhDSpecialization: _____ is deemed to have completed a Dissertation,
titled (dissertation title) _____, which meets thecriteria for and represents the quality of a Doctoral-level dissertation as specified in the *University of the Rockies**Dissertation (and Proposal) Guidelines* document.

The attached Turnitin report has been reviewed and all work is considered the student's own in accordance with the University of the Rockies Plagiarism Policy.

Please attach: Full Dissertation (.doc or .docx format; Formatted according to University of the Rockies Dissertation Formatting Guidelines) Turnitin report Change Matrix (if resubmittal)

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

Electronic signature accepted

Please complete this form and submit at least two weeks prior to the desired preliminary oral defense date.

In lieu of non-electronic signature, Dissertation Chair must email the completed form from their University of the Rockies email address.

Please complete this form and send to:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Date: _____

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Student ID: _____ Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Program: PsyD PhD Specialization: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

Please schedule the Final Oral Defense for:

Day: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Venue on campus in Colorado Springs Venue at the Denver Instructional Site

Telephone conference line needed

Other needs: _____

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____
Electronic signature accepted

Date: _____

Chairperson to complete this form; keep a copy for your records. Refer to distribution instructions below.

Colorado Springs campus Students

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567 and send a copy to the student.

Denver Instruction Site Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Check one:

Initial Evaluation

Reevaluation

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Date of Final Oral Defense: _____

Instructions

Please rate this student's demonstration of knowledge and competency in academic/scientific research areas.

The committee's evaluation should be based on the *University of the Rockies Dissertation Guidelines* and incorporate such areas as the student's ability to:

- Incorporate theoretical and conceptual issues relevant to a scientific investigation.
- Determine conclusions that are theoretically, empirically, and practically sound.
- Discuss theoretical and scientific issues cogently, relevantly, and defensibly.
- Contribute new knowledge to an appropriate academic discussion.

Evaluation of Student's Final Oral Defense: (Committee consensus is required.)

Based upon the oral presentation and written dissertation manuscript, this student's knowledge and competency in academic/scientific research are (check one):

Pass, No Revisions

Pass, Minor Revisions

No, Pass Major Revisions Needed

Recommendations:

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dissertation Committee Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dissertation Committee Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Please complete this form and keep a copy for your student records. Refer to distribution instructions below.

Form to be submitted by the Dissertation Chair after all signatures have been collected.

Colorado Springs campus Students

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567 and a copy to the student.

Denver Instruction Site Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Dissertation Title:

Presented By

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Student ID: _____ Email: _____ Telephone: _____

This dissertation has been successfully defended and approved for final submission.

Certified By

Chairperson Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dean Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

To be completed by student and signed by APA Style Editor. Please refer to distribution instructions below.

Colorado Springs campus Students

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567 and a copy to the student.

Denver Instruction Site Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online Students

Scan/Upload to online classroom for student and Committee

Email to Dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

This is to certify that the following dissertation:

Dissertation Title:

--

For (Student Name) _____, (Student ID) _____,
is in compliance with APA Style and Formatting as well as *University of the Rockies Dissertation Formatting Template*.

APA Style Editor Name: _____

APA Style Editor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Electronic signature not accepted

When all required approvals are obtained below, the student files a copy of this form as follows:

Colorado Springs campus students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site students: dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Online students: dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Email address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Request to change

Chairperson: _____

Committee Member: _____

Reason for Requested Change

Provide a short description of why you are requesting to change your Chairperson or Committee member.

Student Authorization

By signing this form I fully understand that this request to change my Chairperson/Committee Member may have an impact on the timeline for completion of my Dissertation and I am prepared to accept responsibility for any delay that may be associated with said change per my request

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Electronic signature not accepted

If the Current Chair or Member has not signed below, please explain why signature cannot be obtained:

For Office Use Only – Student should not write below this line**Current Chair or Member:**

Signature: _____ Full Name (type or print): _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____ Date: _____

New Chair or Member:

Signature: _____ Full Name (type or print): _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____ Date: _____

Dean of the School:

Approved Not Approved

Full Name (type or print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Electronic signature not accepted

Please complete this form and keep a copy for your student records. Refer to distribution instructions below.

Colorado Springs campus Students

- Copy to Dissertation Chair
 Email to Dissertation.ground@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0567

Denver Instructional Site Students

- Scan/Upload to online classroom for Chairperson
 Email to Dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Online Students

- Scan/Upload to online classroom for Chairperson
 Email to Dissertation.online@rockies.edu or fax to: 888-331-0568

Student Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Student ID: _____ Email: _____ Telephone: _____

I request that (name) _____, (degree title) _____ be approved as a member of my Dissertation Committee.

A copy of his/her curriculum vitae is attached for review.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Dissertation Chair Name: _____

Dissertation Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

Approval

- Granted Denied

Dean of the School Signature: _____ Date: _____
Electronic signature not accepted

APPENDIX B: DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

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

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DISSERTATION TEMPLATE

_____ Uses the University of the Rockies Dissertation Template for all drafts of the Proposal and Dissertation,

including (in order):

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

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

GENERAL WRITING GUIDELINES

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

_____ An approved professional APA Style editor must review and verify review of the final dissertation draft prior to its submission. The student is responsible for all related fees.

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

_____ Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling according to chapters 3 and 4 in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) [also see Chapter 9 of this document]

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

_____ Use secondary sources sparingly.

_____ Include all in-text citations in the reference list.

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

_____ Proposal/dissertation is written clearly in scholarly language.

_____ Writing is clear, precise, and avoids redundancy.

_____ Statements are specific, and topic sentences are established for paragraphs

_____ Flow of language is smooth and clear.

_____ Ideas transition smoothly.

_____ Proposal/dissertation is organized logically and comprehensively.

_____ Chapters add up to an integrated “whole.”

- _____ Subheadings identify the logic and movement of the dissertation.
- _____ Transitions between chapters are smooth and coherent.
- _____ Tables and Figures
 - _____ Use APA formatting (Chapter 5 in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition), except for specifications in Appendix C;
 - _____ Contain (or illustrate) content that is informative, relevant, and concise;
 - _____ Are placed in context with narrative text;
 - _____ Have long tables that are included in an appendix;
 - _____ Include unique titles that are brief but clear and explanatory;
 - _____ Have figure numbers and titles that are placed **below the actual figure**;
 - _____ Have table numbers and titles that are placed **above the actual table**; and
 - _____ Show copyright permission for any non-original content (if not in the public domain).

TITLE PAGE

- _____ Title of the dissertation: centered, all caps, single-spaced
- _____ Name of student
- _____ Date
- _____ Name of Dissertation Chair, including degree
- _____ Names of committee members, including degrees
- _____ Required Text: See Appendix D

ABSTRACT

- _____ Consists of one double-spaced page or less
- _____ Includes a concise description of the study, a brief statement of the problem, statement of purpose or importance, and a brief summary of methods and procedures
- _____ Includes a summary of sample size, findings, and implications (dissertation only)

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

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

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

[NO INITIAL HEADING]

____ Introductory paragraphs introduce the general topic area.

GENERAL STATEMENT [OR BACKGROUND OF STUDY]

____ Describes a practical problem and the need for it to be addressed

____ Supports the existence and impact of the practical problem with documentation

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

____ Identifies a general research problem that will address the practical problem. What do you want to know that you don't know (that nobody knows) that will help to solve the practical problem?

