# Course Description

Students will develop a comprehensive description of the research approach used for the study, including research-guiding questions, null hypotheses, research design, selection of subjects for study, data collection, and data analysis.

**University Learning Outcomes (ULO)**

* **ULO1**: Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
* **ULO2**: Intellectual and Practical Skills
* **ULO3**: Personal and Social Responsibility
* **ULO4**: Integrative and Applied Learning
* **ULO5**: Immersed in the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

# Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

* **PLO1:** Articulate an educational organization's mission, goals, and guiding principles that distinguish the organization from others. (ULO1, 4)
* **PLO2:** Understand the foundational base of organizational theory, and demonstrate the ability to bridge theory and practice. (ULO1, 2, 4)
* **PLO3:** Given scenarios of conflict, choose ethical courses of action consistent with Gospel values. (ULO3, 5)
* **PLO4:** Synthesize and analyze data to reveal relations and causality, and convert raw data into actionable information. (ULO2, 4)
* **PLO5:** View problems and challenges through the lens of a scientist, seeking evidence-based conclusions. (ULO1, 2, 4)
* **PLO6:** Practice and model steward leadership in transforming organizations to better serve all constituents. (ULO3, 4, 5)
* **PLO7:** Demonstrate facility in the application of technology to solve problems, analyze and synthesize data, and manage information. (ULO1, 2, 4)

# Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

* **CLO1**: Evaluate your dissertation progress.
* **CLO2**: Progress through the writing process in your dissertation.
* **CLO3**: Evaluate your dissertation collaboratively with your dissertation advisor.

**Student Expectations**

Students are expected to:

* ask probing and insightful questions related to course content.
* make meaningful and relevant connections and application to their own learning process.
* be productive and contributing members of class discussions.

# Required Course Materials

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

ISBN 13 978-0-8050-1891-9

ISBN 10 0-8050-489-X

Lovitts, B. E., & Wert, E. L. (2009). *Developing quality dissertations in the social sciences a graduate student's guide to achieving excellence*. Sterling, Va.: Stylus

ISBN 978-1-57922-261-1

Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2014). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process* (4th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

ISBN -10: 1452260974,

ISBN-13: 978-1452260976

# Suggested Point Values

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assessment** | **Point Value** | **Due** |
| **Week 1** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Week One Self-Evaluation: Dissertation Progress Tracker Update | 10 | <insert due date> |
|  | Progress Plan | 10 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Week 2** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Week 3** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Week 4** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Week 5** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Week 6** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Week 7** | |  |  |
|  | Participation | 1 | <insert due date> |
|  | Week Seven Self-Evaluation: Dissertation Progress Tracker Update | 12 | <insert due date> |
|  | Progress Plan | 12 | <insert due date> |
|  | Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor | 7 | <insert due date> |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Total Points** | | **100** |  |

# Course Schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Start** | **End** |
|  |  |  |
| One | <insert start date> | <insert end date> |
| Two |  |  |
| Three |  |  |
| Four |  |  |
| Five |  |  |
| Six |  |  |
| Seven |  |  |

