

**Dissertation Guidelines
For
Faculty and Students**



**Holos University Graduate Seminary
Revised January, 2010**

Office of the Dean of Academics

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INTRODUCTION

Documents that will be useful for the Research and Dissertation phase of the Doctoral program are all available on the HU website:

1. The Syllabi for 994, 996, and 998.
2. The Dissertation Guidelines,
3. KEY DATES document, and the
4. HU Calendar.

Please be familiar with all of these documents.

THE BEGINNING – FRAMING A TOPIC

THE BEGINNING: Framing a Dissertation Topic begins with the Orientation (ORP) Class.

Students attend a five-day orientation residency. This residency is an essential part of the core graduate orientation course (ORP). This course is designed to clarify the degree guidelines and to enhance the individualization of the student's program. There are lively discussions between faculty and students about the courses and student's interests. Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor present at ORP who usually serves as the student's Advisor until the student's graduate committee is formed. Students are provided opportunities to exchange ideas concerning thesis and dissertation topics and to work with their Advisor concerning the schedule of courses in which students will enroll to complete their degree program. During the ORP residential component, the student, with the guidance of the Advisor, will plan a tentative Program Schedule for the entire degree program. At the end of each semester, the Advisor will help the student make any necessary changes in this plan.

THREE PRIMARY COURSES

There are three courses that directly relate to the Dissertation. Once students have fulfilled the majority of the core courses and electives required for their degree they are prepared to begin work in 994-Capstone, 996-Preliminary Essay and Exam, and 998-Dissertation. These three courses should be completed in the following sequence:

994: Capstone (See syllabus for complete course description.)

- All core competency courses either must be completed already, or be taken concurrently. Any courses to be taken in a semester after the semester in which one takes the Capstone must be cleared in advance with the Dean of Faculty.
- Students must have an appointed Dissertation Committee before beginning this course. **The Chair of the Committee participates in the Capstone conference calls.**
- Students will need to have chosen their proposed research project.
- During the Capstone, three documents will be produced that may become an integral part of the dissertation: an abstract, a bibliography, and a partial literature review.
- Students in the Capstone class will work with their fellow colleagues in the course to critique each other's abstracts, bibliographies, and literature reviews, offering suggestions and providing helpful information when possible. At this time students will need to begin their search for research instruments and test. The following links may prove helpful:

[ETS test Link](#) – From this link you can Search the Data Base for test instruments in several ways. Click on “search” then follow the directions to search by *title*, *subject*, or a number of other criteria. Your search will open a portal that gives you a list of choices. When you choose from that list you open a portal with a brief description of the test and where it can be purchased. In general, the site where you can purchase the test will have additional information. This is a very extensive site and it is free.

[EDITS](#) –Major site for a choice of personality and mood measurements

[MIND GARDEN](#) – Major site for a choice of tests of anxiety and/or stress

996: Preliminary Essay and Exam

(See syllabus for complete description.)

Stage I: Often students will formulate their dissertation and research topic during the Capstone course. **If the student does not settle on a final topic research project during Capstone, then it is in this course that the student forms a final idea for the dissertation topic and research.** To that end, the student works closely with the Chair to formulate the concepts and approach and to generate the documents that are used in Stage II. This is done through email exchanges and telephone conversations between the student and the Chair. The student may set up a consultation with other Committee members if the expertise needed is strongly represented by one of those members.

Stage II: Basic Documents are sent to Committee

Stage III: Preparing and Responding in Writing to Basic Questions. Student and Committee agree upon five to seven questions that will form the basis of the Preliminary Essays. The student then writes a **scholarly** paper from three to ten pages, appropriately formatted and edited, on each of these questions, citing the appropriate literature.

