

**A GUIDE TO  
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL, PREPARATION,  
AND DEFENSE**

**DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT 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 one of the 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 Department of Psychology faculty member, the Dissertation Chair.

Dissertation projects vary substantially, so it is difficult to describe procedures that apply to all students. This handbook is designed to give pertinent information regarding the dissertation process and should be considered only as a guide. In general, the dissertation process involves seven steps. These steps are described in greater detail in the following pages (see Appendix A for an Estimated Progression of the Dissertation):

- (1) Prospectus is 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 is a written document that contains an extensive literature review and a research plan;
- (3) Proposal meeting is with the Dissertation Committee in which the Committee evaluates the quality of the dissertation proposal (including the written document and the study features);
- (4) Accepted Dissertation Proposal is 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 proposal is submitted to the Department Chair prior to applications for internship;
- (5) Chapter V is a summary of the research, written in APA manuscript style;

- (6) Dissertation defense meeting is with the Dissertation Committee in which the results of the research project are presented and evaluated by the Committee;
- (7) Final dissertation contains the accepted dissertation (revised) proposal, Chapter V (following revisions from the defense meeting), and all relevant materials (e.g., appendices). This is bound and maintained in both the University library and Department library.

**A. Where To Begin**

Upon entering the doctoral program, every student is assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor can be a resource for research ideas 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. Many faculty members pursue lines of research that allow for student collaboration and result in dissertation projects. Students are encouraged to pursue research projects that coincide with faculty interest and expertise (e.g., an area in which the advisor has published or an area in which the advisor practices). *The Dissertation Chair must be a full-time faculty member in the Department 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 Department 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 3<sup>rd</sup> year, but cannot take any other courses or further advance toward the final degree (i.e., cannot take the CCE) until the program 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 Department.

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 Department 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 should provide a rationale for that person's involvement in writing to the Department Chair and should alert the professional to submit her/his vitae for the Department Chair's review. The student is responsible to submit the names

of the proposed Dissertation Committee members in writing to the Department secretary. All appointments to Dissertation Committees are made by the Department Chair, taking the student's requests and preferences into account (along with other considerations). The Department 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 Department secretary). The Department Chair is also provided with a copy of the proposal at the same time as Dissertation Committee members. The Department Chair attends proposal and defense meetings at his or her discretion.

**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 Department secretary in writing, who will post the date, time, and location of the meeting on the Elet first floor department 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 copies of the proposal document to the Committee members and the Department Chair. For the dissertation defense, 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 Department 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 Department 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. 8-11).

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 Department Chair of the time and place of the proposal meeting. The student schedules the room for a meeting by using the sign out book located outside the rooms in Elet. Elet 12 is the exception, as it is scheduled through the Department secretary. Copies of the dissertation proposal must be submitted to all Committee members and to the Department Chair at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. Committee members are to be provided with “hard” copies of the document; they are not to be faxed or sent via email.

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 (5-10 minutes), describe the rationale for the project, the study’s methodology, the statistical procedures planned to analyze the data, and potential study limitations.

There are three possible outcomes of a dissertation proposal meeting: (1) acceptance with revisions; (2) major revisions/remediation required; or (3) 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 will determine at the proposal meeting whether the student is ready to undertake the 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:

*Acceptance 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 Department form; copies of this form is 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 Department Chair within two weeks of the meeting. The accepted proposal serves as a contract between the student and Department for successful completion of the dissertation. This is the most common outcome of Proposal meetings.

*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. With this outcome, the student can make the required changes, or he/she can decide to pursue a different dissertation topic. If the student opts to revise the initial proposal or re-present the study, 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. This outcome could jeopardize the student's ability to meet departmental deadlines, such as the fall deadline for internship applications.

*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 poor understanding of the area. A Dissertation Proposal form is completed by the Dissertation Chair, filed with the Department Chair and placed in the student's file to document this action. The student can improve the proposal or begin a new project. This could be done with the same Dissertation Chair and Committee, or a different Chair and Committee. However, 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 Departmental 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 Department Chair and placed in the student's file. It is only at this point that the student has met the 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 Department without the approval of the Dissertation Committee (see below). If the student does not follow the approved plan, the Committee is at liberty to 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, 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 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 Department file. *Changes to the study plan might also require that the study be reviewed by the IRB, typically through a Modification form filed with the IRB. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the IRB to determine if additional review is necessary.*

## **J. Submitting the Project to the Xavier University IRB**

In keeping with University policy, all research projects 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.xu.edu/irb/index](http://www.xu.edu/irb/index)). Samples of consent forms are available at this website. It is expected that proposals to the IRB are to be submitted within two weeks of the dissertation proposal meeting. 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 instructors.

