Frostburg State University
Doctor of Education
College of Education

Dissertation Style Guide
2015-2016
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INTRODUCTION

Historically, the dissertation has been considered the capstone experience in a student’s academic career. It is an addition to a body of knowledge and stands as an original piece of work marking the student as an expert on a topic in a specific field. Frostburg State University’s Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership program is a living, growing, vibrant community dedicated to enhancing the practice of educational leadership. The administration and faculty share a belief that the dissertation should be a significant piece of work that demonstrates the student’s skills as a researcher, communicator, practitioner, and innovative leader.

The dissertation is expected to make a contribution to professional knowledge and practice. It should encompass the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that students have gained from their seminars, readings, discussions, and field-based experiences. Most often, a contribution to knowledge is best made after developing a thorough understanding of an educational issue or practice as a result of reading the significant research literature available, then posing questions, the answering of which advances the knowledge base and/or practice of the discipline. The student should have a passion to understand the issue or practice and to increase others’ understanding of it through his or her research.

PLANNING FOR THE DISSERTATION

Although all of the steps taken in the development and completion of various research papers apply to the dissertation/thesis, there are two critical issues. The first issue lies in the depth and scope of the work; a second issue lies in the amount of time it will take to complete the project. Since a dissertation experience is worth at least 12 credits, it is reasonable to expect that a dissertation will take a year or more to complete. Another difference is the fact that students must defend a dissertation orally before a committee composed of faculty members and expert practitioners. This defense is a public event open to participation by scholars, and attendance by other interested individuals.

A student in a doctoral program cannot wait until the last moment to begin planning a dissertation. Upon entering the program, thought should be given to identifying a topic for research about which the student has a significant interest. The student must consider such factors as available resources, timeliness, accessibility, logistics, and scheduling. Preliminary planning and contingency planning are encouraged.
INITIAL DISSERTATION PROCEDURES

The program supports each student’s research interests through the program’s structure. All students will be required to complete and defend a dissertation. Students will seek out faculty members and eligible practitioners to comprise the dissertation committee. Students need to complete prerequisite background reading in order to engage in informed discussion about his/her dissertation topic. While an ability to work together is important, both students and prospective committee members must consider carefully the combination of attributes which enable successful doctoral studies: methodological expertise; knowledge of the content area from both a practical and scholarly view; analytical writing and critiquing skills; willingness/ability to commit sufficient time; and ability to engage in respectful yet challenging dialogue. Not all committee members must meet all these needs individually, but students should seek a collective that brings all these skills to bear in order to produce the highest quality dissertation study.

Throughout the first year of the program and into the summer, students should be refining the topic they wish to study and completing research in that area so as to refine questions to be investigated. The student should have an understanding of the scope of the work that they propose to undertake; an ability to develop one or more research questions relative to the intended topic; a sufficient enough review of related literature to engage in informed conversation and writing; and an ability to consider plausible methodological approaches to the possible study. With those abilities, a student would be prepared to secure a dissertation chair. The Committee Chair should be secured before other committee members are invited, so that the chair may be involved in the selection process.

At the initial stage of the dissertation process, faculty members and eligible practitioners indicate their intent to serve as dissertation/thesis committee members. Those individuals will indicate their willingness to serve with signatures on the Intent to Serve on a Dissertation/Thesis Committee Form (Form A). These committee members, and in particular the Committee Chair, will then work with the student to develop a full dissertation proposal, consisting of the chapters of the dissertation that introduce the study, review the literature, and describe the design and methodology. After a dissertation proposal is completed and a formal overview meeting of the proposal is held, approval is signified with the committee signatures on the Dissertation Proposal Approval Form (Form B). The student must then obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) before proceeding with data collection (IRB approval documents will be provided by the IRB and should be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Services for your official file).

THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The dissertation committee is the formal decision-making body whose purpose is to guide the student’s dissertation and progress towards degree completion. The following sections explain the process for composing the committee and describe committee member roles.
Timing of Committee Formation
The student begins, in consultation with his or her faculty advisor and program administration, to identify potential dissertation committee members during the first year of the program. The Dissertation Committee Chair should be appointed by the end of the fall semester in the second year. Additionally, it is to the student’s advantage to have the entire three-person committee in place at that time in order for the committee to support the student’s progress in developing his or her dissertation proposal.

Committee Composition
The dissertation committee is comprised of three members, all with terminal level degrees in his/her field of study, one of whom serves as the Chair. The dissertation committee members are nominated by the student after consultation with the prospective dissertation Chair. One of the members may be external to FSU. The student should consider the following roles and responsibilities in forming his or her committee:

Dissertation Chair. The student’s first step in nominating a Chair is to establish a relationship with an FSU faculty member who holds a terminal degree and is qualified to guide research in his or her topic. This individual must be someone with whom the student feels comfortable and be able to challenge the student to do excellent work and to make full use of available learning resources. The Chair serves as advisor, guide, supporter, evaluator, and mediator. The Chair becomes the student’s official faculty advisor. The Chair also supervises the committee and has final decision-making authority regarding all committee deliberations and actions.

Normally, the dissertation chair will be a faculty member within the FSU College of Education. If an Ed.D. candidate would like to have a chair from outside the College of Education but from within the university, a request must be made to and approved by the Program Coordinator. The coordinator has the authority to grant such a request but will require that an education faculty member must agree to fill one of the other roles on the committee before permission can be granted.

If an Ed.D. candidate would like to have a chair from outside the Education Department and not actively working for the university or emeritus from the university, the coordinator will insist that there be a co-chair situation from within the university who is a faculty member and preferably from the college of education. If the co-chair is from the faculty of the College of Education then no other committee members need be from the college of education. The coordinator has the authority to grant such a request but will require that a co-chair from the University be established and that one of the committee members be from the College of Education before permission can be granted.

Responsibilities of the Committee Chair include, but are not limited to the following items:

1. To help the student clarify and refine the dissertation proposal.
2. To help the student with the selection of other committee members.
3. To help the student establish and maintain a dissertation time line.
4. To guide the student through the proposal process, issue formal approval with the support of the other committee members, and sponsor the student’s application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects if the dissertation involves human subjects.
5. To talk and guide the student through the structure of the respective dissertation chapters.
6. To ensure that professional standards of academic integrity and excellence are maintained.
7. To nurture and support the student’s transition to an independent researcher.
8. To encourage the student to continue to contribute and share scholarly work with the larger professional community through presentations and publication.

The Chair will be the first recourse should any disagreement occur within the dissertation process. In the event of an emergency circumstance (e.g. committee member has a medical emergency or moves), the chair and student will work together to decide on an appropriate way to continue progress. Any disputes arising out of the constitution or operations of the student’s dissertation committee which remain unresolved after the chair has attempted resolve will be submitted first to the Program Coordinator for resolution. If the dispute is not resolved, the matter will be submitted to the Program Committee, then to the Department Chair, and finally to the Dean. If the issue is still not resolved, the student may utilize the Program’s student appeals/grievance procedure.

**Second and Third Committee Members.** Dissertation committee members ensure that the student has achieved a high level of scholarship and that the student’s contributions to the body of knowledge will be acceptable to others in their field. Although faculty who live in the student’s geographical area offer the advantage of frequent face-to-face contact, it is more important to consider their expertise and their readiness to demand high quality work. Students work with their Chair to identity potential dissertation committee members. Students have the ability to identify and approach the best authorities in their field who may be external to FSU. Students can begin developing a list of potential faculty by reading works by scholars in their field, by consulting journals, by conferring with professors and students at other universities, and by generating information through their own developing network of contacts.

