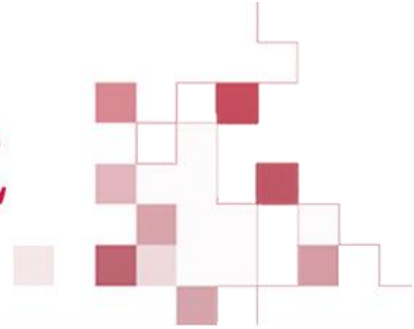




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# **Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) in Curriculum and Instruction Program Handbook**

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## **Overview of the Program**

The Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) in Curriculum and Instruction program is designed to prepare educational leaders with advanced knowledge and skills in curriculum development,

instructional design, and educational research. Graduates of this program will be equipped to drive improvements in educational practices and contribute to the field of curriculum and instruction.

The 60-to-63-hour program includes 30 hours earned in the Specialist in Education program (Ed.S.). The Ed.D. program consists of 18-21 didactic hours plus a minimum of 12 dissertation hours. Courses are delivered online with periodic on-campus meetings.

The program of study is structured with a logical sequence of courses that span multiple semesters. The program of study ensures that doctoral candidates acquire a full understanding of curriculum and instruction to build a solid foundation for producing original scholarship. Six credit hours of coursework in curriculum inquiry and advanced curriculum development allow candidates to specialize in their respective teaching areas, while deepening their understanding of the various methods used to examine curriculum.

In addition to the foundational research methodology courses acquired in the Ed.S. coursework, the Ed.D. program of study places significant emphasis on research methodologies by requiring nine credit hours of coursework in this area. Candidates are introduced to research methods in the Methods of Inquiry course, and they continue to develop their research skills in advanced qualitative and quantitative research methods courses. Throughout these three research methods courses, candidates acquire techniques to engage in the research process and conduct quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods inquiries. In particular, candidates will learn in the Methods of Inquiry course the role of ethics in educational research along with reviewing dissertation requirements.

After all doctoral level coursework is completed, candidates must pass the Dissertation Candidacy Exam. This assessment measures candidates' advanced knowledge of Curriculum and Instruction content, research methodologies, and professionalism.

To prepare the dissertation proposal, candidates complete Doctoral Writing coursework. Doctoral Writing coursework provides structured support and feedback as candidates develop and refine their research proposals. The proposal defense serves as a significant milestone in the program to ensure that candidates have a clear research plan before moving forward with their dissertations. The program culminates in the completion of a dissertation, where candidates conduct and defend independent research that makes significant contributions to the field of education.

## **Program Learning Outcomes**

- Demonstrate advanced ability to design, implement, and evaluate curriculum that promotes student learning.
- Demonstrate advanced ability to plan, implement, and evaluate instruction to facilitate student learning.

- Demonstrate advanced depth and breadth of knowledge and skills in their academic discipline and pedagogy.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the student as influenced by cognitive, physical, emotional, social, cultural, environmental, and economic factors.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct research that contributes to the education profession.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of assessment and the ability to use multiple sources of assessment for maximizing student learning.
- Demonstrate high standards for professional practice.

## **Program of Study**

The Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction is a 60-to-63-hour program that includes 30 hours earned in the Specialist in Education program (Ed.S.). The Ed.D. program consists of 18-21 didactic hours plus a minimum of 12 dissertation hours. Courses are delivered online with periodic on-campus meetings.

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## **Ed.S. Degree Program Courses**

Semester	Course	Title	Credit Hours
Summer I	EDUC 7090	Research Methods	3
	EDUC 7035	Leadership in Curriculum and Instruction	3
	EDUC 7350	Curriculum Theories and Philosophies	3
Fall	EDUC 7100	Research Topics and Methodology	3
	EDUC 7200	Directed Research Seminar	3
Spring	EDUC 7070	Internship in Curriculum	3
	EDUC 7010	Designing Professional Learning Experiences	3
	EDUC 7300	Specialist Seminar	3
Summer	EDUC 7050	Comparative Education	3
	EDUC 7360	Curriculum Advocacy	3
Apply for Ed.S. certificate upgrade		<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>30</b>

