

DISSERTATION HANDBOOK

.....
A HOW-TO MANUAL FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY



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Jones International University

Dissertation Handbook

JIU Vision

Through the enabling power of education, Jones International University endeavors to help create a world where it is more likely that reasonable human needs are met, where the environment is self-sustained, and especially where there is less conflict, less fear and more justice. A world where education is democratized. A world where hope is alive. We believe that such a world is most probable where free markets exist and freedom is abundant.

JIU Mission

We live in a world of incessant cultural and economic change, and the mission of JIU is to help students be successful in this environment. For this reason our education process includes specific skills required for particular disciplines, but also includes skills clustered around ethics, collaboration, communication and critical thinking. JIU is committed to fulfilling this mission by:

- providing innovative and relevant curriculum delivered by accomplished, supportive faculty
- offering readily available student-centered services
- implementing state-of-the-practice, learning-centered technology and learning resources
- engaging with constituents to create an exceptional educational experience

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Dear JIU Doctoral Student,

Congratulations! You have made a decision that will quite literally change your life. You are taking a serious step toward a brighter professional future, and we're proud that you have chosen Jones International University to help take you there.

Your degree from Jones International University will be a testament to the competency and skills you will acquire across a spectrum of personal and professional endeavors. You have already taken the initiative to develop your potential by enrolling in your doctorate program at JIU and beginning this orientation course to familiarize yourself with the JIU course platform and tools.

There is a tremendous amount of work ahead of you. Doctoral-level work requires you to move to a new level of critical thinking and independent research. These skills need to be developed and nurtured over the coming three years; however, our world-class faculty is dedicated to your success. They bring a combination of academic degrees from prestigious institutions around the world and multifaceted levels of real-world experience that result in a dedicated, supportive and practitioner-based learning environment.

Supporting this group of dedicated faculty is the university itself and the infrastructure behind your learning environment. Our technology is intended to facilitate the learning process and adapt to the unique learning styles of our doctoral students. Furthermore, we have implemented a unique support system that includes everything from career advising to extensive library resources. This is your first step to understanding all JIU has to offer—the tools and support essential to your success.

Best wishes on your journey,

Richard C. Thompson, PhD Dean, Academic Affairs

Joanne Maypole, PhD, Dean, School of Education

Danette Lance, PhD, Dean, School of Business

This Dissertation Handbook is written to clarify the steps you will be undertaking to complete the dissertation process and the role of the Dissertation Committee. By clarifying roles and processes, you can best utilize the Committee to stay on track, fine-tune your approach, enhance your research and complete your degree. If writing a dissertation was all you had to complete, that would be one thing; however, you must present your work to the Dissertation Committee, who will evaluate and challenge your findings. Thus, the Committee will be created of academics who can best assist you to determine your topic, to guide you in staying within the bounds of your research, to oversee the writing of your dissertation and to provide expert advice throughout the process.

What makes the JIU Dissertation Model Unique?

The JIU Dissertation Model has two unique features: first, it is a model in which students progress through their programs as part of supportive cohorts; second, it is a model in which dissertation courses begin right away and are taken concurrently with content courses. While in most instances you will be tackling a traditional dissertation, for some programs a doctoral project will stand as the final work. So, for this Handbook, the term “dissertation” is used as a default to refer to either a dissertation or a doctoral project.

Cohort-based community of learning

The first unique feature of the JIU doctoral program is that the JIU doctoral program was designed specifically to be a cohort-based community of learning. Cohorts begin on the same date, progress through the same series of courses (with some accommodations for interests and experience) and encounter other responsibilities during the same period. The cohort-based model is intended to foster the quintessential learning community. As a member of a cohort, students become a part a lifelong learning community of colleagues, friends and faculty. Each cohort is a group who:

- Trusts and respects each other and serves as a resource for each other.
- Practices together the art and science of critical thinking, leadership and research.
- Provides emotional support for each other.
- Takes ownership and responsibility for the quality of the learning environment.
- Challenges each other to achieve the highest learning outcomes.
- Shares success stories and congratulates each other for work well done.
- Learns how to perfect peer review skills and demeanor that will enable the student to better defend the dissertation.

Students helping students and students having a support system are imperative to the success of your degree and to the completion of your dissertation. Don't hesitate to form a group that will follow the path with you!!!

Core and Concurrent Dissertation Courses

The second feature of the JIU doctoral program is the design of the curriculum. During the coursework phase of the program, students have two courses each term: a core course and a dissertation course.

- Core courses feature the substantive, content-rich curricula that serve as the foundation of the program.
- Concurrent dissertation courses are designed to give students time and structure to work on their dissertation.

It is a mistake for students to underestimate the value of the concurrent dissertation courses though they only carry one credit hour. Indeed, they might spend as much time doing assignments in these courses as in core courses. Letting assignment activities slide in the dissertation courses due to their different structure can cascade into falling behind, missing deadlines and ultimately landing a student on academic probation.

Course Assignments

Doctoral courses, in general, are structured in such a way to allow students time to gather resources the first half of the week, leaving substantive responses and interactions for completion during the last half. These interactions with fellow cohort members are a great way to learn new ideas, ways of thinking and perhaps even find an abstract to save for future use. Course assignments are organized in a fashion to better enable you to write your dissertation in an organized and methodical manner.

Each course has been designed to assist you in the formulation of your topic, the clarification of your research and the organization of your writing. If you proceed diligently within each course, your path will be relatively free of potholes.

Course assignments also are designed for students to perfect their reading, researching and writing skills. Employers expect post-graduates to problem-solve by analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information. Each and every course is designed to hone your writing skills, display your critical thinking ability, provide in-depth explanation of an issue, demonstrate extensive research and establish a purpose. Employing a tone that is both formal and appropriate, graduate-level writing has a strong organizational frame and is in your own words. Again, Dissertation Advisors will utilize a [Writing Rubric](#) to evaluate your efforts and successes.

Professional Discussions

Doctoral students engage in ongoing professional discussions with peers in the leadership program about their professional reading, projects and dissertations. These discussions are evaluated through a [rubric](#) that tracks and encourages engagement and thoughtfulness.

A successful discussion includes the following distinguishing features. The student:

- clearly demonstrates introspection and synthesis of ideas.
- clearly demonstrates relevance to readings and class discussions.
- clearly demonstrates a deep understanding of course content.
- clearly and persuasively expresses opinions.
- uses professional language.
- uses proper grammar and punctuation.
- adheres to JIU Netiquette Rules.
- posts often throughout the eight-week term period.
- engages participants in dialogue.
- clearly offers insightful comments or questions that build on comments from peers.
- advances the discussion in a meaningful and significant way.
- responds to all questions.
- is graceful, polite and professional when disagreeing with a peer.
- clearly demonstrates mature critical thinking.
- clearly makes arguments that are relevant, focused, logical, and well supported.
- cites relevant resources (readings, module content and personal experience) with appropriate detail.
- clearly provides concrete examples from own experience to support opinions.

Course Research

Students in any of JIU's doctorate programs will be exploring new research methods and analyzing how these methods can be fully utilized in the development and writing of, ultimately, your Dissertation. In a peer-to-peer mentoring model, students will be engaged in a weekly graduate seminar discussion and various team projects that involve the entire cohort. The dissertation advisor will provide guidance and feedback to all students in order for students to gain a general understanding of what it means to do quality research in any field. Courses highlight content and structure and are designed to help students see connections between what they already know and what is considered quality research from a scientific standpoint. Students also will be led to see alignments between their ability to ask good research questions that can make a difference in their profession and what will be required of them as leaders in their fields.

With this in mind, students will use research skills that are natural and part of what it means to do research in a scientifically defensible way. These skills will prepare one to develop a doctoral project/dissertation proposal.

One such course is designed to help explore and more deeply understand:

- What is already known about research methodology.
- How good research is used to improve the results needed in a particular career context.
- The kinds of research that will best support a student in a leadership role.
- The language of research in terms of the technical terms that are used.
- How to find out what research has been done and what research is most needed in a specific field.
- How to prepare an assignment that allows one to specify why the research is needed and of genuine worth in the field.

The ultimate goal of scholarly research, that which you have decided to do is:

- To inquire into a problem to be solved or to discover new facts.
- To require a diligent and studious search for relevant prior research information.
- Dependent upon knowing what questions to ask and what information to collect to answer those questions.
- To revise current theories in light of new information or ways of thinking about and interpreting existing evidence.
- Of serious consequence if one does not follow the basic research steps known as the Scientific Method.
- An academic approach that can enhance our understanding of what is already known, extend our knowledge of our world in areas where very little or nothing is known or basically help us better understand real issues confronting us in the worlds in which we live.

Evaluation rubrics and JIU workplace competencies

Throughout the doctoral program, faculty members use an established set of three evaluation rubrics and workplace competencies to evaluate graded assignments. These are appropriate for each revision of your dissertation chapters—[Level 1 and 2](#) for the first and second draft; [Level 3](#), for the final version. Each graded assignment includes an evaluation section at the bottom of the page where the applicable rubrics and criteria are presented.

Students are provided with the rubrics in the courses in order to review the criteria before beginning the assignment. In addition to the evaluation rubrics, some doctoral courses use JIU [Workplace Competencies](#) for evaluation. There is a rubric for [Doctoral Writing](#), one for [Discussion Evaluation](#) and one for [Abstract and Critique Assessment](#). Students will become familiar with these rubrics as they progress through courses.

Deadlines

The experience of JIU Dissertation Advisors and Chairs is that, perhaps more than in a face-to-face environment, it is critical that students track and meet deadlines and that faculty hold to the assignment deadlines provided in each course. Faculty establish the course late work policy and hold students to that policy as well. In an asynchronous environment, classic dissertation issues of procrastination, confusion, and anxiety can be exacerbated. The habits of both students and faculty holding to deadlines are intended to maintain momentum and reinforce for students the realities of meeting deadlines in the professional world.

For each doctoral program, transition points have been translated into a checklist to keep faculty and students aware of the milestones and deadlines for this process to keep on track. These checklists can be found:

[DBA Transition Point Checklist](#)

[EdD AEL Transition Point Checklist](#)

[EdD K-12 Transition Point Checklist](#)

[EdS K-12 Transition Point Checklist](#)

In the first course doctoral students take at JIU (DOC900), a copy of the specific program Transition Point Checklist will be introduced. This Checklist is the course and workflow checklist that will enable students to understand when items are due, what needs to be written and completed when and what happens if a deadline is not met. Students keep track of their own work and timeframe, deadlines and responsibilities.

JIU is a leader in providing a new context for doctoral study; however, the accelerated learning process is not for the casual learner. Once doctoral students start with their cohort, there are few days off or holiday breaks. Often

both the core and dissertation courses will end on Saturday at midnight and the next set of courses will begin the very next day. This program demands a great deal of commitment, both in time and effort. The upside is that JIU doctoral students know from the outset that if they do their part and JIU supports their learning, they can complete their degree in three years.