# Weekly Learning Modules

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week One: Evaluating Your Dissertation and Progress | |  | |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Evaluate your dissertation progress. | | CLO1 | |
| * 1. Consult with your dissertation advisor about your dissertation evaluation. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Communicate the status of your dissertation to your committee members. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities****: Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Tutorials**  During this course, you will be asked to use and participate in various technologies to complete activities and assignments.  **Review** the tutorials available on Blackboard as needed.  **Click** the **Student Resources** button from the menu on the left. | | N/A | N/A |
| **Weekly Participation and Discussion**  The purpose of the weekly discussions is to provide you with a way to synthesize the concepts presented in this course. Each week, you will respond to the discussion questions with a substantive post of 200- to 250-words that addresses all the prompts for the question by 11:59 p.m. EST of the listed due date. By the conclusion of each week, Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST, you will make at least one substantive comment of 100- to 150-words to three of your classmates’ posts for each assigned discussion question. Your comments must further the discussion by following the RISE Model for meaningful feedback. It is recommended that you check in periodically throughout the week to ensure that you are meeting the participation requirement.  **Review** the [RISE Model for Peer Feedback](http://elwray.squarespace.com/feedback). | | N/A |  |
| **Collaborating with Your Dissertation Advisor and Dissertation Committee Members**  Throughout this course, you will be working with your dissertation advisor to plan and prepare to work on your dissertation. Your dissertation advisor will be your main point of contact about your dissertation, including progress, breakthroughs, and challenges.  You will also have additional support through your dissertation committee members. They can offer a different perspective and insight into working drafts of your dissertation. Due to their commitments, it is imperative that you contact your committee members in advance of submitting any portions of your dissertation for review, as they will likely have to schedule time to review it.  **Schedule** meeting time with your dissertation advisor at least once each week.  **Alert** the committee members that you will be submitting drafts in the next few weeks. | | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 |  |
| **Creating a Plan to Work on Your Dissertation**  **Resource: Dissertation Progress Plan – 7 Week**  One of the most important aspects of working through this course will be to create a plan for working on your dissertation. Between this course and other responsibilities, it will be valuable to plan out your deadlines and dissertation progress for the duration of the course and to communicate this plan to your dissertation advisor.  **Use** the Dissertation Progress Plan – 7 Week to plan your dissertation progress.  **Note.** You will submit this document to your dissertation advisor this week.  After this course, you’ll have a similar Dissertation Progress Plan that will help you plan to make progress from the time this dissertation course ends to the time your next dissertation course begins. | | 1.1, 1.2 |  |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Writing Resources**  A dissertation is a monumental work—a culminating activity in many senses of the word. The dissertation will require much work and effort, but always remember: you’re not alone in this journey. Gwynedd Mercy University offers a variety of writing resources and supports to you, including the following:   * **Dissertation advisors:** Your dissertation advisors are here to help you with the ideas and content of academic writing, including the structure of your thoughts and research. They have a great deal of expertise in these areas and will follow you throughout the dissertation process. Your dissertation advisor can also offer advice and counsel on issues related to the dissertation, from time management to motivation. * **Academic writing specialist**: For a doctoral dissertation, it is important that you focus on getting words committed to paper and only worry about polishing those words into workable drafts as your dissertation begins to take shape. The academic writing specialist can help all doctoral candidates review and improve their academic writing. * **SMARThinking**: Smarthinking is an online resource that includes a writing center that can review your dissertation drafts and offer constructive feedback. This is a great first step in checking the consistency and construction of your drafts before you seek specialized help. * **Library resources:** Keiss Library offers a tremendously valuable suite of resources to the doctoral student. Writing assistance, database research, interlibrary loans, and a variety of other aides are available online and in person at the GMU campus.    + General library page: <https://www.gmercyu.edu/academics/library>   + Dissertations and theses page (requires login): [http://libproxy.gmercyu.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/pqdt/advanced](http://libproxy.gmercyu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/pqdt/advanced)   + Library Guides page*:* <http://gmercyu.libguides.com/>   There are two additional kinds of outside expertise that some doctoral students will seek: editing and statistical analysis. These services are available for an additional fee.   * **Editing**: Some doctoral students find value in having a third party edit their dissertation. Having another party with expertise in academic writing carefully review your work enhances your professional presentation and ensures correct academic style. * **Statistical analysis**: Our two statistical analyses courses provide a strong background that is sufficient for most researchers, but if your methodology is complex or if you are unsure about analysis, interpretation, or data presentation, you may want to consider consulting a statistician, as well.   Do not hesitate to call upon these resources to help you work through your dissertation. They are here to support you on your journey. Good luck! | | 1.1 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Supplemental Learning Resources and Activities****: These resources and activities provide further exploration of content, supplemental information, and skill building. Students may complete items in this section on their own or as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Adobe Connect Live Discussion**  **Participate** in the scheduled live session with the course instructor. This session will provide an overview of the class and will discuss the major assignments in the course.  **Prepare** to ask questions concerning the content of the week and the course as a whole.  **Note.** A recorded lecture will be made available to those who are unable to attend the live session. | | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 | Live Discussion: lecture and discussion = **1 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments****: Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Week One Self-Evaluation: Dissertation Progress Tracker Update**  During your dissertation work, you will use a tracking worksheet to help communicate the status of your dissertation to your dissertation advisor. This update is required in the first and last weeks of all dissertation courses (EDU 811, EDU 812, EDU 813, and EDU 814), but you may wish to send it to your advisor during other checkpoints.  **Review** your progress on your dissertation.  **Evaluate** your dissertation using the Dissertation Progress Tracker.  **Save** your Dissertation Progress Tracker with the following file name: DPT – LASTNAME – CURRENT DATE.   * Example: DPT – Lastima – 03-12-16 * Example: DPT – Franklin – 08-23-17   **Note.** Keep your Dissertation Progress Tracker up to date throughout your program.  **Submit** your updated Dissertation Progress Tracker and your current dissertation work to your dissertation advisor via Blackboard. | | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 | Project log = private posting =  **30 minutes** |
| **Progress Plan**    **Resource: Dissertation Progress Plan – 7 Week**  **Create** a progress plan to work on your dissertation during this course, including the following:   * The components you will focus on drafting or completing * Your overall week-to-week timeline * Challenges you may encounter   **Share** this plan with your advisor and committee members. | | 1.1, 1.2 | Project log = private posting =  **30 minutes** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, institutional review board (IRB), and any other information.  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 1.1, 1.2 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 1.1, 1.2 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **5 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