#### Ed.D. program courses

Semester	Course	Title	Credit Hours	Matriculation Requirements
Fall	EDUC 8000	Methods of Inquiry	3	
	EDUC 8010	Forms of Curriculum Inquiry	3	
Spring	EDUC 8020	Advanced Qualitative Methods	3	Prospectus Approval
	EDUC 8030	Advanced Quantitative Methods	3	
Fall	EDUC 8040	Advanced Curriculum Development in Areas of Specialization	3	Candidacy Examination

	EDUC 8050	Doctoral Writing Seminar in Curriculum and Instruction I	3	Defend Proposal
Spring	EDUC 8070	Dissertation in Curriculum and Instruction	3-6	Defend Proposal IRB Approval
	EDUC 8060	Doctoral Writing Seminar in Curriculum and Instruction II	3	
Fall	EDUC 8070	Dissertation in Curriculum and Instruction	3-6	Defend Dissertation
Spring	EDUC 8070	Dissertation in Curriculum and Instruction	3-6	Defend Dissertation
		<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>		<b>30-33</b>

## **Ed.D. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Educational Inquiry (21 hours)**

#### **8000 Methods of Inquiry (3 hours)**

This course provides the fundamentals for the research process, research designs (to include mixed methods and program evaluation), and research techniques. Candidates will learn the role of ethics in educational research along with reviewing dissertation requirements.

#### **8010 Forms of Curriculum Inquiry (3 hours)**

This course examines historical and contemporary perspectives of curriculum through political, economic, social, and cultural lenses. Candidates will acquire theoretical and philosophical understandings to imagine alternative conceptions for innovative pedagogy.

#### **8020 Advanced Qualitative Research Methods (3 hours)**

This course introduces doctoral candidates to qualitative research methodology and prepares them to use qualitative methods in their own independent research and dissertations. Candidates will learn and apply various qualitative research techniques and evaluate a variety of qualitative study designs. In addition to studying the history of qualitative study designs such as ethnographies and case studies, candidates will develop hands-on experience in utilizing qualitative data collection methods such as observations, interviews, focus groups, and the utilization of archival documents.

### **8030 Advanced Quantitative Research Methods (3 hours)**

An advanced course in quantitative methods applies significance testing, t-tests, non-parametric statistics, correlation, linear regression, and chi-square analysis to research problems in curriculum and instruction.

### **8040 Advanced Curriculum Development in Areas of Specialization (3 hours)**

This course will prepare candidates to design and implement advanced, philosophically coherent curriculum models within their content areas/areas of specialization. Candidates will also critically evaluate existing curriculum models in their areas of content/specialization. This course is designed to complement candidates' existing knowledge of curriculum philosophy and history from the Understanding Curriculum course and provide them opportunities to connect theoretical underpinnings to curriculum research, design, and evaluation in authentic contexts.

### **8050 Doctoral Writing Seminar in Curriculum and Instruction I (3 Hours)**

This course prepares the doctoral student to complete the dissertation proposal. Drafts of the dissertation's introduction, definition of terms, theoretical framework and a review of related literature are submitted throughout the semester. Upon approval, the student may request to defend the proposal to the doctoral dissertation committee.

### **8060 Doctoral Writing Seminar in Curriculum and Instruction II (3 Hours)**

This course is required for those candidates who need more time to prepare the dissertation proposal.

### **Dissertation (12 hours required)**

#### **8070 Dissertation in Curriculum and Instruction (3 or 6 hours)**

*Prerequisites:* Completion of Educational Inquiry courses and approval of advisor.

Reading and research under the direction of an assigned faculty member leads to the development and defense of the dissertation proposal and the dissertation. At least 3 credit hours must be taken each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed. The number of dissertation hours is limited to 6 per semester, and the dissertation chair must approve a plan of study. The maximum At least 12 hours must be completed.

## **Overview of the Research Dissertation**

### **Introduction**

The Research Dissertation is the capstone for the Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program that demonstrates advanced abilities and knowledge in curriculum design, theory, instruction, academic discipline, assessment, research, and professional practice. The completed dissertation will show the depth of expertise expected from a scholar-practitioner at the doctoral level in curriculum and instruction.

The Research Dissertation will align with the broader mission of LaGrange College Mission Statement in terms of intellectual growth, pursuit of truth, highest ethical values, and exemplifies the values excellence, service, civility, diversity, and inclusion. The completed dissertation

illuminates these values in the doctoral candidate’s efforts to make our schools, community, and society a better place for all.

