

A GUIDE TO
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL, PREPARATION,
AND DEFENSE

DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY
XAVIER UNIVERSITY

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I. From Idea to Data Collection

The dissertation project required of candidates for Xavier University's Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) degree serves as a culminating or “capstone” educational experiences toward the doctoral degree. The dissertation is a research project that generally involves an empirical investigation of a specific question within the field of psychology. The common theme to all dissertations is to expand the student’s understanding of the knowledge base of psychology, as well as scholarly competence and knowledge of research design and analysis. The project results from one-on-one collaboration with a Xavier University School of Psychology faculty member, the Dissertation Chair.

Dissertation projects vary substantially, so it is difficult to describe procedures that apply to all students or their projects. This handbook is designed to give pertinent information regarding the dissertation process and should be considered only as a guide. Appendix A provides additional information about the progression of the dissertation to help students create a timeline. In general, the dissertation process involves eight steps. These steps are described in greater detail in the following pages, but are summarized below:

- (1) Prospectus-- a short document (2-3 pages) used as an organizing tool. It represents the initial ideas about the study and is typically developed early in the student's third year in the program.
- (2) Dissertation proposal--a written document that contains an extensive literature review and a research plan;
- (3) Proposal meeting—a meeting with the Dissertation Committee in which the students describes the proposed study and the Committee evaluates the quality of the dissertation proposal (including the student’s presentation, the written document, and the study features);
- (4) Accepted Dissertation Proposal-- the written document that incorporates all changes required by the Dissertation Committee based upon the proposal meeting. The Dissertation Chair generally oversees all required changes and signs the cover sheet of the proposal after all changes have been satisfactorily made. The signed document is maintained in the student’s file in the School office. The signed proposal must be submitted to the School office prior to applying for internship;

- (5) Chapter V-- a summary of the study, written in APA manuscript style, after the study is completed;
- (6) Dissertation defense meeting—a meeting with the Dissertation Committee in which the student formally presents the dissertation study to the Committee. The Committee evaluates both the document that was provided prior to the meeting and the student’s presentation of the research;
- (7) Final dissertation contains the accepted dissertation (revised) proposal (Chapters I – IV), Chapter V (following revisions from the defense meeting), and all relevant materials (e.g., tables, appendices). An electronic copy of the full document is submitted to the School of Psychology, where it will be housed in a password protected repository that is available to current doctoral students and psychology faculty.
- (8) An electronic version of Chapter V is submitted to OhioLink where it will be publicly available.

A. Where To Begin

Students are encouraged to pursue dissertation projects that coincide with a faculty member’s interest and expertise (e.g., an area in which the advisor has published or an area in which the advisor practices). Upon entering the doctoral program, every student is assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor can be a resource for advice about developing an area of research focus and students are encouraged to discuss research ideas or areas of interest with him or her. The advisor may help the student continue to develop the dissertation project, at which point the advisor becomes the Dissertation Chair, or the faculty advisor may direct the student to a faculty member who has interest or experience in the student's area of interest. Some faculty members have research teams that provide opportunities for faculty-student research collaborations, and that can involve the development of dissertation projects. Other faculty members support research in the student’s area of interest, and some students engage in research with psychological researchers who have positions outside of Xavier University. Note, however, that the *Dissertation Chair must be a full-time faculty member in the School of Psychology at Xavier.*

B. Prospectus/Deadline to Select Dissertation Chair

A prospectus is a short document (2-3 pages) that is used as an initial organizing tool to represent the ideas about the study. It should include (but not necessarily be limited to) the following:

- (1) an explanation of the student's interest in this area;
- (2) the key constructs in the study;
- (3) the broad relevant domains in the literature;
- (4) a statement of research expectations (similar to hypotheses, but not as formal)

The particular information requested for the prospectus may vary by faculty member. Students must have a prospectus for their dissertation accepted by a full-time psychology faculty member who is willing to chair the dissertation by the first Friday in December of the student's third year. The School Chair will officially appoint the Dissertation Chair, after receiving from the student a copy of the prospectus signed by the faculty member. The appointment of a Dissertation Chair must occur by the December date in order for the student to enroll in classes for the Spring semester of the third year. A student who does not have a Dissertation Chair by this December date must remain registered in the program by taking Continuous Major Research, PSYC 790 (3 credit hours), during the Spring semester of the 3rd year, but cannot take any other courses or further advance toward the final degree (i.e., cannot take the CCE) until the prospectus requirement is met.

C. Role of the Dissertation Chair

The Dissertation Chair's task is to provide direction for the dissertation project. This typically involves meeting with the student to develop the idea for the project and reading drafts of the written proposal. The Chair can be expected to provide feedback on all aspects of the written documents including: grammar and clarity of writing; organization of the literature review; thoroughness of studies presented; quality of the methodology proposed; appropriateness of proposed statistics; APA formatting; and formatting required by the School. However, it is not the duty or responsibility of the chair to proofread or extensively edit the document or correct APA errors.

When the Dissertation Chair is satisfied with the quality of the proposal, the student schedules a meeting of the Dissertation Committee at which the proposed study is discussed. The proposal is given to Committee members at least two weeks before the date of the proposal meeting. Unless otherwise directed by the Dissertation Chair, Committee members do not review drafts of the proposal.

D. The Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee is composed of the Dissertation Chair and at least two additional members. *The Dissertation Chair must be a full-time faculty member in the School of Psychology*, but Committee members may be other full-time psychology faculty, adjunct faculty, other psychologists, faculty from other Xavier University departments or community professionals from other disciplines who have expertise in the dissertation domain. When the student would like to invite an individual who is not a full-time or adjunct psychology faculty member to serve on the Committee, he or she provides a rationale for that person's involvement in writing to the School Chair and asks the professional to submit her/his vitae for the School Chair's review. The student is responsible to submit the names of the proposed Dissertation Committee members in writing to the School administrative assistant. All appointments to Dissertation Committees are made by the School Chair, taking the student's requests and preferences into account (along with other considerations). The School Chair is an *ad hoc* member of all Dissertation Committees and must be informed of proposal and defense dates (this can be done through the School administrative assistant). The School Chair attends proposal and defense meetings at his or her discretion, and can request a copy of the dissertation proposal.

