

EOL 598
Thesis Proposal Writing
Course Syllabus, Spring 2008

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Educational Organization and Leadership
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Required Texts:

- American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (5th edition). Washington, DC: Author.
- Bryant, M. T. (2004). *The portable dissertation advisor*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (2nd edition.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Weston, A. (2000). *A rulebook for arguments*. (3rd edition). Indianapolis, IN: Hackett.

Graduate College Handbook

<http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/gradhandbook/>

College of Education Graduate Programs Handbook

<http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/saao/g handbook.html>

Recommended Texts:

- Bolker, J. (1998). *Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day: A guide to starting, revising, and finishing your doctoral thesis*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2003). *The craft of research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Krathwohl, D. R. (1998). *Methods of educational and social science research: An integrated approach*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Optional Qualitative Texts

- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Carspecken, P. F. (1996). *Critical ethnography in educational research: A theoretical and practical guide*. New York: Routledge.
- Conrad, C., Haworth, J. G., & Lattuca, L. R. (Eds.). (2001). *Qualitative research in higher education: Expanding perspectives*. (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gee, J. P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London: Routledge.

- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Schwandt, T. A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed. Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Optional Quantitative/Mixed-Method Texts

- Dilman, D. A. (2007). *Mail and internet surveys: The tailored design approach* (2nd ed.) Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.
- Pedhazur, E. J., & Schmelkin, L. P. (1991). *Measurement, design, and analysis: An integrated approach*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Moodle Website:

The course will have a “Moodle” website to provide the opportunity for students to discuss readings, contribute assignments, and submit preliminary writing for review by peers. Students are expected to be active users of this site by contributing information, opinions, perspectives, resources, etc.

Moodle Reading Response

Starting session 2, you are expected to respond to each set of readings on Moodle. In about 125 – 250 words (1/2 to 1 page), synthesize the most important ideas of the readings and clarify what ideas remain unclear or ask relevant questions. Read other responses and try to respond to at least one other colleague.

Moodle Group Posting

Depending on where you are in the process, your small group will decide what to post and how to distribute responses (e.g., chapters, outlines, etc.). The idea is to post some form of writing a week before class so someone in your group can read it and comment on it before class.

Course Description

This course is designed to synthesize the knowledge and skills developed in previous research courses and apply them to the doctoral dissertation process. Students learn about all aspects of the process of developing and carrying out the doctoral dissertation, and they gain an understanding of standards and expectations that need to be met to be successful in completing the dissertation process. Throughout the course, students are required to work closely with their major advisor and/or dissertation director, as appropriate. Student performance in the course will be assessed your professors, in collaboration with each student’s major advisor/dissertation director. To make substantial progress, it is essential that students set and meet aggressive goals and meet regularly with their major advisor/dissertation director to ensure the dissertation is progressing in a focused and high quality manner.

Specifically, students in this advanced research course will gain a better understanding of how to accomplish the following actions:

- select the dissertation problem;
- identify and work productively with an advisor/dissertation director and faculty committee;
- conduct productive student-faculty interactions;
- organize and manage doctoral-level research;
- organize and write the doctoral dissertation;
- meet departmental, college, and university requirements;
- form and contribute to a thesis/dissertation support group, as appropriate;
- handle the politics of the dissertation process;

- schedule and successfully complete a pre-preliminary or preliminary exam; and
- prepare for the final oral examination.

The course is designed to be taught in a seminar style with extensive dialogue among the students, instructors, and invited resource persons. In-class discussions should be enhanced with additional student-advisor (and committee, if appropriate) meetings. Students are expected to be prepared for all class meetings. Since lecture will be minimized, it is essential that all students be prepared to contribute to all in-class discussions and activities.

Course Expectations and Assignments

Active commitment and engagement in learning the material taught in this course is critical to performance in the course and to the ultimate completion of the doctoral degree program. Students are expected to maintain high standards of ethical and professional conduct, including being adequately prepared, regularly and appropriately contributing to class discussions, submitting graduate-caliber work, and representing one's own work fairly and honestly. Every graduate student is expected to comply with all aspects of the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically the Student Code, of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). A copy of the policy can also be accessed on the UIUC campus website at: http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/article_1/a1_1-401.html. Please note, the UIUC Student Code specifically states that all assignments must be a student's own *original* research and writing. If students have any questions, they should bring them to the attention of the instructors immediately.

Course Organization

With the exception of one Tuesday, classes are held on four weekends (see schedule). Early in the semester, students will convene for a special session with Nancy O'Brien, Lead Librarian, to learn more about electronic databases. In addition, students will hear from other guest speakers, including Anne Robertson of the College of Education, Research Bureau.

Students will be assigned to a small group to engage in discussion, review and feedback on proposal manuscripts as the semester proceeds, plus a Moodle website will be established to support on-going dialogue for each small group. In mid-course, students will prepare and deliver a brief presentation of their dissertation proposal to other members of the small group. At the session's conclusion, substantial time will be devoted to formal presentations of research proposals to the entire class, with one or two students volunteering to participate in a mock preliminary exam format.

The instructional strategies involve a variety of teaching and learning strategies, including lecture and discussion, small group discussions and presentations, and online learning via Moodle. Multiple instructional approaches will be used to encourage active learning. The course teaching and learning activities are designed to engage students in review, reflection, and critical analysis and synthesis aligned with oral and written assignments.