Before it can be approved by the Department Chair, all final dissertations require documentation of IRB approval (or exemption from that requirement) by including a letter from Xavier University's IRB among the Appendices.

## **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 Department 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).

**Note:** Sections 4 - 8 (Acknowledgments- List of Appendices) above are paginated with small roman numerals that are centered at the bottom of the page. (See Appendix E).

- 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 pg) summary statement 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).

\*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 - - 1.5 inches; Right - - no less than ½ inches (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 (beginning with Chapter I, and including Chapter heading pages and appendices) 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 standard font of 10 or 12 pt. size. 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 J and K 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 (bound) document. All measures are to be included in documents given to the committee for review at the proposal and defense meetings as Appendices, but copies of the measures are removed before the document is submitted for binding. In the Appendices of the bound 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 L for an example.

### **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 M for departmental 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. 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. Ideally, faculty will discuss this with the student early in the dissertation process.

#### **C. Format of Chapter V (Dissertation)**

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. In the Participant section of the Method in Chapter V, the demographic analyses will generally be presented. Chapter V has its own reference list, tables, figures, and appendices (some of which are repeated from the

proposal document), which allows this document “to stand on its own” for publication readiness. In addition to appendices that may be repeated from the proposal, those in Chapter V can also include data or analyses outside the purview of the main hypotheses, description of participants where relevant, and/or IRB materials. In addition to the typical tables and figures included in a manuscript, raw data may be included in the appendices.

#### **D. The Dissertation Defense**

The student is responsible for scheduling the time and location of the dissertation defense and informing the Department secretary 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 other faculty members and graduate students. If the student wishes to invite anyone outside the academic community, the Dissertation Chair must grant permission prior to the meeting. During the defense meeting, the student typically 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.

The Dissertation Committee will come to a judgment about the dissertation based upon the written document and the oral defense. 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. The problems with the document

or defense are so significant that all committee members will 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 departmental 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 study 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. 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.

#### **E. Binding**

The document bound as the complete dissertation includes the signed cover page, and all five chapters of the dissertation. When the Dissertation Chair determines that all required revisions have been satisfactorily made, the student will present at least three cover pages and one copy of the complete dissertation to the Dissertation Chair. After the Dissertation Chair reviews, approves, and signs the cover pages, it is submitted to the Department Chair for review, approval, and signature. Once signed by the Department Chair, the student makes the additional copies to take to the library for binding (see Library Binding guidelines in Appendix N). If a student wishes to have any additional copies bound, he or she should also supply the necessary number of cover pages for signature.

The completed copies and cover sheets are taken to the Periodicals Office at McDonald Library to be bound by the University. One copy will remain in the McDonald Library; the cost of binding this copy is

covered by the student's graduation fee. The student is responsible for furnishing his or her Dissertation Chair and the Department with bound copies; the student pays for the cost of binding these copies. The student may have additional copies of the dissertation bound; these are done at the student's expense.

**F. Dissertation Grade**

The dissertation is graded Pass/Fail. The dissertation grade will only appear on a student's transcript when the dissertation has been received by the McDonald Library for binding. 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 himself or herself as having earned a Psy.D. degree in Clinical Psychology from Xavier University.

## Appendix A

### ESTIMATED PROGRESSION OF THE DISSERTATION

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

In the **second year**, further narrow down your dissertation topic options. Have some real interest in what remains or start over. Read. If you choose your life's passion, be careful that you can still like it at the end of the dissertation. Start talking to faculty about your idea. Use *Advanced Research Methods* and *Issues in Applied Research* classes to further develop possible methods. Read. Use the summer to do more reading. Some people find the summer after the second year a great time to propose the dissertation so that there is a lot of time for data collection, data analysis, and writing before internship starts.