E. Scheduling Proposal and Defenses Meeting/Distribution of Copies

The student is responsible for scheduling the proposal and defense meetings and room locations. This information should be submitted to the School administrative assistant in writing, who will post the date, time, and location of the meeting on the Elet first floor School bulletin board. These meetings are public and other students and faculty may attend. At least two weeks before the proposal meeting date, the student is to distribute paper copies of the proposal document to the Committee members and the School Chair. For the dissertation defense, paper copies are also distributed to the Committee members at least two

weeks before the defense meeting. There is no need to give a copy of the dissertation document to the School Chair at that time.

F. The Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal describes the study the student plans to conduct and forms the basis of the student's dissertation "contract" with the Dissertation Committee (and, by extension, the School and the University). The proposal must include clearly stated hypotheses or research objectives (in the case of qualitative studies) built upon a careful and thorough review of the existing psychology literature. The dissertation proposal also should clearly and explicitly describe procedures and planned analyses. The specific elements of the proposal and the order in which they appear are listed in Section II of this Guide (pgs. 9-11).

The proposal document should convince the Committee that the student clearly understands the issues underlying the proposed study, and that the research plan is sufficient to address the hypotheses or research objectives.

G. The Dissertation Proposal Meeting

With the approval of the Dissertation Chair, the student contacts the Committee members to find an agreed-upon time for the proposal meeting. The student must also notify the School office of the time and place of the proposal meeting. For most of the rooms in Elet, the student schedules the room for a meeting by using the sign out book located outside the room; for Elet 304, contact the School administrative assistant. Copies of the dissertation proposal must be submitted to all Committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Committee members are to be provided with **paper** copies of the document.

The format of the dissertation proposal meeting will vary somewhat by Dissertation Chair. Prior to the scheduled meeting, the student should discuss the expectations and format for the meeting with the Dissertation Chair. In general, the student should expect to be able to provide a brief overview of the previous research related to the proposed study, describe the rationale for the project, the hypotheses, the study's methodology, the statistical procedures planned to analyze the data, and potential study limitations.

Dissertation proposal and defense meetings are open to members of the Xavier University academic community. Undergraduate and graduate students are encouraged to attend these meetings, although only committee members are permitted to pose questions or make comments. Guests at the meeting leave before the committee begins its deliberations, and are not present for any feedback given to the student.

There are three possible outcomes of a dissertation proposal meeting: (1) pass with revisions; (2) major revisions/remediation required; or (3) proposal not accepted. The outcome is determined by majority vote of the Committee. The Dissertation Committee judges the proposal largely in terms of the adequacy of the research plan. However, they will also consider the student's knowledge of the literature and ability to describe and discuss all features of proposed study. The Dissertation Committee also considers how the proposed project provides protection of human participants, in preparation for its review by Xavier's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The possible outcomes are described in greater detail below:

1. *Pass with revisions.* The study is accepted, but changes to the study and proposal document are needed. The Dissertation Chair oversees these changes. The changes required by the Committee are recorded on the Dissertation Proposal form; copies of this form are given to the student and the Dissertation Chair and a copy is placed in the student's file to serve as a record of the meeting. A revised copy of the dissertation proposal (signed by the Dissertation Chair) is to be submitted to the School Chair within two weeks of the meeting. The accepted proposal serves as a contract between the student and School for successful completion of the dissertation. This is the most common outcome of Proposal meetings.
2. *Major revisions/remediation required.* In this outcome, substantial revisions or additions to the written document are required or the student failed to present the study adequately in the proposal meeting. The deficiencies of the proposal or presentation are discussed with the student and documented on the Dissertation Proposal form and placed in the student's file. A subsequent proposal meeting is required, but it cannot occur sooner than one month after the initial meeting. At that meeting, the Dissertation Committee will evaluate the quality of the new proposal and the student's presentation and decide on an outcome. All three previously listed outcomes are possible

following the second proposal meeting. This outcome could jeopardize the student's ability to meet School deadlines, such as the fall deadline for internship applications.

3. *Proposal is not accepted.* The grounds for this decision include, among others, unsuitability of the problem, a poorly prepared proposal document, a poor research plan and procedure, and/or a determination that the student has inadequate understanding of the area. A Dissertation Proposal form is completed by the Dissertation Chair, filed with the School Chair and placed in the student's file to document this action. If the student chooses to pursue the project, the student must wait a minimum of three months after the initial proposal meeting before convening another proposal meeting. This outcome could prevent a student from meeting School deadlines.

H. The "Completed" Proposal

The proposal meeting inevitably produces changes to the written document and/or research plan. Because the proposal constitutes the first four chapters of the final (bound) dissertation, all revisions that are agreed upon at the proposal meeting must be made to the document and submitted to the Dissertation Chair within two weeks of the proposal meeting. When the revised proposal has been approved and signed by the Dissertation Chair, it is submitted to the School office and placed in the student's file. It is only at this point that the student has met the dissertation requirements for applying for internship. The letters of recommendation to internship sites will not be released until the Dissertation Chair verifies that the required changes have been made.

The revised proposal constitutes a contract between the student and the University, with the Dissertation Committee serving as the official representative. The student cannot alter the design or plan of research after the revised proposal has been submitted to the School without the approval of the Dissertation Committee (see below). If the student does not follow the approved plan, the Committee may fail the dissertation at the defense.

I. Managing Changes to the Research Plan After the Proposal Has Been Accepted

If circumstances arise that require changes to the research plan as described in the accepted Dissertation Proposal, the Dissertation Chair and the Committee must be advised of the situation and

approve those changes before the student moves forward with the study. Any request for changes to the dissertation could require another meeting of the Committee. The changes will generally be documented in changes to the (previously accepted) proposal; however, it is possible that a new proposal may need to be written. Accepted changes to the research plan are to be documented on the Dissertation Proposal Change Form and signed by all members of the Committee. The new (or altered) proposal and Dissertation Proposal Change Form will be placed in the student's School file. *Changes to the study plan may also require that the study be re-reviewed by the IRB, typically through a Modification form. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the IRB to determine if review is necessary.*

J. Changing research topic. If circumstances arise such that the student must abandon a research project that he/she is pursuing (whether before or after the Dissertation Proposal Meeting), the dissertation chair is under no obligation to continue to serve in the chair role if the student opts to pursue a project that is outside the expertise of that faculty member. A change to the dissertation topic will require that the student develop a new dissertation proposal and, in essence, begin the dissertation process over. If conflicts arise between the student and his/her dissertation chair, or if the dissertation chair can no longer serve in the role of chair, the student should seek the direction of the School Chair.

