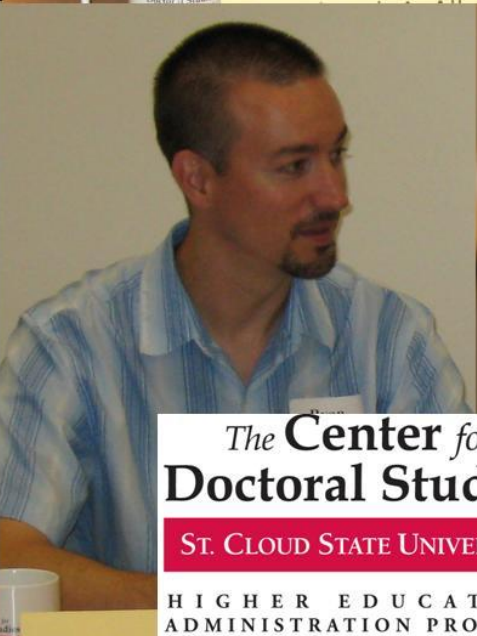


Dissertation Manual
Higher Education Administration
Doctoral Program



The Center for
Doctoral Studies
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY
HIGHER EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

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Introduction

This guide for the dissertation requirement is designed to provide information and direction for graduate students enrolled in the Doctoral Degree Program in Higher Education Administration.

The purpose of the guide is to direct students toward the smooth and successful completion of their dissertation, and to assist in students' timely graduation.

Dissertation

Ed.D. dissertation projects can take on a range of forms. It should involve the design and implementation of empirical research by the student which makes an original contribution to the field. The student designs the study, obtains and/or develops data collection tools, sets up and follows-through on the data collection process, processes and analyzes the data, and writes the findings, analyses, interpretations and conclusions of the study based on the data.

But First, Check the Following

- Be sure that all the courses on your approved Program of Study Form (gray form) were completed within the seven-year time limit for completion of the program.
- Print your transcript online. Check your transcript to determine that all completed course work is included. If transfer credits do not appear on your transcript and they have been approved as a part of your official program, contact the School of Graduate Studies at once. (Call 320-308-2113 or 800-369-4260 or email graduatestudies@stcloudstate.edu .
- Complete all courses on your approved Program of Study. **ALL COURSE CHANGES MUST BE APPROVED BY PETITION**: verbal approval by your adviser is **not** sufficient. Forms are available online at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/stuForms.asp> or the School of Graduate Studies, AS-121
- All incompletes must be completed and grades submitted by the instructor. Remind your professor to submit a grade change for all I or IP grades. Check your transcript to determine if the necessary changes have been made.
- A 3.0 grade point average in the major, the total program, and overall graduate courses attempted must be recorded on your transcript. Students who have not achieved the required grade point average are not eligible to hold the preliminary conference or final defense.
- A grade of C- or lower or a grade of "U" cannot be used toward a graduate program.

- At least 60% of all coursework for a doctoral program must be completed at the doctoral level (800-899).
- Fulfill the residence requirement. A minimum of 45 credits must be completed in residence at St. Cloud State University, including on-campus, off-campus, and online courses offered by St. Cloud State University.

University Procedures

The School of Graduate Studies is responsible for implementing university policies regarding graduate student classification, formal programs, dissertation formatting, and diplomas. This office publishes information on all graduate programs and assists individual departments in updating information on graduate degree programs. The website for the School of Graduate Studies is: <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies>.

It is the student's responsibility to be knowledgeable of, and to meet, the deadlines for submission of your proposal and dissertation. There are no exceptions to university deadlines. Updated deadlines are available at:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/>

Students are required to meet the formatting guidelines of both the university and of the department. The department adheres to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA). APA style rules and guidelines are found in a reference book called, "The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Sixth Edition)." Guidelines are provided to ensure clear and consistent presentation of written material. Editorial style provides uniform use of such elements as grammar, use of tables/graphs, headings, citation of sources, presentation of statistics, fonts, etc.

The Graduate School also has a format manual for dissertations that outlines its expectations. Students should obtain "A Manual for the Preparation of Field Studies and Theses" available at the Husky Bookstore and online at:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/documents/ThesisManual.pdf>

Proposals for the preliminary oral conference are expected to represent a largely complete draft of the first three chapters for the dissertation. As such, the proposal should follow the formatting required by the School of Graduate Studies for the completed dissertations.

When a conflict exists in standards, format, or style, the manual published by the School of Graduate Studies takes precedence over any other manual approved for department use.

Registration

Doctoral students must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of dissertation research to obtain the Ed.D. Degree. You may register for the first 3 credits of dissertation research (HIED 899) during the semester in which you plan to complete the preliminary oral examination. You should register for the final 3 thesis credits during the semester in which you plan to complete the final oral defense. The preliminary and final oral examinations must occur at least one semester apart. To register for these credits, you must complete and submit the “Individual Study Approval Form” which can be found at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/stuForms.asp> or in the Program Forms section of this handbook. Once the form is approved, you will be sent a course ID number by email, which will allow you to register for the course.

In between the first and last semesters of dissertation registration, students must register for an additional six credit hours of dissertation research. Doctoral students must be continuously enrolled during the course of their dissertation research. If students use their six intermediate credit hours and do not plan to complete the dissertation in the next term, they can register for continuous enrollment credits.

Students may hold their final dissertation defense meeting in the summer only with the agreement, in advance, of their chair and all committee members.

The satisfactory completion of the dissertation is reported as S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory). If all requirements have not been met by the end of the semester in which you were registered, the work is reported as an IP. The dissertation project must be completed within the seven-year time limit set for the completion of a doctoral degree.