Among the total membership of the committee including the chair, the following areas of expertise and roles should be included. Please note that these roles and areas of expertise may overlap:

**Content Expertise.** At least one member of the committee, who may or may not be the Chair, should have significant familiarity in the field of study most closely related to the student’s dissertation topic. If other than the Chair, it is the student’s responsibility to find a qualified individual for this position in consultation with the chairperson. Responsibilities of this person include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. To serve as the subject matter expert in guiding the student’s literature review.
2. To advise other committee members on the importance and timeliness of the student’s topic.

**Committee Member/Reader.** At least one person on the committee, who may or may not be the Chair and who may or may not have content expertise as described above, will serve as reader to ensure scholarly writing. If other than the Chair, it is the student’s responsibility to find a qualified individual for this position in consultation with the chairperson.

**Other Possible Committee Members.** Beyond the three required committee members, additional committee members may be added to fill specialized needs of the dissertation, in consultation with the Chair. They may include anyone whose credentials meet the requirements described in the beginning of this section. The student, in consultation with the Chair, will select this member based upon the dissertation topic, the research methodology to be employed, and the availability to serve.

Students may not select relatives for their committee. Students may not select committee members with whom they have dual professional relationships that would compromise academic judgment. Students may not select a member of their cohort, even if that person has completed the program. The Program Coordinator exercises final judgment in all matters related to dissertation committee membership.

**Methodological Expertise.** The dissertation must be informed by methodological expertise. There are members of the FSU faculty community who have such expertise and it will become the chair’s responsibility to ensure that the data collection for the dissertation is informed by methodological expertise at the doctoral level. The role of the methodologist is as follows:

1. To provide support to the student in the area of research methodology.
2. To support the committee chair in the performance of his or her responsibilities (unless the chair is the expert in research methodology).
3. To ensure use of the appropriate research methodology.

**Student and Committee Expectations**
The dissertation process works best when the student and all committee members work as a team and fulfill all expectations of their special roles. The student is expected to:

- Communicate productively and regularly with the Chair.
- Establish with the Chair a protocol for sharing review drafts with the full committee.
- Design and carry out dissertation research with the advice and consent of the dissertation committee.
- Submit dissertation materials in a timely manner.
- Schedule and participate in meetings of the dissertation committee.
- Submit all forms and documents to the Chair for review and signature before the forms are submitted to the Coordinator.
• Provide all necessary information to the Chair and the Program Coordinator whenever either must make a decision concerning his/her program.
• Ensure that the dissertation is of the highest academic quality.

Dissertation committee members are expected to:

• Be open to divergent opinions in the committee and to evaluate them based upon what will promote the academic success of the student.
• Be responsible for managing their own roles and perform them with the same high standards expected of the student.
• Return dissertation material to the student in a timely fashion, not to exceed three weeks.
• Share in the responsibility for helping to make the committee an effectively functioning body.

Replacement of Dissertation Committee Members
Careful selection normally enables the dissertation committee to retain the same membership throughout the process. Replacement of a member may become necessary for such reasons as illness, death, resignation, change in the direction of the dissertation, or non-productive working relationships. Any such changes in committee membership must be discussed with the Chair. If a replacement in the second or third committee member is to be made, the student must submit a new Intent to Serve on a Dissertation/Thesis Committee Form A and secure the Program Coordinator’s final approval before such committee change can be considered final.

If the student wishes to replace the Chair, the student must first discuss the reasons with this person. If agreement is not reached to continue the arrangement, the student must gain approval from the Program Coordinator to seek another chair and if such is given, then a new Intent to Serve on a Dissertation Committee Form A must be produced, and the Program Coordinator must approve before the change can be considered final.

If there is a change in committee membership after the Dissertation Proposal has been approved, then the new committee member will be considered to have accepted the terms of the Proposal.