____ Focuses in on a specific research problem that the study proposes to address

____ Clearly and logically demonstrates how the focus of the study is an important problem, worthy of study.

____ Impact of the research problem is fully documented and supported.

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

____ Explains how the study proposes to address the specific research problem

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

____ Provides a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study

____ Connects the **Purpose of the Study** as addressing the specific research problem

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

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

____ Briefly defines and delimits the specific area of the research

____ Foreshadows the hypotheses to be tested or the questions to be raised as well as the importance of the study

____ Clearly identifies and defines the central concepts or ideas of the study

____ Identifies the unit of analysis in the study

____ Justifies the general method of inquiry used in the study: qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method

For a quantitative study:

- _____ Specifies at least two variables and a conjectured relationship between them to describe what will be studied

For a qualitative study:

- _____ Identifies the phenomenon, situation, or factors of interest
- _____ Indicates and justifies which qualitative methodology will be used

For a mixed methods study:

- _____ Identifies the specific type of mixed method design--explanatory, exploratory, or triangulation.
- _____ Reflects whether the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study are sequential or simultaneous

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

- _____ Answers the following in a logical, explicit manner:
 - _____ What is the importance of this research?
 - _____ What will it contribute to theory and practice in the student's field of specialization?
 - _____ What are implications of the research?

THEORETICAL [OR CONCEPTUAL] FRAMEWORK

- _____ Places the study within a particular theoretical area in the field under investigation
- _____ Situates the study among other research studies within the theoretical area
- _____ Briefly summarizes enough relevant research literature (historical, seminal, and current) to situate and justify the study based on its contribution to the existing body of research, referencing the more detailed discussions in Chapter II
- _____ Articulates the theoretical base (quantitative only) or the conceptual framework (qualitative only) to show connection to a certain body of literature. (Mixed method--addresses both theoretical and conceptual framework.)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS [AND HYPOTHESES]

- _____ Clearly presents specific research questions and sub-questions to be addressed, referencing the more detailed discussions in Chapter III
- _____ Includes research hypotheses for each research question and sub-question (quantitative only)
- _____ Includes research questions that are identified for the qualitative and quantitative phases (mixed method only)
- _____ Questions and hypotheses are elaborated on in a discussion format, not simply listed
- _____ Connects the research questions to the **Statement of Purpose**, showing how these questions will address the goals of the study

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN

- _____ Briefly describes the general methodology and design, including data collection method, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis, with references to more detailed discussions in Chapter III
- _____ Shows how the particular research design is the most appropriate to address the goals of the study

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- _____ Defines important terms as used in this study, especially those that may otherwise have multiple meanings
- _____ Uses citations to support the origin of the definitions
- _____ Defines important technical terms that may be unknown to a reader
- _____ Operationalizes key variables or constructs

ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

- _____ Describes the scope and bounds of the study (delimitations--boundaries researcher has set)
- _____ Addresses major limiting factors in the study that could possibly affect the results (If limitations are considerable, explains why the study is being conducted.)
- _____ Articulates assumptions about facts that are not actually verified
- _____ Addresses potential weaknesses of the study
- _____ Discusses generalizability of the study findings

SUMMARY

- _____ Summarizes key points of the study
- _____ Gives an overview of the content of the remaining chapters in the study, bridging to Chapter II
- _____ Conforms to the recommended length of 15–25 pages for Chapter I

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Scholarship entails comprehensive understanding of at least one academic community's historical and current treatment of the pertinent topic. In order to argue the legitimacy of the current study, a thorough understanding of what that study will add to the most current literature on the topic is necessary. Literature will be critically analyzed, synthesized, and integrated to produce a story that brings the reader along to understand where the study fits into the current debates and academic edges concerning the topic. Existing and historically seminal literature will provide a contextual framework within which the research design is situated. Additionally, a part of the literature review will provide an academic foundation for the methods and research design chosen. This chapter should be written in past tense.

INTRODUCTION

- _____ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the dissertation, and the organization of the chapter
- _____ Frames the review by restating the topic and research questions

SEARCH STRATEGY

- _____ Describes the strategy used to collect relevant literature
 - _____ Indicates which search engines were used
 - _____ Lists which search terms were used
- _____ Indicates strategy for identifying historically seminal (classic) studies and theorists' writings
- _____ Justifies most appropriate time interval for current sources (last 2–3 years? Last 5 years?)
- _____ If applicable, explains the lack of currency of the most recent publications
- _____ Reviews strategy for focusing in on empirical research that most closely resembles the current study

[REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE]

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

- _____ The review is an integrated, critical analysis and synthesis of the relevant research and other scholarly literature published on the topic
 - _____ Includes the most current scholarship and important historical theory and research, when appropriate, to situate the topic
 - _____ Synthesizes prior research to illustrate what is currently known about the research problem
 - _____ Compares and contrasts different theories and research results
 - _____ Evaluates previous research and related theory
 - _____ Integrates various studies and theories to relate a story of the historical and current state of knowledge on the topic
 - _____ Addresses how the proposed research fits in the context of research to date
- _____ Draws mostly from published journal articles in peer-reviewed journals or sound academic books containing primary material; provides justification for using other sources

- _____ Has a specific organization for the review. For example, organizes the review around major ideas or themes or organizes the review historically
- _____ The literature review needs to be *comprehensive*, covering the most important theories or research findings upon which the research problem (and hypotheses) was based.
 - _____ Relates the study to previous research
 - _____ Identifies how the study will extend current knowledge
 - _____ Defines the most important aspects of the theory that will be examined or tested (for quantitative studies)
 - _____ Substantiates the conceptual framework for the study (for qualitative studies)
- _____ Clearly relates the review of the related research and literature to the **Statement of Problem** as expressed in the
 - _____ research questions
 - _____ hypotheses (quantitative)
 - _____ population
 - _____ context/setting
- _____ Includes a discussion of differing and common methodologies previously used to study the research problem, including their strengths and limitations
- _____ Includes a literature-based description of the research variables (quantitative studies) or central phenomenon, situation, or factors of interest (qualitative studies)
- _____ Includes literature pertaining to the population and context or setting
- _____ Reviews literature related to research method and research design, including major and foundational sources in that design and its application to the research problem

SUMMARY

- _____ Summarizes key points of the relationship between the study's research question(s) and the literature
- _____ Summarizes the study's contribution to the literature
- _____ Bridges to Chapter III by summarizing literature-based arguments for choosing a particular methodology
- _____ Conforms to the recommended length of 30–50 pages for Chapter II