Selecting a Topic

It is never too early to begin thinking about and planning for your dissertation. Some students seem to know just what they want to do from the very first day of the program, whereas others take a longer, more reflective path to determine exactly what they will do for their dissertation. More typically, students get ideas and clues about a specific topic or project through participation in courses and/or experiences at their work site. Consider the following:

- Is there a topic that piqued your interest in a class discussion?
- Was there a chapter you read in a text, or perhaps a journal article, that struck a chord for you?
- Did you write a paper for a class and the topic turned out to be quite intriguing to you?
- Is there something in your work experience that you want to explore more closely?
- Is there a current issue affecting higher education that interests you and is related to your professional practice or intellectual endeavors?

These are the kind of self-signals for which you should be on the lookout. When you find something that seems particularly interesting, write it down. Maybe that idea will become the springboard for your research, or the problem you will investigate.

Typically, these self-signals are broader than the research questions that make a good, focused dissertation. They are a good start but need further refinement. The best way to achieve that is to turn to the research literature on the topic you have chosen. As you review and synthesize the literature, you will discover the aspects of the issue that scholars seem to agree on (there is little need to study these further) and the aspects that are still unknown or in dispute. These unknown items can take many forms: For example, theorized connections as yet unproven; a situation or population that a theory or model has not been tested on yet; a program, procedure or intervention that has not been fully tested and verified yet; or a study that has some design flaws that limit its inferential value, but that you can repair in another project. It is in areas such as these that you should be able to formulate questions that can guide dissertation research.

Your Committee

The most important consideration when beginning a dissertation project is the selection of four graduate faculty members to serve as committee members.

Committee Chair

The student's advisor will typically serve as the committee chair. If the student, in consultation with the advisor, determines that her/his topic better matches the expertise of some other member of the program faculty, s/he should consider changing advisors or having co-chairs for the committee. The impact of changing advisors is relatively small provided it is done early in the process of designing the research project. The form for changing advisors can be found at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/stuForms.asp>. The student should make sure that the chair is available throughout the course of the dissertation project.

Selecting Committee Members

Each graduate student, after consulting with her/his advisor, should ask three other graduate faculty members to serve on the committee, based on each member's potential advisory value regarding the research project or method. These committee members must be approved graduate faculty members. A listing of graduate faculty members is available online at: <http://bulletin.stcloudstate.edu/faculty.asp?grad=1>. If a potential committee member is not a member of the graduate faculty, the Graduate School provides a process for establishing membership. An explanation of the guidelines, process and the appropriate forms can be found at <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/>.

One committee member should be a full-time faculty member in the Higher Education Administration Program.

Another committee member fills the role of an "outside reader" and must be from outside the department. The outside reader need not have expertise in the student's specific topic, but

should be in an area that complements the planned project or the field of higher education administration. To view a list of faculty members who have volunteered to serve as outside readers, go to: <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/committee.asp>.

The third member can be from either inside or outside the department. If other members of the committee do not have familiarity with the planned method of the study, the student should consider choosing a member for the committee who has such knowledge and expertise. A student may also consider the membership of a higher education administrator/practitioner who might apply for membership on the graduate faculty for the purpose of serving on the committee.

To receive approval of a committee composition, the adviser should send an email to Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu listing the proposed committee members and their affiliation. The E-mail provides a written record of the request and approval. An email confirmation will be returned within one to two working days. A student will need to meet with the committee at least twice in two separate semesters, once for a preliminary conference and again for a final defense.

Understanding the Purpose of the Committee

Your committee acts in the role of reviewer, partner and mentor to provide knowledge and support as you begin, execute, and complete your dissertation. A student should discuss with her/his advisor the expected role and contribution for each member of the committee.

Working With Your Committee

The student makes all decisions in discussion with the chairperson first, including the composition of the committee, IRB forms, drafts of chapters, etc. In addition, dates for the preliminary and final meetings are scheduled only after the chair has reviewed and approved the working draft of the proposal or dissertation. Appendix A presents lists of responsibilities for the committee chair, committee members, and the student throughout the dissertation process.

The student should ask the chairperson and committee members about the logistics of the involvement of committee members. Some committee members prefer to see all drafts and be involved throughout the process, whereas other members may give early input in terms of conceptualizing the project or research design and then prefer to see only the final drafts. Students should have committee members clarify their preference at the outset of their work together.

Students are advised to work closely with their chair and faculty members in HIED 808 and HIED 809 from the very beginning and throughout the entire length of the dissertation. For example, it would be inadvisable for a student to do most of the work of a proposal on her/his own and then take it to her/his chair in hopes that the chair would “sign on.” The dissertation project is intended to be a process during which the advisor and student work closely throughout.

Another logistical procedure the student, chair, and committee members should discuss and agree upon is the amount of time that the student must allow for the chair and committee members to read submitted written material. For example, how many days does the chair need in order to review materials for your next meeting? When the final draft is completed, how much

time will committee members need before submitting their suggestions? These important procedural considerations should be clearly delineated at the outset of the dissertation process and updated as needed. In addition, committee members should be asked if they want hard copies or electronic copies of all drafts.

Developing Timelines

Timelines help both students and faculty members stay focused and purposeful in relation to the timely completion of the dissertation. Timelines help the student understand the sequence of activities, map out a schedule, and inform committee members when to anticipate incoming drafts of chapters to read. Students should consult with their chair to modify and/or periodically review their timeline.

Writing Successfully

Some committee chairs will provide editing, formatting, spelling correction, and/or grammatical advice for students, whereas other chairs prefer to focus their attention on the content rather than the structure or mechanics of student work. Students are advised to discuss this aspect of their dissertation with their committee chair.

Resources and consultation for editing and formatting are available from St. Cloud State University's Writing Center. Services, hours and location are available from their website: <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/writeplace/>.

It is the student's responsibility to persist with the writing and revision process until the final document is satisfactory to the chair and, then, each committee member.

Original Work

Students are required to conduct and complete an individual project. If two students pursue a similar topic, it must be clear that the "products," are separate and unique, ensuring that each person's work is indeed original.