THE DISSERTATION PROCESS

Introduction
The dissertation integrates and adds to the learning accomplished in other phases of the program. It addresses the appropriate intellectual and professional traditions of the field and signifies grounding in the theoretical and critical scholarship in this field. It allows the student to exercise his or her originality and creativity and provide new knowledge and approaches to the larger scholarly community. Dissertations represent the student’s own scholarly contribution.
Research Sequence
The dissertation process is integrated into the program as follows:

**EDLP 715 Introductory Seminar in Educational Leadership** – Students begin to formulate research topics in this seminar that introduces the dissertation process.

**EDLP 716 Organizational Change and Leadership** – Students are introduced to research techniques and the major assignment is directly related to research in the chosen topic area.

**EDLP 781 History of American Education** - Students begin the process scholarly writing over several written assignments. An effort is made to connect the content and writing to the possible topic.

**EDLP 806 Methods in Educational Research I** – Students are introduced to quantitative and qualitative research methodology.

**EDLP 807 Methods in Educational Research II** – Students are introduced to and practice using the tools of quantitative and qualitative research methodology.

**EDLP 808 Applying Theory and Research to Practice** – Students refine the methodological design of the data collection chapter of the dissertation.

**EDLP 900 Capstone Seminar** – Students expand their work to date into a full dissertation proposal. Students must hold their dissertation proposal defense meetings before data collection is permitted.

**EDLP 911 Dissertation Research** – Students obtain IRB approval (if conducting human subjects research), collect data, and draft a chapter that presents research findings.

**EDLP 912 Dissertation** – Students complete any additional data collection and analysis and write the final draft for committee approval and the dissertation defense meeting.
Dissertation Format Guide

This *Format Guide for the Dissertation* describes the required format for dissertations.

**APA Style**
Aspects of format and style not covered in this guide are to be found in the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA).

Your applied dissertation must be correct in all aspects of style, including--but not necessarily limited to--the following:

1. Writing clearly and concisely
2. The mechanics of style
3. Displaying results
4. Crediting sources
5. Reference examples

**Editing**
You are responsible for editing and proofreading your dissertation prior to submitting it to your committee chair or to the committee. Proofread carefully for typographical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors.

If you and your committee chair determine that editing assistance is needed for the preparation of the manuscript, you may hire a private editor. Editors must not make changes that affect the content of the applied dissertation.

**Format Review**
After receiving final approval from your dissertation committee, you will need to format the dissertation for electronic submission.

**Paper**
The final manuscript, requested after final approval, must be on 8.5 in. x 11 in. white, quality paper (minimum 25% cotton; 20-24 lb.).

Do not bind or staple the final manuscript. Use only one side of the paper.

You will be required to provide one bound copy of your final manuscript for library archives. Binding fees will be $20.00 plus tax per copy. It is recommended that you consider copies for your personal use or gifts.

**Margins**
All pages of the dissertation must have the following margins: 1.5 inches on the left side and 1 inch on the top, bottom, and right. Exceptions include the title page, copyright page, and
signature page. See sections on each later in this document for top and bottom margins for these pages. The bottom margin should be as close as possible to 1 inch, but not smaller than 1 inch.

Margins for appendix items may be larger, but not smaller, than those required for other pages of the manuscript.

Use a ragged (i.e., unjustified) right margin, except for the Table of Contents.

Begin each chapter at the top of a new page.

Page numbers are placed within the bottom margins (middle).

Bottom margins must be at least 1 inch regardless of the paragraph break. Therefore, you should remove the widow/orphan control in your word-processing program so that each page has text to the bottom margin. This guideline applies also to the reference-list pages of the applied dissertation. An exception to the 1-inch bottom margin requirement is a stand-alone subheading (APA Level 2), which should not appear on the last line of a page.

Continue the narrative text to the bottom margin on a page with a short table or figure (i.e., one that is less than a full page) and on a page that precedes a page with a table or figure.

The hyphen that separates two words may appear at the end of a typed line. Do not hyphenate a single word at the end of a line (e.g., do not type “edu-” at the end of a line and “cation” at the beginning of the next line).

**Typeface and Size**

Use only 12-point Times New Roman throughout the document text.