CHAPTER III: METHOD

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

INTRODUCTION

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

[QUALITATIVE]

METHODOLOGY SELECTED

- _____ Describes which qualitative methodology will be used
 - _____ Justifies choice of methodology using major and foundational sources
 - _____ Explains why other possible choices would be less effective
- _____ Describes specific research questions and sub-questions (where appropriate) that are
 - _____ Clear and succinct
 - _____ Congruent with the **Statement of Problem**
 - _____ Answerable
 - _____ Few in number
 - _____ Clearly stated
 - _____ Open-ended (*not* yes/no questions)
- _____ Describes the role of the researcher in the data collection procedure
 - _____ Addresses the potential impact and minimization of researcher bias through methodological approaches

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

- _____ Describes and justifies the context (including site) for the study
- _____ Clearly defines both the general study population and the specific population
 - _____ Demonstrates (and documents) the ability to access the population
 - _____ Describes and justifies the sampling approach
 - _____ Describes how the characteristics of the sample population align with the general population
 - _____ Discusses how the sample selection impacts the generalizability of the study
 - _____ Identifies strategies for recruiting participants

- _____ Specifies appropriate criteria for selecting participants
- _____ Addresses the relationship between the researcher and the participants
- _____ Justifies the number of participants

DATA COLLECTION

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

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED

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

TRUSTWORTHINESS

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

ETHICAL CONCERNS

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

DATA ANALYSIS

- _____ Articulates how and when the data will be or were analyzed
 - _____ Aligns the detailed data analysis plan with the specific research design to generate answers to the research questions
 - _____ Describes procedures for dealing with discrepant cases
 - _____ If a software program was used to aid analysis, clearly describes how it was used

_____ Gives details about the coding procedure and how themes or categories were developed

[QUANTITATIVE]

METHODOLOGY SELECTED

_____ Includes a description of the research design and approach

_____ Provides justification for using the research design and approach

_____ Demonstrates that the research design and approach derive logically from the problem or issue statement

_____ Supports the research design and its application with major and foundational sources

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESES

_____ Describes specific research questions and hypotheses (where appropriate) that

_____ Are clear and succinct

_____ Are congruent with the **Statement of Problem**

_____ Are answerable/testable

_____ Correspond to the number of variables of interest

_____ Have hypotheses that correspond to research questions

_____ Are clearly stated

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

_____ Identifies and describes the source of the specific population and the population's characteristics

_____ Identifies that permission has been obtained to access the population, if relevant

_____ Describes the sampling method, its appropriateness, and the sampling frame

_____ Identifies the sample size as sufficient in terms of statistical power to support the analyses

_____ Identifies the criteria for selecting subjects

_____ Describes the sample characteristics

ETHICAL CONCERNS

_____ Identifies procedures for protection and ethical treatment of human subjects

_____ Describes the informed consent process in detail, including how human subjects will provide their informed consent, where applicable

_____ Includes Informed Consent Letter in Appendix

_____ Describes procedures to protect confidentiality and anonymity in data collection, analysis, reporting, and storage

_____ Where applicable, describes in detail any treatment or intervention to which human subjects will be exposed

_____ Identifies concealment or deception as part of the treatment, if used

_____ Identifies the process for debriefing human subjects following use of concealment or deception

- _____ Identifies if a control group will be used, if the group will receive a standard intervention, and the nature of that intervention

INSTRUMENTATION

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

- _____ Describes in detail all instrumentation or data collection tools, including:
- _____ Instrument name, if using an existing instrument
 - _____ Specific type of instrument
 - _____ Instrument's measures in terms of constructs, concepts, or variables
 - _____ Scoring of scales, subscales, typologies and their interpretation
 - _____ Whether a new instrument is developed or an existing instrument is modified and describes its use
 - _____ Published reliability and validity statistics for existing instruments OR a detailed plan for statistically assessing the reliability and validity of new or modified instrument(s) or existing instruments without established reliability or validity
- _____ Includes a copy of any instruments used in an appendix
- _____ Includes a detailed description of data that comprises each variable in the study
- _____ Includes operational definitions of variables
- _____ Provides a clear explanation of how the value of each variable will be derived from the instrument
 - _____ Identifies the level of measurement (NOIR) for each variable
- _____ Either describes established (published) reliability and validity statistics or a clear plan to statistically validate the instrument (for modified or created instruments)

DATA COLLECTION

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

DATA ANALYSIS

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

- _____ Includes a detailed analysis plan that explains the descriptive and/or inferential analyses proposed or used
- _____ Descriptive statistical procedures
 - _____ Whether the data are normally distributed or the distribution is skewed
 - _____ Parametric and/or nonparametric statistical procedures
 - _____ Statistical power

VALIDITY

_____ Addresses internal and external validity threats and how they will be or were addressed

[MIXED METHOD]

METHODOLOGY SELECTED

_____ Includes a description of the specific mixed method research design and approach

_____ Research questions reflect the two phases, qualitative and quantitative, and the ordering of the two phases consistent with the specific mixed method design (explanatory, exploratory, or triangulation); hypotheses correspond to quantitative RQs, where appropriate

_____ Provides justification for using the specific research design and approach

_____ Shows that the research design and approach derives logically from the problem or issue statement

_____ Supports the research design and its application with major and foundational sources

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/HYPOTHESES

_____ Describes specific research questions and hypotheses (where appropriate) that

_____ are clear and succinct

_____ are congruent with the Statement of Problem

_____ are answerable/testable

_____ correspond to the number of variables of interest

_____ correspond to research questions (if they are hypotheses)

_____ are clearly stated

_____ are open-ended (*not* yes/no questions)

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

_____ Identifies and describes the source of the specific population and the population's characteristics for both phases

_____ Identifies that permission has been obtained to access the population, if relevant

_____ Describes for both phases the sampling method, its appropriateness, and the sampling frame

_____ Identifies the sample size as sufficient in terms of statistical power to support the quantitative analyses

_____ Identifies the sample size as sufficient in terms of data saturation for the qualitative phase

_____ Identifies the criteria for selecting subjects for both phases

_____ Describes the sample characteristics for both phases

ETHICAL CONCERNS

_____ Identifies procedures for protection and ethical treatment of human subjects

_____ Describes the informed consent process in detail, including how human subjects will provide their informed consent, where applicable

_____ Includes Informed Consent Letter in Appendix

_____ Describes procedures to protect confidentiality and anonymity in data collection, analysis, reporting, and storage of data

_____ Describes in detail, where applicable, any treatment or intervention to which human subjects will be exposed

_____ If concealment or deception will be used, identifies that as part of the treatment

_____ Identifies the process for debriefing human subjects following use of concealment or deception

_____ Identifies if a control group will be used, if the group will receive a standard intervention, and the nature of that intervention

INSTRUMENTATION

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

Quantitative phase:

_____ Describes in detail all instrumentation or data collection tools, including:

_____ Instrument name, if using an existing instrument

_____ Specific type of instrument

_____ Instrument's measures in terms of constructs, concepts, or variables

_____ Scoring of scales, subscales, typologies, and their interpretation

_____ Whether a new instrument is developed or an existing instrument is modified and describes its use

_____ Published reliability and validity statistics for existing instruments OR a detailed plan for statistically assessing the reliability and validity of new or modified instrument(s) or existing instruments without established reliability or validity

_____ Includes a copy of any instruments used in an appendix

Qualitative phase:

_____ Describes and justifies data collection method(s) (e.g., interview, focus group, and observation)

_____ Justifies choices about which data to collect, including:

_____ Addresses what types of data will be collected and the unit(s) of analysis

_____ Includes detailed protocol(s) in appendix for data collection (e.g., interview protocol/script, focus group protocol/script, etc.)