K. Submitting the Project to the Xavier University IRB

In keeping with University policy, all research projects conducted by Xavier University students involving human subjects must be approved by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). If data are to be collected at sites other than Xavier University, approval by other IRBs may also be necessary. No data are to be collected until all relevant IRBs approve the project. Information about submitting proposals can be found in *The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Subjects in Research: Policies and Procedures* (at XU website www.xavier.edu/irb); it also includes sample consent forms, application materials and other information to assist in applying. Students should be aware that the process of IRB approval can take several weeks, especially if the study involves special populations or involves review by other institutions.

Before it can be approved by the School Chair, all final dissertations require documentation of IRB approval (or exemption from that requirement) by including a letter from Xavier University's IRB (and any other IRBs, if relevant) among the material submitted with the final document.

II. Outline of the Dissertation Proposal

A. Basic Elements and Format

Below is a list, in order, of the pages and sections of the dissertation proposal:

1. A University approved first page indicating that this is a dissertation proposal presented to the faculty of Xavier University with space for approval signatures by the School Chair and the Dissertation Chair. (See Appendix B).
2. Title page--the title of the dissertation is presented in full. (See Appendix C).
3. List of members of Dissertation Committee, with appropriate academic rank or credentials indicated. The Dissertation Chair is listed first, with the Committee members following, in alphabetical order (See Appendix D).
4. Acknowledgments--if desired. *This is written after the dissertation is successfully defended.*
5. Table of Contents--(See Appendix E).
6. List of Tables--if any (indicate page number[s] for each). (See Appendix F).
7. List of Figures--if any (indicate page number[s] for each). (See Appendix G).
8. List of Appendices (includes measures, questionnaires, etc. referenced in proposal with page number[s] for each). (See Appendix H).
- 9.* Review of the Literature (Chapter I) --The relevant literature is reviewed and discussed in order to provide a detailed background for the proposed study. The length of this section varies depending on the amount of relevant literature. Dissertation Chairs can help provide guidance regarding length and areas to be covered. This section is written in the past tense.
- 10.* Rationale and Hypotheses (Chapter II) --This section begins with a brief

(usually 1 ½ -2 pages) summary of the relevant literature, followed by a formal statement of the hypotheses. Hypotheses are stated in the present tense, and can be presented either in the null or alternate form; the form chosen is left to the discretion of the student in consultation with the Dissertation Chair. Whatever the form of the stated hypothesis, it is always the null hypothesis that is tested statistically.

- 11.* Method (Chapter III) -- This section describes participants, design of the investigation, measures or instruments, and procedure. Number of participants necessary to insure adequate power should be stated in the proposal, with the actual effect size and power included in the Results section of Chapter V. Descriptions of the measures should include psychometric information, including validity and reliability. The Procedure is a narrative account of exactly how each element of the research will be investigated. Except for the report of previous validity and reliability findings, this section of the proposal is usually written in the future tense.
- 12.* Proposed Analyses (Chapter IV) -- The plan of analysis for each hypothesis is to be clearly indicated. A clear statement should be included indicating the level(s) of significance to be used. Some Dissertation Chairs may also want students to discuss study limitations in this section.
13. References -- This list is to include all literature cited in the proposal and should be presented strictly following APA style (consult most recent *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*).
14. Appendices --This section presents information about measures, supplementary data, description of participants where relevant, and/or the IRB approval letter and other IRB materials (the latter three may only apply to the final dissertation manuscript). In addition to the typical tables and figures included in a manuscript, raw data may be included in the appendices.

15. Summary - - A 500-1000 word description of the study designed to be used as a submission for presentation at a professional conference. If a particular conference has been identified, the designated format can be used. Otherwise, students should use the following subheadings to organize the summary: Problem; Method; Findings; Implications (See Appendix I).
16. Press release - - This is a paragraph long (100 to 150 words) description of the highlights of your study, written in a manner that could be understood by the general public. With your chair's approval, this may be shared with the Xavier University Communications Office (see Appendix J).

*The starred items are to be listed as Chapters I through V in the Table of Contents and on the top of the first page of the respective Chapters. Pages on which these sections begin are to be indicated in the Table of Contents. The References and Appendices sections, including pages on which they begin, are also listed in the Table of Contents.

B. Page layout:

The page design for the proposal is as follows:

Margins: Left - - 1 inch; Right - - no less than 1 inch (no right margin justification);

Bottom - - 1 inch; Top - - 1 inch, with the exception of chapter heading pages, which have a 2 inch margin. All pages except the University approved first (signature) page have a running head (using the format of the current *APA Publication Manual*) and are numbered consecutively with the page number at the top extreme right. The document should be printed from a laser printer using a Times New Roman 12 pt. font. All text and tables are double spaced.

C. Formatting figures and landscaped tables.

Some tables and figures may need to be landscaped to most clearly present their information. Many students have struggled to find a means to landscape tables and figures and place the running head and page number in the correct portion of the page, especially when using Microsoft Word. Although there does not seem to be an easy way to accomplish this feat in Word, we offer the following strategy that has worked for most students:

1. Create the landscape table/figure in Word, but not in the dissertation document.
2. Copy and paste it into another program, either Powerpoint (not all versions of Powerpoint will work for this) or MS Paint.
3. Save it as a .jpg file.
4. In an image viewing program (e.g., Photoshop), rotate the image 90 degrees counter clockwise so the top margin is on the left side of the page. Save again.
5. Insert the picture of the table into the thesis/dissertation on the appropriate page, using Insert-Picture from Word's menus.

