



WRIGHT GRADUATE UNIVERSITY
For the Realization of Human Potential

DISSERTATION MANUAL

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Introduction to the Dissertation Manual

The Ed.D. (Doctor of Education) is a degree meant to develop scholar practitioners that requires a minimum of three years of graduate education beyond the Wright Graduate University Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership and Coaching. The degrees may be awarded only to students who have completed a prescribed program of study that includes research methodology and to those who have demonstrated learning achievement through original research directly attributable to them. The doctoral dissertation is expected to reflect originality of thought and to make a significant contribution to the field or advance knowledge about a phenomenon under study.

This manual outlines the steps, policies and procedures required to complete the dissertation.

Types of Research

A wide variety of methodological choices are available to students undertaking the dissertation. Dissertation research may be empirical (data-driven) or theoretical in nature. In addition, empirical studies may proceed primarily from a quantitative base (in which observations of behavior are systematically recorded, measured and analyzed), or qualitative (observations and analyses tend to be based on the behaviors of groups or systems, rather than individuals). In either case the research should deepen and/or broaden the theories and practices related to the Wright Graduate University mission and Wright Integrative.

Brief descriptions of each methodological type follow:

Theoretical Study

A theoretical dissertation contributes to the field by generating a new theoretical formulation for some phenomenon in the discipline. A theoretical dissertation is not a theoretical review, nor is it a commentary on existing theory or an extensive literature review. Theoretical studies may derive from grounded theory, in which the theoretical model should conform to an existing set of data, or from a broader grand theoretical approach, in which no empirical sources are employed in the formulation of the theoretical model. The goal of the theoretical dissertation is to fully explore existing research in a given area, leading to the formulation of a new theoretical model that can yield testable hypotheses and spur scholarly study and future research. Students contemplating a theoretical dissertation study should be prepared to demonstrate a command of the literature in the area of study and a capacity for theoretical formulation deemed satisfactory by the student's faculty committee members.

Qualitative Study

A qualitative dissertation will routinely involve issues related to the processes and procedures of systems or groups. Qualitative research often seeks to identify the meaning individuals or groups may assign or share regarding a social phenomenon or problem. It is common for qualitative studies to generate questions aimed at interpreting the meaning of data collected. Approaches such as program evaluation, needs assessment and focus group assessment are routine applications of qualitative methods. An inductive approach to understanding data, emphasizing individual meaning and

broadening the interpretation of findings from particular settings to broader themes and principles, is used, frequently resulting in recommendations for future research.

Quantitative Study

A quantitative dissertation routinely involves a statistical analysis of either directly collected or secondary data. Quantitative research may involve correlational studies, in which different variables are compared, assessments of group differences, analyses of factors related to various forms of behavior and meta-analyses, in which the cumulative effects of data across several studies are analyzed. The common thread in quantitative research is the systematic evaluation of observable, measurable behaviors. Students contemplating a quantitative dissertation should count on defining a specific behavioral question for study and a sufficient knowledge of statistical concepts to appropriately analyze study data.

All dissertation students should be prepared to demonstrate sufficient knowledge with both the methodological techniques and ethical principles associated with research to satisfy their faculty committee members and meet the requirements for rigor set forth in this syllabus. Questions about the methodological, statistical and other techniques and issues relevant to each student's dissertation should be directed to that student's faculty committee.

Doctoral Candidacy

Prior to beginning work on the dissertation, students must achieve Doctoral Candidacy. To achieve Doctoral Candidacy the student must pass the Comprehensive Exam, which at Wright Graduate University is comprised of Comprehensive Essays. The Comprehensive Essays are designed to provide evidence a doctoral student as a scholar practitioner. The Comprehensive Essays are completed during course Comprehensive Qualifying Examinations (AC511).

Each essay should demonstrate an integration of knowledge, critical thinking, and current literature and research in several core disciplines. It is expected that each paper is accompanied with extensive references, and demonstrates scholarly writing following Turabian format.

Each student will write three comprehensive essays. The student, in conjunction with faculty, will design the specific questions for the essays as follows:

- The first two comprehensive essay questions should relate to the dissertation topic.
- These two questions should demonstrate in-depth, advanced knowledge of the fields of human development, Adlerian theory, human potential theory, existential theory, systems theory, educational theories and methods, and neuroscience as they apply to Wright Integrative. They should relate to the student's practice as a scholar practitioner.
- The third essay should be a narrative describing and analyzing the student's performative and applied growth and learning over the time in the coursework phase of the doctoral program.

The performative narrative will include descriptions and analysis of significant moments of revealing and liberating during the period of doctoral study, based on growth assignments in Wright Transformation labs or related approved growth activities. It will also include an analysis of successful

strategies and challenges related to the work of re-matrixing and dedicating to a life of sustained transformation growth and learning.

The applied narrative will describe and analyze your growth as a coach and leader over the course of your doctoral studies. It will identify your growth in proficiency in the core coaching and leadership competencies and the principles of Wright emergence coaching and leadership. It will also identify your progress and development challenges in becoming an engaged and empowering team member and transformational leader, including a comprehensive and insightful account of your gaps and development plans and strategies.

In the first two comprehensive essays, you are expected to demonstrate the ability to integrate work done in the fields of human development, Adlerian theory, human potential theory, existential theory, systems theory, educational theories and methods, and neuroscience as they apply to Wright Integrative.

You will also need to address a wider range of the relevant academic literature so that you can demonstrate knowledge across the core disciplines. Think of the comprehensive assessment as an opportunity to display a synthesis of knowledge and skills you have acquired from your work in at WGU.

Another important feature of each comprehensive essay is to provide an introduction and a summary. In other words, at the beginning of the essay, introduce the reader to the central issues and topics. You may wish to specify the limitations of the paper by mentioning what you will not address. In the summary statement, recap the main points of your essay.

There is no fixed length for each essay. Please limit the length of each of the three essays to under 40 double-spaced pages. Each essay should have its own list of references.