Statistical Consulting and Research Support

If you are looking for help in drawing on the power of statistics to support your research, the Statistical Consulting & Research Support office in St. Cloud State University's Learning Resources & Technology Services may be able to help you. Staff members will help you design a survey to collect the information you need, and will do the computer work for you. You make the research decisions, and they do the computer work.

What to expect

Visit the Statistical Consulting & Research Support office (MC-204) before you design and write your survey. Staff members will help focus your research and help develop an effective method for finding answers.

- After completing your survey take the completed forms and your data to the Statistical Consulting Office. (Please make an appointment first.)
- Staff can also help you develop web-based surveys. They have experience in creating web products and will help you draw upon the unique aspects of this growing information gathering process.
- Based upon your discussion in the survey planning process and on the questions you want answered, the staff will design a series of computer programs to analyze your data. They even do the data entry for you!
 - This step can take up two weeks. The size of your project and the work the staff has scheduled before yours arrives will influence how long you have to wait for results.
- The staff will run your data, analyze, and assemble the results.
- When completed you can return to the office to have the results explained. They will help you to interpret your results.
- You have the opportunity to return to discuss drawing further information from your data. The staff will perform follow-up analysis upon your request.

Contact Information

Statistical Consulting & Research Support is located in room MC-204. Office hours are weekdays between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. The telephone number to call is 308-4709. The e-mail address is statspss@stcloudstate.edu.

The Proposal

The first step in the thesis process is the development of a proposal. The proposal is required for the dissertation preliminary oral conference with your committee. A student will work with his/her committee chair on the proposal prior to disseminating to other committee members.

A proposal is a comprehensive presentation of the plan for the dissertation project. It should include an introduction, the main research problem, research questions/hypotheses, a review of relevant literature, and the proposed methodology. It should also include a proposed timeline for the project. Proposals for the preliminary oral conference are expected to represent a largely complete draft of the first three chapters for the dissertation. As such, the proposal should follow the formatting required by the School of Graduate Studies for completed dissertations. It is important that the details of the research plan be specified and approved in the proposal before the data are collected.

A suggested outline for the chapters of a dissertation is presented in Appendix B.

Preliminary Oral Exam Conference

Once the proposal has been prepared and approved by the chair, students must arrange for a preliminary oral conference. A rubric for the proposal and the oral conference is included in Appendix C. The purpose of the preliminary oral conference is to elicit committee members' input and insight related to the research problem and the proposed method of inquiry in order to improve the plan for the research and enhance the likelihood of success. Students should be prepared to be open minded about receiving suggestions and criticisms, and be prepared to accept changes that are reasonable and add value to the study. However, students do not have to accept all suggestions made by committee members. Sometimes, a polite, "That is not the focus of my study" can be an appropriate response.

This preliminary conference may be scheduled after the student has been fully accepted into dissertation candidacy, if the graduate grade point average is at least 3.0, and after the student's program of study has been approved by the graduate dean. The student may need to contact Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu to verify preliminary conference eligibility.

It is recommended that the preliminary oral conference take place during the fall term of year three of the cohort schedule. The preliminary oral conference must occur at least one semester prior to the final dissertation defense. These conferences are not typically scheduled during final examination week or during the summer. The student will register for 3 credits of HIED 899 (Dissertation Research) during the semester of the preliminary oral exam.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule committee members for a preliminary conference and to ensure a room is reserved in the Education Building with assistance from the Center for Doctoral Studies office manager (Phone: 320-308-4220). At least two weeks prior to the preliminary conference, one copy of the proposal is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies along with the date, time, and location of the preliminary conference and a list of the committee chair and members. Once the School of Graduate Studies reviews this information and the thesis proposal, the appropriate paperwork is sent to the thesis committee chair.

Each committee member must also receive a copy of the proposal, preferably at least two weeks prior to the preliminary conference. Students should ask their committee members whether they prefer a paper or electronic copy of the proposal.

The preliminary oral conference is open to the public and notice of the meeting will be posted in the College of Education. The meetings usually last 1½ to 2 hours. If a student wishes, family and friends may attend the conference.

A student may continue with the dissertation project when each committee member approves the proposed project by signing and returning the preliminary evaluation report to the School of Graduate Studies.

Written notes of what is discussed and agreed upon in the preliminary conference are very helpful in keeping the chair, committee members, and student on track with timely completion of the proposal.

Human Subjects – Institutional Review Board

All planned research involving human subjects must receive approval from St. Cloud State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects prior to commencing the dissertation project. All students and faculty conducting research that involves the participation of humans or animals must complete an application form and submit it to the Office of Sponsored Programs. Students do not submit this form until their project/thesis has been approved by their committee at the preliminary oral exam and only after approval from the chair. An application is available at:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/irb/documents/IRBApplicationpdf.pdf>

Official protocol forms, as well as copies of federal guidelines for both human and animal-related research, are available from: <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/policies/>

The IRB requires that all applicants complete a set of online training modules before their applications will be considered. Information about that training is available at:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/irb/IRBTraining.asp>.

The Human Subjects Committee convenes biweekly. Applications must be submitted at least two (2) weeks before a meeting to be considered for full review. Approvals from participating institutions or organizations must be obtained on letterhead prior to submitting a completed proposal. Methodology must be specific and clearly written, so that the Human Subjects Committee can approve the research in a timely fashion. Expedited Review is usually completed within 5 to 10 working days after applications have been submitted. Procedures and templates for Informed Consent are available at:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/forms/documents/InformedConsent.doc>.

Changes in the Research Plan/Project

It is anticipated that the research design may need to be modified over the course of the project. Revisions to the proposal are not necessary under such circumstances. However, if the committee chair determined that major changes in the research design are necessary or if a new topic is selected, the student must submit a new proposal and repeat the initial oral conference as described above.

If changes to the procedures of the research project affect the experiences of the research subjects, for example, changes to a questionnaire or changes in the criteria for participation, those changes must be reported to the IRB.