Appendices K and L present landscaped tables and figures produced using this strategy.

D. Copyright Issues.

In order to avoid copyright violations, only measures written by the student and/or the dissertation chair are to be included in the final print or electronic documents that are released after the defense. Copies of most measures are to be included in documents given to the committee for review at the proposal and defense meetings as Appendices, but those are removed after the defense meeting. In the Appendices of the final document, in lieu of the measure itself, specific information that would allow the reader to access or review the measure is listed. This might involve a citation to a journal article in which the measure is reproduced; the author's website address or email contact, and/or; the publisher's website. See Appendix M for an example.

According to the American Psychological Association, copyright permission is required for the following:

- A measure, scale, or instrument
- A video
- Full articles or book chapters
- Single text extracts of more than 400 words
- Series of text extracts that total more than 800 words
- More than three figures or tables from any one journal article

- More than three figures or tables from any one book chapter
- Placement of an abstract of a journal article in a database for subsequent redistribution
- Reuse of content from the public APA web site unless there is a copyright notice on that material stating otherwise
- Content essential to the character of the previously published book or article, when reuse could compromise the sale of the APA publication. Examples include complex illustrations, cartoons, maps, works of art, creative photographs.

The list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. In addition, APA will not grant permission for use of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or any portion of the Manual with the exception of the 'Guidelines to Reduce Bias in Language,' which appears on pages 71-77 in the sixth edition. Nor will APA grant permission for use of any products derived from the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, the *APA Dictionary of Psychology* and derivative products, or publications from Magination Press.

Finally, according to APA, permission is *not* required for the following:

- a maximum of three figures or tables from a journal article or book chapter, except as noted in 2 above
- single text extracts of less than 400 words, except as noted in 2 above
- series of text extracts that total less than 800 words, except as noted in 2 above

No formal requests to APA or the author are required for the items in this clause.

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Permissions link associated with that item. The majority of requests to use APA copyrighted content will be processed through Rightslink®. (Information reprinted with copyright permission from APA).

III. Finishing the Dissertation

A. Conducting the Study/Data Collection

If the study involves human participants, no data are collected until the study has been approved by the Xavier University IRB. Unless otherwise stipulated by the Dissertation Chair, the student is solely responsible for the execution of the study, including recruitment of participants and data collection (see Appendix N for School procedures for recruitment of participants from the psychology participant pool). Likewise, the student is responsible for all costs incurred in carrying out the dissertation study, such as copying materials or purchasing copyrighted questionnaires and measures. The Dissertation Chair can provide assistance in solving problems that might arise as the project proceeds.

B. Analyzing the Data

The student is responsible for all data analyses, unless specifically described in the dissertation proposal. Consultation with knowledgeable faculty members or statistical consultants is allowed, but analyses should be completed by the student. The Dissertation Chair can be used as a resource in managing difficulties that might arise.

C. Retention of Data/Chair's Access to Data

It is common for faculty members to request that the student provide him or her with a copy of the electronic database in order to verify the accuracy of the data and/or its organization in the data file. Students are to make data files available to the dissertation chair at any point it is requested in the process of the study. Students should also be aware that APA requires that all data ("raw" data and copies of electronic files) be securely maintained for five years after publication of findings. For the dissertation, this would be five year following completion of all degree requirements. If there is a published study that results from the dissertation, the student is required to securely maintain the data for five years following publication.

D. Format of Chapter V (Final Dissertation Document)

Chapter V follows APA format for manuscripts submitted for publication, and it is helpful to consult the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. As a general guideline, this document will be 20-25 pages in length, but the final decision on length is left to the Dissertation Chair. Consistent with the start of previous chapters, "Chapter V" should be listed in the Table of Contents and "Chapter V" and "Dissertation" are centered and placed at the top of the page, followed on the next line by "Abstract" and then by the text of the Abstract. Consistent with the *Publication Manual*, the title of the dissertation should be placed on the next page, followed by the introduction to the study. Chapter V has its own reference list, tables, figures, and appendices (some of which are repeated from the proposal document). After the defense and following the required changes that arise from the defense meeting, Chapter V is modified for electronic submission to OhioLink (see Section F below for details). In addition to the typical tables and figures included in a manuscript, raw data may be included in the appendices; the decision to include this information is made at the discretion of the Dissertation Chair.

E. The Dissertation Defense Meeting

The student is responsible for scheduling the time and location of the dissertation defense and informing the School administrative assistant of such information. As is the case with the proposal, these arrangements are not made until the Dissertation Chair feels that the dissertation is in proper shape for the defense. However, the dissertation defense must be successfully completed with all necessary revisions made by Friday of the first full week of April in order for a student to participate in the subsequent May Commencement ceremony. Each member of the Dissertation Committee is to be given a copy of the entire dissertation document (all five chapters), at least two weeks prior to the arranged defense date. Committee members are to be provided with "hard" copies of the document; the document is not to be sent via email or faxed.

The defense meeting is open to the Xavier academic community. If the student wishes to invite anyone outside the academic community, the Dissertation Chair must grant permission prior to the meeting. *Generally, family members or non-professionals do not attend the defense meeting*, although undergraduate

and graduate students are encouraged to attend. During the defense meeting, the student formally presents an overview of the study and its findings. Committee members are free to ask questions about the purpose, methods, and results presented in the document, along with questions on related areas consistent with the context of the dissertation. Only committee members ask questions or make comments during the defense meeting, and guests leave prior to the committee's deliberation. Guests are also not present when feedback is provided to the student.