Characteristics of a Dissertation

A dissertation is the culminating product of a terminal doctoral degree. It demonstrates to the larger professional community that its author is able to do original research; addresses important questions or problems in a specific field; understands the field's relevant literature and theory; writes well; is a critical thinker who can sustain a coherent argument; and is able to provide analyses, results and conclusions that are of interest to others. Each student in the program must submit a dissertation that meets the university's performance level expectations as defined in the [Dissertation Rubric-Level 1 and 2](#) and [Dissertation Rubric – Level 3](#).

A student's dissertation includes these core components: title page, an abstract, an introduction to the problem, literature review, methodology, findings, and the conclusion, discussion and implications. The dissertation document should follow the sequence of steps of the research process. Doctoral students/candidates will become familiar with the [APA Manual 6th Edition](#) and use it as a constant reference in matters of style. Specific details as to how the dissertation needs to be organized can be found in Appendix #2 of this Handbook.

Title Page

The title of the proposal and, later, of the dissertation should be a succinct summary of the topic and generally should not exceed 15 words. Words such as “A Study of...” should be avoided. The title should include key terms that readily identify the scope and nature of the study and should be typed using all capital letters. A manuscript page header and a short title may appear in the proposal title page (following APA “copy” manuscript style) but not in the final dissertation.

- Must be indicative of the contents of the study but may be somewhat catchy.
- Is the first page of your dissertation.
- Use upper and lower-case letters, no bold or italics or underline.
- Spell your name exactly as it is in JIU’s records.
- Correctly spell the names of all the committee members and Chair with their degrees.
- List the year your degree will be conferred.
- Count it as a page but do not number it.

Component 1: Signature Page

- Bears the electronic signature of the members of your Committee along with their advanced degrees, names printed correctly as well.
- Must include the month, date and year when signed.
- Count it as a page but do not number it.

Component 2: Abstract

The abstract is a brief summary of the dissertation’s area of investigation. It should reflect familiarity with current issues in the field and raise research questions or hypotheses suggested by findings in the current literature.

In the abstract, the investigator should describe proposed methods and expected conclusions briefly.

- The abstract can be no more than 350 words (approximately 2,450 characters).
- Should have a brief summary of the problem clearly articulated, the methods and procedures used (includes a statement identifying quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodology that was incorporated), limitations (if any) and a condensed summary of the findings (the conclusion and recommendations are to be briefly stated).
- All in narrative form and will be titled “Abstract” (without quotation marks).
- Use upper and lower-case letters, no bold or italics or underline.
- Count it as a page but do not number it.
- Do not indent.

Component 3: Table of Contents

Essentially, the table of contents lists all of the elements of the proposal, with accompanying page numbers. These elements generally include the following items: title page, abstract, table of contents, introduction to the problem, literature review, methodology, findings, conclusion, discussion and implications, references and appendices.

- Is required.
- Lists page numbers and uses Roman Numerals for Chapters.
- Watch which pages are not to be numbered.

Component 4: List of Tables

Separate lists should be created for the tables and illustrations that appear in the text of the document. Illustrations appropriate for use in the dissertation include figures, maps, diagrams and photos. These lists should include the number and full name of each table or illustration, listed in order of appearance in the text, followed by the number of the page on which the table or illustration appears.

- If the work contains tables, a List of Tables is required.

Component 5: List of Figures

- If the work contains figures, a List of Figures is required.

Component 6 (Chapter One): Introduction to the Problem

The introduction presents (at greater length than in the abstract) the problem to be addressed by the dissertation research. The introduction should describe the nature and purpose of the study, present the guiding research questions and explain the significance of and justification for conducting the study. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal should be defined in this chapter.

Therefore, the Introduction to the Problem:

- Includes a succinct and carefully crafted problem statement that makes clear the research question to be addressed.

- Describes the motivation for the study, why it is of interest and the context in which the question arises, which is the purpose statement.
- Summarizes the dissertation's findings and discusses the importance of the findings.
- Identifies the methodology, states the research design as well as the population studied.
- Combines a mix of the theoretical, the historical and the situational.
- Explains the key definitions of operational or analytical terms in use.
- Provides a roadmap for readers.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Must have an introduction and a summary logically organized in-between.

Component 7 (Chapter Two): Literature Review

A review of literature concerning the topic places the dissertation in the context of previous research. As stated in the *APA Manual*, a “scholarly review of earlier work provides an appropriate history and recognizes the priority of the work of others. Citation of and specific credit to relevant earlier works is part of the author’s scientific and scholarly responsibility” (p.16, 5th edition). The review should focus only on literature and conclusions directly pertinent to the subject and the problem addressed in the dissertation. Any pilot work done should be described in this chapter.

This chapter also should present any specific hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the dissertation study, clearly relating these to the lines of investigation and conjecture detailed in current literature.

- Begins with a brief summary that explains the literature search strategy and sources.
- Discusses, in a logical and organized fashion, how the literature relates to the study.
- Is comprehensive and up to date.
- Shows a command of the literature through a discussion that has depth and critical thinking.
- Provides context for the problem with conflicting findings and opposing points of view
- Includes a discussion of the literature that is selective, synthetic, analytical, and thematic.
- Uses subtopics when needed.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Each chapter must have an introduction and a summary logically organized in-between.

Component 8 (Chapter Three): Methodology

The methodology section describes in detail how the study will be conducted. This chapter typically is divided into labeled subsections. Often a subsection describing participants or subjects is followed by subsections describing testing or other measurement procedures to be undertaken with the participants. Then there follows a subsection describing how the resulting measurements will be analyzed to help resolve the problems stated in the introduction.

- Begins with a brief synopsis of the research problem and purpose.
- Describes in detail the methods applied and/or developed.
- In alignment with the question addressed and the theory used.

- Clear enough that the research could be replicated if desired, including all aspects of data collection, analysis, assumptions, limitations and nature of variables.
- Elaborates how and why the proposed research design will accomplish the goals.
- Provides a detailed description of the participants/population of those studied.
- If **IRB approval** was needed, state it here.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Each chapter must have an introduction and a summary logically organized in-between.

In addition, the author demonstrates:

- A thorough understanding of the methods' advantages and disadvantages.
- How to use the methods and how they were used.

Component 9 (Chapter Four): Findings

The findings section summarizes the data collected and details the statistical treatment of that data. After a brief statement of the main results or findings of the study, the data are reported in sufficient detail to justify the conclusions. Tables and illustrations may be used to report data more clearly and economically. All tables and illustrations used should be mentioned in the text, with appropriate titles or captions and enough explanation to make them readily identifiable.

- Begins with a brief synopsis of the research problem and purpose.
- Aligns with the question and hypotheses raised in an organized format.
- Is reiterative; that is, report results without discussion, interpretation and/or speculation.
- Showcases tables and figures.
- Compare and/or contrast findings to other studies.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Each chapter must have an introduction and a summary with details logically organized.

In addition, the amount and quality of data or information are:

- Sufficient.
- Well presented.
- Intelligently interpreted.

Component 10 (Chapter Five): Conclusion, Discussion & Implications

In the conclusion/discussion section, the results are summarized, evaluated and interpreted with respect to the original research questions and hypotheses. In this section, the investigator is free to examine, interpret and qualify the results, as well as to draw inferences from them. Theoretical and practical consequences of the results and the validity of conclusions may be discussed appropriately. The limitations of the study and suggestions for future work also may be included here.

- Begins with a brief synopsis of the research problem and purpose.
- Summarizes the findings.
- Provides perspective on the findings.
- Refers back to the introduction.
- Ties everything together.

- Discusses the study's strengths and weaknesses.
- Relates implications and applications for the discipline.
- Offers future directions for research.
- Presents recommendations.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Each chapter must have an introduction and a summary with details logically organized in-between.

Component 11: Citations

- Must follow *APA 6th Edition* format, see Appendix #2 for specifics.

Component 12: References

The reference list at the end of the proposal should include all works cited in the proposal; conversely, all items listed as references must have been cited in the text of the proposal. The APA Manual provides further guidance for accurately compiling a reference list.

- Must follow *APA 6th Edition* format, see Appendix #2 for specifics.
- References must be cited in the text.
- Reference list must include every reference in text.

Component 13: Appendices

Appendices of the proposal should include data-collection tools, consent forms, letters of introduction to subjects, questionnaires, survey forms, and the like. The appendices section should begin with its own cover page, followed by its own table of contents page. Each appendix may have its own cover page. The word "appendix" should appear in all capital letters.

- Includes all supplementary material.
- Includes [IRB approval](#).
- Can have multiple appendices as needed.

It is essential that students think about the various stages of work that need to be undertaken and get into good habits early on in the process. Keep records of searches undertaken, ideas that are of interest and material to be cited that can be incorporated in your work.

The Dissertation Process

When students enroll in a doctoral program, they are made aware of the many requirements for successfully completing the degree, one of which is the production of a dissertation. In order to facilitate completion of a proposal and eventually the dissertation, JIU organizes courses with a defined beginning and end, specified readings, written assignments and projects, and peers with whom to share ideas. The dissertation is a highly independent activity and some students have difficulty adjusting to this change of structure. They may find it difficult to get started and to shift into this new mode of operating.

Even the admissions process is more rigorous for doctoral students. Once students complete the application process, they will begin their path by enrolling in courses designed to guide them through the dissertation process. JIU doctoral students enroll in content courses while taking concurrent “How to write a dissertation” courses. The first how-to course is designed to strengthen one’s writing skills to enable the student to write a sizeable and complex dissertation.

Discovering and articulating the research problem is at the core of the dissertation process.

The first course JIU students will take is a two-week instructor-led Orientation Course, DOC900 at no credit and no cost yet mandatory for all incoming doctoral students to pass in order to enroll in a doctoral program. In DOC900, students will explore the challenges and opportunities of online learning, what’s expected of them as doctoral students, what they can expect from the JIU faculty, the structure of a typical JIU course, and the tools and resources available to support doctoral students. Upon completion, students will have the foundation and skills to progress through their doctoral courses. They will be able to access JIU resources and elements, meet and begin to know the other members of their cohort, discuss plagiarism and aspects of the [JIU Student Handbook](#), discuss their reasons for pursuing a doctoral degree, plan their doctoral program by understanding their Transition Point Checklist, use support tools to assess and improve their writing and finally, set up an electronic portfolio to store work as necessary.

This course has been designed to explain clearly and concisely the steps and commitment required to write and to defend your dissertation; it also was created to allow you to determine if this specific path is a fit for your expectations at this moment in time.