When the Dissertation is Nearly Completed

Final Requirements

There are several requirements the student needs to complete during the semester they wish to graduate. Following is a guide to help you through these requirements.

Application for Graduation

A candidate for the Ed.D. degree shall file an application for graduation accompanied by a \$20 non-refundable fee. This application is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies at the beginning of the semester in which the work for the degree is anticipated to be completed.

Deadline dates for application for graduation are available at:

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/commencement.asp>

Thesis or Field Study Final Copy Preparation

If you plan to use someone with expertise in the preparation of your dissertation which meets the requirements for St. Cloud State University, that person should be contacted well in advance to completion of your work. If you need information or names of individuals who can assist with the preparation of your final copy, please contact the School of Graduate Studies at 320-308-2113.

General Format

Most theses and research papers are divided into three major sections: (1) the introductory materials, (2) the text or main body of materials, and (3) references and/or related materials.

The organization of the introductory materials follows:

1. Blank page
2. Title page
3. Approval page
4. Abstract
5. Preface and/or acknowledgment (optional)
6. A quoted statement significant to the paper or a short poem but not recognized as an acknowledgment (optional)
7. Table of contents
8. List of tables (only when tables are used in the body of the paper)
9. List of figures (only when figures are used in the body of the paper)

The Graduate School's "A Manual for the Preparation of Field Studies and Theses" available at: <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/documents/ThesisManual.pdf>.

A suggested outline for the chapters of a dissertation is presented in Appendix B.

Final Dissertation Defense

When the dissertation is complete, including chapters on research findings and conclusions, significance and implications, and the student has the approval of his/her committee chair, a student is ready for a final oral examination. Appendix A presents lists of responsibilities for the committee chair, committee members, and the student throughout the dissertation process.

A final oral defense meeting is required of all students. The student's major advisor presides over the defense meeting. The dissertation defense is not a perfunctory event. It is a formal occasion for discussion, dialogue, and defense of the project the students has completed. A rubric for the dissertation and the final oral defense is included in Appendix C.

The student's preliminary proposal could be considered a well-worked draft of the first three chapters of the completed dissertation. Often, only modest changes are needed in those chapters to prepare them for the final dissertation defense. The review of the literature in chapter two should be updated to reflect any research studies published since the preliminary conference. Further, the method chapter should be revised to change verbs from the future tense to the past tense and to insure the chapter describes the procedures as they were actually undertaken.

The final defense should be scheduled two to four weeks prior to final examinations week to allow for reviewing and binding before the end of the semester.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the final oral defense with their committee members and reserve a room. The final defense cannot be held in the same semester as the preliminary oral conference. Generally, two weeks prior to the final defense the student must distribute a final copy of the culminating project to each member of his/her committee. The specific format and requirements of the final oral defense vary according to the nature of the project chosen.

Once scheduled, the student must notify the School of Graduate Studies to allow the paperwork for the conference to be prepared. Send these final conference details via email to Ann Anderson at aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu.

The final oral defense is open to the public and notice of the meeting will be posted in the College of Education. If a student wishes, family and friends may attend the defense.

The final defense is conducted by the dissertation committee, consisting of four members. Membership consists of the same committee that served on the preliminary exam conference, unless the committee membership is altered in the interim. All members of the dissertation committee are afforded the opportunity to ask questions and make comments regarding the dissertation and research project. A majority vote of the final evaluation committee is required to pass the final defense. The committee will vote to approve, approve with revisions, or reject.

A candidate who fails the final oral defense in the first attempt may, with the approval of the advisor, take the examination a second time, but the candidate may not retake the final oral defense during the same semester in which the original defense was failed. A third chance to pass the defense is not permitted.

Once you pass your final oral defense, remind your advisor to submit a grade/change of grade for the thesis. A mark of “S” is recorded for an approved dissertation.

One complete copy of the work must be submitted along with an approval page signed by all committee members, to the School of Graduate Studies for format review prior to submission for binding. This is not a **final** copy. It is recommended that the student submit the work to the School of Graduate Studies at least three weeks before the submission of the culminating project deadline to allow time for form and style corrections. For the deadline, go to <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/>

After approval by your committee and the format reviewer, submit a minimum of three **final** copies of your dissertation **by the appropriate deadline (see above)**.

- Signatures of committee members are required on each approval page.
- The dissertation is then registered in the School of Graduate Studies for binding and fee payment.
- Two additional signed copies of the abstract are required for further distribution by the School of Graduate Studies.
- Remind you adviser to submit a grade/change of grade for the field dissertation. A mark of “S” is recorded for an approved field study or theses.

Binding the Thesis

Once the student has successfully passed the final evaluation conference, made corrections required by her/his committee, and received approval through the School of Graduate Studies, the thesis is ready for binding. Each approval page must be signed by the committee members and the abstracts must be signed by the committee chairperson.

- Three copies of the dissertation must be prepared on a minimum of 20-pound, 100 percent cotton paper and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for binding **by the appropriate deadline**. For the deadline, go to <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/>
- The copies will be bound in black buckram covers with gold lettering on the front and spine.
- If a student desires a personal bound copy of the culminating project, one additional copy must be submitted for binding with the abstract for a total of four copies.
- The student is responsible for the binding fee of \$10 per copy plus a one-time \$10 microfilm fee. Please make check payable to St. Cloud State University. Submit payment to the School of Graduate Studies. If you wish to use a credit card you must contact Ann

E. Anderson at 320.308.2114 or aeanderson@stcloudstate.edu to enter charges before payment can be made.

Dissertations are approved, bound, and placed on file as described in “A Manual for the Preparation of Field Studies and Theses.”

Student Research Colloquium

St. Cloud State University's annual campus-wide Student Research Colloquium (SRC) promotes research, scholarship, and creative work in collaboration with faculty as a vital component of higher education. Faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students from St. Cloud State University and regional universities are encouraged to participate. Industry sponsors are also invited to attend.