_____ Justifies contents of data collection protocols by connection to the research questions posed in relation to the qualitative paradigm chosen

DATA COLLECTION

- _____ Describes any pilot study results, if applicable
- _____ States the sequence of steps followed in conducting the research, from development of the research instrument(s) to data analysis
 - _____ Details all steps such that another researcher could follow the steps to reproduce the study
- _____ Describes the role of the researcher in the qualitative data collection procedure
 - _____ Addresses through methodological approaches the potential impact and minimization of researcher bias

DATA ANALYSIS

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

- _____ Includes an explanation of descriptive and/or inferential analyses used in the study, such as:
 - _____ Level of measurement (normal, ordinal, interval, or ratio) for each quantitative variable
 - _____ Description of parametric, nonparametric, or descriptive analytical tools used
 - _____ Distribution of the quantitative data
 - _____ Statistical power
 - _____ A detailed explanation of how qualitative data will be or were analyzed, procedures used, and units of analysis used
- _____ Data analysis reflects the phases in alignment with the simultaneous or sequential mixed method design and explains how analysis of qualitative and quantitative data will generate or generated answers to the research questions

QUALITY

- _____ Addresses internal and external validity threats
- _____ Addresses trustworthiness, including: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability

[FOR ALL METHODS OF INQUIRY]

SUMMARY

- _____ Summarizes key points in the chapter
- _____ Transitions to Chapter IV
- _____ Conforms to the recommended length of 10–25 pages for Chapter III

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

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

- _____ Organizes all results such that they are easily understood by the reader (do not just present masses of data for the reader to analyze)
 - _____ Leads the reader carefully through the findings, highlighting the most important observations
- _____ Presents a simple, clear, and complete account of the results
 - _____ Uses APA-formatted tables, charts, graphs, and/or illustrations for clarity
 - _____ Does not just copy and paste the outputs of statistics or other programs
 - _____ Omits discussion of the findings (which is presented in Chapter V)

INTRODUCTION

- _____ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, shows how it fits in the dissertation, and discusses the organization of the chapter
- _____ Re-establishes the purpose of the study and the research questions [and hypotheses]

PILOT STUDY

- _____ Discusses details regarding conducting the pilot study, if applicable.
- _____ Describes and justifies modifications to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test

[QUALITATIVE]

SAMPLE

- _____ Presents a description of the sample participants and sample demographics or other appropriate characteristics of the unit(s) of study

DATA COLLECTION

- _____ Summarizes the actual logistics of the data collection
- _____ Describes unusual circumstances encountered during data collection

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

- _____ Presents the results of analysis, rather than raw data, illustrated with selected representative quotes in a way to makes sense to the reader
- _____ Clearly presents the findings

- _____ Builds logically from the problem and the research design
- _____ Presents the findings, reflecting analysis consistent with the specific research design—goes beyond reporting percentages of who said what or just identifying themes and patterns
- _____ Presents the findings by major themes and sub-themes using section headings that are representative of the themes
- _____ Presents findings in a manner that addresses the research questions
- _____ Supports all findings with data
- _____ Accounts for all salient data in the findings
- _____ Includes discrepant cases and nonconfirming data in the findings

[QUANTITATIVE]

SAMPLE

- _____ Presents description of the sample and sample demographics or other appropriate characteristics of the unit of study
- _____ Does not present raw data; presents results of descriptive and inferential analyses in a way that makes sense to the reader

DATA COLLECTION

- _____ Summarizes the actual logistics of the data collection
- _____ Describes unusual circumstances encountered during data collection

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

- _____ Organization of results aligns with and addresses research questions and hypotheses
- _____ Findings are presented by major themes and sub-themes, using section headings that are representative of the themes
- _____ Demonstrates rigorous methodological approaches
 - _____ Reflects appropriate and correct use of data collection instruments
 - _____ Uses research conventions and standard language/terminology to describe measures
 - _____ Reports results of pilot tests, if used
 - _____ Describes and justifies modifications to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test
 - _____ Describes how any modifications affect instrument scoring and/or interpretation
- _____ Results of data analyses
 - _____ Uses appropriate tools and approaches to display results
 - _____ Makes interpretation and explanation of results consistent with the analyses
 - _____ Reflects alignment with the specific research design, the research questions or hypotheses, and the theoretical or conceptual framework of the study

- _____ Makes the organization and presentation of results correspond to and address each research question and hypotheses, when used
- _____ Reports results of hypothesis testing and indicates support for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis when hypotheses are used
- _____ Develops sound analyses with appropriate use of statistics
- _____ Reports results that reflect conventional research language and format
- _____ Highlights findings that approach statistical significance, such as $p < .10$
- _____ Identifies any inconsistencies or contradictions reflected in the findings and suggests plausible explanations
- _____ Includes additional findings

CONCLUSIONS

- _____ Concludes by logically and systematically summarizing the results pertaining to the research questions and hypotheses

[MIXED METHOD]

SAMPLE

- _____ Presents description of the sample and sample demographics, or other appropriate characteristics of the unit of study, for both phases of the study
 - _____ Does not present raw data; presents results of descriptive and inferential analyses and analysis of qualitative data in a way that makes sense to the reader
 - _____ Description of the sample reflects sample size and characteristics for each phase of the research (qualitative and quantitative)

DATA COLLECTION

- _____ Summarizes the actual logistics of the data collection
- _____ Describes unusual circumstances encountered during data collection

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

- _____ Organization of results aligns with and addresses the research questions and hypotheses, consistent with the type of mixed method design
- _____ Findings are presented by major themes and sub-themes, using section headings that are representative of the themes
- _____ Presents the approaches and results for both phases (qualitative and quantitative)
 - _____ For an explanatory design, presents quantitative results first, describes how these findings were explored in the qualitative phase, and then presents the qualitative findings
 - _____ For an exploratory design, presents qualitative results, explains how these findings informed the quantitative phase, and then presents the quantitative findings

