



HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

Stout School of Education

Stout School of Education
Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership

Traditional Dissertation Handbook
2019-2020

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Introduction

The written doctoral dissertation is a major requirement for those seeking the Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D.) All candidates enrolled in the Ed.D. Program complete a dissertation related to a topic in the educational leadership discipline. The topic is developed into a problem statement based on a review of the literature and gaps in literature or practice. One of the dissertation options for doctoral candidates in the Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership is the traditional dissertation, which is grounded in a gap in literature, with a goal to add to a body of literature, while the other options are a dissertation in professional practice (DiPP), which is grounded in a gap in practice, with a goal to improve practice. Doctoral candidates may choose which of these options best meets their interests and current circumstances. It is strongly recommended that doctoral candidates enrolled in the Ed.D. Instructional Leadership concentration consider a traditional dissertation.

Goals of the Traditional Dissertation

The overarching goal of the traditional Ed.D. Dissertation is to generate understanding of knowledge that contributes to improvement of educational practices, policies, or reforms. The traditional dissertation makes a contribution to the literature, other work by educational researchers, and an understanding of professional practice. The traditional dissertation is scientific in its design to demonstrate the candidate's scholarship, research skills, and insight into a particular gap in understanding literature related to some aspect of education.

The traditional doctoral dissertation in educational leadership is a significant, scholarly manuscript in which the investigator of the study employs rigorous research methods. One goal of the traditional dissertation is to allow a doctoral candidate to demonstrate that he or she can relate his or her study to one or more existing theoretical or conceptual frameworks. Another goal is to allow the doctoral candidate to ground a problem statement within context of empirical gaps in literature, following a comprehensive review of relevant literature.

In general, the traditional dissertation typically involves identifying a topic of interest, reviewing the literature related to that topic, defining a gap in the previous literature, designing a study to address the gap, and collecting empirical data (qualitative and/or quantitative) to engage in an in-depth discussion of the findings, implications and recommendations. At the end of the manuscript, the doctoral candidate demonstrates that he or she is able to discuss implications of his/her research findings based on the gap in literature. The doctoral candidate, as primary investigator, also makes recommendations of important areas for action, as well as additional study. Overall, a traditional dissertation contributes to professional knowledge and understanding, which in turn may inform improvement and or innovation of P-20 schools/districts or other educational settings and institutions. The traditional dissertation also contributes to a doctoral candidate's professional growth, with publication potential as a desired outcome.

Format of the Traditional Dissertation

The format of the traditional dissertation follows a highly structured design that includes five chapters. In the Academy, the traditional design follows a scientific approach that has been honored for years. Although there may be variations across universities, for purposes of guiding doctoral candidates at High Point University in writing a traditional dissertation, the School of Education advises all doctoral candidates writing a traditional dissertation to employ the following format.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the first chapter, the doctoral candidate introduces his or her topic and places it in context of what is missing about it, or less understood about it, in the literature. The dissertation writer must identify a topic that has significance and is related to educational leadership in P-20 schools/districts or other educational settings. The topic should be of compelling interest to both the candidate and others in the field and hold capacity to add to the body of research related to the discipline. The Chair of the candidate's University Doctoral Committee (UDC) will guide the doctoral candidate in developing the topic into a relevant and significant problem as described in Chapter 1.

One of the major pitfalls to avoid is researcher bias. The problem, as presented in Chapter 1, is described through a spirit of inquiry, not through preconceived opinions or conclusions about existing empirical evidence related to instructional leadership. The investigator of the study presents facts and empirical findings to date to make the case about what is void or less known or understood within scholarship related to instructional leadership, warranting the study that he or she is preparing to conduct.

Chapter 1, in addition to contextualizing the topic, also serves as the introduction to the five-chapter manuscript. Therefore, it should be written for an audience who is generally familiar with the focus of the study as it relates to the discipline of educational leadership and presents a coherent rationale for the study and its significance. Although the doctoral student will always follow the advice of the dissertation Chair, Chapter 1 generally follows a specific format with APA headings and subheadings (Level 1 and 2 headings). The sections of Chapter 1 in a traditional dissertation generally include the following headings:

Introduction

In the introduction to Chapter 1, the main function is to introduce the reader to the topic being addressed in the study. For purposes of illustration in this handbook, the *problem topic* the School of Education will use is "teacher leadership." With this *problem topic*, the problem statement may be elaborated into a lesser known facet of "teacher leadership," which, for purposes of illustration, could be how teachers view the implementation of teacher leader roles in schools.