Upon completion of DOC900, students then are enrolled in a ladder of courses logically designed to walk them through the process of writing their dissertation. The first major step is the creation and defense of a dissertation proposal, which becomes the guide for the rest of the process. Defining the research proposal is crucial. Selecting a research topic can be easy or it can be difficult. Sometimes, students, through their work or employment, have a clear idea of a problem or situation that they can address. Other times, students need guidance to discern just what they want to explore. Discovering and articulating the research problem is at the core of the dissertation process. Here are some ways that students can approach the determination of the research question:

- Talk to faculty. Have a general discussion about your interests and ideas.
- Ask other students in your discussion forum.
- Draw upon unresolved questions and issues you had from other courses.
- Read often and a lot, using newspapers and other media to identify topical issues related to areas of social policy, politics and sociology to name a few.
- Analyze your own experience.
- Scan the academic journals.

Find inspiration wherever you can when looking for a dissertation topic. With that said, the topic you select needs to be one that can be addressed in an appropriately academic manner

within the three-year deadline of a JIU dissertation. While massaging your topic, make sure it covers these points:

- Will the topic sustain your interest over the months to come?
- Is the topic one which you can approach with analytic distance?
- Is there existing literature that can form the basis for your work?
- Is the topic one that you can research with the time and resources available?

One of the most difficult aspects of designing a research question is attempting a topic that is too broad in scope. In many ways, smaller and more focused is the better avenue. If you remain aware of the question you have developed, the methodology you will employ and the body of theory you are interested in exploring you should be able to narrow the focus of the dissertation into a manageable project.

From day one, a student should start writing. The more you write, the better you will write. In addition, the more you read, the clearer your thoughts and approaches. Many students find it useful to keep a research notebook in which you can record:

- Your initial ideas and any new ideas that may be developed.
- Points from the literature or other sources consulted.
- Your observations and impressions.
- Problems that you come across.

Keeping a record of your reading and your ideas at the preliminary stage will come in handy and guide you later as you narrow your focus and clarify your thoughts. You should maintain an accurate record of the bibliographical details of all the material that you read which will save an enormous amount of time at the end of the project. Keep your notes in APA format so you will not have to scramble later to find the correct sourcing information. You will read studies and primary literature sources in your chosen area, including those that specifically utilize research methods and methodology theory relevant to your approach. The typical length of a bibliography for a dissertation is anywhere between 25-50 references, so whatever you read early should become part of your Reference Page.

The process of thinking about the dissertation topic and methods is an evolving one. The discovery of your research question and the evolution of the appropriate research methodologies you will utilize are interconnected. How you will explore your question and ultimately come to an answer or resolution is of primary importance in your dissertation. As you begin, you will need to allow time for the following:

- Clarifying and focusing the research question/hypothesis.
- Applying for [IRB approval](#).
- Designing the framework for the literature review.
- Undertaking the literature search and developing the review.
- Designing the methodology for fieldwork and identifying appropriate methods.
- Collecting/coding/transcribing/analyzing data.
- Developing the discussion and making recommendations.

Oftentimes, students are over-ambitious when it comes to planning their research. Research design refers to the strategy the student employs to integrate the different components of the research project in a cohesive and coherent way. Students will work with Dissertation Advisors to ensure that they utilize all appropriate methodology including qualitative, quantitative, mixed, validation strategies, theoretical, applied and so on. Students need to be familiar with the diverse research methods available to them while choosing the actual methods to resolve their question. This can be a daunting task. The design of the research methods is of equal import for students as the research question and at JIU, individual courses tackle this issue in detail. As you move through the program, you will find that as your interest begins to take shape, your focus is much clearer.

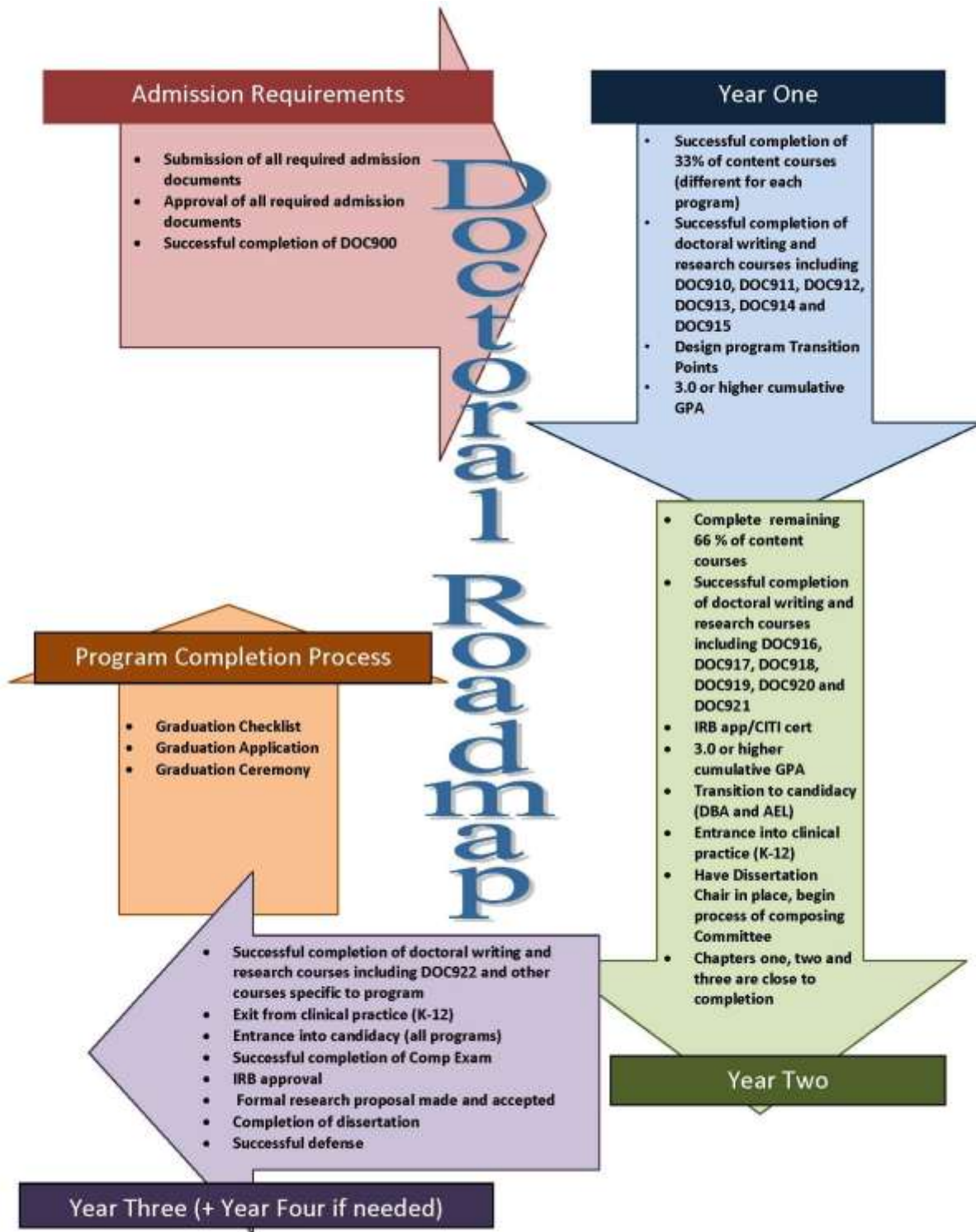
It is expected that all doctoral students will become experts at APA style. It is required for all classes and papers. Students are encouraged to download the APA style template on the Resources page in JESS.

At the same time that students are delving into the specifics of their dissertation writing and research, they are enrolling and completing content courses designed to supply them with the learning that is required at the graduate level. Upon completion of content course requirements, each doctoral student is required to take a "Comprehensive Written Examination." This examination is taken in BA730 for DBA students and in EDU850 for EdD students. As stated in the course's learning outcomes, upon successful completion of this examination, students will demonstrate their mastery of program content, demonstrate their competence in analysis, synthesis, organization, application, and expression and demonstrate mastery of APA-formatted, scholarly writing by submitting error free responses to each question.

Successful completion of this exam will admit the student to the candidacy phase of the DBA and/or EdD program. Students MUST pass their [doctoral comprehensive exam](#) prior to defending their dissertation proposal and that occurs at the end of the second year. In addition, after completion, students must submit the [Advance to Candidacy Approval Form to the Chair](#) of their Dissertation Committee.

All of the student's Dissertation Advisors review the student's progress in each of the individual courses and, at the appropriate time, one of the Dissertation Advisors will be asked to become the Dissertation Chair. Sometime after the first year, the student submits a [Form to Designate a Dissertation Chair](#) which inaugurates the process of forming the Committee. Thereafter, the Chair will assist the student in forming a [Dissertation Committee](#) and will submit the appropriate form.

The student works with the Dissertation Committee to develop a sound formal proposal. Early in the third year, each student orally presents (online by Webinar or in person when feasible) to the Dissertation Committee a formal proposal of his/her dissertation. This proposal allows students to experience a professional presentation setting and peer review, and details the designed research question and the methodology that will be undertaken to solve, resolve or analyze the problem. This formal proposal includes their Introduction, their Literature Review and their methodology. The student may not move forward until every member of his/her Dissertation Committee passes the student's formal proposal and the [form](#) is submitted.



Following successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam, students enroll in either BA823 or EDU892 (required). Here is where students put the final touches on their formal research proposal and then present that proposal to their Dissertation Chair and Committee.

The candidate's Dissertation Chair supports the student's progress on the dissertation and, as appropriate, makes a recommendation to the student to prepare for the final defense of the dissertation. The student works with the Dissertation Committee (especially the Dissertation Chair, reference librarian, and liaison statistician) to complete the dissertation. Each student orally presents (online by Webinar and in person when feasible) a public, final defense of his/her dissertation to the student's Dissertation Committee. The specifics of how to set up a Webinar are detailed in EDU851 or BA731. Follow the specified procedures contained in the email on how to access and record a WebEx presentation. Familiarize yourself with the WebEx interface and procedures for uploading your slides and recording your presentation. Perform at least one test recording to make absolutely sure that:

- Your webcam and microphone are working properly.
- The video and audio quality is satisfactory.
- Your slides are readable.
- You are completely prepared for the presentation.

After the presentation, the student's dissertation committee makes one of the following conclusions:

- Approval without changes
- Non-approval with minor changes
- Non-approval with major changes

When a student's dissertation is not approved, s/he must take dissertation extension courses, as needed. Specifics as to what steps are taken to correct submitted work are detailed on the specific Transition Point Checklist each student has. Prior to graduation, the student's Dissertation Committee must approve the dissertation without changes.

Year one

Obviously, year one begins with the successful completion of your admissions packet. Those items include an application, transcripts, resume, essay and references. Once that process is completed, students will begin their assigned coursework. That coursework commences with an Orientation Course of no credit and no charge yet is mandatory for all enrolled students. DOC900 explores the challenges and opportunities of online learning, what's expected of doctoral students, what students can expect from the JIU faculty, the structure of a typical JIU course, and the tools and resources available to support doctoral students.