**About the Research Dissertation**

The research dissertation applies rigorous scholarship to address the challenges facing today’s educators and or to improve educational practices. While this research starts with a problem at your school or within the district, your findings will often have broader implications. Not only is it an expectation that your research dissertation will appreciably influence and contribute to the collective knowledge base in education, but the paramount expectation is for you to become an agent of change within your school, district, and beyond. The research designs supported in the Ed.D. are action research, case study, and program evaluation. All studies must use mixed methods for data collection.

**The Dissertation Process Overview**

The table below illustrates a typical dissertation timeline and general descriptions of the steps. Your pace through the associated coursework and progress in the research process may be different than this example. The Department of Education may revise the timing and descriptions of these steps as the program develops.

<b>Semester</b>	<b>Step</b>
First Spring Semester	Prospectus Approval
	Dissertation Chair and Committee appointed
Second Fall Semester	Proposal Development
	Proposal Oral Presentation
	Comprehensive Candidacy Examination
Second Spring Semester	Internal Research Board Approval (IRB)
	Dissertation Development
Third Fall Semester	Form and Style Review Approval
	Dissertation Oral Defense
	Graduate Faculty Research Review
	Chief Academic Officer Approval
	ProQuest Submission

## **Prospectus.**

The prospectus identifies and defines the problem to be researched, which is foundational for the development of dissertation proposal. Upon approval of the prospectus by the Education Department's Graduate Faculty, you will be assigned a dissertation chair, committee members, and a Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR). The Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR) ensures consistent maintenance of high research integrity, quality, and adherence to accepted research standards. For more information: [See Appendix A.](#)

## **Committee Selection**

Following the submission of the dissertation prospectus, the Education Department's Graduate Faculty will assign candidates a dissertation chair, a committee member, and the Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR). The candidate may select a third committee member from outside of the college. If the candidate does not select a third committee member, one will be assigned. The Education Department Graduate Faculty determines if the committee member selected by the candidate meets the qualifications for serving. For more information: [. See Appendix B.](#)

## **Proposal**

Following the methodologies of either action research, case study, or program evaluation, the candidate submits the first three chapters of the dissertation to describe the problem, establish the rationale and significance for conducting the study, completes a comprehensive review and analysis of the relevant literature, and proposes the research design and methodology. For more information: [See Appendix C.](#)

## **Proposal Oral Presentation**

This presentation is an opportunity for the committee to evaluate the candidate's preparedness and to ask questions regarding the proposed plan for the study.

Upon approval of the proposal by the candidate's chair and committee members, the chair submits the dissertation and abstract to the GFRR member for review.

## **Comprehensive Candidacy Examination**

Before continuing the dissertation, candidates are required to pass the Dissertation Candidacy Exam. This assessment measures candidates' advanced knowledge of Curriculum and Instruction content, research methodologies, and professionalism.

Candidates are required to be on campus for at least two days to sit for the Comprehensive Candidacy Examination.

## **Internal Research Board Approval (IRB)**

The purpose of the IRB is to assure that research is conducted in an ethical manner. The LaGrange College Institutional Review Board (IRB) exists as a safeguard for ethical and responsible treatment of human participants in research. The IRB oversees all research conducted



by LaGrange College faculty, staff, and candidates that involves work with human subjects, whether funded or not. Candidates must complete and submit the required IRB forms for review. IRB approval is required to proceed with the dissertation.

### **Dissertation Development**

Following IRB approval, candidates can proceed with their study, collect, and analyze data, report findings, and write the discussion by completing the last two chapters of the dissertation. The abstract may be prepared. At this point, the chair submits the dissertation, abstract, to the GFRR member for review of the abstract and Chapters 4 and 5. For more information: [See Appendix D.](#)

### **Form and Style Approval**

Upon GFRR approval, the completed manuscript goes to a program contracted as form and style review editor for approval.

### **Dissertation Oral Defense**

The oral defense is a formal discussion of the candidate's comprehension of their scholarship. This discussion is followed by an evaluation of the dissertation. Candidates may need to revise the dissertation based on feedback during the oral defense.