When you and your faculty of record agree that your final draft is complete, submit it to the core faculty for an evaluation. Upon passing the comprehensive qualifying exam, you will achieve Doctoral Candidacy.

Residential Weekend Attendance Requirements

Once a student has achieved doctoral candidacy and moved into the Dissertation phase of the program they will be enrolled in the Dissertation (AC600) course. Student must enroll in the Dissertation course for at least two quarters and will earn 22 quarter credits upon successful completion of the dissertation. During each quarter the student is registered for Dissertation, they must attend at least one residential weekend session on-campus and may attend the remaining two remotely by teleconference. This is the same requirement of all students in all courses at Wright Graduate University and remains in effect during the dissertation phase of the doctoral program

Initiating the Dissertation Process

Selecting a Topic for Study

The specific topic areas for dissertation may stem from a variety of sources. Students are advised to give extended thought to possible dissertation topics early in their postgraduate careers because the final choice is often reached by successive approximation. By beginning with a broad area for consideration, and more narrowly focusing in on a specific topic, students may become more familiar with and fluent in the research in that area and make an informed decision as to the topic area. Such a focusing approach will proceed more smoothly when it follows consultation with the potential faculty chair. Typically, one begins with an idea about something noticed in the real world that seems intriguing enough to want to understand better. Before finalizing a specific project, unless it is a grounded theory study, one should search the literature to learn what research has already been conducted on the topic. By examining what is already in the public domain, one may discover controversies related to the topic, difficulties previous researchers have faced with dealing with the topic, various methodologies used in exploring the subject, and related issues that may influence the final choice of research. One great place to look for interesting topics is in the Suggestions for Future Research in previous related dissertations.

The chosen topic should be interesting to the student. There is a direct correlation between time taken to complete, the quality of the dissertation, and the level of personal meaning of the subject to the researcher. Motivation to complete the lengthy task of a dissertation will partially stem from the desire to answer the questions posed.

Share your thoughts about your proposed project with others – students, friends, faculty, potential committee members, and the Director of Doctoral Research. Welcome both the encouragement and criticism, for it is better to seek input to your ideas during the nascent stage rather than face adversity that could have been avoided during your comprehensive exam!

Identify a faculty chair

One of the primary criteria in selecting a chair should be that individual's familiarity and degree of comfort with the topic area. The chair's familiarity with the literature associated with the proposed topic area, as well as practical experience participating in or guiding research in the field can be used to predict pitfalls, will help clarify research questions and suggest designs that best capture the questions at issue. The Director of Dissertation Research or the Chancellor must approve the selection of the faculty chair.

Dissertation committee

The purpose of the Doctoral Committee is to provide sufficient scholarly oversight for the Candidate to satisfactorily complete a dissertation. Throughout the entire dissertation process, the dissertation faculty committee is the single most important resource available to the student. The committee members review and recommend revisions for every draft of the dissertation in addition to offering guidance and support. More importantly, the committee members, singly and collectively, offer their expertise in the various stages of topic selection, design and reporting of findings.

Wright Graduate University requires students to successfully complete the research methodology courses to assist them in forming a viable research question including selecting a research method. Students then submit the proposed members for their dissertation committee for approval by the core faculty. Below are the selection criteria:

- 1) **Committee Size:** a minimum of three qualified faculty members.
- 2) **Institutional Affiliation:** the committee must include at least two (2) core Wright Graduate University faculty members and one (1) individual from another appropriately accredited institution with relevant subject matter expertise.
- 3) **Degrees Earned:** All dissertation members must possess the doctoral degree consistent with WGU faculty qualifications policy. Additionally, at least two committee members must have earned a doctoral degree from an appropriately accredited institution other than Wright Graduate University.
- 4) **Chair:** The committee chair must be a Wright Graduate University core faculty member.
- 5) **Others:** On occasion, given particular expertise, or familiarity with the data source of the study, a professional not affiliated with Wright Graduate University may be invited to participate as a committee member beyond the three minimum as defined above. Any non-faculty member must meet approval requirements set forth by the University before joining the dissertation committee.
- 6) **Approval:** The core faculty must approve the selection of the dissertation committee members. It is the responsibility of the committee chair (who is a Wright Graduate University core faculty) to assure that all committee members have earned appropriate academic credentials, scholarship, experience, and practice in the field of study and that this information is appropriately documented in doctoral students' academic files.

Dissertation Proposal

Once the topic area has been selected, work on the formal proposal can begin. The Preliminary Proposal is best thought of as an extended abstract of the proposed dissertation/thesis. It need not be lengthy – three to ten pages should be sufficient to present the logic of the plan. The principal focus of this document is to read the published literature – if not a grounded theory project – and then develop a sound, but realistic, research project. The purpose of this document is to convince the Director of Doctoral Research (and tentative Chair, if you have already approached someone) that you have a worthwhile and viable idea before you invest numerous hours writing up a poorly thought out proposal for your Qualifying Exam. (If the dissertation is a grounded theory project, the literature review occurs after the development of the grounded theory.)

The Preliminary Proposal should contain the key points of information that will allow the Director of Doctoral Research/Chairperson to evaluate the proposed work. Carefully selected information will present your project more impressively than an indiscriminate litter of facts. A suggested guideline for this information is shown below for the dissertation. Because there are so many types of acceptable research for projects of this kind, not all types fit easily into this specimen outline – some of the headings may not apply, while other headings or information may be needed to explain your work.

Before embarking on the writing of the proposal, it is advisable that an outline, highlighting the different components of the proposal, as well as the key concepts to be defined and described, be organized. This outline will be aided by viewing the dissertation proposal “backwards”, that is, beginning with the desired endpoint (e.g., study hypotheses and specific research questions), and work back toward the beginning (e.g., a broad view of the topic area as an entry point). This will necessitate having a clear grasp of the entire study, including its theoretical origins, justification for the selected method and citation of specific research questions to be answered by the study, or theoretical model to be proposed by the compilation of information about the topic.