- _____ In a triangulation design, presents both sets of data and triangulates the findings from the two phases
- _____ Demonstrates rigorous methodological approaches
 - _____ Reflects appropriate and correct use of data collection instruments
 - _____ Uses research conventions and standard language and terminology to describe measures
 - _____ Reports results of pilot tests, if used
 - _____ Describes and justifies modifications to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test
 - _____ Describes how any modifications affect instrument scoring and/or interpretation
- _____ Results of data analyses
 - _____ Uses appropriate tools and approaches to display results
 - _____ Interprets and explains results consistent with the analyses
 - _____ Reflects alignment with the specific mixed method research design, the research questions or hypotheses, and the theoretical or conceptual framework of the study
 - _____ Makes the organization and presentation of results correspond to and address each research question and hypotheses, when used
 - _____ Reports results of hypothesis testing, and indicates support for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis when hypotheses are used
 - _____ Develops sound analyses with appropriate use of statistics
 - _____ Reports the results that reflect conventional research language and format
- _____ Highlights findings that approach statistical significance, such as $p < .10$
- _____ Identifies any inconsistencies or contradictions reflected in the findings and suggests plausible explanations
- _____ Includes additional findings
- _____ Highlights findings that approach statistical significance, such as $p < .10$

CONCLUSIONS

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

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

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

INTRODUCTION

- _____ Begins with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the dissertation, and the organization of the chapter
- _____ Reviews the need for the study, the purpose of the research, the research questions that guided the study, and briefly restates the findings presented in Chapter IV
 - _____ A restatement of the research problem is helpful to provide context

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

- _____ Includes an overview and interpretation of the major findings of the study
 - _____ Includes conclusions that address all the research questions and/or hypotheses
 - _____ Carefully examines all findings, including those that do not support or only partially support the hypotheses (quantitative only)
 - _____ Contains references to all results reported in Chapter IV
 - _____ Is comprehensive in terms of addressing the range of findings
 - _____ Is bound by the evidence collected

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- _____ Discusses limitations that may affect the validity, generalizability, or trustworthiness of the results
- _____ Includes a reflection on the researcher's experience with the research process (qualitative only)
 - _____ Discusses possible personal biases or preconceived ideas and values
 - _____ Discusses the influence of the researcher on the participants or the situation
 - _____ Reflects on student's changes in thinking as a result of the study

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND RESEARCH

- _____ Situates the findings in a larger body of literature on the topic, including the conceptual/theoretical framework
 - _____ Considers the findings in light of published research studies
 - _____ Discusses implications of the current study findings as pertinent to current theory
 - _____ Discusses implications of findings that support, extend, and refute prior knowledge

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

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

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings of the current study

_____ Identifies topics that need closer examination and may generate a new round of research questions

_____ Recommends alternative research methods and design

CONCLUSION

_____ Closes with a strong conclusion statement that makes the "take-home message" clear

_____ Conforms to the recommended length of 15–25 pages for Chapter V

REFERENCES

_____ Alphabetically lists **all** references cited in the dissertation

_____ Uses APA style for listing references

_____ **Do not** list references that were not cited in the dissertation

APPENDIX (OR APPENDICES)

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

Examples include:

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

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

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT (*OPTIONAL*)

_____ Includes a brief biographical statement about the author. The focus should be on the professional aspects of the individual's life but may include items such as place of birth, educational background, significant life events, reasons for choosing the field of study/specialization, and interest in the content of the study.

APPENDIX C: FORMATTING GUIDELINES

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

While the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* provides a style guide for submitting manuscripts, University of the Rockies has its own style guide for dissertation publication, as described in this Dissertation Formatting Specifications Appendix. University of the Rockies uses the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) as the basic style guide for all papers as well as dissertations, and it should be used as a guide for all style and formatting issues not addressed in the following.

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

GENERAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES

ELEMENT	SPECIFICATIONS
Font – main text	Times New Roman, 12-point
Font – footnotes	Times New Roman, 10-point
Margins (all pages, including those with tables and figures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left: 1 ¼ inches (to allow for binding) • Top, right, bottom: 1 inch
Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left: justified • Right: ragged (not justified) • No hyphenation at the right margin
Spacing (lines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double-space all pages, including abstract, except for the following (which should be single-spaced): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Headings, subheadings, and table or figure captions <i>exceeding one line in length</i> ○ Table of contents entries <i>exceeding one line in length</i> (double-space between entries) ○ Footnotes (although individual footnotes are single-spaced, double-space between each separate footnote if more than one appears on a page) ○ Long, block-indented quotes or narrative ○ List entries (double space between numbers) ○ Individual entries of more than one line in the Reference section (although individual reference entries are single-spaced, double-space between each separate reference) ○ Table titles, table column and row headings, table text (double-space between rows), table notes ○ Lengthy material in tables and appendices
Spacing (sentences)	<i>Single-space</i> after all punctuation except internal periods in abbreviations (e.g., i.e., U.S.). However, insert two spaces between sentences. See section 4.01 in the <i>Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association</i> (6 th ed.) for more detail.

Spacing (headings, tables)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headings may have an extra space above to enhance readability. Be consistent throughout the manuscript in spacing around headings. Headings may have an extra space above to enhance readability. Be consistent throughout the manuscript in spacing around headings. Add an extra space above and below a table or figure to separate it from paragraphs or other tables/figures on the page. 																
Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each paragraph should be indented one-half inch No extra spaces between paragraphs 																
Headings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Headings 																
Footnotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List consecutively at the bottom of the page where they first appear; or Place footnotes in consecutive order on a separate page titled <i>End Notes</i>, following the Reference section 																
Pagination	<p>All pages (<i>except the title/cover page</i>) bear a page number. The preliminary pages are arranged and numbered as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Preliminary Pages</th> <th>Page Numbers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Title/signature page (not numbered)</td> <td>(understood as page i, but not numbered)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Copyright notice</td> <td>ii</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abstract</td> <td>iii</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Acknowledgements (Dedication optional)</td> <td>iv</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Table of Contents</td> <td>v</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lists of Figures & Tables (if applicable)</td> <td>vi</td> </tr> <tr> <td>List of Appendices (if applicable)</td> <td>vii</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If any of the preliminary pages exceed one page, advance the page numbers consecutively Preliminary page numbers are shown in Roman numerals at the <i>bottom center</i> of each page. Chapter 1 begins on page 1. Number pages sequentially from chapter 1 through the end of the manuscript, in Arabic numerals centered in the footer at the <i>bottom center</i> of each page, in the Times New Roman 12-point 	Preliminary Pages	Page Numbers	Title/signature page (not numbered)	(understood as page i, but not numbered)	Copyright notice	ii	Abstract	iii	Acknowledgements (Dedication optional)	iv	Table of Contents	v	Lists of Figures & Tables (if applicable)	vi	List of Appendices (if applicable)	vii
Preliminary Pages	Page Numbers																
Title/signature page (not numbered)	(understood as page i, but not numbered)																
Copyright notice	ii																
Abstract	iii																
Acknowledgements (Dedication optional)	iv																
Table of Contents	v																
Lists of Figures & Tables (if applicable)	vi																
List of Appendices (if applicable)	vii																
Headers and Footers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No text or page numbers in the header Page number at the center of the footer 																
Tables and Figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Tables and Figures 																

ARRANGEMENT

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

TITLE (SIGNATURE) PAGE

Each copy of the dissertation must include a title page (signature page) prepared in accordance with the example shown in **Appendix D**. The title page does not bear a page number (though it is understood to be page i). Include the student's full legal name as it appears in University of the Rockies records. Only the Committee Chair signs the

final document, which includes an appropriate signature line. List dissertation committee members below the Chair's signature line, along with their credentials.