### **Reviews by Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR)**

After approval of the prospectus, a Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR) is assigned to the committee by the graduate faculty. Upon approval of the proposal by the candidate's chair and committee members, the chair submits the abstract and dissertation to the GFRR member for review. After a successful oral defense, the chair submits the abstract, dissertation, and the form and style review approval to the GFRR member for final review.

### **Chief Academic Officer (Vice President of Academic Affairs) Review**

Following GFRR approval, the candidate's dissertation is sent by the Dissertation Chair to the College's Chief Academic Officer (VPAA) or designee for review. Only when approved by the Chief Academic Officer is the dissertation officially accepted and completed.

### **ProQuest Submission**

Once approved by the Chief Academic Officer, the dissertation must be submitted to ProQuest for publishing. Upon confirmation that the dissertation has been accepted for publication, and all other graduation requirements have been satisfied, the candidate is recommended by the LaGrange College Department of Education for the degree.

## **Faculty Research Profiles**

### **R. Colby Jones, Ph.D.**

Colby Jones' record of scholarship includes the publication of three peer reviewed articles, a dissertation and seven presentations at state and national conferences. Colby Jones' scholarship contributes to the fields of historical inquiry, social studies pedagogy, and teacher preparation.

### **Donald R. Livingston, Ed.D.**

Don Livingston's record of scholarship includes five chapters in edited books, thirteen articles in peer reviewed journals, and thirty-eight presentations at state, national and international conferences. Don Livingston's research spans curriculum theory, instruction, educational policy, and teacher preparation.

### **Sharon M. Livingston, Ph.D.**

Sharon Livingston's record of scholarship includes three chapters in edited books, three articles in peer reviewed journals, and seventeen presentations at state, national and international conferences. Sharon Livingston's publications focus on educational policy, assessment, teacher preparation and higher education.

### **Gretta Milam, Ed.D.**

Gretta Milam's record of scholarship includes a chapter published in an edited book, the dissertation and five presentations. Gretta Milam's areas of scholarship are teacher preparation, reading and leadership.

### **Vicki Pheil, Ed.D.**

Vicki Pheil's record of scholarship includes an article, dissertation and seven presentations at state and national conferences. Vicki Pheil's scholarship centers on teacher induction, reflective practices, and clinical experiences.

## Appendices

### Appendix A. Dissertation Prospectus Guidelines

A prospectus for an action research dissertation serves as a proposal or plan outlining the key elements and intentions of the research. It should effectively communicate the researcher's goals, approach, and justification for conducting a research study. A well-structured and persuasive prospectus should convey the significance of your research, demonstrate your readiness to undertake the study, and provide a clear roadmap for how you will conduct the research and address the identified problem.

#### Prospectus Sections

Preliminary Dissertation Title:

1. **Problem Statement:** Clearly articulate the problem or issue you intend to address through your research. Explain why this problem is significant and merits research inquiry.
2. **Contextual Background:** Offer background information about the context in which the research will take place. This includes information about the setting, stakeholders, and any relevant contextual factors.
3. **Rationale of the Problem and Purpose of the Study:** The rationale for choosing this problem is clearly articulated. The rationale consists of evidence that the problem exists and explains why there is a need to study and address this problem. The purpose or intent of the study is explained.
4. **Relevant Data to the Problem**  
Using publicly available data, describe, analyze, and illustrate the relevant data that frame the problem you have identified.
5. **Review of Literature Addressing the Problem.** This section consists of two parts: a) theoretical/conceptual framework and b) current research literature addressing the problem:
  - a. **Theoretical / Conceptual Framework:** Clearly identify and describe the theoretical or conceptual framework that will guide your research. Explain how this framework informs your research design and approach.
  - b. **Literature Review:** Summarize relevant literature of scholarly work that informs your understanding of the research problem. Discuss how these sources support your research study. Includes at least 15 current sources from research literature articles published in peer-reviewed journals or scholarly books. Current literature is defined as published within the past five (5) years.
6. **Research Questions:** List research questions that emerged from the review of the literature. These questions will guide your study design, methodology, and data collection.
7. **Description of Proposed Research Methodology (Includes research design, population and sample/selection of participants, data collection methods and/or types of data, data collection instruments, data analysis methods, and ethical considerations):**

