

EOL 598
Thesis Proposal Writing
Course Syllabus

Spring 06 Semester - Tuesday nights, 5 to 8 pm (note time change)

Course Schedule: Arranged
Classroom: Library, Room 109, Children Research Center (CRC)
Instructor: Dr. Debra Bragg, Professor
Office: 140B Education Building
1310 South Sixth St.
Champaign, IL 61820
Office Hours: Monday, 10 am to noon
Work Phone: 217/333-2155 (EOL central office)
217/244-9390 (CRC line)
E-mail: dbragg@uiuc.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Required Texts:

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.

Recommended Texts:

Krathwohl, D. R. (1998). *Methods of educational and social science research: An integrated approach*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Additional Texts and Readings:

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

Selected Readings on the Dissertation:

Adams, G. (1993). *Making the grade in graduate school*. Notre Dame, IN: National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering, Inc. ERIC document number ED358779.

Bolker, J. (1998). *Writing your dissertation in 15 minutes a day*. New York: Holt and Company.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (1995). *The craft of research*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

- Cole, K. (1992). *Doctoral students in education and factors related to the literature review process*. ERIC document number ED349892.
- Doty, C. K. (1993). *Guide to the dissertation proposal preparation and dissertation and preparation*. ERIC document number ED353920.
- Dugan, P. (1991). *Blurring genres, crossing boundaries, and calling the question: The dissertation*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. ERIC document number ED335693.
- Isaac, P. D. & others. (1992). Faculty perceptions of the doctoral dissertation. *Journal of Higher Education*, 63(3), 241-286.
- Krathwohl, D. R. (1993). *How to prepare a research proposal*. (3rd edition). Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Krathwohl, D. R. (1994). A slice of advice. *Educational researcher*, 23(1), 29-32.
- Light, R. J., & Pillemer, D. B. (1984). *Summing up: The science of reviewing research*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Light, R. J., Singer, J. D., & Willett, J. B. (1990). *By design: Planning research on higher education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Meloy, J. (1994). *Writing the qualitative dissertation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Matkin, R. E., & Riggan, T. F. (1991). *Persist and publish*. Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Mauch, J. E., & Birch, J. W. (1993). *Guide to the successful thesis and dissertation*. NY: Marcel Dekker, Inc.
- National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council. (1993). *A selected list of fellowship and other support organizations for advanced education for United States citizens and foreign nationals*. Washington, D.C.: author.
- Stalker, A. (1991, April). *Misery loves company and other important functions of a dissertation support group*. *ACA-Bulletin*, 76, 56-69.

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 students need to meet to be successful in

completing the dissertation process. Throughout the course, students are required to work closely with their major advisor/ dissertation director and committee, as appropriate. Student performance in the course will be assessed by Prof. Bragg in collaboration with each student's major advisor. 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, instructor, and 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.

Contract for Thesis Proposal Accomplishments

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

- a) prepare a brief statement of the contribution your dissertation will make to the profession and to your own personal educational and career goals.
- b) explain exactly what has been accomplished already on the dissertation.
- c) describe your personal goals for EOL 598.
- d) clearly specify the product of this course (e.g., complete three chapters and defend the proposal in prelim).
- e) provide a timeline for this semester for completion of goals and products, and through completion and defense of the dissertation, and graduation.
- f) indicate briefly how you plan to utilize your advisor/ dissertation director, committee (if appropriate), peers, etc. in reviewing and contributing to the development of your work.
- g) provide a sign-off from yourself, your major advisor, your dissertation director (if different from major advisor, and your EOL 598 instructor).

Please note, this contract 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. For this assignment students should specify:

- the proposed research activity (goals, actions, expected outcomes, and rationale for how this activity makes a significant contribution to the dissertation)
- a review and feedback process utilizing your faculty advisor, committee (if appropriate), student committee, and instructor
- deadline for completion of the written product for this course to be submitted ***no later than Tuesday, May 9, 2006***
- deadline for completion of an oral report of the above product (each student will receive 30- to 40-minutes of class time for this activity (to be determined))
- other relevant information about the research project

Grading/Evaluation Policy

The grading/evaluation policy for this course is consistent with UIUC policy. Because of the need to involve faculty advisors / dissertation directors in the dissertation process, overall student performance will be assessed by the instructor in conjunction with each student's major advisor.

Peer and Advisor Input/Review

During the semester, students are encouraged to discuss any and all ideas, outlines, or drafts of assignments with the instructor, fellow students, and, of course, their major advisor/ dissertation director. A peer committee will be identified for each student for the purposes of providing regular review, feedback, and support on the dissertation process. Students are encouraged to have their peer review committee provide feedback on writing before it is submitted to Prof Bragg and the major advisor/ dissertation director. When assignments are submitted to Prof Bragg, attach a copy of previously-reviewed drafts with comments, if appropriate, for determining progress.

Academic Integrity Policy

Every graduate student is expected to comply with the student code of conduct of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). Every graduate student should obtain a copy of the booklet entitled *Code on Campus Affairs and Handbook of Policies and Regulations Applying to All Students*, which sets forth the official regulations governing all student conduct on the Urbana-Champaign campus. The *Code* also stipulates a graduate student's rights in the event he or she is charged with misconduct or some violation of University regulations. The student code of conduct is available at: http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/student_code_2005.pdf

Proposed Roadmap for EOL 598

Week 1–	1/17	Organizational meeting with students
Week 2–	1/24	Review and discussion of the dissertation process – <i>College of Education Graduate Handbook</i> Chapter 1, Creswell - A Framework for Design Chapter 1, Bryant – First Steps Toward Your Dissertation
Week 3–	1/31	Chapter 2, Creswell - Review of the Literature Chapter 3, Bryant – The Literature Review
Week 4–	2/7	Chapter 3, Creswell - Writing Strategies and Ethical Considerations IRB – Anne Robertson’s presentation
Week 5–	2/14	Chapter 4, Creswell - The Introduction Chapter 2, Bryant – The Introductory Sections
Week 6–	2/21	Chapter 5, Creswell - The Purpose Statement Chapter 6, Creswell – Research Questions and Hypotheses
Week 7-	2/28	Chapter 7, Creswell – The Use of Theory Chapter 8, Creswell - Definitions, Limitations, and Significance
Week 8-	3/7	Chapter 4, Bryant – The Research Design Chapter 9, Creswell - Quantitative Methods
Week 9-	3/14	Chapter 10, Creswell - Qualitative Methods Presentation by COE Format Checker, Johnna Parker
Week 10-	3/21	Spring Break
Week 11-	3/28	Chapter 11, Creswell - Mixed Methods Procedures Student Presentations
Week 12-	4/4	Chapter 5, Bryant – Report of Your Findings Chapter 6, Bryant – The Concluding Section Student Presentations
Week 13-	4/11	AERA Conference in San Francisco – no class
Week 14-	4/17	Chapter 7, Bryant – Sage Advice on Navigating the Dissertation Process Student presentations
Week 15-	4/24	Student presentations
Week 16-	5/2	Student presentations

Week 17- 5/9 Student papers are due by 5 pm