The goal of the SRC is to bring together students, faculty, and members of the community involved in scholarly and artistic activities – this event typically occurs every April, and students are able to give paper presentations, poster presentations, or performance or creative works. Students work with a faculty member on all aspects of their presentation for the SRC. Information and deadlines are available at www.stcloudstate.edu/src.

Helpful Links

School of Graduate Studies

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies>.

School of Graduate Studies Forms

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/stuForms.asp>

School of Graduate Studies Academic Calendar

<http://bulletin.stcloudstate.edu/gb/calendar.asp>

A Manual for the Preparation of Field Studies and Theses

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/documents/ThesisManual.pdf>

Culminating Project Deadlines

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/>

Graduate Faculty Members

<http://bulletin.stcloudstate.edu/faculty.asp?grad=1>

List of Faculty Members who Have Volunteered to Serve as Outside Readers

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/graduatestudies/current/culmProject/committee.asp>

The Write Place

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/writeplace/>

Human Subjects Approval for the Institutional Review Board

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/irb/default.asp>

Application for the Institutional Review Board

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/irb/documents/IRBApplicationpdf.pdf>

Protocol Forms for Federal Guidelines for Humans and Animal-Related Research

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/policies/>

Online Training Modules for the Institutional Review Board

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/irb/IRBTraining.asp>

Procedures and Templates for Informed Consent

<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/forms/documents/InformedConsent.doc>

Student Research Colloquium

www.stcloudstate.edu/src



Resources

The following are examples of books providing valuable information and guidance for preparing and completing your thesis/project. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, simply a starting point.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (1993). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Irby, B. J., & Lunenburg, F. (2007) *Writing a successful thesis or dissertation: Tips and strategies for students in the social and behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2001). *Practical research: Planning and design* (7th ed.). New York: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Madsen, D. (1992). *Successful dissertations and theses: A guide to graduate student research from proposal to completion* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pyrczak, F. (2000). *Completing your thesis or dissertation*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

Appendix A

Student and Faculty Dissertation Responsibilities

Dissertation Chair: It is the responsibility of the chair to:

1. Sign off on the Independent Study form for HIED 899.
2. Assist the student in the selection of the other committee members.
3. Determine the appropriateness of the topic selected by the student.
4. Determine the adequacy of the project design before the student begins work.
5. Provide the student with feedback regarding when it is appropriate to schedule committee meetings. With this approval, the student will schedule the Preliminary Oral Exam and Final Oral Defense meetings, providing the date, time, and location to all members in addition to a draft of the paper. In addition, once approved, the student will notify Graduate Studies as well.
6. Work effectively with the student to set realistic timelines for completion of the thesis/project.
7. Ensure that the student has obtained the required clearances from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research involving human subjects before the research study or project begins.
8. Review the scholarly execution of the study.
9. Assure that all of the committee members have reviewed the project before it is typed in final form and that all the necessary changes have been incorporated.
10. See that a high standard of writing quality is maintained throughout the project using APA writing principles.
11. Chair the preliminary and final defense of the dissertation and submit all required approvals and paperwork to the School of Graduate Studies.

Committee Members: It is the responsibility of the committee members to:

1. Attend and participate in preliminary and final oral exam.
2. Check the adequacy of the dissertation project design before the study begins through participation in the Preliminary Oral Exam.
3. Review the scholarly execution of the study.
4. See that a high standard of scholarship and writing quality are maintained throughout the dissertation project.
5. Review and comment on the dissertation before it is completed in final form.
6. Complete all paperwork associated with the dissertation.

Student: It is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Constitute a committee of four appropriate graduate faculty members willing to act as supervising faculty on the dissertation – including at least two from the program (including your chair) and at least one from outside the department.
2. Make sure that all required forms are filed out and filed properly and on time.

3. Provide the chair and committee members accurate contact information for all members and update any changes, such as phone numbers and email addresses as necessary.
4. Decide, in consultation with the committee chair, an appropriate and worthy topic for research study or project.
5. Call the committee meetings for the Preliminary Oral Exam and Final Oral Defense, only after approval from the chair, providing the date, time, and location to all members, including the School of Graduate Studies, and submitting all drafts and final documents to the committee and School of Graduate Studies.
6. Determine, in consultation with the committee, roles of the committee members, needs of the committee in working through the approval process, and the timelines and deadlines for submitting written work for approval.
7. Understand that re-writes will probably be necessary and that the guidance of the committee is to be taken seriously if the work is to be satisfactorily completed.
8. Obtain editorial help if necessary to meet the standards of the University and the HIED program for quality and presentation of the dissertation in APA format.
9. Adhere to the appropriate style manual determined by the department (APA) and to the thesis guidelines outlined by the School of Graduate Studies Manual.
10. Uphold the ethical and scholarly standards of research, including the protection of human subjects and the probation against plagiarism.
11. Defend the dissertation; understand that final acceptance of the dissertation is determined by the student's faculty committee and the School of Graduate Studies.

Appendix B

Dissertation Chapter Outline

Dissertations in the social sciences typically contain five chapters as outlined below. However, this is common practice rather than a requirement. If the student and advisor think a different array of chapters fits a project better, they should seek the approval of the committee for their proposed presentation of the project and results.

Chapter One – Introduction

1. Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide a context in which the problem exists and that supports the rationale for the proposed study.

2. Statement of the Problem

This section provides a clear statement of the research problem and why it needs to be addressed. It is supposed to lead the reader into understanding or concluding that this is an issue that needs to be formally studied.

3. Description and Scope of the Research

This section tells what your study will do to address the problem. This section identifies and briefly introduces the conceptual framework for the study. How is this problem framed and discussed in the research literature? What theories and concepts are used to guide the discussion? Which of these theories will form the backbone of your study and why did you choose it? This section also explains what you intend to do, describing the who, what, when, where, and how of the study. But address all these matters in a summary fashion in Chapter 1, knowing that you will present fuller descriptions of the literature in Chapter 2 and of the research method in Chapter 3.