Unless the dissertation is a grounded theory study, it is essential that a comprehensive review of the relevant literature be a part of the proposal. Consultation with the chair about the specific topic proposal should yield suggestions for literature sources to be sought. In addition, a list of key terms will prove essential to performing a comprehensive review. The literature review for the proposal should be broad enough to demonstrate a fluency with the relevant writing in the broad topic area, as well as familiarity with recent research conducted in that area. In addition, the literature review should help guide the student toward the specific research question(s) to be addressed in the study.

Write the first draft

The first proposal draft serves as the initial articulation of the proposed study, and the essentially unrefined ideas of the student and faculty committee. After agreeing to the topic area, the student’s next task is organizing the topic at hand into a manageable and coherent set of questions that can be addressed by the proposed study. Each section of the proposal is designed to help organize the available information, making the rationale for the proposed study increasingly understandable, and the study itself an obvious extension of the questions raised. Once the initial draft has been reviewed by the Chair and Dissertation Committee, feedback should be communicated to the student. The proposed changes should be accompanied by a suggested deadline, by which time the required changes are to be made.

Revise the draft

Once the recommended changes are made, the Dissertation Committee again reviews and provides feedback. The student will continue to work with the faculty committee toward the development of the final proposal draft until the Dissertation Committee approves the proposal.

Sections of the proposal draft

The dissertation proposal draft is divided into key sections, each of which is designed to orient the reader toward a greater understanding of the proposed study and the thought underlying it. The sequence of sections is outlined below:

I. Introduction

1. General Introductory Summary (Why is this area in need of study?)
2. Statement of the Problem (What is the specific research question to be addressed?)
Or in the case of a grounded theory study: Statement of the Area of Study - of what area of life will this be a study?
3. Statement of Purpose (What will the proposed study accomplish?)
4. Assumptions and Limitations of the proposed study (If a qualitative study, what questions or interpretations of data will remain?)
5. Study Hypotheses or Action Questions
(Not applicable at the outset in the case of grounded theory studies.)

II. Review of the Literature (In grounded theory dissertations, this section is not completed until after the research is conducted and the theory is developed)

1. Selection of key references and citations in the related area
2. Citation of specific literature addressing potential strengths and weaknesses of the current proposed study
3. Synthesis of the literature to make the argument for the current study

III. Methodology

1. Specify the approach being employed (quantitative, qualitative, theoretical, grounded theory)
2. Identification of study variables or theoretical arguments
3. If an empirical study, the unit of measurement (sample)
 - 3a. Sample characteristics (demographic and, if relevant, clinical)
 - 3b. Sample recruitment
 - 3c. Inclusion and Exclusion criteria for potential participants
4. Procedures
 - 4a. Instruments and Measures to be used
 - 4b. Procedures
 - 4c. Data collection and management procedures
5. If grounded theory methodology, replace steps 2-4 above and section IV below with the appropriate procedures related to selection of participants, theoretical sampling, data coding and collection, theory generation, writing of the research, generalizability of results, and implications

IV. Data Analysis and Results

1. Data analytic techniques to be used
2. Hypothesis testing
3. Reporting of results
4. Expected findings and their implications

V. Anticipated Timeline

VI. References

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

In accordance with the Turabian guidelines and federal laws (45CFR, Part 46.102; 46.103[c]), every effort must be made to protect the rights and well-being of human subjects in research conducted under the auspices of Wright Graduate University. In terms of the doctoral dissertation, the IRB is primarily concerned with insuring that the rights of human participants (including those represented in archival datasets) are observed and protected, and that the research design poses minimal risks to participants. Students must obtain Committee approval, in the form of dated signatures, on the Study Proposal Review Form for Protecting Human Subjects (see Appendix), prior to conducting the research. Weighing the ethical principles associated with research should not be taken lightly, as it is not uncommon for these guidelines to conflict with one another (e.g., determining when it is appropriate to use deception in order to obtain more accurate data). The benefits and risks of each study will be weighed by the Committee and their decision, to approve or defer, is final.

Any activity (including routine educational activities) that will or could be employed for research purposes must be reviewed by the IRB. A study may qualify for expedited review if the risks to participants are minimal, and no special populations (such as children, pregnant women, inmates or people incompetent to give informed consent) are involved. If such populations are involved, or the research is deemed to present at least minimal risks or physical, emotional, psychological or other harm to participants, full review by the IRB will typically be required.

Informed Consent

Informed consent *must* be obtained from every subject within a study (or their legal guardian, if warranted). A specimen consent form is shown in the Appendix. Subjects must be advised of the general nature of the study (but not necessarily the hypotheses or expected findings). They must be advised of the possible risks and benefits they can expect to experience as a result of participating in the study. Assessment of risks and benefits should be determined in accordance with the guidelines, rules, and regulations set forth by the American Psychological Association. Subjects must be advised that they can withdraw from the study at any time. Information should not be withheld in order to increase the willingness of subjects to participate. Consent to participate must be voluntary. Special care must be taken to protect the rights of all subjects, but particularly subjects from vulnerable populations such as children or dependents. Inducements to participate, if necessary, may not be so large as to compromise the subject's ability to refuse participation.

A copy of the written information given to subjects during the process of obtaining consent must be included in the Appendix of the Dissertation and is attached to the Protection of Human Subjects Review form. It is highly recommended that all subjects (or their legal guardian) keep a copy of the written consent. Additionally, it is highly recommended that subjects be advised, in the consent form, of ways to contact the researcher, as well as the doctoral Chair, and/or the Director of Doctoral Research, in case of any unresolved questions, or complaints regarding the study. All complaints from subjects must be taken seriously and fully resolved in conjunction with the Director of Doctoral Research.