- a. **Research Design:** Describe the research design you plan to employ that involves the research cycles or stages, the data collection methods, and the data analysis techniques you will use.
  - b. **Population and Sampling:** Specify the target population or participants in your research. Explain how you will select participants or samples and justify your choice in relation to the research problem.
  - c. **Data Collection Plan:** Outline your plan for collecting data during the research process. Include details on when, where, and how data will be collected, as well as the types of data you will gather, and the instruments used to collect data.
  - d. **Data Analysis Plan:** Explain how you will analyze the data you collect. Discuss how the data analysis will help you answer your research questions and evaluate the impact of your actions.
  - e. **Ethical Considerations:** Address the ethical considerations relevant to your research methodology.
8. **Action Plan:** Provide a clear plan for the actions you intend to take to address the identified problem. Describe the interventions, changes, or initiatives you will implement as part of your research.
  9. **References:** Provide a comprehensive list of references cited in your prospectus, following the APA citation style.
  10. **Appendices (if necessary):** Include any supplementary materials, such as consent forms, research instruments, or additional background information, in the appendices.

## **Appendix B. Committee Roles and Responsibilities**

LaGrange College Department of Education dissertation committees are comprised of four members who serve in specific roles: a committee chair, two committee members, and graduate faculty research reviewer (GFRR) assigned to the committee. Every member plays a crucial role within the committee, contributing significantly to a candidate's successful completion of an acceptable doctoral dissertation.

### **Roles of Each Committee Member**

#### **Committee Chair**

The Committee Chair acts as the central hub of the committee, serving as its main point of contact for communication, and assistance to the candidate.

The Committee Chair has the following responsibilities:

- Provides early support to the candidate during project conceptualization, early drafts, and committee formation.
- Takes on a central role in ensuring that the committee's work aligns with the expectations of benefiting both the candidate and the academic discipline(s) and professional field(s) of practice involved.
- Orchestrates and evaluates the dissertation's advancement from initiation to completion, serving as an expert in content, methodology, or a blend of both roles.
- Closely supervises and offers comprehensive, timely, and consistent feedback on drafts.

#### **Committee Member**

The Committee Member offers direct assistance to the candidate by supplementing the content and/or methodology guidance given by the Committee Chair.

The Committee Member:

- Shares in the responsibility of ensuring that the committee's work aligns with the expectations of benefiting both the candidate and the academic discipline(s) and professional field(s) of practice involved.
- Actively participates in, oversees, improves, and evaluates the advancement of the dissertation, functioning as an expert in content, methodology, or a combination of these roles, from initiation to completion.

#### **Committee GFRR**

The Committee Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR) ensures consistent maintenance of high research integrity, quality, and adherence to accepted research standards.

The Committee Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR):

Provides timely and substantive feedback within the defined scope of the GFRR role at specific stages in the dissertation process. This includes:

- Conducting reviews of final proposals and completed dissertations.
- Determines the acceptability of key components of the dissertation, such as research questions, designs, data analyses, or interpretation.
- GFRRs do not review entire chapters or sections until the proposal is ready for review.
- Determines whether the candidate's work is accepted for advancement to the next step in the process. GRFF approval is required for scheduling both oral defenses of the proposal as well as the completed dissertation and prior to the Chair submitting the dissertation to the Chief Academic Officer for final approval.

### **Content and Methodology Functions within the Committee**

Content and methodology functions may be split or shared between committee members.

#### *Content*

- Works with candidates to:
  - Conceptualizing the problem.
  - Establish the topic's significance and the study's potential to contribute to the field of curriculum and instruction.
  - Establish a clearly defined focus and research question(s).
  - Write a comprehensive literature review of current knowledge of the dissertation's subject matter.
  - Articulate a conceptual framework to guide the study.

#### *Methodology*

- Provides guidance to candidate on:
  - Choosing a research design for addressing the identified problem and research questions/focus.
  - Selection of the appropriate methodology.
  - The study's compliance with Institutional Research Board requirements.
  - Data collection and analysis.
  - The presentation and discussion of the results of the study.