Contract for Thesis Proposal Accomplishments

A contract will be prepared by each student, in conjunction with the major advisor/dissertation director and your instructors. The contract should specify the following:

- a) brief statement of the contribution your dissertation will make to the profession and to your own personal educational and career goals.
- b) explanation of prior accomplishments on the dissertation.
- c) personal goals for EOL 598.

- d) end-of-course product (e.g., complete three chapters).
- e) timeline for this semester for completion of goals and products, and through completion and defense of the dissertation, and graduation.
- f) strategies for collaborating with your advisor/dissertation director, committee (if appropriate), peers, etc. in reviewing and contributing to the development of your work.
- g) sign-off from yourself, your major advisor and your dissertation director (if different from major advisor).

Please note, this contract (sample follows) will be used to assess your progress in the course. It is important to set your goals high but be realistic. Your own satisfaction with the course will depend on setting ambitious but reasonable objectives and continuing to work toward them.

Research Proposal

The major assignment for this course is to develop a research proposal (traditionally chapters 1-3 of the dissertation) that provides a foundation for each individual doctoral student to complete a dissertation. Each student in the course is expected to complete an independent research activity that will make a significant contribution to accomplishing the doctoral dissertation.

Since students enter the course having different levels of knowledge and experience related to the dissertation, each student must develop the specifications and outcomes for this major assignment and negotiate them with his/her major advisor/ dissertation director, committee (if appropriate), and the instructor for this course. This research activity must be specified in the proposal (contract) described previously in this course syllabus (sample follows.)

Evaluation and Grading

The student's final grade will be based upon the joint assessment of the two instructors. Consistent with UIUC grading policy, a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade will be awarded for this course. Because of the need to involve faculty advisors/ dissertation directors in the dissertation writing process, students' advisors/directors may be consulted in the awarding of the final grade based on overall student performance.

Scholarly Journals Core to Educational Organization and Leadership

Though not intended to be exhaustive, selected scholarly journals central to EOL are: *American Educational Research Journal*, *Community College Review*, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *Educational Policy*, *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*, *Journal of Community College Research and Practice*, *Journal of Educational Administration*, *Journal of Education Policy*, *Journal of Higher Education*, *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, *Research in Higher Education*, *Journal of School Leadership*, *Review of Educational Research*, and *Review of Higher Education*.

Session	Topics	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 Jan 22 Tuesday 5:30 – 9:30 pm	Course Intro Dissertation Overview Framework for Design Literature Review Writing Strategies	College of Education Graduate Handbook – Degree Requirements (EdD or PhD) Creswell 1-4 Bryant 1-3 Recommended Kennedy – Defining a Literature	
Session 2 Feb. 1/2 Fri 5:30 – 9:00 Sat. 8 – 4:30	Session 1 cont. Purpose Statement Research Questions/Hypotheses Theory Research Design IRB Library Resources Interactive Feedback	Creswell 5-8 Bryant 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Moodle Reading Response 1/30 o 598 contract with advisor’s signature o Accomplishments/Goals Summary o At minimum, outline of “best guess” of Problem Statement, Purpose Statement, Research Questions o Optional “Best” outline or chapter for review o Volunteers – Whole Group Feedback Opportunity (Powerpoint or handouts)
Session 3 Feb. 22/23 Fri 5:30 – 9:00 Sat. 8 – 4:30	Quantitative Methods Reporting Findings On Writing Well APA Interactive Feedback	Creswell 9 Bryant 5 Zinsser – Simplicity (on Moodle) Quickly skim APA manual Recommended Quantitative Dissertations in “Quality Dissertation” Excel File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Friday, Feb 15 – Group Moodle Post/Responses o Moodle Reading Response 2/20 o Accomplishments/Goals Summary o Student Presentations – Small Group o Optional “Best” outline or chapter for review o Volunteers – Whole Group Feedback Opportunity
Session 4 Mar. 21/22 Fri 5:30 – 9:00 Sat. 8 – 4:30	Quality Arguments Qualitative Methods Concluding Section Interactive Feedback	Creswell 10 Weston pages ix-78 Recommended Qualitative Dissertations in “Quality Dissertation” Excel File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Friday, March 14 – Group Moodle Post/Responses o Moodle Reading Response 3/19 o Accomplishments/Goals Summary o Student Presentations – Small Group o Optional “Best” outline or chapter for review o Volunteers – Whole Group Feedback Opportunity
Session 5 April 18- 19 Fri 5:30 –	Mixed Methods Interactive Feedback	Creswell 11 Bryant 6-7 Recommended Mixed-Method Dissertations in “Quality Dissertation” Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Friday, April 11 – Group Moodle Post/Responses o Moodle Reading Response 4/16 o Accomplishments/Goals Summary o Mock Prelims and Student

9:00 Sat. 8 - 4:30		File	Presentations ○ Optional "Best" outline or chapter for review
No Class May 2 Friday			Submit proposal/manuscript by 5:00 pm

Sample Contract for EOL 598

Name: _____

Date: _____

Advisor: _____

Dissertation Director (if different from advisor): _____

Provide a detailed response to the following points (use additional paper, if needed):

1. Statement of the contribution your dissertation to the profession and your own personal educational and career goals.

2. Description of accomplishments on dissertation proposal, to date.

3. Goals for EOL 598

4. Intended product for EOL 598 (e.g., complete three chapters)

5. Detailed timeline for this semester, plus dates for accomplishing major milestones (i.e., preliminary exam, data collection, data analysis, draft of full manuscript, dissertation, and graduation.)

6. Communication plan with your advisor/dissertation director

7. Other important items

Student

Advisor

Dissertation Director