A 10- or 11-point type may be used in tables and figures, if necessary, to fit material within the left and right margins or on a single page. Where reduction is necessary, reduce also the table number and title. Consistency should be throughout the manuscript.

Italics should be used only where required by APA rules. (See APA manual, section 4.21, pages 104-106) Do not use underlining or colors in text. Do not use superscript (e.g., the “th” in “5th”). Do not use bold type - except for headings (see APA manual, section 3.03, pages 62-63), certain statistical symbols (see APA manual, section 4.45, pages 117-118) and table data (see APA manual for examples - Table 5.13, pages 131-132, and Table 5.4, page 134) as described in the APA manual. Do not use heavy, bold lines for the horizontal rules in tables.

Seriation (presenting lists) should follow APA format (see APA manual, section 3.04, pages 63-65). Bullets are acceptable only as outlined by APA style. Numbers should be used to indicate order, bullets otherwise.
**Line Spacing**
Double-space between all lines of text, between paragraphs, between headings and subheadings, between headings and text. Table text can be single or doubled spaced; however, there must be consistency throughout the document.

Single-spacing is required in some sections of preliminary pages. Single-spacing is permissible in multiple-line table titles, table notes, figure captions, and text headings; however, consistency throughout the manuscript is required.

**Spacing After Punctuation**
Provide one space after *sentence-ending* punctuation. APA style is used for all other spacing after punctuation.

**Pagination**
Preliminary pages must have a lowercase Roman numeral centered between the left and right margins and placed two line spaces below the 1-inch margin line at the bottom of the page. The title page is assigned a number (i) and is not placed on the page.

For all pages of the main body of the manuscript (from page 1 of the first chapter through all pages of the appendices), place Arabic numerals in the middle, bottom of the page and two line spaces below the 1-inch margin line.

The typeface and size of page numbers should be the same as the manuscript type. Do not use running heads.

Approval signature page and copyright page are not numbered or included in the Table of Contents.

**Indentation**
The first line of each paragraph must have a consistent indentation of ½ inch. Use an indentation of ½ inch for subheadings and titles in the Table of Contents, for the second paragraph of block quotations, and for the second and subsequent lines of a reference-list entry. In numbered lists, indent the first line of each item; second and succeeding lines should be flush left. Numbered and bulleted lists should be indented for the number or bullet to begin at ¼ inch and the list line to begin at ½ inch.

**Headings**
Use no more than the five levels of headings as are described in the APA manual, section 3.1, pages 62-63.

The Level 1 heading is used for (a) the preliminary pages, (b) the beginning of each chapter, and (c) the References and Appendices sections.

The wording of headings must match the wording of the corresponding headings in the Table of Contents.
Headings should use an en dash, with a space before and after, instead of a colon. For example: “Chapter 1 – Introduction”

**Tables and Figures**

Tables and figures must be formatted according to the guidelines of the APA manual, chapter 5, pages 125-167.

No table or figure should carry over to a second page. Tables and figures should be set flush left, presented horizontally, and placed at the appropriate point in text (i.e., following, as soon as possible, the text reference). Avoid placing a table or figure within a paragraph, unless the table or figure is at the top or bottom of the page.

If you have only one table or figure in the manuscript, do not label it with a number; refer to the item as “Table” or “Figure.”

Horizontal rules in tables should not extend into the left and right margin areas.

**Reference List**

Use “References” (Level 1 header) for this section and continue using double spacing throughout the reference list. Each reference entry should follow the style guidelines of the APA manual, including the use the hanging indents. For more information on crediting sources and formatting references, please refer to chapter 6, pages 169-192, and chapter 7, pages 193-224, of the APA manual.

Remove all hyperlinks, such as the underlining of URLs, and use DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers) when available. For more information on citing electronic sources, including the use of DOIs, please refer to section 6.31, pages 187-189, and section 6.32, pages 189-192, of the APA manual.