The Dissertation Committee will come to a judgment about the dissertation based upon the written document and the oral defense. The decision concerning the outcome of the dissertation defense meeting is by majority vote of the Committee. The dissertation and its defense are assigned a Pass/Fail grade on the student's transcript. Three possible judgments can be made:

1. *Pass with revisions*: The candidate has passed the defense, subject to revisions to be overseen by the Dissertation Chair or by a designated Committee member.
2. *Major revisions/remediation required*: This could arise because of deficiencies in the document or inadequate presentation at the defense meeting that require remediation. Changes to the document require that all committee members participate in the revisions of the document and/or a subsequent defense meeting. At the conclusion of the defense meeting, the committee will determine if the student must make significant modifications to the dissertation document and/or to defend the dissertation at another defense meeting. If a subsequent defense is required, it can occur no sooner than one month after the initial meeting. The student also may be required to register for *Continuous Major Research PSYC 790* (3 credit hours) if the completion of revisions extends beyond a second defense meeting and if such revisions extend into a new academic semester. The student should also be aware that this outcome may jeopardize his or her meeting School deadlines, such as the April deadline to participate in the May Commencement ceremony.
3. *Fail*: The candidate has failed the defense. This outcome would occur, for example, if the study departs markedly from the plan described in the proposal, or if there are ethical violations such as plagiarism or fraudulent data collection. Under the latter circumstances, the student may also face disciplinary measures at the University and/or be recommended for expulsion from the program.

F. Bound Paper Copy and Electronic Version of Full Dissertation Document

The student is responsible for providing a paper copy, printed on only one side of the page, of the complete dissertation document (Chs I – V) to the School. This copy is reviewed by the Dissertation Chair and the School Chair, each of whom will sign the cover sheet if it meets the requirements of the Dissertation Committee’s changes and is properly formatted. The School will bind this copy of the completed and approved document and keep that in the School.

The student will also provide his/her Dissertation Chair with an electronic copy of the complete document; this document should be the electronic version of the paper copy described above. The Dissertation Chair will review and electronically sign this document, place a watermark in the document that states “For Internal Xavier University Use Only” and forward the document to the School Chair, who will also review and electronically sign the document if it is in acceptable format. The School Chair then sends the document to the School Administrative Assistant who will convert it to a .pdf and store in an electronic repository that allows current students and faculty to access it.

An electronic copy of Chapter V is then modified to include the cover page, Dissertation Committee page, Title page, Acknowledgements, a Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures (if relevant) that present information for Chapter V only. See Appendix O for information about how to submit this electronically to the library for inclusion in to [OhioLINK’s Electronic Theses & Dissertations \(ETD\) Center](#). After the document is uploaded, the School of Psychology library liaison verifies that all information for submission is complete; the library liaison notifies the School of Psychology administrative assistant that this feature of the dissertation requirement has been completed.

G. Dissertation Grade

The dissertation is graded Pass/Fail. The dissertation grade will only appear on a student's transcript when Xavier Library personnel verify that the document has been successfully filed with OhioLink, and the completed paper copy has been approved in the School (see F. above). Until the dissertation grade is listed on the transcript, along with the grades for all other academic/internship requirements, a student has not

earned and cannot represent him- or herself as having earned a Psy.D. degree in Clinical Psychology from Xavier University.

H. Publication and Presentation of the Dissertation Study

All students are encouraged to pursue publication in academic journals and presentation of the dissertation at relevant conferences. In doing so, the student and Dissertation Chair are encouraged to discuss authorship of any presentations and publications arising from the study. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* provides information to consider when assigning authorship, but as a general rule, students can expect to be the first author of publications that are based on the work they presented as Chapter V of the dissertation, and the Dissertation Chair is generally the second author. However, this order may change or others may be included as authors to recognize substantial contributions that individuals have made to the study. This most commonly occurs if the final manuscript submitted for publication has been substantially rewritten by the Dissertation Chair (or another person who participated in the study design, analysis, or writing). *If the student does not pursue presentation or publication of the dissertation within two years following the date of the defense, the Dissertation Chair may assume responsibility for that process, which could result in a change in authorship order.* To avoid misunderstanding about authorship, students and Chairs are encouraged to discuss authorship early in the dissertation process, and to revisit the issue as the dissertation is completed and work begins on the publication process.

Appendix A

ESTIMATED PROGRESSION OF THE DISSERTATION

During the **first year** of the program, review faculty research areas to identify topics that interest you. Using class assignments such as papers and presentations to further explore areas when possible. Think about learning statistics as an investment. Learn and practice RefWorks with papers. Start narrowing down your ideas.

In the **second year**, work with a faculty member, individually or as part of a research team, to begin to develop a research question. If you choose your life's passion, be careful that you can still like it at the end of the dissertation. Use *Advanced Research Methods* and *Issues in Applied Research* classes to further develop possible methods. Use the summer to do more reading and writing.

Requirement: By December of your third year, at latest, you must identify a Dissertation Chair and submit a 2-4 page dissertation prospectus, signed by your Chair to the School Office. By becoming your Dissertation Chair, that professor becomes your academic adviser. If you do not have a prospectus accepted, you may not register for spring courses. You need to turn a copy of your prospectus in to the School administrative assistant and fill out a small, pink form identifying your Dissertation Chair and a working dissertation title

It may be helpful to think about the Dissertation process as occurring across phases. The outline below also helps explain why the dissertation process can be very lengthy.

1. In the Proposal Phase, which typically lasts 6-8 months at minimum, meet with your Chair or research team regularly to formulate a testable research question. Read the literature. (Different people find different note taking and organization methods to be useful. RefWorks is a free and convenient reference management system that may be helpful.) Produce a draft of your proposal. Assume you will need 4-6 drafts. You should allow your Chair two weeks per draft, although there could be times when the chair will require more time to review drafts. Estimated time: 5 drafts X (2 weeks turnaround + your writing time) = easily 6 months. Proposing your dissertation in your third year is recommended. You can, of course, propose earlier but need to finish the statistics sequence and pass all required first year classes first.

Requirement: You must propose and make all necessary revisions before you may apply for internship your fourth fall. Your Committee members must be allowed two weeks between the time you give them a copy and the proposal meeting. Revisions inevitably result from the proposal meeting (often improving quality of study or even making it more feasible). **They are to be finished by the end of two weeks after the proposal meeting.** Your Chair needs time to read and OK them indicated by the Chair's signature on the final, revised copy. **Submit this revised proposal to the School administrative assistant for your file.**

2. **Requirement: Human Subjects Review Phase. You must submit your study to the Xavier Institutional Review Board.** Allow at least 1 month for the Xavier University IRB and its requests for further revisions. If you have to submit your study to other IRB's this can take additional time.