COPYRIGHT PAGE

This page consists of the following information centered on the page:

<p>Copyright by</p> <p>FULL LEGAL NAME OF STUDENT</p> <p>Year the degree will be conferred</p>

ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS

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

<p>Full Title of the Dissertation</p> <p>by</p> <p>Full Name of Student</p> <p>Abstract</p> <p>Text of the abstract</p> <p>Key Words:</p>

- Abstract should be approx. 2,450 characters (no longer than 350 words). An average 350-word abstract will contain about 70 characters per line with a maximum of 35 lines.
- Use the same paragraph formatting as used in the full manuscript.
- At the bottom of the abstract, include *key words*. The key words are used by other researchers to search for and identify information in various subject areas. The best way to determine this is to think about your own dissertation and what key words you would want to search for to find it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/DEDICATION

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A table of contents is required and must reflect the outline and organization of the dissertation. If your dissertation includes tables, figures, appendices, these must be noted on separate pages as List of Tables and Figures and List of Appendices (identified by number and title). Lists should include page numbers. The heading should be centered at the top of the page. List your chapter headings flush to the left margin and subheadings indented beneath them. Corresponding page numbers should be inserted in a column on the right side of the page.

TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION

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

HEADINGS

Chapter headings should be shown in all caps (CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION) with chapter numbers in capital Roman numerals (CHAPTER II, CHAPTER III, etc.). Subsequent headers in each chapter should follow the APA style guide requirements for subsequent levels of headings/subheadings, with the first heading in a chapter being a Level 1 heading. See Section 3.03 “Levels of Headings” in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.):

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

CREDITING SOURCES

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

- In-text citations should conform to APA style (generally, author and date for paraphrased information and author, date, and page number for direct quotations).
- If the names of the authors and/or the date are included in the text, only the remaining required information is included in parentheses.
- Indirect sources (sources referenced in a secondary source) are indicated in the in-text citation, and the secondary source is listed in the reference list at the end of the paper (See section 6.17 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.).
- Use secondary sources sparingly.

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

REFERENCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL SECTIONS

REFERENCE SECTION

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

Consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) for specific examples of proper formatting of reference entries for each type of document or electronic material.

APPENDIX MATERIAL

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

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

TABLES AND FIGURES

- Place tables and figures as close as possible to the first mention within the text. If small enough, place *below the first mention, or begin on the page immediately following the first mention* by number. (Note: Tables and figures provide the means by example for developing the text argument, but they do not constitute the argument; thus, they must be interpreted in your written text.)
- Separate tables and figures from text by triple space at top and bottom of table.
- Number tables and figures *sequentially throughout the manuscript* (e.g., Table 1, Table 2, etc.; Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.). Do not use chapter numbers or letters to identify tables (e.g., Table 4-1, Table 4-A) except in the Appendix (e.g., Appendix A might contain one or more tables titled Table A-1, Table A-2, etc.).
- Use dissertation margin requirements for tables and figures. If necessary, print tables or figures that exceed the margins using landscape format.
- Do not break a table or figure between two pages unless it is impossible to include the entire table or figure on one page. If a table or figure is too large to fit on one page, use an abbreviated heading on the following page (e.g., Table 1 - Cont'd.).

- Tables and figures may be reduced, though titles and captions should remain in 12-point font.
- Limit lines in a table to those that are necessary for clarity (usually only that separating headings from columnar data), and do not use vertical lines. Use generous spacing between columns and rows, as well as strict alignment to clarify relationships within a table. Individual entries in rows and columns should be single-spaced, with a double space between each separate entry.
- Note that authors must obtain permission to reproduce or adapt all or part of a table (or figure) from a copyrighted source (see "Inclusion of Previously Published Material" below). If you plan to include copyrighted material in your dissertation, you must include letters of permission when you submit your final manuscript to UMI/Proquest.

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

Example of Table heading format:

Table 1

Errors for Younger and Older Groups by Level of Difficulty

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

Example of Figure caption format:

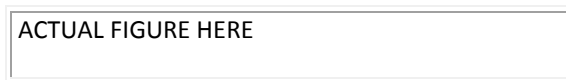


Figure 1. Title of figure here.

REFERENCES AND CITATIONS

EXAMPLES OF CITATIONS WITHIN THE TEXT

- 1) At end of quoted material in text (closing punctuation outside parentheses):

hard territory. "I feel strengthened by it, like a ship that's been through hard winds, torrents, and then finally comes to a harbor" (Marshall, 1992, p. 36). Last year, on

- 2) At end of long block quote in text (closing punctuation precedes parentheses):

After the emotion comes exhaustion. Your soul is tired. And in the calm of that exhaustion, your spirit begins to muster itself in preparation for a kind of rebirth. (Caine, 1978, p. 60)

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED MATERIAL

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

ACTUAL FIGURE OR TABLE

Note. From [or The data in column 1 are from] *Title of Book* (p. 103), by A.N. Author and C. O. Author, 1994, Place of Publication: Publisher. Copyright 1994 by the Name of Copyright Holder. Reprinted [or Adapted] with permission.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

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

REFERENCE LIST PREFERENCES

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

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Include a doi when available. If retrieved from a library database, do not include “Retrieved by” location or date.
- Only the first word of the article’s title and subtitle (the first word after the colon) and proper nouns are capitalized.
- Italicize the name of the journal but not the title of the article.
- Capitalize major words in the name of the journal.
- Italicize the *volume number* (if any).
- Only the first word of the article’s title and subtitle (the first word after the colon) and proper nouns are capitalized.

BOOKS

- Only the first word of the article’s title and subtitle (the first word after the colon) and proper nouns are capitalized.
- Italicize book title.
- Use the official 2-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations for publisher's state location (MA, CA, etc.).
- Omit superfluous terms such as Publishers, Co., or Inc.; retain the words *Books* and *Press*.

Consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) for specific examples of proper formatting of reference entries for each type of document or electronic material.