After DOC900, students will progress through their content and foundation courses while enrolling in concurrent courses designed to explain the dissertation writing process. For the most part, students have two courses each term: a core course and a dissertation course.

Year one is chock full of coursework, reading, writing and thinking that will define and frame the scope and breadth of your dissertation. Students must be focused on completing assignments thoroughly and on-time. At the same time, faculty must maintain high standards while encouraging and engaging students in this endeavor.

- Core courses feature the substantive, content-rich curricula that serve as the foundation of the program.
- Concurrent dissertation courses are designed to be taken concurrently with core course, while giving students time and structure to work on their dissertation. Students actually will begin writing their first chapter draft by the end of year one.

It is a mistake for students to underestimate the value of the concurrent dissertation courses. Indeed, they might spend as much time doing assignments in these courses as in core courses. Letting assignment activities slide in the dissertation courses due to their different structure can cascade into falling behind, missing deadlines and ultimately landing a student on academic probation.

Through this coursework, students will identify their potential dissertation topic, work with Dissertation Advisors (usually one of the faculty members who taught DOC912, DOC913,

Deadlines matter. JIU expects faculty to hold students accountable for assignment deadlines in courses and students must meet the deadlines. In real-life, deadlines matter.

DOC914, DOC915, DOC916 and/or DOC917) and fine-tune writing skills to ensure minimal grammatical errors and mastering the art of summarizing and paraphrasing others' work.

At this stage of the process, students should be reading research in their area of interest, including other dissertations, major studies both agreeing and

disagreeing, as well as Literature Reviews. In addition, critical thinking is of primary import as students are beginning to think of themselves as researchers, analyzing problems that are of interest, creating a specific research question to explore. Students will be writing—a lot. They will be perfecting their ability to write an APA paper. They will be synthesizing research and expressing what it says and what is pertinent. They will be writing the first draft of chapters one and two of their dissertation that will be used to delineate the scope of their topic.

At the end of year one, students will have completed 33% of their coursework (including DOC910, DOC911, DOC912, DOC913, DOC914 and DOC915), have a 3.0 GPA or higher and have established the structure and plan for writing their first three chapters in the second year.

Year two

Year two begins with dissertation writing and additional coursework. Students will be drafting, correcting, re-writing and submitting several drafts of their first three chapters of their dissertation. During year two, students will be completing an [IRB Application](#) and a CITI Certification.

Virtually every institution of higher education where research is conducted has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) composed of faculty members, staff members and an IRB chair. The job of the IRB is to ensure that the institution follows mandatory federal guidelines for protection of human subjects for academic research of any type concerning humans. Even those whose research does not directly include humans as subjects must also submit their research for review if the research uses any type of data about humans.

Because research in human subject issues is appropriate for all doctoral candidates, every student enrolled in a JIU doctoral program is required to complete certification in human subjects research. The selected training course in human subjects research is developed by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiatives (CITI) organization, a volunteer group of experts within academia, healthcare, government, industry, independent research institutes, institutional research boards and thirteen international participants.

Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chairs are required to be aware of the instances in which human subjects research is being conducted by students within courses. JIU does not authorize any research about or with human subjects without full approval of the IRB. Questions about which type of research constitutes a need for human subjects review by the IRB can be answered by a thorough reading of the JIU IRB Handbook. Please send any additional questions to the IRB via email to irb@international.edu. To further explain this process, students will be

Candidates MUST complete and submit electronic notification and details describing their Dissertation Chair and Committee members.

<http://www.citiprogram.org/>

enrolled in DOC922. This course details and explains the process for choosing a Dissertation Advisor and a Chair as

well as IRB requirements and application.

At this stage of the process, students should be reading more specific research in their area of interest. Students will be parsing the research to determine its value-added to their own efforts and shall be choosing faculty members to sit on their Dissertation Committee and submit the appropriate form. Students will be writing and rewriting—a lot. They will be perfecting their proposal in order to be ready to defend it. They will transition from student to candidate and will sit for their Comprehensive Exam at the end of year two. To do so, students will have completed 66% of their coursework (including DOC916, DOC917, DOC918, DOC919, DOC920 and DOC921), have a 3.0 GPA or higher and have their Dissertation Committee in place. Students will have completed an IRB application and a CITI certificate, and have Chapters one, two and three close to completion. When all of this is finished, students graduate into candidacy, one step closer to that doctoral degree.

The Comprehensive Exam

Doctoral work is unique in requiring comprehensive exams that cover all course subject areas at the completion of the program's core courses. These exams are administered at the end of the second year.

To keep knowledge current for the comprehensive exams, students should create course study guides. Each course study guide should document key topics, seminal research and current applications. In completing a study guide for a given course, students need to provide enough detail to enable them to recall key elements from each course. Students are encouraged to gather all the materials they might need and should back up any electronic data to a portable or virtual storage area.

In each core course, students can download a sample study guide. “Sample” means that students can have an idea of what should be remembered from the course, some but certainly not all. Each cohort is encouraged to set up an independent study group to exchange information and assist in keeping pertinent materials that can be used to review course content for the comprehensive exams in the second year. All of this effort will assist you in studying for and passing your comprehensive exam which is taken in BA730 for DBA students and in EDU850 for EdD students (an [evaluation rubric](#) will be used by the Advisor).

The Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chair

The Dissertation Committee is established by the candidate and the candidate’s Dissertation Chair. Dissertation Advisors are JIU faculty members who provide one-to-one and one-to-group support to students, helping them to become the critical thinkers, leaders and researchers they wish to become. Doctoral work is challenging and requires you to move to a new level of thinking and doing that must be nurtured. Serving as a guide through the program, your advisor has the knowledge, experience, and credentials to make a profound difference in your progress. They:

- Use discussion and planning tools to guide doctoral completion within three years.
- Show respect for adult learners’ life situations and constraints.
- Provide direct instruction and support to help students complete the complex tasks of dissertation development.
- Advocate for you and your dissertation to the IRB and Dissertation Committee.
- Help maintain enthusiasm and joy throughout the program.

The Dissertation Committee plays an active role in supervising communications with the candidate at regular intervals to review progress.

You will receive regular, helpful formative feedback from your Dissertation Advisors during each course taken concurrently with your core courses beginning with DOC912: Structure of the Literature review. Here is an important fact: You will select your [Dissertation Chair](#) in year two. This faculty member can be one of your Dissertation Advisors or one of your course content faculty.

The Chair of your Dissertation Committee will then serve as an advocate for you during your dissertation formal proposal and final defense. The Chair must approve all members of your Dissertation Committee and is, therefore, the most important person in your doctoral program! So choose carefully and find that one Advisor with whom you feel most comfortable and compatible.

Candidates are free to choose which Dissertation Advisor will become the Chair of the Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee is comprised of three faculty members, all of whom will be selected from JIU faculty. If the student desires an additional member of the committee who is not a faculty member, that individual must hold a terminal degree and will provide a resume for Committee Chair approval. In the instance where an external member is crucial to the student’s dissertation as the owner of the problem being addressed, such as a

school principal or business manager, and that person does not have a terminal degree, then that individual may be added as a fourth member of the Committee and will be referred to as the External Reader. The External Reader's approval and signature will be required for final approval of the dissertation as well. After the Committee is formed, candidates must submit [the Form to Designate a Committee](#).

We think about the relationship between candidates and faculty at the doctoral level as one that is complex and proactive. Rowley (1999) described characteristics of faculty who successfully advise and lead candidates. These six characteristics of effective Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chairs are adapted from Rowley's work:

Dissertation Advisors and the Dissertation Chair are committed to their roles. In keeping with the JIU vision of education, the doctoral programs are intended to assist all candidates in



Success is building upon a strong foundation and reaching your goal. We are responsible for each other and count on each other for our student's success.

completing their degree. As such, Dissertation Advisors play a crucial role in assisting a student to understand the dissertation process. A Dissertation Chair carries on the work of Dissertation Advisors from formation of the Dissertation Committee through to successful dissertation defense. While there are always circumstances in which a change in Dissertation Chair is requested, the intent is for continuity of those roles. To request such a change, a candidate must submit a [Request for a New Committee Member](#).

Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chair are accepting of beginning doctoral students. Students come to their program with different levels of ability and with a variety of interests and circumstances. These are students who may be new to JIU and new to the online environment, and are likely new to the complex world of doctoral-level expectations. Remembering what it was like to be novices themselves, Dissertation Advisors and the Chair resourcefully leverage all tools and resources necessary to help students get on track and stay on track.

Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chair are expert educators.

Being skilled at providing instruction as needed to help students make progress, Dissertation Advisors and the Chair offer direct and rigorous feedback on student work and help students brainstorm on how to gain new knowledge and skill. This entails advising students on how to take the next step in the dissertation process and coaching them on maintaining academic honesty; it entails holding students accountable to staying on task and meeting deadlines; and it entails encouraging them to access the people, information and tools they need to succeed.

Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chair are effective in a variety of interpersonal contexts. Students come to the JIU doctoral programs from many different backgrounds and experiences. Dissertation Advisors and the Dissertation Chair are role models for how professionals communicate and resolve disputes. They get to know each student and determine how to best work with each student.

Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chair are models of continuous learners. They demonstrate good problem-solving skills as well as research skills. They remain professionally curious and involved, and are eager to learn from both candidates and colleagues. They model what it means to be a professional in the field.

Dissertation Advisors and Dissertation Chair communicate hope and optimism. They begin the relationship with students assuming that each and every one will proceed through the process of completing his or her doctorate. Their hope and optimism is contagious.

Dissertation Advisors and the Dissertation Chair are asked to rigorously review and assess students' dissertation work through the use of standardized rubrics. They must hold students to the standards of the program consistently, including deadlines, using APA citations and following the JIU procedure on plagiarism. In addition, Dissertation Advisors and/or the Chair must remain current on JIU policies and procedures (or know where to go to find out) in order to give students accurate and complete information about the dissertation process. Most importantly, Dissertation Advisors encourage supportive professional relationships among the students in the cohort, and develop a healthy collegial relationship with each student in the cohort.

The Dissertation is a requirement that tends to be intense and demanding. In dissertation courses, assignments are literally the building blocks of the dissertation research and writing. Each block builds on the previous one. Success or failure with one block dramatically impacts the next, and so has a direct effect on subsequent faculty in the program as well as on student progress. In the doctoral program, we are responsible to each other, and count on each other in a very close and integrated way because we are all actually working on one unified project: each and every given student's successful completion and defense of his or her dissertation.

The Dissertation Advisor and then the Dissertation Committee are the pillars for our candidates as they walk through the doctoral road map. Walking side-by-side, success is achievable and remarkable. If each plays its role accurately and thoughtfully, students will remain engaged in the process and faculty will have the pleasure of watching their student succeed.