**Appendices**

The format of appendix material may deviate from the format used for other sections of the manuscript. However, pagination must be continuous, and no color should be used. Margins for appendix items may be larger, but not smaller, than those required for other pages of the manuscript.

Each appendix item must be on a separate page and labeled alphabetically and listed in the table of contents.

Keep the number of appendix items to a minimum. If only one appendix item is included, label it as “Appendix,” not as “Appendix A.”

Landspaced pages should face out from the left side of the manuscript. Page numbers on landspaced pages must be placed in the same position as Arabic numbers on other pages.
Preliminary Pages
The order of preliminary pages is as follows: title page, copyright (if applicable), Approval Page, Acknowledgments (optional), Abstract, and Table of Contents, List of Figures and List of Tables.

Use your name as it should appear as author—First M. Last or, if necessary, use your legal name as recorded by the university registrar.

Title Page
The top line (title) must be 2 inches from the top of the page (including margin); the bottom line (year) must be 1.5 inches from the bottom of the page. The byline section and the fulfillment-of-requirements section should be placed so that white space is evenly distributed.

List the College, University name, and the month (May, August, or December) and year of graduation in which you expect final approval of your degree award under the university name.

Break each line of the title at a logical point (e.g., avoid the splitting of a phrase). The avoidance of a split phrase takes precedence over the use of a pyramid or inverted pyramid style. Break the lines of the fulfillment statement as shown in the sample.

Approval Page
See the sample for the required format.
Keep top margin set at 1 inch and space down one double space to begin title. Title should be listed exactly as is on title page. Be certain paragraph settings are set to 0 pt before and after.

Set signature areas to single space and use two single spaces between signature line and signature text above. Refer to sample.

Copyright Page
If using a copyright page, leave top margin at 1 inch and space down to begin copyright text at 6 inches from top of page.

Acknowledgments (Optional)
An Acknowledgments page, if included, must be double-spaced with a paragraph indentation. Use the preferred spelling of “Acknowledgments” for the heading. Dedications should also be placed in this section.

Acknowledgments and dedications should be written with an academic tone and be appropriate to a scholarly manuscript.

Abstract
The applied dissertation title, your name, and the year must be identical to the title, name, and
year on the title page. Double-spaced with 250-300 words preferably on one page. 
Body of the abstract should be Times News Roman, 12-point font size.

Include up to five descriptors or keywords/phrases that relate to your study. Use below sample. Keyword italicized; however, the words are not to be italicized and should have commas between with no period at the end.

Keywords: word, word, word

Table of Contents, List of Figures, and List of Tables
See the sample for the required format.

All first and second-level headings should be included in the Table of Contents. Third level headings are optional, fourth and fifth should not be included in the Table of Contents. Lists of Figures and List of Tables follow immediately after the abstract. All first level headings should be flush left and each succeeding level should be indented ½ inch from the preceding level.

Dot leaders, rather than a series of periods, must be used to join headings and titles with their respective page numbers; at least two dots must separate the heading or title from its page number. See example.

The right margin for the Table of Contents, List of Figures, and List of Tables is justified. Do not provide an additional tab (indent) for the second and subsequent lines of a heading, or subheading; begin the second line of the heading or subheading at the same point as the first line. The same rule applies with respect to figures’ captions in the List of Figures and tables’ titles in the List of Tables. Avoid having headings, subheadings, tables’ titles, and figures’ captions extend into the column of page numbers.

Appendix items are presented in the Table of Contents.

Headings, subheadings, and page numbers in the Table of Contents must match the corresponding headings, subheadings, and page numbers in the text. The same rule applies to figures’ numbers, captions and page numbers in the List of Figures and tables’ numbers, titles, and page numbers in the List of Tables.

Do not include an identifying letter or number if you have only one appendix item, one table, or one figure; label the header “Appendix,” “Table,” or “Figure” and begin the title on the next line at the first tab position.