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| Week Two: Writing Your Dissertation | |  |  |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Use the writing process to continue your dissertation. | | CLO2 | |
| * 1. Research available writing resources. | | CLO1, CLO2 | |
| * 1. Collaborate with your dissertation advisor about your plan to progress on your dissertation. | | CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities****: Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Revising Your Dissertation Components**  During this course, you will be working on writing new components to your dissertation and on revising older components. You may be in a different point of progress within your dissertation than other students. This is to be expected. Therefore, there are many resources that are available to you that are relevant to where you are. You are not expected to read every resource each week; only review those resources that fit your writing and revision plan.  **View** the Dissertation Resources sidebar in Blackboard to review resources and information about each of the different components of a dissertation. | | 2.1 |  |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Working in Stages**  There’s an old joke about handling big tasks: How do you eat an elephant?  The answer? One bite at a time.  Predictably, writing a dissertation requires a large amount of writing. It can be challenging to engage with the enormity of the task before you. Luckily, you do not have to complete the entire dissertation all at once. You have the luxury of knowing exactly the shape and style of each chapter of the dissertation and can therefore work on each element as you are able.  **Takeaway:** Break down your tasks until they are in small enough pieces to complete.  You may be working on a draft of your Ch. 2. The task could be organized in the following way:   * “**Write** a draft of Ch. 2.”   This is too large a task to accomplish in one sitting. Break this task down into a smaller subset, as in the following:   * “**Write** the annotated bibliography of related literature.” * “**Organize** and present the review of literature.” * “**Create** a reference list.”   This is better, but each of these can also be broken down into subtasks. Note how, as we break down these tasks, they begin to come closer to something we could reasonably accomplish in one sitting.   * “**Write** the annotated bibliography of related literature.”   + **Discuss** your resources with your dissertation advisor.   + **Submit** your annotated bibliography to your dissertation advisor for feedback. * “**Organize** and present the review of literature.”   + **Review** the literature you have researched and your documentation.   + **Organize** the review of literature.   + **Submit** a draft of the review of literature to your dissertation advisor for feedback. * “**Create** a reference list.”   + **Review** your references.   + **Write** the reference list.   + **Submit** the reference list to your dissertation advisor for feedback.   Each of these tasks can be broken down into even smaller pieces. You can keep going down to whatever level you are comfortable with. In some cases, you’ll even see people break down their tasks to the size of their available time—10-minute tasks, 30-minute tasks, 60-minute tasks.  If you are feeling stuck while you are working on your dissertation, it is likely that you are trying to work on too much all at once. Work with your dissertation advisor to break the tasks down, and you’ll have a much easier time. | | 2.1, 2.2 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments****: Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, IRB, and any other information.  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **4 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week Three: Writing Your Dissertation | |  |  |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Review your dissertation and dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Write and revise the elements of your dissertation according to your dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Collaborate with your dissertation advisor and/or committee members about the progress of your dissertation. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities****: Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Revising Your Dissertation Components**  During this course, you will be working on writing new components to your dissertation and on revising older components. You may be in a different point of progress within your dissertation than other students. This is to be expected. Therefore, there are many resources that are available to you that are relevant to where you are. You are not expected to read every resource each week; only review those resources that fit your writing and revision plan.  **View** the Dissertation Resources sidebar in Blackboard to review resources and information about each of the different components of a dissertation. | | 3.1 |  |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Avoiding Distractions**  When you’re tired or stressed, it’s natural that you may get distracted while you’re writing or that you might have trouble focusing. In most cases, getting up and stretching, taking a short walk, or even just closing your eyes and planning your next steps can help you get back on track. These types of short breaks are natural during extended writing sessions.  However, there’s a tremendous difference between taking a short break and procrastinating or getting distracted. It’s all too easy in these halcyon days of Internet videos, social media, and smartphones to get caught up in something and to get so involved that you forget to return to the task at hand. Thankfully, there are a number of techniques you can use to prevent or mitigate the effects of procrastination and to write when you intend to write.   * **Schedule alone time**: Our friends and families can sometimes be our most fruitful distractions, and we’re certainly not going to suggest you ignore your family, but work is work. To be at your best, you need to work to ensure that you have dedicated time when you can work on your dissertation, distraction free. Schedule a one-hour time slot during which you will not be approached and in which you can plunge into your work. During that time, make it clear that you won’t be taking phone calls, answering questions about the dishes, or making plans for next week. Everyone in your life is aware that you are working on your dissertation. Use this to your advantage. If it is not practical to schedule this time at home, find another venue in which you can work, like the library, a coffee shop, or a similar quiet space. * **Be prepared**: Sometimes when you write, the words spill out and you make tremendous progress. The easiest way to help yourself write with flow is to actively and mindfully prepare to write. This means that when you are writing, you aren’t doing research. You’ve already done the research. If necessary, you should schedule separate research and prep time. Research and writing are different activities. Give them enough space to coexist. If you mix your time between the two activities, you’ll be more likely to get less out of each of them. * **Reduce distractions**: The Internet is one of the most wondrous communication and information innovations to ever hit humanity, and when you’re trying to write, it’s a swampy pit of fun distractions. Since you’ve already done your research before you start writing, you won’t need the Internet. Lock down your browsers, turn your phone to airplane mode, and make sure that anything that you might be liable to get lost in is out of sight and out of mind. * **Set specific writing goals**: If you’re going to spend the time and get the prep done, you should know what you intend to accomplish. Whenever you are preparing to write, you should set a specific goal for your progress, whether it’s a word count, a task list, or something else. Write it down and make it visible. Stick to it—you’re not done until you make your goal. Setting this goal before you start to write gives you a better sense of how much energy you have so you can set a goal accordingly. It’s okay to start small, but you must be concrete about what you’d like to accomplish. When you’ve met your goal, you can stop or continue to work, but you’ll have a concrete accomplishment. * **Use a kitchen timer**: Imagine that you are writing, but your mind is wandering and it’s getting hard to focus. In cases like these, take a moment to do a real self-assessment. Is this the type of distraction that you can push through, or is it the type of distraction which could get out of hand? If you can keep working, do so, re-commit, keep working, and push through. However, if you know the distraction is going to linger and affect your work, set your kitchen timer to 15 minutes, and give yourself permission to close your loops. Pay a bill, talk to your family, grab a snack, cuddle with your pets, or take a walk. When that timer goes off, close the loop and return to work.   You might have some other ideas about how to make the best use of your writing time. If so, share them with your cohort in a discussion. Remember, you’re all in this together. | | 3.1, 3.2 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments****: Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, IRB, and any other information.  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 3.1, 3.2 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **4 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