Confidentiality

It is preferable not to keep the actual identities of the subjects on file (since there is typically no reason to obtain the information in the first place). This has legal implications since research records can be subpoenaed. Potentially, an individual's test results could be of interest in a custody case, or information about drug use could ruin future career goals, or information about illegal activities could be used for arrests and convictions. Therefore, it is advisable to code data in such a way as to conceal identity (e.g. use numbers instead of names).

Data Storage

Federal regulations require that consent forms, and master copies of original data generated by the research, be kept in a secure, confidential place, for five years after termination of the project. You may also be requested to produce these documents by your Committee members or the Director of Doctoral Research. WGU will retain a copy of the Human Subject's Review Form approval sheet on file, together with all other documents relating to the student's dissertation/thesis.

Once the dissertation proposal has been accepted by the faculty committee, students should begin the IRB review application process. The IRB has several options in considering proposed research. If, in the view of the committee, the proposed activities are routine aspects of educational activities, the committee may deem the proposed research exempt from IRB review. If this is the case, the study may proceed without further involvement of the IRB. Typically, this is not the case in dissertation research.

Dissertation

Sections of the Dissertation

The following is the sequence of pages in the dissertation:

- Title Page
- Committee Page
- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- Curriculum Vitae
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- Chapter I: Introduction
- Chapter II: Review of the Literature
(Appears after Results chapter for grounded theory studies.)
- Chapter III: Methodology
- Chapter IV: Results
- Chapter V: Discussion
- Appendices

- Tables
- Figures

While data collection and analysis comprise essential parts of the quantitative and qualitative dissertation processes, the key component is the actual dissertation document. Writing the dissertation entails synthesizing the professional literature to establish the need for the current research, integrating the status of the literature with the specific steps taken in the current study, reporting and analysis of the study data and the implications of the research, both, in terms of the questions raised in the proposal and for future research in the field.

Writing the dissertation is, in large measure, similar to the writing that formed the proposal. There are some differences. Where information conveyed in the proposal is framed prospectively, information in the dissertation should be presented in the past tense (conveying what has already been accomplished with the research). The dissertation should be a faithful depiction of what research was undertaken, why, how and what was found. Expectations for the primary sections of the dissertation is below.

Table of Contents

This is best created automatically if the text of your document has been properly formatted in the word processor. Include a line for References and the Appendix (listing the contents of the Appendix separately). Use no more than three or four levels of heading. Double space the first three levels only.

Chapter One - Introduction

A good introduction is an extremely important component of the dissertation. Introduction invites the reader to become interested in the topic to be studied. The introduction provides the background and overview of the proposed research, as well as the rationale for the necessity of this original research. The introduction contains four main sections (although others may be included).

1. *Statement of the Problem (or Area of Life in the case of ground theory studies):* This section explains the basic 'Problem' (issue) to be studied. The context of the problem as well as its relevance for transformational leadership and coaching should be addressed clearly within this section. The title of your dissertation/thesis is usually a succinct, clear reference to the problem.
2. *Purpose, Goals and Objectives:* The purpose, goals, and objectives section should clearly set forth the aims of the study. Research goals will likely have both specific practical applications as well as more generalized or theoretical applications.
3. *Definitions:* Significant and/or confusing terms should be defined as they pertain to the study.
4. *Hypotheses:* Unless the project is a grounded theory, the exact hypotheses that will be tested should be presented explicitly in this section. Hypotheses should be stated in the form of precise, scientific predictions (null and/or alternate forms), based upon the theoretical position adopted and the evaluation of existing evidence. A clear rationale for each hypothesis should be presented prior to the statement of the hypothesis. Note that hypotheses are presented again, in identical form, in the "Methods" chapter.

The Introduction is best thought of as an overview of the proposed research. It should stimulate significant interest in the reader and convince others of the necessity to complete the proposed research. Both the nature and the importance of the study are essential components to explore. The

Introduction is much like an advertisement for the study - the reader should be enticed by the topic, persuaded by the argument of its relevance and importance, and finally, sold on the study's objectives, goals, and hypothetical outcomes. At the same time, however, any significant limitations of the study may be mentioned.

Chapter Two - Review of the Literature (appearing after the Results chapter in grounded theory studies)

The review of the literature is intended to provide general theoretical background and critical analyses of the previous research studies that are relevant to the proposed research. The organization of the literature review should move smoothly from general to specific, focusing first on common issues and themes, and later focusing on a narrower field which closely relates to the proposed research. The literature review is expected to be comprehensive and inclusive – if not, then justify the selection you have made. It shows the Committee that you have sufficient skill to review critically others' research, integrate it with your existing knowledge and apply it to your own field of endeavor. A narrow and focused research topic will help to trim the amount of information necessary within this section.

Students are expected to be familiar with the source references that they cite. Whenever possible, copies of seminal papers should be obtained and thoroughly studied. It is not sufficient to rely indirectly on references quoted by others, or solely on review publications and books.

Chapter Three - Methodology

While this chapter sometimes creates the most tension in students, it is actually the most organized and easiest chapter to develop! The methodology of the research needs to be provided in as much detail as possible. The overall goal of this section is to present the methodology of the study in such a detailed and specific manner that any peer could replicate, independently, your research study exactly. Components of this section include the following:

1. *Overview of the Study*: A general description of the design and nature of the study should be presented. Typically, this section is very short (normally one to three paragraphs).
2. *Subjects*: Number, source, selection criteria for inclusion and exclusion, characteristics, availability, recruitment strategies, sampling methods, and control of sampling biases should all be included.
3. *Ethical Considerations*: Include a thoughtful section on the protection of human subjects, and all other possible ethical considerations.
4. *Variables*: It is essential to identify the independent and dependent variables of the study. (Not applicable in grounded theory studies.) Include all levels (if applicable) of each variable. Discuss all possible confounds and how these might be controlled to reduce specific weaknesses of the study (e.g., sampling error, investigator or subject bias, teaching effects, temporal/seasonal effects).
5. *Criteria and Criteria Measures*: Describe tests, metrics, instruments, inventories, demographics, apparatus, judging or rating procedures, scoring standards, reliability, and validity associated with each variable measured. (Replace with appropriate methods and procedures for grounded theory studies.) The reliability and validity of data gathering procedures must be established. Relegate detailed information on instruments to the Appendix.