Refer to the APA manual for capitalization rules relating to headings and title.
YOUR TITLE HERE, ALL CAPS, NO BOLD:

NO MORE THAN 13 WORDS: DOUBLE SPACE AND TWO INCHES FROM TOP

By

First M. Last

Dissertation Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

College of Education

Frostburg State University

May 2015
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the College of Education, have examined and approved this dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Chair
Rusty R. Hinge, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Frostburg State University

U. Need Tu, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Frostburg State University

Almo S. Done, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Frostburg State University

Almo S. Done, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Frostburg State University
Acknowledgements (Level 1)

Start with indented paragraph and you may acknowledge anyone that you would like in this section. Dedication of your work can also be placed in this section. There should not be a separate dedication section.
Abstract (Level 1)

SAME TITLE AND FORMAT AS TITLE PAGE

USE DOUBLE SPACE

By

Glenn E. Thompson

Abstract should be double spaced with indented first line of paragraphs.
Preferably 250-300 words. Keywords and phrases should be listed at the end as shown below – up to five. Indent and italicize keywords with commas between listing and no period at the end.

Keywords: Word, phrase, word, word
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Chapter 1 – Introduction (Level 1)

The first one to two paragraphs of Chapter 1 should include a brief overview of the topic and of the contents of this section. It should pull the reader instantly into the topic and be broad enough that the reader understands your interest area quickly.

Statement of the Problem (Level 2)

The problem statement describes the topic and focus of the question that will be the subject of your study. Do so in a manner that compels the reader to wonder and think about the problem. The problem statement should be clear and concise so that the reader is clearly seeing the problem. Below are a list of essential elements that should be addressed in Chapter 1. While the titles below are set up as level 2 headings, this could look different, based on your study and based on the preference of your Committee. The below titles are suggested format titles for Chapter 1, but defer to your Chair.

Purpose and Rationale of the Study (Level 2)

Significance of Study (Level 2)

Theoretical (or Conceptual or Contextual) Framework (Level 2)

Research Design Overview (Level 2)

Research Questions (Level 2)

Assumptions (Level 2)

Limitations (Level 2)

Delimitations (Level 2)

Definitions (Level 2)

Organization of the Study (Level 2)
Chapter 2 – Review of Literature (Level 1)

Introduction (Level 2)

This section should be used to provide a clear roadmap to present your literature review and the things that will be covered. Essential elements in Chapter 2 are varied based on the individual study. However, theoretical framework is likely to be one of your headings in the literature review if not fully covered in Chapter 1. Many dissertations introduce the framework in Chapter 1 and provide a more detailed review in Chapter 2 as part of the literature review.

Other elements to consider in the literature review:

- The history and background is stated to set the stage for your topic giving the reader enough information to place the problem in the current context of education;
- A critical review of relevant scholarly literature about the topic is conducted in order to show a deep understanding of the topic as it operates currently;
- Begin to narrow the focus of your inquiry into the topic pointing out an area where there is something that if investigated, would add to the broader understanding of the topic;
- The review of the current state of the topic is drawn primarily from recent published articles and or dissertations;
- The review should come from peer-reviewed journals or sound academic journals and texts; otherwise there is a justification for using other sources;
- A statement about how saturation has been reached in the literature review and efforts to find related research are explained.
Theoretical (or Conceptual or Contextual) Framework (Level 2)

Essential elements in Chapter 2 are varied based on the individual study. However, theoretical framework is likely to be one of your headings in the Literature review if not fully covered in Chapter 1. Many dissertations introduce the framework in Chapter 1 and provide a more detailed review in Chapter 2 as part of the literature review. Including a section about how you went about conducting your literature review is good practice. Synthesis, including methods used in previous studies, is key.

Essential Element Level 2

When inserting a figure see below for the format. Using the insert table/figures option is recommended for ease of page numbering in the list of tables page. When inserting Figures, there should be no heading above the figure, unlike the format for tables.