Selection of the Dissertation Committee Chair

The candidate will select, with approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies, a Dissertation Committee Chair who must be a member of the JIU Doctoral Faculty.

- Doctorate of Education (EdD) candidates must choose a member of the Doctoral Faculty of the JIU School of Education.
- Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) candidates must choose a member of the Doctoral Faculty of the JIU School of Business.

It is recommended that one of the candidate's Dissertation Advisors serve as the Chair; however, the candidate may choose another member of the doctoral faculty as Chairperson.

The candidate is responsible for forwarding the name of the Dissertation Committee Chair to the Director of Doctoral Programs using the [Form to Designate a Dissertation Chair](#).

Selection of the Dissertation Committee

The candidate and the candidate's Dissertation Committee Chair will select members of the Dissertation Committee.

- All EdD candidates must choose at least two members of the JIU doctoral faculty of the JIU School of Education; an outside committee member with a terminal degree in education may be included; students must have the external committee member provide a current resume or curriculum vitae as well.
- All DBA candidates must choose at least two committee members, both from the doctoral faculty of the JIU School of Business; an outside committee member with a terminal degree in business may be included; students must have the external committee member provide a current resume or curriculum vitae as well.
- External Reader: There is a high probability that the external member of the committee is the actual owner of the problem that the JIU doctorate student is trying to solve or issue that the student is addressing. These individuals are key members of the student's dissertation but may not necessarily have a terminal degree. These individuals are members of the committee and will be listed as "External Readers" and will be designated as such on the signature page of the dissertation.

As an Advisor, a Committee member or a Chair, you are not required to be an expert in the topic a candidate has selected. Your background in accomplishing a terminal degree, your experience and your track record of contributing quality research are the skills most important to share with our students.

The Dissertation Committee is chosen by the candidate in cooperation with the Dissertation Chair, engaging faculty who are eager to participate in this process.

The candidate is responsible for forwarding the names of the members of the [Dissertation Committee](#) to the Dean of Graduate Studies, plus a CV for any outside committee member. Outside committee members are subject to JIU approval. A link will be provided in the appropriate course to submit this information.

Roles and Responsibilities of Dissertation Chair, Committee and Candidate

There are two key milestones in the candidate's journey to their doctorate: the [Formal Dissertation Proposal to Conduct Research](#) (the Dissertation Proposal) and the Dissertation. Successful completion of both requires the candidate to produce research that is appropriate, credible and professional and both must meet (or exceed) JIU standards.

The Dissertation Committee Chair (Chair) is responsible for working with the candidate and coordinating with the Committee. The Dissertation Committee members offer expert guidance and have responsibility for approving the proposal and dissertation. The candidate has ultimate responsibility for completing the proposal and dissertation and for keeping the Chair and Committee focused on their roles.

The Chair

The Chair will provide advice to the candidate regarding development of the research topic, methodology, data collection, as well as research findings, conclusions, recommendations, and supporting documentation. Note: the candidate must be enrolled in a course at all times in order to receive feedback from the Chair and/or Committee.

Dissertation Advisors, Committee members and Chairs will be rigorous in their review and assessment, holding candidates to consistently high standards while encouraging them to develop professional relationships among the students in their cohort. They will guide candidates through the process to ensure success.

- **Dissertation Proposal**

1. The Chair is responsible for helping the candidate determine his or her readiness to present the *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* (the Proposal) to the candidate's Dissertation Committee. No committee presentation can be made until the Chair has submitted her/his approval to the Director of Doctoral Programs (using *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval Form*).
2. The Chair also serves as a resource to the candidate in all aspects of presenting the formal proposal to the committee. This includes reviewing documents, submitting appropriate forms, and chairing discussions in the course forums and in off-line Dissertation Committee meetings.
3. The Chair facilitates committee meetings and posts decisions in the Course Forum. If necessary, the Chair guides the candidate in revising and resubmitting materials for committee approval. Once final committee approval has been attained, the Chair will submit the *Advance to Candidacy Approval Form* to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

- **Dissertation**

1. The Chair is responsible for helping the candidate finalize the dissertation draft and get it ready for final defense and Committee approval. No committee presentation can be made until the Chair has submitted her/his approval to the Dean of Graduate Studies (using *Dissertation Defense Approval Form – Chair*).
2. The Chair also serves as a resource to the candidate in all aspects of defending the dissertation to the committee. This includes reviewing documents, submitting appropriate forms, chairing discussions in the course forums and in off-line Doctoral Committee meetings.
3. The Chair is responsible for posting Dissertation Committee decisions in the course Forum and, if necessary, guiding the candidate through any revisions and resubmitting of materials for committee approval. Once final committee approval has been attained, the Chair will submit the *Final Dissertation Approval Form – Chair* to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

- **Dissertation Defense**

The Dissertation Committee Chair will lead the candidate's formal dissertation defense forum discussion. These responsibilities include:

1. Read the candidate's *Dissertation Draft*.
2. Submit the candidate's *Dissertation Defense Approval Form – Chair* to the Dean of Graduate Studies, thus signifying that the dissertation is ready for committee review.
3. View the candidate's WebEx presentation.
4. Comment and ask questions, if necessary, using the course forum.
5. Chair the offline discussion regarding the candidate's dissertation defense.
6. Facilitate a consensus decision as to whether the dissertation defense is approved without changes, approved with changes or is rejected.
7. Post the Dissertation Committee's decision in the course forum.
8. Guide, as necessary, the candidate in making changes and gaining final approval.
9. Submit the *Final Dissertation Approval Form– Chair* as instructed.
10. Review the *Final Dissertation Approval Form – Chair* with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the appropriate Dean, and obtain their final approval.

Instructions on how to set up a Webinar can be found in course EDU851 or BA731. Send an email to doctoral_submissions@international.edu requesting access to JIU's WebEx account.

The Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee members offer expert guidance and have responsibility for approving the proposal and dissertation.

- **Dissertation Proposal**

1. The Dissertation Committee must determine whether the candidate's proposed research topic and methodology are worthy of research at JIU. Every committee member must read the candidate's full proposal (Chapters 1, 2, and 3 plus all supporting material) and participate in the candidate's presentation and meeting.
2. After the presentation, the committee will decide to approve without changes, approve with changes or reject the proposal. A candidate cannot move forward until the Dissertation Committee grants approval without changes. Guidelines for what needs to be included in the proposal can be found in the required approval form. Once unanimous approval has been attained, committee members will submit the *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval Form* as instructed.

- **Dissertation**

1. The Committee must determine whether the dissertation meets all JIU standards (as outlined in the *Dissertation Defense Approval Form*) and is ready for publication. Every committee member must read the candidate's full dissertation (all chapters plus supporting material) and participate in the candidate's defense presentation and meeting. After the proposal presentation, the committee will decide to approve without changes, approve with changes, or reject the candidate's proposal.

2. A candidate cannot be approved to graduate until the Dissertation Committee grants approval without changes. Once unanimous approval has been attained, committee members will submit the *Dissertation Defense Approval Form – Committee* form to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The Doctoral Candidate

The Doctoral Candidate is responsible for submitting all required materials and forms to the Chair, Committee and Dean of Graduate Studies as well as meeting all deadlines. The candidate is also responsible for communicating with the committee – keeping them informed of his/her progress and alerting them to upcoming meetings. Note: the candidate must be enrolled in a course at all times in order to receive feedback from the Chair and/or Committee.

- **Dissertation Formal Proposal**

By the time the candidate begins BA731 or EDU851, his/her proposal should be complete and ready to be evaluated by the Committee at either the proficient or advanced level (see *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval Form* for details). It is the candidate's responsibility to deliver all drafts to committee members, post all communication in the forum, create required Webex and/or other supporting documentation and meet all deadlines. The candidate also is responsible for communicating with the Committee any required changes and to ensure all required forms are submitted on schedule.

- **Presentations**

Doctoral Candidates will follow these steps in presenting their formal proposals:

1. Enroll in either BA731 (DBA) or EDU851 (EdD).
2. Submit *IRB approval* to Dissertation Chair.
3. Submit evidence of completion of required IRB training course or annual re-certification to Chair.
4. Submit *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* (Chapters 1-3, Level 3) to Dissertation Committee.
5. Send request to WebEx Administrator for WebEx login and password.
6. Login to WebEx.*
7. Record @ 20-30 minute WebEx presentation, in which the *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* presentation information and candidate are visible in the WebEx presentation Window.
8. Save WebEx *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* presentation on the WebEx server.
9. Save the URL for the WebEx *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* presentation.
10. Post the WebEx URL & the *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* presentation in the course Forum for review by the Chair.
11. Once Chair has approved, send an email to all committee members announcing that the presentation and proposal are ready for review, including instructions to access the WebEx using the URL and to use the course forum to post comments and ask questions.

12. Respond to all Dissertation Committee members' questions in the Forum.
13. If required, resubmit [Formal Proposal to Conduct Research](#) with changes.
14. Once approved without changes, begin collecting data.

**Note: WebEx has limited user availability (one user at a time). It is highly recommended that the candidate record the presentation as soon as possible.*

- **Dissertation**

By the time the candidate begins BA823 or DISS823, his/her research should be complete and the full dissertation draft ready to be evaluated by the Committee at either the proficient or advanced level (see [Dissertation Defense Approval Forms](#) for details). It is the Candidate's responsibility to deliver all drafts to committee members, meet all deadlines, post all communication in the Forum, create required Webex presentation and/or other supporting documentation, and meeting all deadlines. Candidate is responsible for communicating with Committee any required changes and to ensure all required forms are submitted on schedule.

Approval Process

When the candidate has all components of the dissertation proposal ([Formal Proposal to Conduct Research](#)) completed, he/she will submit it to the Chair for approval. Once the Chair approves, the candidate will send their proposal to the Committee and create her/his Webex presentation. Once the Committee has read the proposal and viewed the Webex, they will conduct a discussion in the Forum to decide whether the proposal is approved or requires changes. When the proposal receives unanimous support – i.e., all Committee Members judge the proposal to be proficient or advanced in every category on the [Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval form](#) --the Chair can approve the Candidate's advancement to candidacy and the candidate may begin to conduct research.

The steps to obtain final approval for one's dissertation can be detailed in BA823, EDU892 or DISS823. Candidates will have faculty assistance as well as Chair involvement to ensure that all steps are completed on-time and in order.

First week of BA823, EDU892 or DISS823 (Required)

- Submit [Dissertation Approval Form](#) to Dissertation Chair.
- Submit Dissertation: Chapters 1 – 5, Level 4 to Dissertation Chair for approval.