Stage IV: Oral Preliminary Exam - Student and Committee

The Oral Preliminary Exam takes place in an atmosphere of Collegiality. The Prelim exam is less rigorous than the Dissertation Defense in that there is an exploratory aspect in the exchange between the student and the Committee. The student is expected to have a very competent grasp of the concepts and to set forth a well thought out plan for the research, but space is left for the Committee to suggest changes in protocol and to comment upon concepts set forth in the Essays with the intent of sharpening the focus of the proposed dissertation and research.

998: Research and Dissertation

The academic pinnacle of graduate degree work, after all preparatory coursework is completed, is the final research project. The most common form of dissertation is focused on research based on quantitative measures. In addition, many dissertations also include qualitative data. Executive Committee permission is required if a student plans to base a dissertation purely on qualitative measures, a survey, or a major project demonstrating excellence. Whatever form the dissertation takes, it must represent original work by the participant and be an original contribution to the field. The final project will take the form of a standard “traditional” academic dissertation of 100 or more typewritten pages. The document will conform to the guidelines of the University, the expectations of faculty, and the Chicago style manual. It is the student's responsibility to supply a document free of errors. If the Chair finds 15 errors within 30 deliberately selected pages, the dissertation will be sent back to the student and will not be re-read until it is re-submitted in an acceptable form. This can be costly in terms of time and may interfere seriously with the student's planned time line for finishing the degree. This research preparation course is intended to empower the participants:

- To plan effectively and prepare to complete a major work of research which permits the demonstration of excellence within the student’s general area of study;
- To state a problem or formulate the hypotheses for intensive study and research;
- To prepare an overall design of a project, an experiment and a critical analysis and synthesis in the chosen field of study;
- To plan for the effective interpretation of data and information from the proposed study;
- To determine techniques for drawing valid conclusions;
- To understand the proper manner of reporting results to other scholars within the field of study; and
- To understand the guidelines that govern the academic argument, the presentation of the scholarly discussion, and the formatting of the document.

A syllabus is available on the web for each of these courses. Students should download the syllabi and read them thoroughly in order to understand what will be required for each course.

TIME PLANNING AND POLICIES

1. A FULL-Time student should expect to spend two and one-half years minimum to complete a doctorate, with at least 12 months for research and dissertation. Part-time students should expect to spend a minimum of three to five years depending on the number of hours per semester. Nine hours at least three and one-half years. 12 hours at least three years and so forth.
2. Research should be begun only after students have successfully completed Capstone and Prelims and their project and protocol has been approved by their chair and committee and they have received an IRB review.
3. Students need to plan at least TWO SEMESTERS in which to do the project and the Dissertation. This means that they must take part of the Dissertation credits one semester and the remaining hours in the subsequent semester. Or they may spread the dissertation hours out in 3-hour increments for four semesters. EXCEPTIONS to this must be agreed upon by all members of the executive committee.
4. Students planning a quantitative research study are strongly advised to plan for a minimum of 30 participants who complete the study in both the control and the research participant groups. Therefore, it is advised to start with 35 in order to allow for attrition rates. If a project uses several smaller groups, standard deviation measures should be applied at the beginning of the project to establish similarity of the groups.
5. Students working with complex esoteric instrumentation such as the GDV, will need to have on their committee at least one member who is either a specialist or is well versed concerning the use of that instrument. The research protocol must be approved by that committee member prior to the beginning of the project.
6. Students using psychometric testing are advised to have a minimum of 40 subjects and 40 controls. Those projects with fewer controls or no controls must have the unanimous approval of their Committee.

TIMELINE

Students may not enroll in all 12 required hours of Dissertation in one semester. At the beginning of the semester in which a student is enrolled in Capstone, the student should devise a reasonable time line for finishing the requirements of the degree and send that timeline to their Chair.