# Faculty Notes

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week Four: Writing Your Dissertation | |  |  |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Review your dissertation and dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Write and revise the elements of your dissertation according to your dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Collaborate with your dissertation advisor and/or committee members about the progress of your dissertation. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities****: Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Revising Your Dissertation Components**  During this course, you will be working on writing new components to your dissertation and on revising older components. You may be in a different point of progress within your dissertation than other students. This is to be expected. Therefore, there are many resources that are available to you that are relevant to where you are. You are not expected to read every resource each week; only review those resources that fit your writing and revision plan.  **View** the Dissertation Resources sidebar in Blackboard to review resources and information about each of the different components of a dissertation. | | 4.1 |  |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Self-Care**  You’re a busy person. The typical doctoral student is going to be juggling many responsibilities, like family, school, and a job or career. Sometimes it might feel like you’re always moving and that there’s no time for anything that isn’t already scheduled on a calendar. On the other hand, it’s easy to leave a very important person off your list of priorities: yourself.  You are the person who has to do the writing. You are the person who has to do the research. You are the person working on revisions. And it’s okay for you to take care of yourself. In fact, if you aren’t taking care of yourself, you’re unlikely to finish your dissertation. No one can go 100% all the time.  The key to each of the suggestions (which you will have heard time and time again) is to plan and schedule. Keep a calendar, schedule your activities (even your relaxation time), and stick to it. Do not allow for changes to the schedule unless it is absolutely essential. Explain your schedule to your friends and family and make sure they understand why you’re guarding your time so carefully: you have a lot of responsibilities, and you want to protect them and yourself.  With that said, here are a few tips on how you can practice self-care:   * **Exercise:** Your brain is part of your body. If there is something interfering with the way your body normally functions, it is likely to interfere with the way your cognition functions. The best way to take care of your mind is to take care of your body. Exercise can help you increase your focus and build your stamina for long sessions of writing and researching. You might want to schedule time to exercise and keep it on your schedule. This is time that will pay you dividends. Even a brisk, 30-minute walk once a day can help keep you feeling good. * **Eat right**: Controlling your diet during your dissertation process can be a struggle. When we are feeling sluggish, it is tempting to reach for foods and drinks that give a temporary boost of energy—ones that are high in sugar, caffeine, and carbohydrates. While the initial rush of energy we get can help us to push through, it is almost always followed by a large drop in energy. This rapid rush and slowdown can cause quite a bit of stress.   How can you help yourself reach for the right foods and beverages? Make sure that they are available and that you cannot reach for the poorer-quality alternatives too often. When we are busy and stressed, we are less likely to use our available effort for food and drink, so we have to make sure we plan.  This is not to say that you cannot have your coffee or chocolate when you need it. Instead, the recommendation is to be moderate in your intake. It is almost always going to be better for us to consume healthier alternatives to keep functioning efficiently.   * **Relax**: How hard do you have to work to relax? When you are in the middle of your dissertation, it is likely that you will need to work harder than you are used to to set aside the time in your schedule for relaxation. You cannot allow yourself to get overwhelmed. Being busy does not mean that you are unable to relax: it means you have to be smart about how you fit in your relaxation time.   If the thing that really lets you relax is doing crossword puzzles for an hour, build that into your schedule. If you want to read for an hour each evening, build that into your schedule. Whatever the activity is, stick to your schedule. This means you may have to cut other activities out of your schedule. Maybe you will have to cut down on television time, internet time, or some other guilty pleasure. You have to know what will work for you. Whatever that is, schedule it and stick to it.  One more thing to remember about relaxing: you are allowed to relax. Despite all of your responsibilities, despite all the work you have to do, you are still allowed to take time to recharge. You cannot go 100% all the time. The dissertation process generally takes, at an absolute minimum, over a year. You will do much better at this process if you are able to stay fresh as you make incremental progress than if you try to do many more sprints and get burnt out. | | 4.1, 4.2 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments****: Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, IRB, and any other information.  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 4.1, 4.2 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **4 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