![Tulips](image)

*Figure 1. Picture of Tulips.*

A short conclusion and transition to the methodologies chapter should be presented.
Chapter 3 – Research Design and Methodology (Level 1)

This section should start with an introduction to your research study and design noting elemental sections of the chapter.

Research Design (Level 2)

This is where you will describe the research design and provide justification for choosing this design.

Level three headings (Level 3). Level 3 headings can be used when you are trying to provide a breakdown of the content involved in the title of the level 2 heading. The paragraph begins after the period of a level three heading. Level three headings are bold, sentence structure and end with a period. The paragraph/text begins after the period. For example, if you are using a mixed methods design you may want a level 3 heading to describe each method. However, you may not need more than the level 2 heading to describe the design and justification for using the design. This is dependent upon the design and the best approach to being clear with the description.

Research Questions (or Hypotheses) (Level 2)

This is an essential element. A good research question is specific and includes the population, data source, and implies a method and direction, if arguable. For example: Do females age 18-35 score higher than adult males age 18-35 on the WAIS-III? How are online users experiencing or addressing privacy issues on such social networking sites as Facebook and Twitter?

Repeat each sub-section below for every component or phase of a mixed methods study. You might also organize based on the research question. Repetition may occur for the sake of clarity.
**Population (or Setting or Site) (Level 2)**

This is an essential element describing the population, setting, or site you are studying.

**Sample Selection (Level 2)**

This is an essential element which addresses how you selected a sample and why the method of sample selection is appropriate. The level of heading is likely to be level 2 or level 3 depending on your design.

**Data Source (or Instrument or Materials) (Level 2)**

This is an essential element where you describe your data source, instrument, or materials, including coding and levels of measurement in relation to constructs.

**Data Collection Procedures (Level 2)**

This is an essential element as well. Explain, step-by-step, how data will be collected, recorded (if applicable), and managed. The level of heading is likely to be level 2 or level 3 depending on your design.

*Figure 2. Picture of Yellow Tulips*
Data Analysis Procedures (Level 2)

This is an essential element which explains, step-by-step, how data will be screened, analyzed, and interpreted. The level of heading is likely to be level 2 or level 3 depending on your design.

When inserting tables use the format illustrated by Table 1 below (refer to APA guidelines). YouTube can be a good source if you are trying to learn how to format a table.

When inserting tables you should never have a table begin on one page and roll over to the following page. Tables should not span multiple pages. As shown below, the table number and table title should be placed above the table. Notes can be placed below the table to include any explanations of the table contents (i.e., identification of significance level used, explanation of abbreviations used).

Table 1

Faculty Survey Sample by College, Employment Status and Tenure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment and Tenure Status</th>
<th>College of Business</th>
<th>College of Education</th>
<th>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time tenure</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time tenure track</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time non-tenure track</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time non-tenure track</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* This is where you might provide a description of elements above.

Validity and Reliability (Level 2)

This is an essential element which addresses issues related to legitimacy, consistency or trustworthiness. Risks and benefits of issues are weighed.
Role of Researcher (Level 2)

This is an essential element which describes your role and potential bias in relation to the study.

Measures of Ethical Protection (Level 2)

This is an essential element which addresses issues related to IRB protections and procedure.

Chapter 4 – Findings (Level 1)

Finding 1 (Level 2)

The elements in this section will be determined by your study. This is where you present your study findings.

Table 2

Faculty Survey Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment and Tenure Status</th>
<th>College of Business</th>
<th>College of Education</th>
<th>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time tenure</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* This is where you might provide a description of elements above.
Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Implications (Level 1)

Conclusions (Level 2)

This is an area for discussion of results and conclusions.

Implications (Level 2)

This is an area where you should discuss the implications of your findings.

Summary (Level 2)
References


(Reference page is a level one heading and you should follow APA style for all references. Use doi numbers when available.)
Appendix A – Title of Appendix (Level 1)
Appendix B – Title of Appendix (Level 1)