6. *Design*: Present the design of the study (e.g., randomized controlled experiment, case study, meta-analysis, etc.) and its justification, including levels of the independent variable. The design should be appropriate to the subject and to the solution of the problem.
7. *Procedures*: In detail, describe the study methodology. Present all components of the study, including, but not limited to, location, length, subject's duties, researcher's duties, definition of researcher, instructions, training, treatments, conditions, collection of data, scoring of data, informed consent, incentives, and debriefing. After reading this section, any competent peer should be able to replicate your study without referring to any other materials.
8. *Statistical Design (as applicable)*: Describe the research design, statistical tests to be used for each hypothesis, and the rationale behind them. Justify sample size and statistical power. Mention any post hoc analyses that you might wish to conduct.
9. *Hypotheses*: Unless it is a grounded theory study, restate your hypotheses in the appropriate format (already given in Chapter One). The rationale for each hypothesis is not necessary at this point, as it has already been presented earlier.

Chapter Four – Results

This chapter has the distinction of being the “driest” (except in the case of grounded theory studies where the full theory is presented). Only raw data and facts are presented, totally devoid of any accompanying explanation or interpretation (which is covered comprehensively in Chapter Five). The “Results” chapter should begin with a description of the sample, the number of the subjects, and summaries of all the relevant demographic information. Information on noncompliance, dropouts, and non-evaluable subjects, need to be included so that an evaluation of potential bias in sampling can be made. The representativeness of the study sample should be commented upon. The remainder of this chapter presents results relevant to the analyses of the hypotheses, as well as data used in post hoc analysis.

It is preferable to organize the presentation of the information in terms of the order of the stated hypotheses. Frequently, there will be more than one source of information bearing on an individual question and data may be analyzed in more than one way. Organizing the results in terms of the hypotheses makes the analyses and findings more comprehensible. Use discrimination when deciding what analyses are relevant to the hypotheses. Mass quantities of results will not make the findings any more significant or impressive to the Committee. Thus, it is the researcher's obligation to tailor the many possible analyses to explain the outcome of the hypotheses in a parsimonious and understandable manner. Post hoc analyses should be handled in the same manner. By presenting only results which are critical and or interesting, and which follow the organization of the hypotheses, this chapter becomes much less difficult to write, as well as much more lucid to read.

It is essential that results for each stated hypothesis be presented - not only those which were found to be significant. Each hypothesis must be explicitly accepted or not accepted. If the study was quantitative in nature, the findings should include tables along with accompanying written explanations. All tables, figures, and results must be reported according to Turabian guidelines – refer regularly to the Turabian Publication Manual (Sixth Edition) to ensure that these are presented correctly and to save you much time and frustration later on.

If the study was qualitative in nature, the massive amounts of raw data gathered should be synthesized into general themes. In “Results”, it is these themes that are presented along with representative quotations from the subjects. Just as in quantitative analyses, the student must guide the reader through the findings in a manner that directs attention to what is important. The student of the qualitative design must be discriminating in the presentation of the findings. If tables, figures, or numerical results are presented, they too must be reported according to Turabian format. Use tables and figures that are necessary for clarifying or expanding on the text but insure that they are self-explanatory. Identify axes of figures clearly and use clear titles. Make sure that text, tables and figures are internally consistent with one another whenever you edit one of these.

Chapter Five – Discussion

The principal objective of this chapter is to explain how the study findings integrate into the body of literature reviewed in Chapter Two (or in the chapter following Results for grounded theory studies). In other words, it is devoted to interpreting the results presented in Chapter Four and giving these interpretations meaning and relevance to the population from which the study sample was drawn. In this chapter, the reader is reminded of the findings that matched the stated hypotheses, and the way in which these findings extend the body of knowledge regarding the topic. Additionally, unsupported hypotheses and unexpected results should be covered, and possible rationales for these should be offered. New citations may be added to support statements made in this chapter – integrate them with other references.

This chapter is one of the few areas within the dissertation in which personal opinions (supported by research or otherwise) are permitted, although a scientific attitude should be retained. The Candidate is seeking to inform, not persuade! The practical significance of statistically significant (or insignificant) findings should be explained. Unexpected results will always necessitate some explanation. Given the unexpected nature of these results, it is unlikely that existing research could explain these findings (otherwise they would have been hypothesized). Thus, theoretical speculations as to the cause of these findings are warranted. If, however, data are available to reinforce your theories, this will make for a much better argument.

Chapter Five should include clinical and research implications. Suggestions for future research and for improvements in methodology should be offered. It is appropriate to review any limitations placed on the findings of the study, especially those that became clear only during the gathering or analysis of the data. Conclusions should be clearly stated, substantiated by the evidence presented and, of course, relevant to the stated problem.

Appendices

Appendices should include specific metrics utilized in the study, a copy of the informed consent form, verbatim transcriptions of interviews, critical raw data (results), and any other relevant information which would be inappropriate, or too cumbersome, to include the narrative of the first five chapters. This is the place to display items that really do not fit neatly into the formal text.

References

As with all other aspects of the dissertation, references must strictly follow Turabian guidelines. Expect to refer to these regularly. It is much easier if citations and references are prepared simultaneously. In other words, if in Chapter Two a quote is used, cite the quote within the text and in the reference section at that time. This is much simpler than searching for the source of that quotation months later. All citations and sources of information used within the document must be cited in the reference section. References not cited should not be included in the list.

Final Oral Review

Once the written draft of the dissertation is completed, the oral defense should be scheduled. The oral defense of the dissertation, like that of the proposal, is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate personal mastery of the topic area and to present and justify the completed research study. Unlike the proposal oral defense, the dissertation oral defense is open to any member of the WGU community. Attendance is required for the student, faculty chair and members of the faculty dissertation committee, including outside readers.