# Faculty Notes

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| Week Five: Writing Your Dissertation | |  |  |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Review your dissertation and dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Write and revise the elements of your dissertation according to your dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Collaborate with your dissertation advisor and/or committee members about the progress of your dissertation. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities****: Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Revising Your Dissertation Components**  During this course, you will be working on writing new components to your dissertation and on revising older components. You may be in a different point of progress within your dissertation than other students. This is to be expected. Therefore, there are many resources that are available to you that are relevant to where you are. You are not expected to read every resource each week; only review those resources that fit your writing and revision plan.  **View** the Dissertation Resources sidebar in Blackboard to review resources and information about each of the different components of a dissertation. | | 5.1 |  |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Writer’s Block**  At some point in your dissertation, you’ll experience writer’s block. Given the sheer volume of writing, the stress of academic life, your busy personal and profession life, and you being human, it’s inevitable. Mark Twain is widely quoted as saying, “The secret of getting ahead is getting started” and it’s easy to get started. If you’re stuck, try one of these strategies to get back on track.   * **Generate** **Ideas**: Sometimes you just need to get your creative energy flowing. The following strategies encourage just that, and help you organize your thoughts. * **Freewrite**: This is a great strategy if you’re stonewalled. It helps you to overcome the first hurdle of just getting started and put yourself in a mindset that is open to inspiration. Set a timer for 10 minutes and begin writing. The only rules are these: you can’t stop writing, and anything goes. If you’re really stuck, begin by describing your current perceptions—sounds, sights, smells, or feelings—and see where that takes you. * **Brainstorm**: Unrestricted, brainstorming encourages creativity and works well if you’re stuck on a certain topic or area of your dissertation. Begin with an open-ended question related to where you’re stuck, and don’t be afraid to phrase it broadly. For example, “How do I feel about this?” or “What is the craziest line of argument I could make?” Next, take 10 minutes to list as many answers as you can. Don’t stop to judge them, just write. * **Mind map**: Mind maps illustrate relationships between ideas. They encourage idea generation, use drawing, and require more organization. They work well if you have some ideas but are stuck on how to organize, order, or expand them. Begin with a large sheet of paper or a whiteboard and some colored pens. In the middle of the space, write or draw your main idea, and draw a shape around it. Next, spend 20 minutes writing or drawing other ideas and how they branch from your main idea and each other. Use multiple colors and aim for at least three levels of branching. * **Consult**: You’ve got a wealth of people who can consult with to generate new ideas, find new directions, and create new beginnings in your writing and research. Of course, you can talk with your dissertation advisor and your readers, but you can also consult with other students in your dissertation program. You can talk to the librarian to generate new leads on research you might not have considered or that you may have forgotten about. You can reach out to former instructors with whom you have an establish relationship for new ideas and angles to consider. You could even post to a message board on a website dedicated to research or that caters to graduate students. Remember that you are never alone. There is always someone who can help nudge you in the right direction. | | 5.1, 5.2 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments****: Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, IRB, and any other information.  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 5.1, 5.2 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **4 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