**Requirement: By December of your third year, at latest, you need to have a Dissertation Chair and a 2-4 page prospectus, signed by your Chair.** By becoming your Chair, that professor becomes your academic adviser too. If you do not have a prospectus accepted by your Chair, you may not register for spring courses. You need to turn a copy of your prospectus in to the Department secretary and fill out a small, pink form indicating who has agreed to be your Chair and what your tentative dissertation title is.

In the Proposal Phase, which often lasts 6-8 months, meet with your Chair regularly. 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. 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 oral 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 Department secretary for your file.**

**Requirement: Within two weeks of completing your revisions, you should submit your study to the Xavier Institutional Review Board.** Occasionally the Chair will agree to a delay but this agreement should be explicit and purposeful. Allow at least 1 month for the IRB and its requests for further revisions.

Next is the Data Phase. There is a trade off between the apparent security of an archival study and the flexibility of new data collection. A lot depends on whether the archived data is 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. While the entry phase is going on, use the 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. Create your database and enter the data. Analyze the data according to your proposal. **It is strongly recommended that at least this phase be completed prior to leaving for internship.**

The final phase is Writing the Dissertation. There is a detailed guide to writing and format requirements available on line or as a paper version, in the waiting room by the Psychology Office.

Your last chapter 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 it 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 Department Chair for review and signature. Once final signatures have been obtained, submit the required copies to the department for binding. When a copy is deposited in the library, you are finished. Your grades for research will be changed and you should celebrate your accomplishment.***

***To be hooded in the May graduation ceremony (only formal hooding), everything for the dissertation 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, though many are on campus.

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:

---

Christine M. Dacey, Ph.D., ABPP  
Chair, Department of Psychology

---

(Name of faculty member)  
Dissertation Chair

APPENDIX C

Sample Title Page

Family Characteristics of  
Bulimic and Nonbulimic 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

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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.

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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.

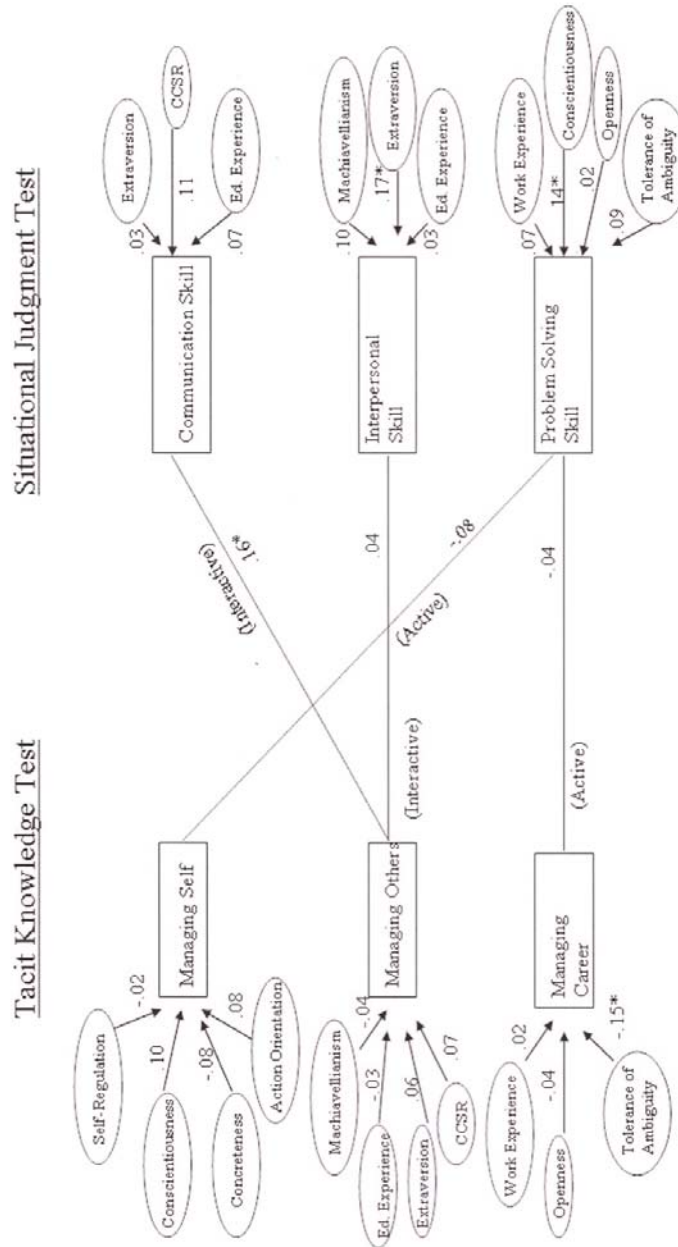
*Implications.* The clusters generated by MACI profiles of juvenile offenders further support the notion that juvenile offenders are a heterogeneous group. Based on information from the CBCL, it appears that other raters are prone to endorse more externalizing characteristics, as opposed to internalizing 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 Landscaped Table