- Towards the end of the semester prior to Capstone, students should contact the Dean of Faculty to form the final Committee if they have not already done so.
- At the beginning of the semester in which the student plans to begin the research project he/she should immediately contact the Chair and work with the chair and the committee to gain approval of the research design.
- Students may **not** enroll concurrently in Prelims and Capstone. Prelims are begun directly following the semester in which they complete the Capstone (Exceptions to this are through the Dean of Faculty. The Prelim exam is best scheduled in the first part of the semester, so that work on the project may go forward in a timely fashion. Once the student has passed the Prelim Exam and the study has been approved by the IRB, the student may begin collecting data.
- At this time, the student should formulate a definite plan concerning how he/she plans to complete the statistical component of the study. Although students are provided a background in Research Methods and Statistics, they may still wish to seek the help of an expert statistician for this component of the project.
- The time-line should allow time for data collection and statistical analysis of the data. Thought must be given to the turn-around time when working with an outside statistician.
- Depending on the students writing skills, an outside editor may also be engaged by the student.
- Most doctoral students find that it is unrealistic to plan only one semester in which to:
 - gather and analyze the data for their project,
 - complete the body of the dissertation,
 - defend the dissertation,
 - complete final edits required by the committee at the defense, and
 - submit a bound finished work by the published deadline.

The 12 hours of dissertation must be spread over at least two semesters. The segmentation of these credit hours should be discussed with the student's Chair or Advisor. Once a graduate student in HU reaches the dissertation stage, enrollment in at least 3 credit hours of dissertation is required each semester until all the degree requirements are fulfilled. Special Fees: Students who have already fulfilled the required credit hours for the doctoral degree (12 credits) and who are using continuous enrollment in order to complete the degree, pay a reduced fee for the three hours. Check with the Bursar about this amount.

IRB REVIEW (INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD)

FDA Required Reviews

An FDA required review is required for the following kinds of studies: All research projects involving application of electronic devices not FDA approved, drugs, chemicals administered to clients, blood draw, acupuncture, and other similar approaches (When in doubt check with the IRB). These **FDA Required Reviews** must be approved by the full Institutional Review Board. This board meets the end of October and the end of April each year. Proposals must be submitted to the full board at least two weeks prior to the meetings. Cost of this review is \$400.

To begin the IRB process contact Jody Trotter at:
jody@holosinstitutesofhealth.com

Social Science Reviews

All research projects which involve human subjects in psychometric, counseling, interview sessions, etc, must be submitted for an **Expedited Review**. This application must be submitted three weeks prior to the full IRB meeting so that the Reviewers may determine whether full IRB approval is required. The Expedited Review, if not approved, will need to be sent to the full IRB for review. Cost of this Expedited Review is \$200. If the additional full board review is needed, there will be an additional charge of \$250.

To begin the IRB process contact Jody Trotter at:
jody@holosinstitutesofhealth.com

Protocol for Expedited Social Science IRB:

Title of Research:

Background and Theoretical Framework:

Study Design:

Population: Include men/women, age, etc.

Inclusion Criteria:

Exclusion Criteria:

List Potential Risks/Safety:

Discontinuation Criteria for Subjects:

Tests to be Used:

Consent Form for Participants:

Protocol Monitoring:

Pre-Inclusion Screening

Testing:

Research Intervention:

Post- tests:

Monitoring Personnel for Research:

Chair of Dissertation:

List Primary Researcher and any assistants:

Research Results: Analysis

Confidentiality Statement

Method of sharing results with research participants

You are required to submit reports quarterly to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) plus a final report, documenting your results.

Fee for submission of your Protocol to the IRB for an Expedited Review is \$200.00 U. S. currency. Please make check to Holos Institutes of Health.

Protocol for Quarterly Reviews, IRB

Reports to the IRB must be submitted each quarter following the approval of the protocol. These simply summarize progress to date, how many enrolled, and any other pertinent updates. **If the project is not completed within 12 months, a new IRB Protocol must be submitted and approved.** At completion of the protocol, a summary of results must be sent to the IRB. This will include any deviations from the protocol as well as outcome of all measurements.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

Deadlines for the Defense: See current KEY DATES document for information about deadlines. See the current 998 Syllabus for submission requirements. Both may be downloaded from the HU website.