Second week of BA823, EDU892 or DISS823 (Required)

- Send request to WebEx Administrator for WebEx login and password.
- Login to WebEx.
- Submit Dissertation: Chapters 1 – 5, Level 4 to Dissertation Committee after receiving Dissertation Chair approval.

Fourth week of BA823, EDU892 or DISS823 (Required)

- Record @ 20-30 minute WebEx presentation, in which the Dissertation presentation information and candidate are visible in the WebEx presentation Window.
- Save WebEx presentation on the WebEx server.*
- Save the URL for the WebEx Dissertation presentation.*
- Save the WebEx URL and the Dissertation presentation in the course forum.

Fourth through Seventh week of BA823, EDU892 or DISS823 (Required)

- Send an email to all committee members announcing that the presentation and proposal are ready for review, including instructions to access the WebEx using the URL and to use the course forum to post comments and ask questions.
- Respond to all Dissertation Committee Members' questions in the course forum.

Seventh and Eighth week of BA823, EDU892 or DISS823 (Required)

- Resubmit WebEx presentation and/or Chapters 1-5 with changes, if necessary.
- Submit *Abstract and Abstract Title Page* to Dissertation Chair.
- Submit approved copies of the Dissertation: Chapters 1-5, Level 5 to the Chair.
- Submit Graduation Approval Form to the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- Submit approved copies of the *Dissertation, Abstract and Abstract Title Page* to the JIU Librarian after all signatures have been obtained.*

*You may not submit your Dissertation to the JIU Librarian until the Dean of the appropriate School has approved your research and signed the signature page included on the Dissertation.

Peer Review

Peer review is an integral part of the scientific process called research. Whether in the form of applied research or traditional research, all doctoral students will participate in formal and informal peer review practices from the first course of study. The JIU doctoral curriculum extensively uses peer review (substantive feedback) throughout the program. This process involves challenging the author's assumptions, agreeing or disagreeing with the author's positions, and/or offering suggestions for improvement in the content of the article. Peer review is a collaborative effort and such discord is the basis of many "academic arguments."

Learning the fine art of "agreeing to disagree" is part of the peer review process. Improving skills in honing research arguments to support personal/professional beliefs is the purpose of

Peer review is a powerful tool to assist you in writing and researching your dissertation. Peer review is a collaborative effort in honing your research arguments, critically thinking and becoming a research professional.

early exercises in peer review in the doctoral program. The student's responsibility in posting substantive reviews to peers is in reading and responding to the content only and not critiquing formatting, spelling, and/or grammatical issues. This is not an exercise in becoming an editor. It's an exercise in becoming a research professional.

The substantive review process has two goals: to help faculty decide whether the student fully understands the content of the weekly assignment and to help cohort members improve their understanding of the material. Students need to begin with a brief outline of the paper under review, numbering comments for ease of response.

A good tip is to focus on where you agree or disagree, and substantiate your views with research citations, not personal beliefs. One does not have to address each topic in the paper. It is important when writing a peer review that one is careful with one's words, not to get personal or to give disparaging remarks. Be courteous and constructive. The aim of the exercise

is to help one another. The first comments written should always be positive followed by strengths and weaknesses. Remember, peer reviews have strict deadlines that students must meet and faculty have the right to remove a review that could be construed as too personal or critical without substantiation.

As the author of the work being reviewed (whether it is course assignments or your dissertation), students can expect any review to be thorough, knowledgeable, timely and courteous. Given the rigor and pace of the doctoral program, a student needs to prepare for the professional and scholarly review of the Dissertation Committee very early in the program. Learning the art and science of peer review will allow one to develop a proposal manuscript as a reviewer might look at it—in a very detached, scientific manner.

It is often difficult to have common definitions of these qualities, which can lead to misunderstandings. Often a reviewer will completely misunderstand a position. If so, read the work again to see if it clearly, and with convincing references, argues the point. Do your homework as a reviewer. Check the references cited in the original postings for clarification. Going the extra mile for peers will create a spirit of collegiality. Cohort members can be colleagues for a lifetime, through the built trust and mutual respect earned here. Providing clear and concise peer reviews is an art that you will learn over time.

Graduation Requirements

There indeed is a light at the end of the tunnel. As you move from candidate to graduate, there is some paperwork that needs to be completed as your final steps. In order, you need to complete and submit:

- Make sure you have had the appropriate people sign the Dissertation Signature Page (there is one for the School of Business and one for the School of Education); attach it to the front of the dissertation.
- Submit your dissertation and abstract to the library via the electronic form provided after all signatures have been obtained.
- Finally, make sure you apply for graduation using the Graduation Request form.

As you successfully complete all of the requirements, we congratulate you for the terrific work that you have accomplished. Faculty and staff are proud to recognize our esteemed graduates of JIU.



Deadlines

Formal Proposal

Second week of BA731 or EDU851 - (Required)

- Collect *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval Form* to Dissertation Chair
- Submit *IRB approval* to Dissertation Chair
- Submit evidence of completion of required IRB training course or annual re-certification to Dissertation Chair

Third week of BA731 or EDU851 (Required)

- Send full proposal (Chapters 1-3 plus supporting materials) to Committee Members
- Send request to WebEx Administrator for WebEx login and password
- Login to WebEx

Fourth week of BA731 or EDU851 (Required)

- Record @ 20-30 minute WebEx presentation, in which the *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* presentation information and candidate are visible in the WebEx presentation Window
- Save WebEx presentation on the WebEx server
- Save the URL for the WebEx presentation
- Save the WebEx URL and the *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* presentation in the course forum
- Gain Chair approval

Fourth through Seventh week of BA731 or EDU851 (Required)

- With Chair's approval, send an email to all committee members announcing that the presentation and proposal are ready for review, including instructions to access the WebEx using the URL and to use the course forum to post comments and ask questions
- Respond to all Doctoral Committee Members' questions in the course forum. If any communication takes place outside the Forum, add transcripts of those conversations in the Forum

Seventh and Eighth week of BA731 or EDU851 (Required)

- Resubmit *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research* with changes, if necessary
- Make sure *Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval Form* and *Advance to Candidacy Approval Form – Chair* forms have been filed with the Dean of Graduate Studies
- Once approved without changes, begin collecting data

Deadlines

Dissertation

First week of BA823 or EDU892 (Required)

- Submit *Dissertation Approval Form* to Dissertation Chair
- Submit *Dissertation*: Chapters 1 – 5, Level 4 to Dissertation Chair for approval

Second week of BA823 or EDU892 (Required)

- Send request to WebEx Administrator for WebEx login and password*
- Login to WebEx*
- Submit *Dissertation*: Chapters 1 – 5, Level 4 to Doctoral Committee after receiving Dissertation Chair approval

Fourth week of BA823 or EDU892 (Required)

- Record @ 20-30 minute WebEx presentation, in which the *Dissertation* presentation information and candidate are visible in the WebEx presentation Window*
- Save WebEx presentation on the WebEx server*
- Save the URL for the WebEx *Dissertation* presentation*
- Save the WebEx URL and the *Dissertation* presentation in the course forum*

Fourth through Seventh week of BA823 or EDU892 (Required)

- Send an email to all committee members announcing that the presentation and proposal are ready for review, including instructions to access the WebEx using the URL and to use the course forum to post comments and ask questions
- Respond to all Doctoral Committee Members' questions in the course forum

Seventh and Eighth week of BA823 or EDU892 (Required)

- Resubmit WebEx presentation and/or Chapters 1-5 with changes, if necessary
- Submit *Abstract* and *Abstract Title Page* to Dissertation Chair and JIU Librarian
- Approved copies of the *Dissertation*: Chapters 1-5, Level 5 to the Dissertation Chair and the JIU Librarian
- Submit *Graduation Approval Form* to the Dean of Graduate Studies

Appendix #1: Index of Forms

| Form | Purpose |
|--|--|
| Doctoral Writing Rubric | Dissertation Advisors will utilize this rubric to assess all student writing in doctoral-level courses. |
| Doctoral Discussion Rubric | This rubric is used in evaluating forum discussions including appropriateness, thoughtfulness, depth and grammar. |
| Doctoral Abstract/Critique Rubric | This rubric is used by the student, faculty and peers in evaluating a student's abstract or journal critique. |
| EdD AEL Transition Point Checklist | This checklist provides the student, the Chair and the Committee with meaningful deadlines and responsibilities as they unfold. |
| EdD K-12 Transition Point Checklist | This checklist provides the student, the Chair and the Committee with meaningful deadlines and responsibilities as they unfold. |
| EdS K-12 Transition Point Checklist | This checklist provides the student, the Chair and the Committee with meaningful deadlines and responsibilities as they unfold. |
| DBA Program Transition Point Checklist | This checklist provides the student, the Chair and the Committee with meaningful deadlines and responsibilities as they unfold. |
| Dissertation Rubric – Level 1 and 2 | Evaluation criteria to evaluate the work of the student are set forth in scoring rubrics for the first and second drafts of each chapter (1 – 5) of the student's dissertation. |
| Dissertation Rubric – Level 3 | Evaluation criteria to evaluate the work of the student as basic, developing, proficient or advanced are set forth in scoring rubrics for the final draft of the student's dissertation. |
| Approved Dissertation Committee Chairs and Committee Members | Use this list to assist in the selection of a Committee Chair and Members. List is updated often. |
| Form to Designate a Dissertation Chair | Student must submit a form to gain approval from the Dean for choice of Dissertation Chair. |
| Form to Designate a Dissertation Committee | Students must complete and submit an electronic form describing and detailing members of their Dissertation Committee. |
| Request for New Committee Member | If a change in Committee member is desired, this form must be submitted and signed. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Formal Proposal to Conduct Research Approval Rubric – Chair | This is the rubric the Chair uses to evaluate proposal. Students must achieve a satisfactory rating in ALL areas before proposal WebEx committee meeting can be created. |
| Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Rubric | This rubric is used by the faculty in evaluating the student’s comprehensive examination, essential before moving to Candidacy. |
| Advance to Candidacy Approval Form – Chair | This is the form the Chair submits indicating all proposal requirements have been met and students can begin to conduct their research (be advanced to candidacy). |
| Dissertation Defense Approval Form – Chair | This is the rubric the Chair uses to evaluate final dissertation manuscript. Students must achieve a satisfactory rating in ALL areas before WebEx defense meeting can be created. |
| Dissertation Defense Approval Form – Committee | This is the rubric the Committee uses to evaluate final dissertation manuscript. Students must achieve a satisfactory rating in ALL areas in order to be recommended for graduation. |
| Final Dissertation Approval Form – Chair | This is the form the Chair submits indicating all dissertation requirements have been met and student is ready to be graduated. |
| Dissertation Signature Page - Business | This is the form candidate will use for dissertation signatures. It must be attached to the front of the final dissertation manuscript. |
| Dissertation Signature Page - Education | This is the form candidate will use for dissertation signatures. It must be attached to the front of the final dissertation manuscript. |
| Dissertation/Doctoral Project Library Submission | This electronic form is used to submit the student’s thesis to Jones International University (JIU) and acknowledge and agree that the thesis will become part of the permanent collection of JIU libraries. In submitting the form, the student gives JIU express consent and permission to archive digital copies of the thesis and to display and make such copies available for reference to the general public. |

Appendix #2

Formatting your dissertation is a formidable task. Use of the rules of the *APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition* is mandatory for JIU doctoral and specialist students. Read and follow these guidelines closely and completely so that the format of your JIU dissertation is consistent and professional. Pay particularly close attention to the rules for permissions, margins, spacing, new pages and table of contents, as these may be different from what you have used for course work.