APPENDIX D: TITLE PAGE TEMPLATE AND EXAMPLE

TITLE OF DISSERTATION (single space title if more than one line)

A dissertation submitted

by

STUDENT'S FULL NAME (no credentials)

Month, Year

to

School of Professional Psychology / School of Organizational Leadership

UNIVERSITY OF THE ROCKIES

Upon the recommendation of the Faculty and the approval of the Board of Trustees, this dissertation is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY / DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

Approved by:

(signature of chair)

Name of Chair, degree
Committee Chair

Committee Members:

Name, Degree
Name, Degree

**HOW TO WRITE A DISSERTATION: A TEMPLATE PROVIDING
STRUCTURE AND CLARITY**

A dissertation submitted

by

ROCKIES R. RACOON

November, 2012

to

School of Organizational Leadership

UNIVERSITY OF THE ROCKIES

Upon the recommendation of the Faculty and the approval of the Board of Trustees, this dissertation is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

Approved by:



Irene F. Stein, PhD
Committee Chair

Committee Members:
Melanie Maggard, PhD
Kenneth Sherman, PhD

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT

The following provides an example of how a Letter of Intent (LOI) should be completed. Please see [A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent](#) for the complete form that should be submitted as portions have been removed for this illustration.

Problem Statement:

In a cogent paragraph or two, identify a general problem in the discipline that supports the need to conduct the proposed research and describe a specific research problem that the research will address. Describe what is problematic, how, and for whom, supported by recent citations. Briefly explain how the results of the study could be used to address the specific research problem. (1-2 paragraphs)

The realization that soft skills are needed in the post 2010 workplace is being explored in a variety of fields; however, it has become an area of focus in the field of engineering, where companies want engineers who can not only complete the technical elements of their job but also explain these achievements to other employees, lead special projects, and manage other workers (Ketter, 2011). In short, they are looking for engineers who have hard and soft skills, and this is problematic for recent graduates because soft skills often are not a part of the engineering college curriculum (Crompton-Young et al., 2010). By failing to ensure that their technical graduates are as versed in the soft skills as the hard skills of their fields of study, colleges and universities are sending them into the job market without all the skills they need, thus presenting us with a new area of inquiry into the effectiveness of our institutions of higher learning.

“Soft skills” is a term that refers to a plethora of skills ranging from oral communication to self-actualization. With limited time to teach any of the soft skills, it would be advantageous for engineering curricula to include the most important soft skills needed by engineers who will soon enter the job market. This dissertation study seeks to identify those specific soft skills by surveying a group of recent engineering graduates regarding those soft skills most found themselves lacking in their first job after graduation, while also seeking to discover which, if any, of these skills they obtained through their schooling, which they think should have been emphasized more in their engineering curriculum, as well as what ways they have obtained—or hope to obtain—the soft skills that are needed in the workplace.

Ketter, P. (2011). Soft skills are must-haves in future workplace. *T + D*, 65 (9), 10.

Crompton-Young, L., McCauley-Bush, P., Meza, K. et al. (2010). Engineering leadership development programs a look at what is needed and what is being done. *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research*, 11 (3/4), 10-22.

Purpose Statement:

Provide a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study. Align the **Purpose of the Study** to address the specific research problem. In one concise paragraph, succinctly describe the focus, methodology, population, and geographical location of the study. (1 paragraph)

The purpose of this study is to add to the current discussion about engineering students lacking soft skills by identifying which specific soft skills they need. Currently, no one has compiled a list of the soft skills that these graduates do need in order to be successful upon graduation. Simply saying “soft skills” is far too broad. There is no way that engineering faculty can include an overview of all soft skills into their already very full curriculum; instead, the soft skills that engineers need must be identified. The purpose of this study is to identify the specific soft skills engineering students need upon graduation. Identifying these skills will pave the way for further research. This study will be conducted as basic qualitative interpretive research (Merriam, 2002) and will utilize in-depth, semi-structured interviews with recent engineering graduates in the state of Kentucky.

Merriam, S. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Importance of the Study

Briefly describe the importance of the proposed research, including how the study represents a unique approach to the problem, how the results may contribute to theory and /or practice in the field, and the implications of the research. Identify any knowledge gaps to be addressed by the proposed research. (1-2 paragraphs)

According to some of the most recent research from popular engineering academic journals, like the *Journal of STEM* (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) *Education*, soft skills are not typically taught in the engineering curriculum because in the past, engineering graduates were not expected to bring these skills to the workplace. The recent studies seem to agree, however, that this is no longer the case as each discusses in detail the current change in the job market and the need for change in engineering curriculum to create graduates who are ready to compete for and succeed in today's entry-level engineering jobs (Crompton-Young et al., 2010; Sankar, Kawulich, Clayton, and Raiu, 2010; Schuhmann, 2010; Warnick, 2010). This study is important and timely, as the results could add specific information to the current discussion about engineering graduates and soft skills.

When looking at the discussion about deficient soft skills, it is evident that those in the engineering field have reached a consensus, as they are all publishing studies identifying a lack of definition of soft skills and a lack of understanding when it comes to how to teach them. To further illustrate, a recent study showed that most engineering faculty members currently indicate that they do not know how to define soft skills or how to identify which soft skills need to be incorporated into their curriculum (Cox, Cekic, & Adams, 2010).

Cox, M., Cekic, O., & Adams, S. (2010). Developing leadership skills of undergraduate engineering students: Perspectives from engineering faculty. *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research*, 11 (3/4), 22-34.

Crompton-Young, L., McCauley-Bush, P., Meza, K. et al. (2010). Engineering leadership development programs a look at what is needed and what is being done. *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research*, 11 (3/4), 10-22.

Sankar, C., Kawulich, B., Clayton, H., & Raiu, P. (2010). Developing leadership skills in introduction to engineering courses through multi-media case studies. *Journal of STEM Education: Innovation and Research*, 11 (3/4), 34-60.

Schuhmann, R. (2010). Engineering leadership education - the search for definition and a curricular approach. *Journal of STEM Education: Innovation and Research*, 11 (3/4), 61-70.

Warnick, G. (2010). *Global competence determination of its importance for engineers working in a global environment* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3412315)

Proposed Research Method

Briefly describe the research methodology for the proposed study, including the research method and research design, population and sample, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis approaches. (1-2 paragraphs)

The methodology proposed for this study is qualitative; more specifically, this study will be a basic interpretive qualitative study (Merriam, 2002) as it is seeking the perceived lack of soft skills in engineering education from the perspective of recent engineering graduates. The aim of the current study is to identify specific soft skills that recent engineering graduates say were missing from their education and would have been helpful for them to learn during their formal education. This data will then be analyzed to construct the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

Individual interviews will be conducted via telephone with graduates of the ABET accredited engineering programs at the University of Kentucky, Western Kentucky University, and the University of Louisville. Though focusing on such a specialized sample will not yield results that are representative of the population of engineering graduates at large or statistically significant, using this small and specific sample is the most practical and efficient way to begin to explore this research topic, and the findings of this study will still add to the current body of research and pave the way for future inquiry (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Interviews will be conducted with recent engineering graduates, as they are certainly the most reliable source to identify the opinions of recent engineering graduates. The study participants will also be recruited for all three of the ABET accredited programs in Kentucky. Expanding the sample to include all three accredited programs and the three universities gives the data obtained the potential to be applicable to more researchers.