Final Dissertation Approval

Once the oral defense is completed, the student will receive any final revisions required from the faculty committee, along with a timeframe for submitting the revised draft. Upon completion of the revisions, the draft will be submitted to the committee for review. If accepted, this will be regarded as the final dissertation draft. Acceptance by the committee, provided all other requirements are met, is the final requirement for graduation. The student's graduation date will be the last date of the quarter in which his/her committee approves the final dissertation draft.

Proofreading and Binding

Once the final dissertation draft is accepted by the faculty committee, the draft will be sent to an outside proofreader, for final editing and proofing.

The student is responsible for producing three bound copies and submitting to the University. The degree is conferred, and diploma/transcripts released upon the Registrar's receipt of bound copies.

Students are responsible for insuring their faculty chair and faculty committee members are kept informed of progress throughout the dissertation process. Students are required to meet at least once per quarter during the dissertation process to confer and complete the Wright Graduate University Dissertation Status Report Form. Failure to progress, or to keep the committee informed of progress are grounds for an academic warning. Copies of each Wright Graduate University Dissertation Status Report Form will be included in the student file.

Policy on Ethical Conduct

Wright Graduate University embraces a high standard of integrity of performance for students, administrators, faculty, and staff members. All members of the campus community have the responsibility to foster a standard of conduct that reflects credit on themselves and on the University, while preserving a climate that respects the dignity and integrity of each individual. Wright Graduate University expects and requires that all students maintain the ethical standards of the professions and

careers for which they are training. Plagiarism, or presenting the ideas, words, or views of another, as if they were one's own, is considered unethical conduct by the University. Failure in maintaining such standards or engaging in actions that are deleterious to Wright Graduate University may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Policy Regarding Use of Consultants

Statistical Support

It is not the responsibility of the Director of Doctoral Research to give extensive input, or support, to data analyses. Most students, therefore, seek professional advice with the statistical aspects of their research. However, students should not rely on a statistical consultant to be more than an advisor because the dissertation process requires students to take *full responsibility* for designing and implementing their own experiments. At the Final Oral Defense students are expected to be able to explain and justify statistical approaches, so be sure to seek advice from the consultant if inferential statistics are not your strong subject, but also make sure to understand the methods involved.

Students who misuse consultants, either by misrepresentation of data or by being unable to explain or defend their work, are placing their dissertation at jeopardy.

Writer/Editor

An editor is often considered useful for each phase of the dissertation. Neither the Director of Doctoral Research, nor your Committee, will accept drafts that are sloppy, grammatically incorrect, or that have excessive spelling and punctuation errors. The dissertation and thesis require a level of scholarship and quality in writing to which few, lower level, students are accustomed. Students should expect to write, edit, and rewrite sequential drafts in order to obtain cogent, succinct logic and clarity of presentation. Students should strive to turn in drafts that are close to perfect, and in approved style. A skilled (though not necessarily professional) writer-editor may be helpful for this process. If you do not use the services of such an individual, you are strongly advised to have someone that is not associated with your project read carefully through your document, to check for clarity, syntax, grammar, and typographical errors.

Dissertations and theses that do not meet a graduate level of scholarly research and high quality writing will not be accepted. It is the student's responsibility to hire a professional editor, at their expense, to finalize their work prior to final submission to the University.

DISSERTATION EVALUATION METHOD

The dissertation is graded on a pass-fail basis. An average of 3 on the following rubric is required for passing.

	Exemplary = 4	Good = 3	Minimally Acceptable = 2	Not Acceptable = 1
1. Demonstrates in-depth, advanced	Comprehensively employs, appraises and analyzes	Generally employs, appraises and	At a minimally acceptable level,	Fails to meet minimally

knowledge of the fields of human development, Adlerian theory, human potential theory, existentialism, educational theory, neuroscience and other research as they inform your own growth as a scholar-practitioner of transformational coaching and leadership.	component theories and methods of Wright Integrative, including developmental theory, Adlerian psychology, human potential and humanistic psychology, and existentialism, optionally demonstrating an understanding of educational theory and neuroscience.	analyzes component theories and methods of Wright Integrative, including developmental theory, Adlerian psychology, human potential and humanistic psychology, and existentialism, optionally demonstrating an understanding of educational theory and neuroscience.	employs, appraises and analyzes component theories and methods of Wright Integrative, including developmental theory, Adlerian psychology, human potential and humanistic psychology, and existentialism, optionally demonstrating an understanding of educational theory and neuroscience.	acceptable standards described to the left.
2. Analyzes Wright Integrative theories and methods, systems theory, human development theories, Adlerian theory, humanistic and existential theory, educational theory, neuroscience and other research in relation to doctoral dissertation topic/timeline.	Consistently and cogently analyzes Wright Integrative theories and methods, systems theory, human development theories, Adlerian theory, humanistic and existential theory, educational theory, neuroscience and other research in relation to doctoral dissertation topic.	Generally analyzes Wright Integrative theories and methods, systems theory, human development theories, Adlerian theory, humanistic and existential theory, educational theory, neuroscience and other research in relation to doctoral dissertation topic.	At a minimally acceptable level, analyzes Wright Integrative theories and methods, systems theory, human development theories, Adlerian theory, humanistic and existential theory, educational theory, neuroscience and other research in relation to doctoral dissertation topic.	Fails to meet minimally acceptable standards described to the left.
3. Demonstrates academic skills of integrative and critical thinking, emphasizing comprehension of academic material and critical evaluation of theories and methods.	Consistently and cogently demonstrates academic skills of integrative and critical thinking, emphasizing comprehension of academic material and critical evaluation of theories and methods.	Generally demonstrates academic skills of integrative and critical thinking, emphasizing comprehension of academic material and critical evaluation of theories and methods.	At a minimally acceptable level, demonstrates academic skills of integrative and critical thinking, emphasizing comprehension of academic material and critical evaluation of theories and methods.	Fails to meet minimally acceptable standards described to the left.
4. Uses appropriate research methodology for dissertation research, based on analysis of a broad range of research designs, methods, and resources for conducting applied research in the fields of transformational leadership and	Consistently and cogently uses an appropriate research methodology for dissertation research, based on analysis of a broad range of research designs, methods, and resources for conducting applied research in the fields of transformational leadership and coaching.	Generally uses an appropriate research methodology for dissertation research, based on analysis of a broad range of research designs, methods, and resources for conducting applied research in the fields of transformational	At a minimally acceptable level, uses an appropriate research methodology for dissertation research, based on analysis of a broad range of research designs, methods, and resources for conducting applied research in the fields of transformational	Fails to meet minimally acceptable standards described to the left.