For style rules not covered below, use the *APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition* (**not** the 5th edition). Make sure to follow the rules in the *APA Manual* for expression, spelling, grammar, punctuation, headings, numbers, abbreviations, capitalization, tables/figures, appendices, citations and references. Page numbers in this manual refer to pages in the *APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition*.

Obviously, a dissertation is a professional document and must meet the professional standards in content and appearance. It is the candidate's responsibility to understand and fulfill the requirements presented here and in the dissertation and to submit a document of the highest quality. Correct grammar, punctuation and spelling also are the responsibility of the candidate as is intellectual honesty. While the candidate's Dissertation Chair may be helpful in editing and guiding the direction of the research, the candidate ultimately is responsible for the quality, the accuracy, the professionalism and the content. JIU and its employees are not responsible for copyediting the candidate's Dissertation. Should this be necessary, it is the responsibility of the candidate to seek out and utilize such resources at the candidate's own expense.

It is imperative that the research undertaken in the dissertation be thorough, scholarly and with the highest ethical standards. Any form of fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or misrepresentation constitutes a serious breach of accepted ethical standards and can lead to dismissal from the program.

Specifics

Permissions

Obtain written permission to use previously published texts, tests or parts of tests, photographs, tables or figures. You will need to include these permissions as appendices to your dissertation or doctoral project.

- See the *APA Publication Manual* for detailed information about when permissions are needed (pp. 128, 166, 173-174, and 231-236).

Font

- Times New Roman 12 points.

Margins

- Top: 1"
- Bottom: 1"
- Left: 1.5" (to accommodate binding, if you choose)
- Right: 1"

Running Head

- Do **not** include a running head. (A running head is not necessary for a dissertation or doctoral project. Running heads are used for course assignments and documents submitted to journals for possible publication.)

Pagination

Preliminary pages (pages that precede the body of the dissertation or doctoral project) -- such as acknowledgments (optional), dedication (optional), table of contents, list of tables, list of figures, etc. -- should have Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.) at the bottom center of each page in the footer. Some preliminary pages -- such as the title page, copyright page, signature page -- should be counted but should not display Roman numerals. Please see the table below for how to order and paginate the preliminary pages. Pages of the main text -- such as the body of the dissertation or doctoral project, references and appendices -- should have Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) in the upper right-hand corner of the page in the header. Please see the table below for how to order and paginate the main text.

Order and Numbering Sequence

Pages of the dissertation or doctoral project must appear and be paginated in this order. Examples of how to format these pages are at the end of this manual.

| Sequence | Section | Count the Pages in Total Count? | Print Page Number on Paper? | Number Type |
|----------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1st | Title Page (1) | Yes | No | NA |
| 2nd | Copyright Page (1) (optional) | Yes | No | NA |
| 3rd | Signature Page | Yes | No | NA |
| 4th | Abstract | Yes | No | NA |
| 5th | Dedication (optional) | Yes | No | NA |
| 6th | Acknowledgements (optional) | Yes | Yes | Small Roman |
| 7th | Preface (optional) | Yes | Yes | Small Roman |
| 8th | Table of Contents (1) | Yes | Yes | Small Roman |
| 9th | List of Tables (1) | Yes | Yes | Small Roman |
| 10th | List of Figures (1) | Yes | Yes | Small Roman |
| 11th | Body of Dissertation starting with Chapter 1 | Yes | Yes | Arabic |
| 12th | References | Yes | Yes | Arabic |
| 13th | Appendix/Appendices | Yes | Yes | Arabic |

(1) Sample Page available

Spacing

- Set spacing before and after paragraphs to 0 (in Word 2007: Page Layout > Paragraph > Spacing).
- Set Widow/Orphan control to prevent single lines of text on the tops and bottoms of pages (in Word 2007: Page Layout > Paragraph > Line and Page Breaks > Widow/Orphan control).
- Indent paragraphs 5 spaces.
- After the closing punctuation of a sentence, put either one or two spaces before starting the next sentence (depending on your comfort).
- Double-space the **text** of your dissertation.
- Single-space **block quotes** (quotes of 40 words or more) and footnotes.
- Double-space **references** both within and between references. Indent the second and subsequent lines of a reference 5 spaces.
- Chapters, references and appendices should start on new pages.
- Poems should be double-spaced with triple-spacing between stanzas.

Justification

- Left justify the text; do not right justify. Leave the right side “ragged.”

New Pages

- All sections, including new chapters (but not subheadings), must start on a new page.
- Number pages consecutively. Do not add “in between” pages such as “61a.”
- The title at the top of a page, such as “Abstract,” “Dedication,” “Chapter II,” “References,” “Appendix A,” etc., is **not** a heading and, therefore, should **not** be in bold, italics or underline. The title should be centered and in upper- and lower-case letters (no all-caps).
- Chapter numbers have Roman numerals, for example, “Chapter II: Review of the Literature” or “Chapter III: Methodology.”

Headings

- Headings must follow the format laid out in the *APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition* (pp. 62- 63). Note the placement of headings on the page (i.e., centered, flush left or indented), how they are capitalized, which ones are in bold and/or italics and where after the heading to continue the paragraph that you are writing.
- Levels of headings must reflect the organization of your work.
- Never use a sub-heading level if it is the only one in a section (i.e., use two or more subheadings or none).
- All headings of the same level must appear in the same format.
- The title at the top of a page, such as “Abstract,” “Dedication,” “Chapter II,” “References,” “Appendix A,” etc., is **not** a heading and should **not** be in bold.

Abbreviations

- Eliminate unnecessary abbreviations and explain the necessary ones (pp. 106-107).
- Explain abbreviations in tables and figures in the table notes or the figure legends or captions.

Numbers, Statistics, and Mathematical Symbols

- Express numbers as stipulated in the *APA Publication Manual* (pp. 111-114).
- Identify Greek letters and all mathematical and statistical symbols, except common ones (pp. 117-124).
- All non-Greek letters used as statistical symbols must be in italics.

Research

Keeping a record of your reading and your ideas at the preliminary stage will come in handy and guide you later as you narrow your focus and clarify your thoughts. You should keep an accurate record of the bibliographical details of all the material that you read which will save an enormous amount of time at the end of the project. Keep your notes in APA format so as to not have to scramble later to find the correct sourcing information. Typically you will read studies in your chosen area, research methods and methodology texts relevant to your approach and primary literature sources. Since the typical length of a bibliography for a dissertation could include anything between 50 and 100 references, whatever you read early should become part of your reference list.

Title Page

The title of the proposal and, later, of the dissertation should be a succinct summary of the topic and generally should not exceed 15 words. Words such as “A Study of...” should be avoided. The title should include key terms that readily identify the scope and nature of the study and should be typed using all capital letters. A manuscript page header and a short title may appear in the proposal title page (following APA “copy” manuscript style) but not in the final dissertation.

- Must be indicative of the contents of the study but may be somewhat catchy.
- Is the first page of your dissertation.
- Use upper and lower-case letters, no bold or italics or underline.
- Spell your name exactly as it is in JIU’s records.
- Correctly spell the names of all the committee members and Chair with their degrees.
- List the year your degree will be conferred.
- Count it as a page but do not number it.

Copyright Page

- You may choose to register and retain copyright for your dissertation when you submit your work to UMI (there is an additional fee for this). If you choose to do so, prepare a copyright page following the model at the end of this manual (otherwise, do not prepare the page).

- Count the copyright page in the total count of preliminary pages, but do not print a page number on it (see sample page).
- Spell your name **exactly** as it is in JIU's records.
- List the year your degree will be conferred.

Signature Page

The signature page bears the electronic signatures of the members of your committee showing their approval of your work (see sample page).

- Correctly spell the names of the committee members under the lines to be signed along with their most advanced degrees (e.g., PhD, EdD, MA).
- The date should be the month, day and year the signature page was signed.
- Count the signature page in the total count of preliminary pages, but do not print a page number on it.

Abstract

The abstract is a brief summary of the dissertation's area of investigation. It should reflect familiarity with current issues in the field and raise research questions or hypotheses suggested by findings in the current literature. In the abstract, the investigator should describe proposed methods and expected conclusions briefly.

- The abstract can be no more than 350 words (approximately 2,450 characters).
- Should have a brief summary of the problem clearly articulated, the methods and procedures used (includes a statement identifying quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodology that was incorporated), limitations (if any) and a condensed summary of the findings (the conclusion and recommendations are to be briefly stated).
- All in narrative form and will be titled "Abstract" (without quotation marks).
- Use upper and lower-case letters, no bold or italics or underline.
- Count it as a page but do not number it.
- Do not indent.

Dedication

A dedication page is optional, but you may choose to dedicate your work to a person or to people of particular importance in your life.

- If you include a dedication, it should be brief and less than one page; double space it.
- At the top of the dedication, center and type the title Dedication. Use upper- and lower-case letters, with no all-caps, bold, italics, or underline.
- The title, "Dedication," should be 8 lines from the top. The dedication then should start 4 lines down from the title.
- Count the dedication page, but do not print a page number on it.

Acknowledgments

An acknowledgements page is optional, but frequently used. In the acknowledgements, you can recognize people or organizations who made significant contributions to the development of your research, such as your committee, important teachers or mentors, readers of your work, family, friends and/or funding sources.

- If you include an acknowledgement page, it is the first page to have a number with a small Roman numeral. If you have a copyright page and a dedication, the acknowledgements page would be “vi.”
- At the top of the acknowledgments, center and type the title Acknowledgments.
- Use upper- and lower-case letters, with no all-caps, bold, italics, or underline.
- The title, “Acknowledgments,” should be 8 lines from the top. The acknowledgments then should start 4 lines down from the title.
- Double-space the acknowledgments.

Preface

A preface page is optional. In it, you can state your personal reasons for undertaking your research and other thoughts not directly related to your findings.

- The tone of the preface must be scholarly, but there is no length limit.
- If you do a preface, it will have consecutive page numbers in small Roman numerals, starting with the first number after the acknowledgements page (if you include one).
- At the top of the preface, center and type the title Preface. Use upper- and lowercase letters, with no all-caps, bold, italics, or underline.
- The title, “Preface,” should be 8 lines from the top. The preface then should start 4 lines down from the title.
- Double-space the preface.