3. Data Phase. There is a tradeoff between the apparent security of an archival study and the flexibility of new data collection. A lot depends on whether the archived data are of high quality and answers the questions you want to answer. Neither is inherently or consistently shorter. Data collection is recommended for the summer before your **fourth year** or that fall. Keep in mind that it often takes time to recruit subjects or to get permission to enter systems (hospitals, schools, prisons, etc.) for data collection. It also takes time to get all your materials ready, and do any photocopying, collating, commercial scale ordering etc. Gather your data, do any necessary scoring as you go so you can see errors and prevent more.

4. Data Analysis. Create your database and enter the data. Analyze the data according to your proposal. Seek assistance from your dissertation chair, if necessary. Review your findings with your chair to assure that you have entered, analyzed, reported, and interpreted your data correctly. **It is strongly recommended that at least this phase be completed prior to leaving for internship.**

5. Writing Chapter V. There is a detailed guide to writing and format requirements for Chapter V in other portions of this manual. Chapter V of your dissertation is in journal form, so a focused review of the literature and less detailed Method section is part of it. Write a complete draft of that chapter and turn it into your Chair for the first of several revisions. Turnaround will take about two weeks each time, maybe more during certain times of the academic year. Expect multiple revisions.

Requirement: When you and your Chair agree that the document is ready for final defense, you need to distribute the complete dissertation (i.e., all 5 chapter, required cover pages, appendices, etc.) to your Committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled oral defense. Expect revisions to come from the defense. Revisions should be finished in two weeks and submitted to your Chair for final review and signature. The document is then submitted to the School Chair for review and signature. Once final signatures have been obtained, submit the required copies to the School for binding. When the signed copies are accepted in the School, you are finished. Your grades for research will be changed and you should celebrate your accomplishment.

To be hooded in the May graduation ceremony (the only formal hooding of the year), everything for the dissertation(including changes) must be completed by the first week in April.

If you are still doing your internship, your doctorate will be conferred in late August when you successfully complete it. If you have finished your internship and all other requirements, you can call yourself “Doctor” right away and you will receive your actual degree at the next one of the three dates when the University confers degrees.

Also, remember that faculty are not always available – sabbaticals are scheduled, illnesses occur, or travel happens. Most faculty are on 9 month contracts and are not obligated to be available during summers and holidays. You should consider faculty availability as you anticipate how long the dissertation process will take.

APPENDIX B
Sample Cover Sheet

A Dissertation Proposal *
Submitted to the Faculty
of
Xavier University
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Psychology
by
(Name)

(Date- - Month, day, year of proposal/defense)

Approved:

(Name of current Chair of the School of Psychology)
Chair, School of Psychology

(Name of faculty member)
Dissertation Chair

*Note: include "Proposal" on cover sheet for proposal; omit for final dissertation document

APPENDIX C

Sample Title Page

Family Characteristics of
Bulimic and Non-bulimic Adolescents

APPENDIX D

Sample Dissertation Committee Page

Dissertation Committee

Chair	W. Michael Nelson, III, Ph.D., ABPP Professor of Psychology
Member	John J. Barrett, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Psychology
Member	Kathleen J. Hart, Ph.D., ABPP Professor of Psychology

APPENDIX E
Sample Table of Contents

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* Note: Chapter V and the Summary do not appear in the Table of Contents in the proposal but do appear in the final document.

APPENDIX F
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Appendix I Sample Summary

Title: Cluster Analysis of Juvenile Offenders' MACI Profiles

Problem. While there is general agreement that juvenile offenders are a heterogeneous group, few empirical strategies have been used to identify subgroups of offenders until recently. Within the last few years, several studies have used Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI) profiles to identify subcategories of juvenile offenders (e.g., Stefurak, Calhoun & Glaser, 2004; Taylor, Kemper, Loney & Kistner, 2006). Overall, these studies identified clusters of youths with distinct characteristics, such as antisocial features, impulsive/depressive features, conforming features and internalizing features. However, these studies were limited by fairly small data sets and a failure to provide other indicators for the validity of the profiles generated. We attempted to correct for these limitations by examining a much larger sample size ($N = 680$) and using scores on the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) to provide external validity for the clusters generated by hierarchical cluster analysis of MACI profiles of first-time male juvenile offenders.

Method. We used data generated by the routine psychological assessment of 680 young men who were evaluated through a Juvenile Court-run assessment program. This program, which requires that youth to remain at a facility for two weeks, is multi-disciplinary and results in recommendations to the Court about how to best manage the youth. The program serves first-time offenders, primarily, but the nature of the offenses for youths in the program varies considerably, from misdemeanor and status offenses to felonies. The mean age of this group was 15.61 ($SD = 1.19$) with a range from 13 to 17 years. Racial breakdown was 70.9% African-American, 26.0% Caucasian, and 2.9% Other. This breakdown is similar to that of the youths housed in the detention center I this county. Using an anonymized dataset comprised of the psychological test scores of the youths who has undergone assessment, we conducted Hierarchical Cluster Analysis. A five cluster solution was

deemed to best represent this sample.

Findings. We labeled the five clusters generated as: Internalizing, Conforming, Antisocial, Depressive/Delinquent and Reactive/Abused. The Conforming Cluster ($n = 366$) included nearly half of the sample, indicating that many of these youths act out in attempt to “fit in” and gain peer acceptance. The Internalizing Cluster ($n = 138$) consisted of youths who tend to experience anxiety and depression, as well as social difficulties. Youths in the Antisocial Cluster ($n = 57$) endorsed items indicating rebellious, impulsive, sensation-seeking tendencies. These youths likely have little regard for social norms and lack empathy for others. The Depressive/ Delinquent Cluster ($n = 73$) is comprised of youths who have low self-esteem, disinterest in life and hopelessness, in addition to behavioral problems, including impulsivity, oppositionality and lack of concern over social norms. Last, youths in the Reactive/Abused Cluster ($n = 45$) also endorse symptoms of depression and rule-breaking behavior, but in the context of a history of child abuse.