coaching.		leadership and coaching.	leadership and coaching.	
5. Conducts applied doctoral dissertation research project that contributes to the fields of transformational coaching and leadership and to one's professional/career development and expertise as a scholar-practitioner.	Consistently and cogently conducts applied doctoral dissertation research project that contributes to the fields of transformational coaching and leadership and to one's professional/career development and expertise as a scholar-practitioner.	Generally conducts applied doctoral dissertation research project that contributes to the fields of transformational coaching and leadership and to one's professional/career development and expertise as a scholar-practitioner.	At a minimally acceptable level, conducts applied doctoral dissertation research project that contributes to the fields of transformational coaching and leadership and to one's professional/career development and expertise as a scholar-practitioner.	Fails to meet minimally acceptable standards described to the left.
6. Applies appropriate Wright Integrative theories, principles, and methods in dissertation research, including emergence coaching principles and related competencies; evolving theory; the Wright developmental framework; and grounded theory and grounded leadership methods.	Consistently and cogently applies appropriate Wright Integrative theories, principles, and methods in dissertation research, including emergence coaching principles and related competencies; evolving theory; the Wright developmental framework; and grounded theory and grounded leadership methods.	Generally applies appropriate Wright Integrative theories, principles, and methods in dissertation research, including emergence coaching principles and related competencies; evolving theory; the Wright developmental framework; and grounded theory and grounded leadership methods.	At a minimally acceptable level, applies appropriate Wright Integrative theories, principles, and methods in dissertation research, including emergence coaching principles and related competencies; evolving theory; the Wright developmental framework; and grounded theory and grounded leadership methods.	Fails to meet minimally acceptable standards described to the left.
7. Demonstrates in-depth knowledge and expertise in leadership and coaching competencies and applications related to dissertation focus.	Consistently and cogently demonstrates in-depth knowledge and expertise in leadership and coaching competencies and applications related to dissertation focus.	Generally demonstrates in-depth knowledge and expertise in leadership and coaching competencies and applications related to dissertation focus.	At a minimally acceptable level, demonstrates knowledge and expertise in leadership and coaching competencies and applications related to dissertation focus.	Fails to meet minimally acceptable standards described to the left.

APPENDICES

The Wright Graduate University Style Guide

The Wright Graduate University Style Guide follows Kate Turabian's style guide manual, 8th edition. Style guide examples are available from the Chancellor or the Chief Academic Officer.

Copyright Guidelines

The purpose of the *Wright Graduate University ("WGU") Copyright Compliance Policy: Library and Classroom* is to provide a summary of U.S. copyright law as it relates to the use of text-based copyright-protected works in the classroom and library at WGU, and to provide guidelines and procedures for obtaining copyright permission to use these works.

U.S. copyright law contains many gray areas, and the goal of this policy is to provide WGU administrators, faculty, librarians, students, employees, and others with a standard approach for addressing complex copyright issues. This policy covers classroom issues such as photocopying as well as online and distance education. It also covers library uses for print and electronic reserves, ILL, and document delivery. Other WGU copyright and intellectual property policies may complement this policy by providing guidance on

What is Copyright?

Copyright is an area of law that provides creators and distributors of creative works with an incentive to share their works by granting them the right to be compensated when others use those works in certain ways. Specific rights are granted to the creators of creative works in the U.S. Copyright Act (title 17, U.S. Code). If you are not a copyright holder for a particular work, as determined by the law, you must ordinarily obtain copyright permission prior to reusing or reproducing that work. However, there are some specific exceptions in the Copyright Act for certain academic uses, and permission is never required for certain other actions, such as reading or borrowing original literary works or photographs from a library collection.

What is Protected by Copyright?

The rights granted by the Copyright Act are intended to benefit "authors" of "original works of authorship", including literary, dramatic, musical, architectural, cartographic, choreographic, pantomimic, pictorial, graphic, sculptural and audiovisual creations. This means that virtually any creative work that you may come across—including books, magazines, journals, newsletters, maps, charts, photographs, graphic materials, and other printed materials; unpublished materials, such as analysts' and consultants' reports; and non-print materials, including electronic content, computer programs and other software, sound recordings, motion pictures, video files, sculptures, and other artistic works—is almost certainly protected by copyright. Among the exclusive rights granted to those "authors" are the rights to reproduce, distribute, publicly perform and publicly display their works.

These rights provide copyright holders control over the use of their creations and an ability to benefit, monetarily and otherwise, from the use of their works. Copyright also protects the right to "make a derivative work," such as a movie from a book; the right to include a work in a collective work, such as publishing an article in a book or journal; and the rights of attribution and integrity for "authors" of certain works of visual art. Copyright law does not protect ideas, data or facts.

In the U.S., the general rule of copyright duration for a work created on or after January 1, 1978 is the author's life plus 70 years after the author's death. This is often referred to as "life-plus-70". Works created by companies or other types of organizations generally have a copyright term of 95 years. For more information on copyright duration, visit <http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ1.html#hlc>.

Fair Use Policy

A provision for fair use is found in the Copyright Act at Section 107. Under the fair use provision, a reproduction of someone else's copyright-protected work is likely to be considered fair if it is used for one of the following purposes: criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship and research.