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| Week Six: Writing your Dissertation | |  |  |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Review your dissertation and dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Write and revise the elements of your dissertation according to your dissertation plan. | | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Collaborate with your dissertation advisor and/or committee members about the progress of your dissertation. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities:*** *Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Revising Your Dissertation Components**  During this course, you will be working on writing new components to your dissertation and on revising older components. You may be in a different point of progress within your dissertation than other students. This is to be expected. Therefore, there are many resources that are available to you that are relevant to where you are. You are not expected to read every resource each week; only review those resources that fit your writing and revision plan.  **View** the Dissertation Resources sidebar in Blackboard to review resources and information about each of the different components of a dissertation. | | 6.1 |  |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Outside Advice**  After a while, it can be hard to remember what life was like before you began writing the dissertation. It can all seem to run together: the long nights researching and writing, the time spent in the trenches, hours spent talking to your advisor, and the times when your significant can rattle off your thesis at dinner parties.  Don’t forget that you are not the first person begin writing a dissertation, and you are not the first person to spend time pursing this intense academic achievement. There are a great number of generous people in this doctoral business—both PhDs who are happy to take their time to advise graduate students and those who are working towards or completing their degrees who are willing to help share their advice and experiences for the benefit of those still wondering what the end looks like. This is a collection of articles from authors reflecting on their dissertation experiences and talking about the achievements, pitfalls, and wisdom they received in the process. It is our hope that you’ll be able to find something of value in these articles.  **Review** these articles from *Inside Higher Ed*:   * When It Come to Dissertations, Done is Best: <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/when-it-comes-dissertations-done-best> * A Done Dissertation Isn’t the Best Dissertation: <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/done-dissertation-isn%E2%80%99t-best-dissertation> * The Battle Between Perfectionism and Productivity: <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/battle-between-perfectionism-and-productivity> * How to Survive and Thrive During the Dissertation Process: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2015/11/25/how-survive-and-thrive-during-dissertation-process-essay>   **Review** these articles from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*:   * The Completion Agenda, Part 1: <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Completion-Agenda-Part-1/229463> * The Completion Agenda, Part 2: The Best Defense: <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Completion-Agenda-Part-2-/230565>   **Review** this blog article from Chronicle Vitae:   * The No-Fail Secret to Writing a Dissertation: <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/370-the-no-fail-secret-to-writing-a-dissertation?cid=articlepromo>   **View** the following video on YouTube:  Writing your dissertation [7:01]: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9TFZ6blzAg> | | 6.1, 6.2 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments:*** *Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, IRB, and any other information.  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 6.1, 6.2 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **4 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