A MANOVA yielded a significant difference across cluster groups on the CBCL Syndrome Scales, Wilks' Lambda = .85, $F(4, 356) = 1.18, p = .004$. All but one scale (Somatic Complaints) differed significantly across cluster groups on one way ANOVAs. However, it is notable that the mean scores for the Anxious-Depressed, Withdrawn-Depressed, Social Problems, Thought Problems and Attention Problems scales of the CBCL were in the Normal range for all five MACI cluster groups. In contrast, the mean score on the Rule-Breaking scale was in the Borderline or Clinical range for all five clusters, and, for three of five clusters, the Aggressive Behavior was within the Borderline or Clinical range. Chi-square analyses indicate that there are no significant differences in offender type across MACI cluster groups.

Implications. The clusters generated by MACI profiles of juvenile offenders further support the notion that juvenile offenders are a heterogeneous group. Based on information from the CBCL, it

appears that other raters are prone to endorse more externalizing characteristics, as opposed to internalizing characteristics, which were more commonly endorsed by the juveniles. Creating intervention strategies according to the psychological and behavioral needs of youths in each cluster will likely be more effective in their treating mental health needs and in preventing future offending.

Appendix J

Sample Press Release

Press Release

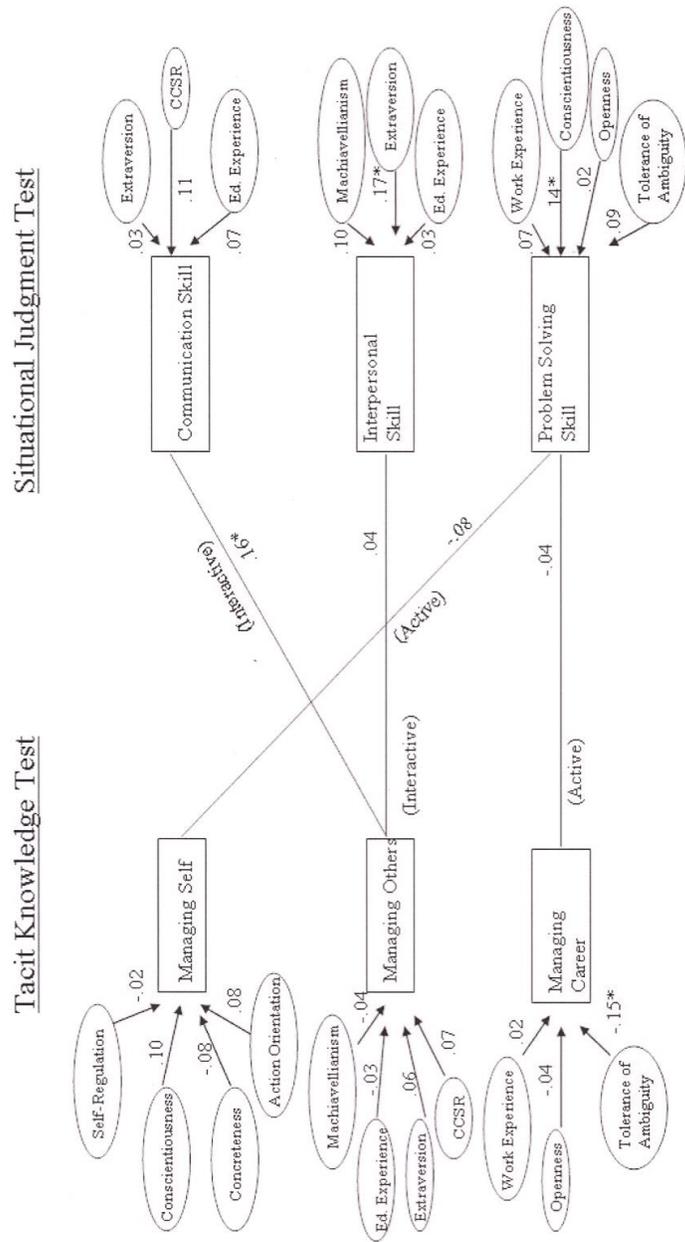
March 31, 2017 (date of dissertation defense)

A Validation Study of the Neuropsychological Assessment Battery's Numbers & Letters Test

CINCINNATI – Psychologists stress the importance of a comprehensive evaluation to determine whether an individual has Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The Numbers & Letters (NL) Test is a neuropsychological test that measures an individual's attention and processing speed abilities. This measure has not been evaluated with college students being evaluated for ADHD and Learning Disorders (LD). This study showed that students who were ultimately diagnosed with ADHD performed worse than would be expected on six out of seven of the scores produced by the NL test. Additionally, NL scores were associated with students' performance on other measures of attention and processing speed suggesting that this measure in fact measures what the test developers believe it measures. This study suggests that the NL test is appropriate for use as part of a larger comprehensive battery of tests when assessing for ADHD.

Appendix K

Sample Landscaped Figure



Note: * = $p < .05$

Appendix L

Sample Landscaped Table

Table 6

Intercorrelations and Reliabilities of Key Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Match Percentage	--											
2. Psychosocial Assistance	.23	(.79)										
3. Role Modeling	.03	.71**	--									
4. Acceptance and Confirmation	.19	.87**	.41*	--								
5. Counseling	.32	.83**	.63**	.56**	--							
6. Friendship	.16	.74**	.21	.78**	.36*	--						
7. Career-Related Assistance	.20	.74**	.71**	.55**	.63**	.44**	(.88)					
8. Sponsorship	.21	.63**	.49**	.44**	.57**	.46**	.82**	--				
9. Exposure and Visibility	.12	.56**	.60**	.51**	.34*	.34*	.84**	.64**	--			
10. Coaching	.07	.68**	.73**	.44**	.69**	.26	.86**	.64**	.66**	--		
11. Protection	.23	.67**	.64**	.49**	.53**	.47**	.90**	.65**	.67**	.74**	--	
12. Challenging Work	.20	.48**	.41**	.37*	.43**	.31	.66**	.39*	.40*	.39*	.65**	--

(table continues)

Appendix M

Sample Appendix for Copyrighted Measure

Appendix XX

Instruments Used

The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) is protected by copyright so it is not reproduced in this document. This measure is available through Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. at www.parinc.com.