The interviews will be conducted by telephone and audio-recorded using Audio Acrobat or a similar service. The interviews will be transcribed and analyzed using a form of grounded theory analysis (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). The transcripts will be coded through inductive and deductive code development, themes will be developed and a rich description answering the research questions will be written. I will conduct coding both by hand and with the assistance of a computer software program, such as ATLAS.ti. The goal of this analysis is to identify the soft skills that Kentucky Engineering Graduates say were missing from their college education that they would have needed; and by coding the interviews, I will be able to inventory the skills that were identified, as well as which skills were indicated as more or less important or applicable.

Merriam, S. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12 (2), 219-245.

Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Research Questions (and Hypotheses, if quantitative)

Present specific research questions to be addressed, consistent with the proposed research method and design. If hypotheses will be tested, include them as well.

What soft skills do recent engineering graduates from ABET accredited programs in Kentucky say would have been helpful for them to learn during their formal education in order to be successful at their first job?"

Sub -Question 1: Which of those skills did they obtain through their schooling?

Sub-Question 2: Which of those skills do they think should have been emphasized more in their engineering curriculum?

Sub-Question 3: What ways have they, or will they, obtain the soft skills that are needed in their job?

APPENDIX F: DISSERTATION WRITING TIPS

1. Avoid words that imply absolutes, such as *the research proves*. Instead, scholarly terminology such as *the research data or findings suggest or imply* is more appropriate.
2. Use of vague or colloquial expressions that one might use in normal conversations should not be used in scholarly writings. Avoid the use of jargon and expressions that are not scholarly. Examples inappropriate for dissertations: *nevertheless, on one hand, in other words, corner the market, otherwise, at the broadest level, ripple effects, fills the gap, as a bonus, closed the loop, large, argued* (unless the writer knows an argument did occur), *bridging the gap*.
3. Ensure that the referents for all pronouns are clear. Avoid the use of pronouns such as *this, that, their, them, those, its*, etc. unless the referent is clearly and specifically known. Provide an example here.
4. Watch the use of singular and plural in the same sentence. Subject, verb, and object should all be either singular or plural. Be consistent, even between sentences.
5. The word *data* is plural; the singular is *datum*.
6. Do not use an apostrophe when referencing events occurring within a specific year of a given decade. For example, when referring to events that occurred within the year 1980, one should write 1980s and not 1980's.
7. Avoid absolute phrases such as *will contribute* or *will show*. It is recommended that learners use phrases such as *may* or *might contribute*.
8. Always use specific references to time. Vague references, such as *today, recent, currently, and this* should be avoided because some readers may not read the dissertation until sometime in the future.
9. All paragraphs should contain 3–5 sentences that support a **single idea**. Many learners inappropriately construct paragraphs containing only one or two sentences. Conversely, many learners inappropriately have very long paragraphs that are composed of unrelated sentences.
10. Students often overuse the words *this researcher* when it may be more important to state what occurred in the study. Instead of *this researcher placed the mouse in the tub, say the mouse was placed in the tub*. Focus on the action taken rather than on yourself as the performer of the action. The use of first person may be permitted for clarity.
11. Avoid anthropomorphisms (attributing human characteristics to an inanimate object). *Research* cannot *demonstrate* or *show* (or actually do much of anything). *Research results* can *indicate*.
12. Avoid stringy sentences. Stringy sentences are so long the reader forgets the beginning of the sentence before reaching the end. Break long sentences into shorter sentences. A good rule of thumb is that sentences should be no more than 40 words. Longer sentences should be revised for succinctness and clarity. (See sections 3.08 and 3.09 in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition.)
13. Past tense should be used to describe previous research or when referencing quotes, as the process has already been completed. An example of the appropriate use of past tense might be: *Jones (2005) defined or Smith (2004) published*.
14. Proposals and dissertations should be written in scholarly language. Non-scholarly words that begin sentences may be redundant with other words or ideas in the sentence. Revise to scholarly tone and presentation. See section 3.21 in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Examples may include, among others: *Additionally, As a result, Accordingly, Because of, Clearly, Consequently, Essentially, Finally, Furthermore, For example, However, In addition, In spite of, It was found, Moreover, Nevertheless, Overall, Therefore, and Thus*.
15. Place periods and commas within closing quotation marks (US rule; different in UK). Colons and semicolons are placed outside closing quotation marks. Question marks and explanation points should be inside the quotation marks only if they are part of the quoted material.

Contributed by Dr. Ken Sherman, University of the Rockies.

APPENDIX G: DISSERTATION PROCESS CHART

Pre-Dissertation	Academic Course Work		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possible dissertation topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Dissertation Handbook 	
PHASE 1 Finalize Topic	ORG/PSY 8910 Dissertation Planning I* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select and expand on a topic Complete CITI training 		
	ORG/PSY 8912 Dissertation Planning II* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a Committee Chair Create schedule for completion of dissertation 	A1: Request for Committee Candidates A2: Dissertation Committee Chair Request	
	ORG/PSY 8990 Dissertation & ORG/PSY 8991 Dissertation Extension Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize the research topic Complete LOI 		
	Transition Point I: Letter of Intent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit Dissertation Letter of Intent 		A3: Dissertation Letter of Intent
PHASE 2 Form Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop mini-proposal from LOI Select other Committee Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start working on Dissertation Proposal 	
PHASE 3 Prepare & Defend Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and revise proposal (Chapters I, II, & III) Secure Committee approval 		
	Transition Point II: Proposal Research Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit proposal for Research Review Board (RRB) review Revise proposal as needed 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule Preliminary Oral Defense 		A4: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Proposal Research Review A5: Request for Preliminary Oral Defense
	Transition Point III: Preliminary Oral Defense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass defense 		A6: Preliminary Oral Defense Evaluation
Transition Point IV: IRB Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit research summary and other documents to the IRB Revise proposal as needed 		IRB Request for Review IRB Research Summary CITI Certificate	
PHASE 4 Conduct Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect data Analyze data 		
PHASE 5 Write Dissertation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise Chapters I, II, and III Write Chapters IV and V 		
	Transition Point V: Final Research Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit for Research Review Board (RRB) review Revise as needed 		
PHASE 6 Defend Dissertation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise based on Committee feedback Secure Committee approval 		
	Transition Point VI: Final Oral Defense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass defense 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule Final Oral Defense 		A7: Certification of Preparedness and Request for Final Research Review A8: Request for Final Oral Defense A9: Final Oral Defense Evaluation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have Committee review final dissertation Get dissertation reviewed by APA Style Editor 		
	Transition Point VII: Final Manuscript Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit dissertation for final review 		A10: Dissertation Final Submission A11: Certification of APA Style Compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit dissertation to UMI Publishing 		Petition to Graduate	
Transition Point VIII: Petition to Graduate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Registrar to prepare for graduation 			

*These courses are not taken by students in the PsyD, Clinical Specialization.