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| Week Seven: Evaluating the Progress of your Dissertation | |  |  |
| ***Learning Objectives*** | | ***Alignment*** | |
| * 1. Evaluate the progress of your dissertation and dissertation plan. | | CLO1 | |
| * 1. Write and revise the elements of your dissertation according to your dissertation plan. | | CLO2, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Evaluate the progress of your dissertation with your dissertation advisor and/or committee members. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| * 1. Create a plan with timelines to continue progressing on your dissertation. | | CLO1, CLO3 | |
| ***Required Learning Resources and Activities****: Students must complete any resources and activities listed in this section as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Week Seven Preparations**  You’re probably not done with your entire dissertation, and that is completely expected. This week, you’ll be working on completing more of your dissertation writing and on making plans to continue working on the dissertation after this course is complete. | | 7.1 | N/A |
| **Being a Mindful Writer: Feedback**  In this course, you have been getting a lot of advice and information about writing, research, and the dissertation process. This week, you’ll have the opportunity to give feedback about your experience in this program and to recommend ways to strengthen it.  In this discussion, briefly describe your dissertation experience, including:   * Ways in which you have felt well supported * Ways in which you wish you had more support * One piece of advice for students beginning their dissertations   Your feedback is not graded, and if you feel more comfortable, you can simply discuss it with your dissertation advisor or pass it on to the program director. However you choose to provide feedback, it will be used to improve the program and support offered for students. This is your chance to have a voice in the process. Thank you for your effort and your contributions to this academic community! | | 7.1, 7.2 |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Supplemental Learning Resources and Activities****: These resources and activities provide further exploration of content, supplemental information, and skill building. Students may complete items in this section on their own or as selected by the instructor.* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Pages/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Adobe Connect Live Discussion**  **Participate** in the scheduled live session with the course instructor. This session will provide a summary of the course.  **Prepare** to ask questions concerning the content of the course and provide constructive feedback.  Note:A recorded lecture will be made available to those who are unable to attend the live session. | | 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 | Live Discussion: lecture and discussion = **1 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |
| ***Assignments****: Students must complete the weekly assignment(s).* | | ***Alignment*** | ***Points/AIE/***  ***Generic*** |
| **Week Seven Self-Evaluation: Dissertation Progress Tracker Update**  During your dissertation work, you will use a tracking worksheet to help communicate the status of your dissertation to your dissertation advisor. This update is required in the first and last weeks of all dissertation courses (EDU 811, EDU 812, EDU 813, and EDU 814), but you may wish to send it to your advisor during other checkpoints.  **Review** your progress on your dissertation.  **Evaluate** your dissertation using the Dissertation Progress Tracker.  **Save** your Dissertation Progress Tracker with the following file name: DPT – LASTNAME – CURRENT DATE.   * Example: DPT – Lastima – 03-12-16 * Example: DPT – Franklin – 08-23-17   **Note.** Keep your Dissertation Progress Tracker up to date throughout your program.  **Submit** your updated Dissertation Progress Tracker and your current dissertation work to your dissertation advisor via Blackboard. | | 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 | Project log = private posting =  **30 minutes** |
| **Dissertation Progress Plan**  **Resource: Dissertation Progress Plan – Between Courses**  **Create** a progress plan to work on your dissertation after this course concludes, including the following:   * The components you will focus on drafting or completing * Your overall timeline * Your estimated date of completion for the dissertation * Challenges you may encounter   **Share** this plan with your advisor and committee members.  **Note.** It is possible that you will not finish your final plan until after the course is complete due to the feedback cycle with your dissertation advisor and committee members. This is natural and expected—you are creating a plan to continue working on your dissertation after this course is complete. | | 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 | Project log = private posting =  **30 minutes** |
| **Dissertation Collaboration: Dissertation Advisor**  Every week, students are expected to meet with their dissertation advisors to discuss the progress of their dissertation and to make plans for the completion of each phase of the dissertation.  **Schedule** a meeting time with your dissertation advisor.  **Submit** drafts and progress to your dissertation advisor.  **Prepare** to discuss all aspects of your dissertation, including progress, challenges, and ideas surrounding methodology, focus, IRB, and any other information.  Prepare to discuss the  **Collaborate** with your dissertation advisor. | | 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 | Discussion: communicate status of dissertation and follow up = **2 hour** |
| **Dissertation**  **Work** on your dissertation. | | 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 | Guided Project =  **2 hour** |
| **Total** |  |  | **5 hours** |
| **Notes** |  | | |

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# Breakdown of Academic Instructional Equivalencies

|  |  |  |
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| **Week 1** |  |  |
| Required |  | 5 hours |
| Supplemental |  | 1 hour |
|  |  |  |
| **Week 2** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Week 3** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Week 4** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Week5** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Week 6** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Week 7** |  |  |
| Required |  | 5 hours |
| Supplemental |  | 1 hour |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Required Hours** |  | 30 hours |
| **Total Supplemental Hours** |  | 2 hours |
| **Total Hours** |  | 32 hours |