APPENDIX N

SCHOOL PROCEDURES ON RECRUITMENT FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY PARTICIPANT POOL

Participant Pool

Rationale

A participant pool within the School of Psychology is utilized by both faculty and students for coursework and independent research. Also, for students and faculty working on research, including theses, dissertations, certain course requirements, and independent projects, having an organized participant pool for collecting data from a college population is desirable. It eliminates the difficulty of recruiting participants from individual classes and creates an understanding among the undergraduates of their responsibility to participate in research at Xavier.

Responsibilities of the Researcher

Recruitment

At least two months prior to the start of a new semester, researchers should submit to the research liaison (typically Dr. End's GA) the approximate number of participants and hours expected to be utilized for the upcoming semester. This does not apply to students enrolled in courses in which they will be needing participants for various assignments (i.e. *Research Methods and Design II* and *Assessment I: Cognitive*).

Sign-up Process

Researchers will create and post sign-up sheets on the bulletin board on the second floor of Elet Hall (example forms will be emailed to the primary researcher after we receive notification of the researcher's intent to use the participant pool). The sign-up sheets will consist of the investigator's name, title or purpose of project, participant requirements (if any), date/time/location of the project, and approximate length of time to complete. Also, confirmation receipts with contact information should be attached to the sign-up sheets that the participants can take with them as a reminder.

*If a project is not time consuming (e.g. five minutes), it would be a more efficient use of the participant pool to have that project “piggyback” on another study.

Before Data Collection

Before collecting data, the researcher will remove the sign-up sheet from the bulletin board (although the researcher should still provide information of where, when, etc., data are being collected). Students should sign their name on the sign-up sheet in the margin next to the information provided to sign up. Their professor’s name should be written clearly (If we cannot determine one’s instructor, one will not receive credit). The researcher will **CLEARLY** mark on the sheet if the participant is present or absent (this sheet will be turned into Dr. End’s GA’s mailbox).

After Data Collection

The researcher will distribute credit slips to the participants. The credit slip will consist of the participant’s name, the professor’s name, course name, the researcher’s name (**make sure you sign**), title or purpose of the project, and date and start/stop times. For students who signed up to participate, but failed to show up or provide a 24 hour cancellation notice, the researcher will fill out a no-show slip for that student. The no-show slip will consist of the student’s name, the professor’s name, course name, researcher’s name, date and time, approximate number of hours lost, and title or purpose of the project. Next, the researcher will be responsible for putting the no-show slips, as well as the sign-up sheet that **CLEARLY** indicates who was absent/present, in Dr. End’s GA’s mailbox.

APPENDIX O

Submitting Dissertation to OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center and other Final Requirements in Document Processing to Complete the Dissertation

Psychology doctoral students submit the approved electronic version of Chapter V, along with the University approved signature page and the other introductory pages, to [OhioLINK's Electronic Theses & Dissertations \(ETD\) Center](#).

Students' Responsibilities—Part I:

1. The student makes all changes required by the Dissertation Committee after the defense.
2. The student submits the full dissertation (Chapters I – V, with all accompanying cover pages, tables, appendices, etc.) to the dissertation chair in both an electronic and paper version.
3. As a separate document, the student reformats Chapter V to be a stand-alone document. This requires:
 - a. Copying Chapter V into a separate document
 - b. Taking “Chapter V” and “Dissertation” off the first page of that document
 - c. Copying and pasting the introductory pages from the long document (the signature page, Title Page, List of Committee Members, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, List of Appendices) to the front of Chapter V
 - d. Adjust the page numbers in the Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, and List of Appendices to match the new numbering (since Chs I-IV are no longer in the document)
 - e. Suppress the running head on the signature page (only). [This is found under the header/footer tab; check “different first page.”]
4. The student sends the reformatted Chapter V document (as a Word document) to the Dissertation chair for review/approval.

Dissertation Chair's/School Chair's Responsibilities:

When the Dissertation Chair has reviewed the electronic (short document—previously Ch V) and hard copy (the long document, Chs I-V) documents and agrees that all required changes have been made, the following will occur:

Electronic Chapter V document:

1. The dissertation chair will type his/her name onto the cover page, and then
2. Send the approved document to the School Chair as an email attachment (in Word)
3. If the School Chair approves the document, s/he will type his/her name on the signature page
4. The School Chair will forward the approved signed document to the School administrative assistant; the administrative assistant will then save the document as a .pdf and send the document back to the student, along with the instructions for how to submit the document to OhioLink.

5. The School administrative assistant will copy Vicki Young (library liaison) on the email to the student

Electronic Full Document:

1. After reviewing the document to determine that all required changes have been made and that the document is correctly formatted, The dissertation chair will type his/her name onto the cover page, and then
2. Send the approved document to the School Chair as an email attachment (in Word)
3. If the School Chair approves the document, s/he will type his/her name on the signature page
4. The School Chair will forward the approved signed document to the School administrative assistant; the administrative assistant will then add a watermark stating “For Internal Xavier University Use Only” and save the document as a .pdf
5. This document is then stored in a repository that allows current Xavier graduate students and faculty to access.

Hard copy (complete) document:

6. The dissertation chair will provide the School Chair with the hard copy that she/he has signed as soon as possible after sending the electronic (Ch. V) document to the School Chair
7. The School Chair reviews the hard copy and signs the cover page
8. The School administrative assistant has the paper copy bound; that copy is retained in the School.

Students’ Responsibilities—Part II:

Electronic document:

1. Student follows instructions in the email about accessing and uploading the approved .pdf document to OhioLink
2. Once Vicki Young/library liaison receives notification that the document has been uploaded to OhioLink and that all necessary information has been provided, she will notify the School administrative assistant that the process is complete

Once the hard copy is signed by the Chair and Dissertation Chair, AND the uploading of the electronic copy has been verified, the student will have completed all requirements for the dissertation; his/her grade will be released from the School to the registrar. AT THIS POINT, THE STUDENT HAS COMPLETED ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DISSERTATION.