### **Assignment of Dissertation Committee Members**

Following the submission of the dissertation prospectus, the Education Department's Graduate Faculty will assign candidates a dissertation chair, a committee member, and the Graduate Faculty Research Reviewer (GFRR). The candidate may select a third committee member from outside of the college. If the candidate does not select a third committee member, one will be assigned. The Education Department Graduate Faculty determines if the committee member selected by the candidate meets the qualifications for serving.

## **Appendix C. Dissertation Proposal Guidelines**

The outline below illustrates the sections of a traditional dissertation. Depending upon your study, the components and arrangement may vary.

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

**Title and Introduction:** Provide a clear and concise title that encapsulates the essence of the study. Follow this with an engaging introduction that outlines the research problem and its significance.

**Statement of the Problem:** Clearly define the issue or problem being addressed by the research. Describe its context and importance.

**Objectives and Research Questions:** Enumerate the specific objectives and research questions that the dissertation aims to answer or address.

**Rationale and Significance:** Establish the rationale for conducting the study. Explain why this research is essential and highlight its potential impact or contributions to the field.

**Overview of Remaining Chapters:** Provide a clear and succinct description of the forthcoming chapters of the proposal.

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

**Comprehensive Review:** Offer a thorough examination and analysis of the existing literature related to the research problem. Discuss key theories, studies, and methodologies that inform the research.

**Critical Analysis:** Evaluate and synthesize the existing literature, identifying gaps, contradictions, and areas where the current knowledge is lacking.

**Theoretical Framework:** Develop a theoretical framework that guides the study, integrating relevant theories and concepts to support the research.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

**Research Design:** Clearly outline the proposed research design and the mixed methods to be used. Justify the choice of design based on the research questions.

**Data Collection:** Detail the methods for data collection (both quantitative and qualitative). Justify these methods and discuss their appropriateness for the study.

**Data Analysis:** Describe the proposed data analysis techniques. Discuss how the gathered information will be analyzed to answer the research questions.

**Ethical Considerations:** Discuss any ethical considerations related to the research, including issues of consent, confidentiality, and potential biases.

**References:** Provide a comprehensive list of references cited in your prospectus, following the APA citation style.

**Appendices** (if necessary): Include any supplementary materials, such as consent forms, research instruments, or additional background information, in the appendices.

**Manuscript Guidelines:**

Formatting and Structure: Follow the required APA (American Psychological Association) citation style.

Clarity and Coherence: Ensure the proposal is well-organized, coherent, and written in clear, concise language. Use headings and subheadings to enhance readability.



## **Appendix D. Dissertation Guidelines for Chapters 4 and 5 and Abstract**

### **Chapter 4: Data Collection and Analysis**

**Data Collection:** Describe the methods and procedures used to collect data. Provide a clear and detailed account of data collection tools, participants, and any ethical considerations, if applicable.

**Data Analysis:** Present the methods and techniques used for data analysis. Explain how the data were processed, organized, and interpreted to answer the research questions.

**Results Presentation:** Report the results of your analysis. Use tables, figures, and clear narratives to convey the findings. Be sure to reference your research questions and objectives.

### **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion**

**Discussion of Findings:** Interpret the results and discuss their implications. Analyze the data in the context of your research questions, theoretical framework, and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

**Theoretical Implications:** Discuss how your findings contribute to existing theories or if they challenge current understanding. Highlight any unexpected results and their significance.

**Practical Implications:** Explain the practical applications of your research findings. How can your research inform policy, practice, or future research?

**Limitations:** Be transparent about the limitations of your study. Discuss any constraints or challenges you faced during data collection and analysis.

**Recommendations for Future Research:** Suggest areas for future research that stem from your study. What questions or issues have emerged as a result of your work?

**Conclusion:** Summarize the key points from your discussion and conclude the dissertation by restating its significance and relevance.

**References:** Provide a comprehensive list of references cited in your dissertation, following the APA citation style.

**Appendices** (if necessary): Include any supplementary materials, such as consent forms, research instruments, or additional background information, in the appendices.

**Abstract Preparation:** Following APA guidelines, write an abstract that concisely summarizes the entire dissertation. It should provide a brief overview of the problem, methods, major findings, and conclusions. Key terms need to be provided.

**GFRR Submission:** Submit the abstract and Chapters 4 and 5 to the Graduate Faculty Representative Review (GFRR) member for evaluation and approval.