If the reproduction is for one of these purposes, a determination as to whether the reproduction is fair use must be made based upon four factors:

1. The purpose and character of use (principally, whether for commercial or nonprofit educational use);
2. The nature of the copyright-protected work;
3. The amount and substantiality of the portion used; and
4. The effect of the use being evaluated upon the potential market for or value of the copyright-protected work.

Fair use is an ambiguous concept and the law does not state exactly what uses of a copyrighted work will be considered fair uses under the law and may therefore be used without obtaining permission. As such, individuals who are not lawyers may often need to be interpreters of the law in everyday circumstances, and answers as to how much reproduction may be considered fair use often remain unclear. The bottom line is that fair use requires a very circumstance-specific analysis as to whether a particular use or reuse of a work may indeed be considered fair use.

To avoid confusion and minimize the risk of copyright infringement, WGU interprets the following situations as fair use:

- Quotation of short passages in a scholarly or technical work for illustration or clarification of the author's observations.
- Reproduction of material for classroom use where the reproduction is unexpected and spontaneous – for example, where an article in the morning's paper is directly relevant to that day's class topic. This would generally cover one time use in only one semester.
- Use in a parody of short portions of the work itself.
- A summary of an address or article, which may include quotations of short passages of the copyright-protected work.

If your use does not meet the above criteria and the work is protected by copyright, you probably need to obtain permission to use the work from the copyright holder or its agent.

Dissertation Committee Proposal and Approval Form

Student Name: _____

AC600 Scheduled to Begin (Date): _____

	Name	Qualifications
Member 1: Chair* <i>(Must be WGU Core Faculty Member)</i>		Degree: Conferring Institution: Subject of Degree: Brief Description of his/her expertise:
Member 2: 2nd WGU core faculty member <i>(must have doctoral degree from similarly accredited institution--not WGU--if Chair's degree is from WGU)</i>		Degree: Conferring Institution: Subject of Degree: Brief Description of his/her expertise:
Member 3: doctoral degree from similarly accredited institution <i>(degree may or may not be from WGU. At least two faculty on the dissertation committee must have degrees from an educational institution other than WGU)</i>		Degree: Conferring Institution: Subject of Degree: Brief Description of his/her expertise:
Optional Member:		Degree: Conferring Institution: Subject of Degree: Brief Description of his/her expertise:
Optional Member:		Degree: Conferring Institution: Subject of Degree: Brief Description of his/her expertise:

I certify that the above committee meets the requirements of the Dissertation committee as detailed in the syllabus for AC600. (Director of Doctoral Research or Chancellor must approve the chair. Dissertation Committee Chair must approve the composition of the committee.)

Director of Doctoral Research or Chancellor

Date

Dissertation Chair

Date

Approved by the WGU Core Faculty on (Date): _____

Attach meeting minutes or emails indicating approval and submit signed copy to Registrar.

Proposal Approval Form

Date _____

Candidate Name

Proposed Dissertation Title

Degree Title

Date

The preliminary proposal appears acceptable and feasible:

Yes No

Comments and recommendations:

_____ (continue on reverse side if necessary.)

Signed:

Research Instructor

Protection of Human Subjects Review Form

Dissertation Title:

Student:

Briefly describe the subjects of your research, including any factors that may increase vulnerability to stress or distress (such as age, disability, psychological disturbance, institutional status).

Describe your sample size and recruitment techniques. (How do subjects enter your study?)

Attach a brief outline of your procedures from entrance into the study to completion. Include inducements offered to participants, methods of assessment, methods of assignment to group, experimental procedures, if any. Be explicit in the description of any stressors, drugs, ingested substances, aversive stimuli, or any deprivations that are planned. The attachment should be no longer than one page.

To your knowledge, are there any laws or regulations relevant to the special nature of your population (e.g., minors, patients in psychotherapy, child abuse victims who may require reporting)? If so, include a discussion of how your procedures address these issues.

Describe your debriefing process, including the approximate time between experimental procedure and debriefing.

Justify use of concealment or deception in the research.

Describe procedures for protecting confidentiality of participants.

Describe all potential risks attendant with your procedures.

In any case other than no risk, evaluate the risk-benefit ratio (i.e., in what ways do the perceived advantages or benefits of the research outweigh possible risks?).

By my signature, I attest that this is an accurate representation of my dissertation proposal procedures. I agree to inform my Committee in writing of any changes that I intend to make to my study procedures that might significantly alter their assessment of the risks or benefits for subjects participating in this research. A copy of the finalized subject informed consent form is attached to this form.

Signature of Student

Date

Protection of Human Subjects Committee Study Proposal Review Form

Dissertation Title

Student

Date

ITEM	Yes	No	If no, what improvement is needed?
Written consent form adequate and kept on file?			
Ethical standards preserved?			
Confidentiality assured?			
Freedom from coercion?			
Risks and benefits clearly explained?			
Risk:Benefit ratio acceptable?			
Compensation appropriate?			
Committee and contact information supplied			
Follow up with subjects/organizations adequate?			
Research methodology appropriate?			
Student competent to conduct stated research?			

The Protection of Human Subjects Committee has examined the methods and procedures of this proposal and the student's review form. It is agreed that the study complies with all guidelines and is authorized to proceed.

Committee Chair

Date

Research Instructor

Date

Chief Academic Officer

Date

Director of Doctoral Research

Date

Request for Oral Defense of Dissertation

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Program: _____

Title of Dissertation/Thesis: _____

Chair: _____ Tel: _____ E-mail: _____

Reader: _____ Tel: _____ E-mail: _____

Reader: _____ Tel: _____ E-mail: _____

Date requested: _____ Time: _____

Location/Room: _____

Student Note: Committee members, the Research Instructor, and the Director of Doctoral Research must receive copies of your dissertation at least two weeks prior to your Qualifying Exam.

For office use only: Date Invitation Flyer Prepared, Posted and Filed: _____