4. Research Questions

This section lists your research questions, which are the questions that will drive your study. You will answer these questions at the conclusion of your study. Also remember that the data you collect must provide the evidence to justify answers to these questions. Typically, you will have two to three research questions. Avoid “yes” or “no” response-type questions.

5. Research Hypotheses

This section is not needed in a qualitative study or in a quantitative study using only descriptive statistics (i.e. percents, means, modes, median, ranges, and frequencies). Hypotheses are typically written as null hypotheses, stating that there will be no difference or effect. For example, “Females and males will not differ in their desire to advance to a higher administrative position.”

6. Purpose of the Study

This section addresses the importance and significance of the study and how the results may benefit the field. This section also clearly states that the purpose of the study is to examine a specific research question(s) and to test certain hypotheses (in the case of a quantitative study) or to explore certain themes related to the research questions (in the case of a qualitative study).

7. Assumptions of the Study

This section describes the things that you have assumed to be true for the study. Assumptions may include things such as honesty in responses, representative sample, or global postulates (claims about your field that most or all would assert to be true, e.g. “High quality teaching leads to improved student learning”).

8. Delimitations

In this section, you will set the parameters for your study and tell the reader what variables you included and what variables you did not include. In effect, you indicate the elements that may be relevant to your topic but that your study will not address. Note: This differs from the limitations section that is included in chapter five of your thesis. Limitations, or problems you encountered as you carried out the study, should not be included in chapter one.

9. Summary

This section summarizes chapter one, provides a paragraph or two indicating how the thesis is organized, and provides a bridging statement to chapter two.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

1. Introduction

The purpose of the review of the literature is to explore research on the issues that are relevant to the proposed study. Begin chapter two with a brief description of your study. Also, describe the sources you used to identify relevant literature, including databases and search engines. Next, list and preview the critical topics/issues in the order in which they will be discussed in the review. The subheadings of the subsequent sections of the review should reflect the critical topics/issues identified.

2. Review of the Research on Issues Relevant to the Study

Organize and present the literature or sets of literatures that have a bearing on your study, including critical issues for the problem and the research done to build a conceptual framework for understanding and researching the problem.

It is particularly important that the literature review is built primarily around literature that reports the results of empirical studies. In addition to discussing the major findings of the studies, the student should also include pertinent information about how each study was conducted, such as the number of subject/participants, relevant characteristics of the subjects, types of instruments and/or methods used (e.g., not necessarily the specific names of the tests or instruments, but whether they were interviewed, responded to questionnaires, tested, observed, etc.). The synopsis should also mention any major weaknesses in study design.

As the student reviews the research on each issue, s/he should use the most recent version of APA style for formatting prose and citations. The student should obtain the latest edition of the APA style manual.

3. Synthesis of the Review of the Research

This section synthesizes the major findings of the research as it relates to the proposed study.

Does the research you have just reviewed:

- support the development of the proposed dissertation?
- indicate how your study should be designed and/or implemented?
- identify other studies that are similar to the proposed study? If so, how would the proposed study differ from or improve upon existing similar studies?

The synthesis should seriously critique the literature looking for gaps, contradictions and criticisms of the studies you have selected and how your study might help respond to any areas of critique.

4. Summary

This section summarizes chapter two, relating the review to your purpose statement and study, and providing a bridge to the presentation on method in chapter three.

Chapter Three - Methodology

This chapter specifically describes how you plan to conduct the study. Remember anyone should be able to read chapter three and replicate your study without ever speaking to you- it should be that detailed and focused.

1. Introduction

Restate the hypotheses or research question(s) and present in broad terms the research design for the proposed study. Explicitly address why the design is appropriate for the research questions driving the study. Briefly delineate the organization of this chapter.

2. Participants

Describe the population and/or sample of the study, including a description of how many participated (you may want to talk about the number of surveys sent out versus the response rate, for example), all other relevant descriptors (typically including age, ethnicity, gender, psychological condition, etc.), how participants were selected (random, intact group, etc.), and if they were grouped in any way.

3. Instrument(s) for Data Collection

All instruments, tools, or methods used to gather data must be described here, including the psychometric characteristics of the tests (e.g., validity and reliability indicators), how the tool was developed, or how the instrument will be designed and piloted. If a qualitative technique is to be used, such as interviews, observations or videotaping, what protocols or interview guides will be applied? What type of information regarding procedures, ethics, and confidentiality are participants and/or others given?

4. Research Design

Describe the research design. If the study is an experimental or quasi-experimental study, what research design will be used? What are the comparison groups? How does the design address each of the hypotheses? If it is a qualitative study, what research design will be used? How do the design and instruments address the research questions? In both quantitative and qualitative studies, what methods will be used to overcome research problems and establish reliability and validity?

5. Analysis

Describe the procedures that will be used to analyze the data collected during the research. For a quantitative study, state explicitly what statistical procedures will be used for each research question, what p-value will be used to determine significance, etc. For a qualitative study, describe how the data will be coded and compiled, and how it will be integrated into themes or interpretations.

6. Human Subject Approval – Institutional Review Board (IRB)

This section outlines how the rights of human subjects will be protected throughout the study. For more information <http://www.stcloudstate.edu/osp/irb/default.asp>

7. Procedures and Timeline

The student should provide an outline of all procedures involved in the proposed research. Describe the logistics and the timeline for this study. How/when the participants will be/were selected and contacted. When and how will the data be collected, processed, and analyzed?

8. Summary

This section summarizes chapter three and provides a bridging statement to chapter four.

Chapter Four – Results

1. Introduction

Reiterate the research problem and the hypotheses and research question(s). Describe the organization of the chapter, which, in effect, is how the data will be discussed.