Table of Contents

Essentially, the table of contents lists all of the elements of the manuscript, with accompanying page numbers. These elements generally include the following items: title page, abstract, table of contents, introduction to the problem, literature review, methodology, findings, conclusion, discussion and implications, references and appendices.

- Is required
- Lists page numbers and uses Roman Numerals for Chapters
- Watch which pages are not to be numbered
- For chapters, only list the first and second levels of headings in the tables of contents (chapter titles do not count as headings).
- Chapter titles have Roman numerals (not Arabic numbers), e.g., “Chapter I,” “Chapter II,” etc.
- List the title and page number of each appendix.
- The table of contents has consecutive page numbers in small Roman numerals.
- At the top of the table of contents, center and type the title Table of Contents.
- Use upper- and lower-case letters, with no all-caps, bold, italics, or underline.

- Follow these instructions for setting the tab stops for your table of contents. In Word: go to Paragraph > Tabs button:
 - type “.6” and select Leader “2.....” Click the “Set” button.
 - type “.5” and select Leader “1 None.” Click the “Set” button.
 - type “.75” and select Leader “1 None.” Click the “Set” button.
 - click the “OK” button.
 - then, type your chapter title press “Tab.” Dots appear to the margin. Type the page number. You might need to press the tab key one or two times for the dots to appear.
 - for a level 1 heading, press the “Tab” key once (for a level 2 heading, press it twice), then type the heading name. Press the “Tab” key again, and dots appear to the margin. Type the page number. Remember only to include the first two levels of headings.
- Make sure to update the table of contents if pages numbers change during revision of your text. The table of contents will not update dynamically.

List of Tables

Separate lists should be created for the tables and illustrations that appear in the text of the document. Illustrations appropriate for use in the dissertation include figures, maps, diagrams and photos. These lists should include the number and full name of each table or illustration, listed in order of appearance in the text, followed by the number of the page on which the table or illustration appears.

- If the work contains tables, a List of Tables is required.
- Use the same tab settings and basic setup as the table of contents.
- Follow the sample for how to format the list of tables.

List of Figures

- If the work contains figures, a List of Figures is required.
- Use the same tab settings and basic setup as the table of contents.
- Follow the sample for “List of Tables” substituting “figure” for “table.”

Tables and Figures

- Use APA Style for tables and figures (pp. 125-167). Pay close attention to placement of titles, notes, etc.
- Limit the use of rules (i.e., lines) in a table to just those necessary for clarity (p. 141).
- See the Table Checklist (p. 150) and the Figure Checklist (p. 167) for detailed information about formatting tables and figures.
- Tables and figures should appear at the end of the paragraph where they are first mentioned. All tables and figures must be referred to in the text.
- Tables and figures must be numbered consecutively within each chapter in the order that they are mentioned. Use this numbering format: “3.1,” “3.2,” etc. (where “Table 3.1” is the first table in Chapter 3 and “Figure 3.2” is the second figure in Chapter 3, etc.).

- Try to fit tables and figures on one page. Single-space large tables to fit them on one page.
- Every table column must have a heading.
- Include titles and notes on the same page as the table or figure.
- Elements within a figure must be legible after being reduced to fit on a page.
- If you rotate a table or figure to fit on a page (i.e., put the table or figure in landscape view), put the page number in the upper-right hand corner of the page in portrait view.
- If you use photographs, you must treat them as figures (pp. 165-166).

Introduction to the Problem

The introduction presents (at greater length than in the abstract) the problem to be addressed by the dissertation research. The introduction should describe the nature and purpose of the study, present the guiding research questions and explain the significance of and justification for conducting the study. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal should be defined in this chapter.

- Includes a succinct and carefully crafted problem statement that makes clear the research question to be addressed.
- Describes the motivation for the study, why it is of interest and the context in which the question arises, which is the purpose statement.
- Summarizes the dissertation's findings and discusses the importance of the findings.
- Identifies the methodology, states the research design as well as the population studied.
- Combines a mix of the theoretical, the historical and the situational.
- Explains the key definitions of operational or analytical terms in use.
- Provides a roadmap for readers.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Chapter must have an introduction and a summary logically organized in-between.

Literature Review

A review of literature concerning the topic places the dissertation in the context of previous research. As stated in the *APA Manual*, a “scholarly review of earlier work provides an appropriate history and recognizes the priority of the work of others. Citation of and specific credit to relevant earlier works is part of the author’s scientific and scholarly responsibility” (p.16, 5th edition). The review should focus only on literature and conclusions directly pertinent to the subject and the problem addressed in the dissertation. Any pilot work done should be described in this chapter. This chapter also should present any specific hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the dissertation study, clearly relating these to the lines of investigation and conjecture detailed in current literature.

- Begins with a brief summary that explains the literature search strategy and sources.
- Discusses, in a logical and organized fashion, how the literature relates to the study.
- Is comprehensive and up to date.
- Shows a command of the literature through a discussion that has depth and critical thinking.
- Provides context for the problem with conflicting findings and opposing points of view.

- Includes a discussion of the literature that is selective, synthetic, analytical, and thematic.
- Uses subtopics when needed.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Chapter must have an introduction and a summary logically organized in-between.

Methodology

The methodology section describes in detail how the study will be conducted. This chapter typically is divided into labeled subsections. Often a subsection describing participants or subjects is followed by subsections describing testing or other measurement procedures to be undertaken with the participants. Then there follows a subsection describing how the resulting measurements will be analyzed to help resolve the problems stated in the introduction.

- Begins with a brief synopsis of the research problem and purpose.
- Describes in detail the methods applied and/or developed.
- In alignment with the question addressed and the theory used.
- Clear enough that the research could be replicated if desired, including all aspects of data collection, analysis, assumptions, limitations and nature of variables.
- Elaborates how and why the proposed research design will accomplish the goals.
- Provides a detailed description of the participants/population of those studied.
- If IRB approval was needed, state it here.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Chapter must have an introduction and a summary logically organized in-between.

In addition, the author demonstrates:

- A thorough understanding of the methods' advantages and disadvantages.
- How to use the methods and how they were used.

Findings

The findings section summarizes the data collected and details the statistical treatment of that data. After a brief statement of the main results or findings of the study, the data are reported in sufficient detail to justify the conclusions. Tables and illustrations may be used to report data more clearly and economically. All tables and illustrations used should be mentioned in the text, with appropriate titles or captions and enough explanation to make them readily identifiable.

- Begins with a brief synopsis of the research problem and purpose.
- Aligns with the question and hypotheses raised in an organized format.
- Is reiterative; that is, report results without discussion, interpretation and/or speculation.
- Showcases tables and figures.
- Here is where you report what your findings mean.
- Compare and/or contrast findings to other studies.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Chapter must have an introduction and a summary with details logically organized.

In addition, the amount and quality of data or information is:

- Sufficient.
- Well presented.
- Intelligently interpreted.

Conclusion, Discussion & Implications

In the conclusion/discussion section, the results are summarized, evaluated and interpreted with respect to the original research questions and hypotheses. In this section, the investigator is free to examine, interpret and qualify the results, as well as to draw inferences from them. Theoretical and practical consequences of the results and the validity of conclusions may be discussed appropriately. The limitations of the study and suggestions for future work also may be included here.

- Begins with a brief synopsis of the research problem and purpose.
- Summarizes the findings.
- Provides perspective on the findings.
- Refers back to the introduction.
- Ties everything together.
- Discusses the study's strengths and weaknesses.
- Relates implications and applications for the discipline.
- Offers future directions for research.
- Presents recommendations.
- Utilizes proper APA citations and format.
- Chapter must have an introduction and a summary with details logically organized in-between.

Citations

- Must follow *APA 6th Edition* format (pp. 174-179).
- In citations, authors and dates must always be physically next to each other on the page, whether as part of a sentence or in parentheses at the end of the sentence.
- Page numbers for direct quotes go at the end of the sentence in parentheses. Consult the *APA Manual* for examples.
- Pay close attention to Table 6.1 (p. 177) which explains how to cite works by multiple authors.
- For block quotes (i.e., quotations of 40 words or over), make sure first to punctuate the final sentence **then** to add the citation in parentheses (this only applies to block quotes).
- For direct quotes from online sources and other works without pagination, count the paragraphs to arrive at the number to put in the citation. Precede the paragraph number with "para." **not** "¶" (i.e., do not use the paragraph symbol) (pp. 171-172).

References

The reference list at the end of the proposal should include all works cited in the proposal; conversely, all items listed as references must have been cited in the text of the proposal. The APA Manual provides further guidance for accurately compiling a reference list.

- Must follow *APA 6th Edition* format (pp. 193-224).
- References must be cited in the text.
- Reference list must include every reference in text.
- References must follow the APA guidelines for ordering and constructing references (pp. 180-183).
- Do not include a source in the reference list that was not cited in the text.
- **Double-space** references both within and between references.
- Make sure to type the titles of article and books in “sentence case” capitalization (make sure also to capitalize the first word after a colon in a title and any acronyms and proper nouns).
- Fully spell out the names of journals.
- Include page numbers for all articles and book chapters, but do not type “p.” or “pp.”
- Include DOIs (digital object identifiers) for articles and ebooks that have them. If your source has both a DOI and a URL, only list the DOI (pp. 187-192, 198-199).
- **New** to *APA 6th Edition* is that you no longer need to include the date you retrieved a particular website.
- **New** to *APA 6th Edition* is that you need to include the state (in US postal code abbreviation), province or country where a book was published.

Appendices

Appendices of the proposal should include data-collection tools, consent forms, letters of introduction to subjects, questionnaires, survey forms, and the like. The appendices section should begin with its own cover page, followed by its own table of contents page. Each appendix may have its own cover page. The word “appendix” should appear in all capital letters.

- Includes all supplementary material.
- Include a copy of your IRB clearance as one of your appendices.
- Include a copy of your CITI Human Research Curriculum Completion Report as one of your appendices.
- Can have multiple appendices as needed.
- Supplementary material, such as questionnaires, copies of consent forms, raw data or other supplementary information, go into the appendices.
- Include copy of permissions to use previously published text, tests (or parts of tests), photographs, tables, or figures in your appendices.
- If you have more than one appendix, letter them consecutively, e.g., “Appendix A,” “Appendix B,” etc. Do not type in bold face. Center the appendix name at the top of the page.

- Include the appendices titles in the Table of Contents (see Table of Contents in this manual).
- At the top of an appendix, center and type the title. Use upper- and lower-case letters, with no all-caps, bold, italics or underline.
- The title, for example, "Appendix A," should be 8 lines from the top. The appendix then should start 4 lines down from the title.

Submitting the Dissertation

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