APPOINTMENT OF DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

During the residential portion of the Orientation session each student will be assigned an initial academic advisor to serve as the first member of that student's thesis or dissertation committee.

The dissertation committee of a doctoral student must be formed before the student begins 994: Capstone, 996: Prelims, or 998: Research and Dissertation.

Student requests to have the committee formed will be sent by the student to the Dean of Faculty. The Dean will send the student a list of all eligible faculty who are available at that time to chair or serve on the dissertation committee. Using the list, the student will indicate in order of preference (first through fifth) five faculty members as their preferred candidates for membership on their academic committee. This list must include their initial faculty advisor. However that person may or may not be listed first (This list will be submitted, in confidence, and be available only to the Dean personally).

Doctoral students may elect one outside person with a doctorate to serve as an outside member of the committee only if that person has expertise that cannot be found within the faculty and only with special permission of the Executive Committee. Should permission be granted, the Dean secures a copy of the person's CV, including contact information and Social Security number (This information is forwarded by the Dean to the Bursar).

Using the above lists as a reference, the Dean will select a Chair and three other committee members. The initial advisor will be invited to be on the committee and may or may not accept the invitation. Chair will become the primary academic advisor for the balance of the degree program, assisted by the other members of the student's committee.

The Dean's selection is based on a number of factors: The student's list of preferences, the availability of faculty, and the University's need to balance faculty involvement on committees. It is expected that this process, once begun, will be accomplished within one month's time.

Any change to the student's committee must be approved by the Dean, and is not official until recorded by the registrar on the student's Program Schedule. The Dean will notify the Registrar of any changes in the committee, and the Registrar will notify the student when the change has been recorded.

COMPLETION OF THE DEGREE

Once students complete the required course work, they are in the coveted position of all but dissertation. Students must use the official Word Template for formatting the Dissertation. Contact the Dean of Faculty for dates of Template tutorials. Students are also responsible for meeting specific deadlines for scheduling their defense and for submission of manuscripts. Current deadlines are described are posted on the website Calendar and the KEY DATES document that may be downloaded from the website.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Major Responsibilities of the Chair

1. Validate that the student's program (PSF form) fulfills all of the requirements for the degree.
2. Help student negotiate the various steps of the dissertation process.
3. Help student frame the title and the formal proposal
4. Participate in the Capstone course conference discussions in order to advise the student about the wording of the final abstract, the bibliography, and the literature review.
5. Review the Prelim questions and answers before they are sent to the rest of the committee.
6. Advise students on the protocol of their research and in preparing the first draft of the dissertation.
7. Insure that the student has sufficient knowledge of statistics to complete the study, or advise the student about acquiring outside statistical expertise.
8. Review and approve the first draft before it is sent to other committee members.
9. Chair the 90 Minute Oral defense.
10. Assure that any dissertation improvements have been completed before the manuscript is sent to the bindery.

The Dissertation Chairperson is the faculty member with greatest responsibility for the overall quality of the dissertation.

Responsibilities of other Committee Members

1. To review the Abstract and preliminary questions and make suggestions.
2. To carefully review the Preliminary Essays written in answer to the questions agreed upon by the Committee. To take part in the Prelim exam. Members should formulate several additional questions based on their reading of the Essays to be asked of the student in the exam. These questions should focus upon giving the student the opportunity to articulate specific knowledge pertaining to their dissertation topic and research.

3. To offer, when called upon by the student, their particular expertise throughout the dissertation process.

Responsibilities of Student

1. To request of the Dean of Faculty that the Committee be appointed.
2. To maintain correspondence with the chair and committee throughout the process.
3. To request of the Chair that a date be set for the Prelim exam.
4. To request of the Chair that a date be set for the Defense.
5. To pay the cost of the conference call for both exams.
6. To bear all necessary related mailing and printing costs.
7. To bear the cost of binding and mailing the final manuscript.