2. Results for Each Hypothesis or Research Question

Quantitative: Restate each hypothesis. Discuss how each was tested by describing the method of analysis. Discuss whether or not the results support the hypothesis. Do not inject your opinion or explanation of the results. Commentary should be provided in Chapter 5.

Qualitative: Restate each research question. Present the relevant data for each question and discuss how you organized the narrative information for interpretation and the outcomes.

3. Synthesis

Quantitative: Discuss your findings as a whole and synthesize the results. What were your major findings? How many of the hypotheses were validated? Were there any contradictory results, or

any unexpected or confusing results? Overall, what conclusion(s) can you draw from the data regarding the research question?

Qualitative: The synthesis discussion of qualitative research should be inductive in nature and interpretive. The purpose is to assist the reader in gaining a fuller understanding of the phenomenon, context, or culture studied. You might examine aspects of the outcomes, categorize your findings with previous studies, and/or identify the aspects of a particular phenomenon that need further investigation.

4. Summary

This section summarizes chapter four and provides a bridging statement to chapter five.

Chapter Five – Discussion

1. Introduction

Summarize the preceding four chapters, starting with the purpose of the study. State findings from the data you collected and analyzed. You may use this summary as your abstract, although some students prefer to write an elaborated summary. State the organization of the chapter as a bridge to the discussion.

2. Discussion and Conclusions

Discuss the results in light of the review of the research and your own research findings. In this section you should present your interpretations of the findings and why they are important. You may also inject your opinions as supported by the data and/or review of the research. Point out new findings that are supported by your data and findings that contradict or expand upon existing research studies. Overall, what conclusion(s) can you reach from your research? In this section, you have the opportunity to write from your own voice. Reflect on what you have learned.

3. Limitations

List any problems you encountered in your study that you had not anticipated, i.e. low survey return rate. Then make recommendations for further research based upon the limitations.

4. Implications for Theory

Explore what your research project and conclusions indicate about the conceptual framework you have used in your study. In what ways have your findings supported the theory or concepts you have studied? Do your findings suggest the need to amend some aspect of the theory or model, and/or do your findings contradict some major component of the theory and the research literature?

5. Implications for Practice

Based on your review of literature and study, what recommendations would you make to the field? How may practitioners use the results of your study to improve their practice?

6. Implications for Research

Identify future research topics that were indicated by your study, and point to new avenues for further research – what subsequent questions arose from your study? What can be done in further research studies to build on what you found?

7. Summary

Briefly summarize chapter five.

References

Provide a complete list of all the items cited in the thesis. Do not include items that were reviewed but not cited in the body of the thesis.

Appendices

Each appendix should be listed A, B, C.... Include the original of your approved Human Subjects Protocol, as well as other items, such as a survey instrument, raw data, and participants' verbatim comments. Items should be in the order they are first referred to in the body of your thesis.

Appendix C
Rubrics for the Dissertation Proposal Conference
and the Final Dissertation Defense

**Higher Education Administration, Ed.D.
Dissertation Proposal Conference Rubric (Transition Point 4)**

Candidate: _____ Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Criteria	Unsatisfactory (0-1)	Satisfactory (2-3)	Exemplary (4-5)	Score
Topic: Identifies , describes and defines a significant HIED research or research application topic of appropriate scope and depth	Topic is not clearly defined or it was too broad or too narrow; topic is not relevant to HIED; proposal does not demonstrate the topic's interest to the candidate or potential contributions to the field	Scope is sufficient and feasible given timelines; topic is reasonably relevant to HIED; proposal demonstrates interest to the candidate and potential for contributions to the field.	Scope is unquestionably feasible given timelines; topic is highly relevant to HIED; proposal demonstrates significant interest of the candidate and potential for significant contributions to the field.	_____ Comments
Prefatory Material: Provides an abstract; table of contents, and a list of tables and figures (if relevant to the proposal)	Abstract is not provided or is outside the range of 350-700 words; table of contents is omitted or inaccurate; lists of tables or figures (if used) are omitted or inaccurate	Abstract adequately addresses the research within 350-700 words; accurate table of contents is complete; accurate lists of tables or figures (if used) are provided)	Abstract provides a crisp, complete 350-700 word summary of the research; the table of contents, and titles and subheadings are complete and accurate; lists of tables or figures (if used) are complete and accurate	_____ Comments
Introduction: Introduces the topic and provides a rationale for the selection of topic; provide a clear statement of the problem; outlines the scope and rationale for the study; presents the research question(s); establishes a clear connection between the problem and the research question; and defines relevant conceptual framework	Topic is ill-defined; research problem or problem statement is not clearly articulated; purpose or rationale for the study are ill-defined or does not match the problem or research question; research question(s) are not clearly articulated or do not relate to the problem; definitions of concepts or theoretical framework was omitted, incomplete, or inaccurate.	Topic is generally well-defined; statement of the problem is clear; research delimitations and rationale are sufficiently outlined and connected to the problem and the research question; all or nearly all relevant concepts are defined with sufficient clarity and accuracy.	Topic is concisely described, contextualized, and includes multiple perspectives; statement of the problem is apt and precise; delimitations and rationale are extremely well presented and strongly linked to the problem and research question; all key concepts are clearly and precisely defined and articulated.	_____ Comments
Literature Review: Presents an up-to-date, research based, systematic, thorough review of literature relevant to the problem that includes scholarly sources and discussion.	Many sources are old or are opinion pieces that don't reflect the research-based progress in the field; review strays from the topic or ignores key points; sub-topics are disjointed or the overall flow is difficult to follow.	Review of literature is complete; most sources are of scholarly/research nature reflecting current thinking on the topic in the field; review is generally well-organized, relevant to the problem, and adequately addresses the study.	Sources are of high research quality and scholarly nature; sources include latest publications; review is comprehensive, pertinent, and extremely well-organized; review insightfully addresses the study.	_____ Comments
Methods: Selects, defines, and describes appropriate research methods, including data collection procedures and data analyses.	Does not provide rationale for the method chosen; methods or procedures were not relevant to the research question or purpose of the study; threats to validity (internal and external) are not clearly articulated; applications are poorly connected or ill-defined.	Provides a clear rationale for the methods chosen; methods and procedures suit the research; threats to validity (internal and external) and applications of the research are adequately described and discussed.	Provides a clear and full developed rationale for the methods chosen; methods and procedures precisely suited the research; threats to internal and external validity and applications of the research were coherently and fully described and discussed.	_____ Comments
Mechanics: Uses correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and vocabulary; editing and citations conform to APA guidelines.	Proposal contains many or major errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, or vocabulary use that greatly diminished readability; many or major errors in formatting to APA standards.	Proposal contains occasional errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, or vocabulary use that does not interfere significantly with readability; only minor errors in formatting to APA standards	Proposal contains few or no errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, sentence structure or vocabulary use; precisely follows APA guidelines.	_____ Comments
Oral Presentation: Demonstrates professional demeanor, confidence, and poise; answers questions clearly; uses scholarly terms; is open to feedback and suggestions; is respectful to committee members.	Candidate is late or allows devices to interfere with exam; grows flustered or hostile; does not answer questions or relies heavily on notes; uses unscholarly terms; resists feedback or suggestions; uses disrespectful language or gestures.	Candidate is on-time and attentive; maintains composure; answers most questions independently; usually uses scholarly terms; willingly engages in discussions about feedback or guidance; uses respectful language and gestures.	Candidate is on-time and fully attentive; appears confident, poised, and enthusiastic; answers complex questions independently; uses scholarly language consistently; actively seeks and discusses feedback and suggestions; uses respectful language and gestures.	_____ Comments