Running head: BYSTANDER ATTITUDES

81



Note: \* = p < .05

Appendix K  
Sample Figure

Running head: BYSTANDER ATTITUDES

81

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 L

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](http://www.parinc.com).

## APPENDIX M

### DEPARTMENTAL PROCEDURES ON RECRUITMENT FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY PARTICIPANT POOL

#### **Participant Pool**

##### **Rationale**

A participant pool within the Department 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 N

### LIBRARY BINDING GUIDELINES

- Thesis/dissertation should be collected and initial paperwork should be done by individual departments. This is a more streamlined approach since the students already have to deal with the departments to get their thesis/dissertation approved and signed.
- Thesis/dissertation can be dropped off in Library Director's office. Hours for accepting thesis are Monday-Friday, 8:00am-3:00pm. (It is recommended that patrons call first (745-3884/3883) to make sure someone is in the office to accept the thesis/dissertation.) A Thesis/Dissertation Binding form should accompany each thesis/dissertation. If it is just NOT possible to drop off your thesis during office hours special arrangements can be made by calling the office at 513-745-3884.
- Library does not make photocopies of thesis/dissertation for patron. (For example if a patron wants 5 copies bound they must submit 5 unbound copies to the library.)
- Library ships thesis/dissertation as it is received. We do not check pagination or grammar.
- Payment for all copies of thesis/dissertation to be bound must be prior to shipment and preferably at the time thesis/dissertation is submitted for binding.
- Payments may be made by cash or check payable to Xavier University Library. The library DOES NOT bill bursar accounts.
- The cost to bind a thesis/dissertation is as follows:

Library copy	no charge
Each copy thereafter	\$16/each
- Patrons do have the option to have their thesis/dissertation shipped to them upon return from the bindery. They must first complete and submit a waiver (enclosed) to the library before thesis/dissertation can be shipped.
- The cost to have a thesis/dissertation shipped is as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> copy shipped	\$5.00
Each additional copy shipped	\$3.00
- A binding pickup-delivery schedule has been attached. Turn around time for binding a thesis/dissertation is 3-4 weeks. Each department will be notified by phone that their shipment has returned from the bindery. Each department is to make arrangements for the retrieval of bound theses/dissertations from the library.

**THESIS/DISSERTATION BINDING SUBMISSION FORM**

Date submitted to library \_\_\_\_\_

Date leaving library \_\_\_\_\_

Date returning to library \_\_\_\_\_

**PATRON INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**THESIS/DISSERTATION INFORMATION**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How many copies should be bound? \_\_\_\_\_ Will a copy go to McDonald Library? \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: \_\_\_\_\_ Patron will pick up thesis/dissertation when ready.

\_\_\_\_\_ Library to distribute thesis/dissertation on campus as indicated below:

<u>DEPT. AND/OR PERSON</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>NO. COPIES</u>	<u>COST \$</u>
* Library		1	N/C
* Psychology Department	ML 6511	1	\$16.00
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Total number of copies being bound** \_\_\_\_\_

**\* required copies** \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL COST:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_ Cash 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Check/Institution \_\_\_\_\_ Check No. \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Library worker accepting thesis/dissertation: \_\_\_\_\_

**THESIS/DISSERTATION SHIPMENT WAIVER**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ will release Xavier University Library of  
all responsibility concerning the shipment of my thesis/dissertation entitled: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

I also understand that I am responsible for all costs incurred for the shipment of my thesis/dissertation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date