FORMATTING

Consistency of Style

HOLOS provides students with a Microsoft Word Template with established formatting for the Dissertation. It is the responsibility of students to request this Template when they begin work on the Dissertation. A tutorial about how to use this Template is offered each Semester. Please contact the Registrar for the date and time of this tutorial and PLAN TO ATTEND.

Required Style Manuals

Participants are required to make use of the materials provided or required by the University, as described in the 998 syllabus. It is highly recommended that participants also select a dissertation research guide and a writing guide to support their project and preparation of the manuscript.

Support Materials:

1. The electronic version of the Chicago Manual of Style. Purchase and download from the internet: www.chicagomanualofstyle.org

2. Harris, Robert. Using Sources Effectively: Strengthening Your Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism. 2nd ed. Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing, 2005.

3. Galvan, Jose. *Writing Literature Reviews: A Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 3rd ed. Glendale, CA: Pycszak Publishing, 2006.

4. Glatthorn, Allan and Randy Joyner. *Writing the Winning Thesis or Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Guide*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2005.

Supplemental Learning Resources

Baker, S. *The Practical Stylist*, 5th edition. New York: NY: Harper Collins, 1981.

Barzun, J. *On Writing, Editing and Publishing: Essays, Explicative, Hortatory*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Cone, John D. and Sharon L. Foster, *Dissertations and Theses from Start to Finish: Psychology and Related Fields*. 2nd ed., American Psychological Association, 2006. ISBN 978-1-59147-362-6.

Cook, C.K. *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

Davis, Gordon B. and Parker, Clyde A. *Writing the Doctoral Dissertation: A Systemic Approach*. Woodbury, NY: Barron's Educational Series, 1997.

Growers, E. *The Complete Plain Words*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1962.

Leggett, G., D.D., Mead, and W. Charvat. *Prentice-Hall Handbook for Writers*. 10th edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988.

Madsen, David. *Successful Dissertations and Theses: A Guide to Graduate Student Research from Proposal to Completion*. 2nd edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992.

McCrimmon, J. *Writing With a Purpose*. 9th edition. Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin, 1988.

Meloy, Judith M. *Writing the Qualitative Dissertation: Understanding by Doing*. Lawrence Erlbaum Association. ISBN 0805814175.

Sternberg, David. *How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1981. ISBN 0312396066.

Strunk, W., Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. Fourth edition. New York, NY: Longman, 2000.

Williams, J. M. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

English Grammar Resources

Moss, Norman. *British/American Language Dictionary: For More Effective Communication between Americans and Britons*. ISBN: 0844291161.

Peters, Pam. *The Cambridge Australian English Style Guide*. ISBN: 0521434017.

Princeton Language Institute. *21st Century Grammar Handbook*. ISBN 0440215080.

Stilman, Anne. *Grammatically Correct: The Writer's Essential Guide to Punctuation*. ISBN: 0898797764.

ISSUES OF COPYRIGHT LAW

Materials may be quoted or cited freely without serious regard for copyright law for class papers. However, it is necessary to obtain permission from authors to use copyrighted material in theses or dissertations. For such permission, it is the position of the University that students and faculty be guided by the standards of higher education and the principles of "fair use," "public domain," and "permissions" as stated in Section 17, USC 107 of the Copyright Law (U.S.A). If in doubt, consult the committee chair.

It is the expectation of the University that HOLOS students should clearly separate their words from those of the authors, referencing the work honestly, and giving proper citation in all cases. Indentation of large sections of quoted copyrighted text is expected. Massive use of copyrighted material, such as whole sections or chapters of books, should be placed in the appendix and referenced within the student's scholarly presentation. Permission for such use should be obtained. Students are expected to conform their manuscript to either the Turabian or APA style manual, and all laws and traditions governing the written word.