Total Score: ____/35

Comments

**Higher Education Administration, Ed.D.
Final Dissertation Defense Rubric (Transition Point 5)**

Candidate: _____ Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Score each of the six criteria separately, using a rating scale of 0-4 = Unsatisfactory, 5-8 = Satisfactory with Revisions, or 9-11= Exemplary.

Criteria	Unsatisfactory (0-4)	Satisfactory with Revisions (5-8)	Exemplary (9-11)	Score
Results: Candidate provided an in-depth description of the results, including data collection and statistical analyses; and answered the research question(s).	Candidate provided an inaccurate or incomplete description of results; did not accurately or adequately describe data collection or statistical analyses; or did not answer the research question(s).	Candidate obviously understood the results, including data collection and statistical analyses, but had difficulty conveying the information clearly or had some difficulty answering the research question(s).	Candidate accurately and fully described results; accurately and completely described data collection and statistical analyses; and precisely answered the research question(s).	_____ Comments
Synthesis: Candidate tied the results and conclusions of the study to the research question, review of literature, and purpose of the study; and clearly articulated the study's benefit to the field.	Reporting of results was inconsistent with the research question(s), review of literature, or purpose of the study; conclusions did not reflect the research question(s), review of literature, purpose of the study; or benefits to the field were simplistic, irrelevant, or not discussed.	Reporting of results and conclusions were generally consistent with the research question(s), review of literature, and purpose of the study but ideas need further development; and discussion of benefit to the field may have missed or required further development of one or two significant points.	Reporting of results and conclusions were seemingly inevitable relative to the research question(s), review of literature, and purpose of the study; and benefit to the field went beyond the obvious, and was articulated with great profundity and clarity.	_____ Comments
Conclusions: Candidate provided a complete, accurate summary and interpretation of findings, and aptly discussed limitations, applications, alternate interpretations, recommendations for future research, and individual bias.	Candidate reached unsupported or erroneous conclusions; provided an incomplete or inaccurate summary and interpretation of results; did not provide a meaningful discussion of limitations, applications, alternate interpretations, recommendations for future research, or individual bias.	Candidate may have made minor conclusive errors; or made minor errors in interpreting and discussing limitations, applications, alternate interpretations, recommendations for future research, and individual bias.	Candidate provided a complete, precise summary and interpretation of findings, and provided highly insightful discussion or limitations, applications, alternate interpretations, recommendations for future research, and individual bias.	_____ Comments
Mechanics: Used correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and vocabulary; and edited according to APA guidelines.	Dissertation contained numerous editing errors that greatly diminished readability; or required substantial revision.	Dissertation may have contained minor errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary use, or format that required further editing.	Dissertation required cosmetic or no further editing. Dissertation "looks publishable."	_____ Comments
Professionalism: Demonstrated professional demeanor, confidence, and poise; answered questions clearly; used scholarly terms; was open to feedback and suggestions; and was respectful to committee members.	Candidate may have been late or allowed devices to interfere with exam, grew flustered or hostile, did not answer questions or relied heavily on notes, used unscholarly terms, resisted or dismissed feedback or suggestions, or used disrespectful language or gestures.	Candidate was on time and engaged, but may have quivered, appeared overly passive, or showed other signs of distress, answered most questions adequately, generally used scholarly terms, accepted feedback and suggestions, and used respectful language and gestures.	Candidate was on-time and fully engaged; appeared confident, poised, and enthusiastic; answered complex questions independently; used scholarly language consistently, actively sought and discussed feedback and suggestions; and used respectful language and gestures.	_____ Comments
Oral Presentation: Candidate presented the research topic, literature, methods, results, conclusions, limitations, and implications in a clear, organized manner.	Candidate relied heavily on notes, omitted significant elements of the dissertation, needed to be asked to clarify information multiple times, lost place several times, or presented information haphazardly.	Candidate may have relied on notes several times, omitted a significant element of the dissertation, or was occasionally unclear or disorganized.	Candidate rarely or never needed to access notes, included all significant elements of the dissertation, and conveyed information clearly and in a logical, easy-to-follow manner.	_____ Comments

Total Score: _____ /66

Comments:

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