Finding Editing Assistance

Students may be required to seek outside editorial services or obtain the services of translators to assure proper English usage, if their committee chair finds it necessary. There are software programs available for this purpose. Many times an English teacher from a local school or college can be employed. The University can assist with the names of a few professional editors if students are unable to find help. Such outside assistance does not relieve the student from the burden of defending the English usage employed in the manuscript.

Finding Statistical Assistance

Students usually seek outside statistical services to assure proper usage of statistics, if their committee chair finds it necessary. There are software programs available for this purpose. Many times a math or statistics teacher from a local school or college can be employed. The University can assist with the names of a few professional statisticians if

students are unable to find help. Such outside assistance does not relieve the student from the burden of defending the statistical usage employed in the manuscript. Writing up the statistical results of a study requires that the student descriptively lead the reader through the statistical outcomes so that the meaning of those outcomes and their significance to the study is obvious to the educated layperson. In correctly writing up the results of the study, a student may need to seek the help of a technical editor.

Preparation of Theses and Dissertations

The Dissertation Template establishes the general format of the Dissertation and sets forth a particular style. The scholarly paper template is usually sufficient for the Thesis.

Please use The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th edition for all editorial questions.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL DISSERTATIONS

Microsoft Word Template:

A format template has been designed for your use. Please request a copy of this MS Word template from the Dean of Faculty. The Template is set up to format your document with all the required headings, endnotes, and page numbering and will automatically create your table of contents and table of figures as you enter the data in your manuscript. The page numbering in the table of contents will automatically update as you make changes in your document. A group tutorial is offered each semester in the use of this template. Check with the Dean of Faculty about dates. Do not attempt to use this template without benefit of the group tutorial. You will need to spend some time learning the proper use of this template, but it will save you hours of work and will help ensure that your document meets Holos' format regulations.

Endnotes

References will appear as endnotes at the end of the text and before the Appendices. Specifically there will be no footnotes at the bottom of each page and there will be no parenthetical citations interrupting the text of the manuscript, as is most common under APA. The "Endnotes" will appear at the end of the final chapter's text in the order in which they occur. Each source in an endnote will also be included in a "Bibliography" arranged alphabetically by author and placed after the appendices.

The following additional guidelines should be used when preparing the final thesis or dissertation manuscript.

Paper

The final bound manuscript submitted to the University must be on acid-free white bond paper of 60lb weight. Page size shall be 8 1/2 by 11 inches.

Binding

Students are required, at their expense, to submit to both their Chair and to Holos University Graduate Seminary a bound copy of their final manuscript with a dark green cover and gold lettering.

The University suggests the following on-line bindery: **Thesis on Demand**
<http://www.thesisondemand.com/>

Most committee members prefer to work with electronic copies. A committee member may, however request a hard copy be sent them by mail. Check with committee members about their preferences.

If a committee member requests a copy of the final thesis or dissertation, following final approval, it is the responsibility of the student to arrange and pay for this. This is worked out on an individual basis, and the University has no hard and fast policy regarding provision of bound copies to faculty, except that students abide by the expectations of each member of the Faculty Committee.

Time Schedule: The bindery requires four weeks for the printing and binding process. Expedited binding can be done in two weeks (but there is an extra charge).

The HU Registrar must receive a copy of the Bound Thesis by September 20th for Fall graduation and by March 20th for Spring graduation. Thus, you should have a PDF file of your manuscript to the bindery by August 15th for Fall graduation and February 15th for Spring graduation.

There is a cost calculator on the home page of the recommended bindery. An average manuscript (180 pages) costs about \$20 for each copy.

Cover Color: Dark green with gold foil lettering.

Paper: 60lb acid free.

Format: HU Template

One Last Word of Advice

Students should keep at least two extra electronic copies of any computerized work, one to back up current work, and one at a remote site to insure against unforeseen circumstances. Thumb drives are excellent to provide this protection.