In the introduction, the doctoral candidate may write an opening paragraph in which he or she states with clarity what the study is about. The doctoral candidate will also provide the context for the study in two-three pages which might also include providing clear definitions for any terms that will be

used throughout the study. While some key terms may seem generally understood by practitioners, the doctoral candidate needs to define terms that may be relatively new, or defined in different ways by different researchers. If the term has some ambiguity in literature or practice, the doctoral candidate needs to define it as it is used “in this study.” For example, even a term such as “professional learning community,” while generally used in the profession may have some ambiguity in practice, which compels the doctoral candidate to include it in his or her list of terms.

Three potential areas of focus in the Introduction which may be further developed by the doctoral candidate could include the *societal background*, such as what trends or changes are going on in society that make the problem topic relevant, the *intellectual background* related to the problem topic such as what major philosophical or intellectual movements are going in the profession that create an intellectual or theoretical context for the study, and the *professional background* which includes a brief description of what specific developments in the profession make the problem topic worth studying.

Problem Statement

The Problem Statement in Chapter 1 usually follows the Introduction and serves to clearly and boldly state the problem which is to be addressed in the study. The candidate must be explicitly clear about what is less known or less understood about the problem topic. For example, perhaps the doctoral candidate studying teacher leadership found that the literature included teacher leader standards, empirical evidence of role descriptors that distinguished teachers from teacher leaders, etc., but perhaps the literature did not include how teachers in the field were experiencing the teacher leader role in elementary schools. Were there challenges of implementing teacher leadership in elementary school? With the literature void or very sparse on these aspects of the “teacher leadership” topic, the researcher discovered a gap in literature, which he or she may then turn into a *problem statement*. The wording has to be precise, as it not only informs the reader of the problem, but also alerts the reader about the specific research questions that will attempt to be answered in the present study. As the doctoral candidate begins to formulate a problem statement and corresponding research questions, the researcher is beginning to lay the groundwork for Chapter 3 (Methodology). For example, if the researcher is trying to understand how teachers in schools were experiencing teacher leadership, the doctoral candidate may be presenting a rationale for conducting a qualitative study. Eventually the problem statement and related research questions must be aligned to the methods of study. The UDC Chair will help guide doctoral candidates in matching problem statement and appropriate methods of study.

Professional Significance

The professional significance of the study summarizes why the doctoral candidate has chosen the topic and explains its significance to the profession. In short, what is value to literature and practitioners in the field? From a scholarly perspective, the doctoral candidate is making claims and arguing that the study is significant from several perspectives. In this “significance section,” the specific research questions or considerations that the doctoral candidate is attempting to answer should be clearly defined (even presented in bulleted fashion).

Research Questions

The doctoral candidate should conclude Chapter 1 with a summary of the main research questions which have been formulated. These should be presented as bulleted statements and serve to alert the reader to the focus of the Methodology in Chapter 3.

Examples of Research Questions in the area of *teacher leadership* might include:

- To what extent do newly hired teachers (3 years or less) have defined perceptions about the role of teacher leadership in schools compared to experienced teachers (5 or more years)?
- To what extent teachers who participate in the *XXX Teacher Leadership Program* in XXX school district perform on the Teacher Leadership N.C. Professional Teaching Standards as evaluated by their building principals compared to non-participants?

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Review of Selected Literature

The function of the Review of Literature is to provide an organized review of current research that helps to define what is known about the problem topic selected for study. The role of the doctoral student is to demonstrate that he or she not only understands the knowledge base related to the study, but it also demonstrates that the candidate can organize relevant empirical findings and acknowledge key researchers who have contributed to an understanding of the research problem.

First, many researchers have most likely contributed some understanding of some aspect of the problem in the doctoral candidate's study. Therefore, if a candidate needs an historical overview of topic, he or she must make it brief with seminal research that grounds the history.

Secondly, the doctoral candidate, for the most part, will utilize current literature. Literature beyond ten years may not be relevant to the study. The doctoral candidate will read and critique much more literature than he or she will then choose to include in the review of literature. The purpose of the literature review is to ground the study in the current knowledge base in an organized manner. The pitfall to avoid is listing every source the candidate reads and not making a connecting, logical presentation of what is known from an empirical perspective.

Thirdly, the doctoral candidate must create an outline as he or she engages in exhaustive reading. The outline represents the doctoral candidate's decision about what to include in the review of literature relevant to his or her topic and how he or she plans to frame the knowledge base relevant to his topic. Then, in writing this section, the doctoral candidate's outline should be obvious through the explicit use of many APA headings (at least levels 1, 2, 3) that inform the reader of his or her logic and linkages of sections. The APA headings should guide the reader in a logical way. For each major and minor sections in the body of the literature review, Joyner, Rouse, Glatthorn (2012) suggest that the doctoral candidate maintain a consistent pattern of writing. The pattern they suggest is provide a brief overview of content of section, then general knowledge base (what does research generally agree on and/or disagree on), followed by specific evidence in which the doctoral candidate cites each study mentioned in general knowledge and discusses its relevance to the current study.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

Doctoral candidates should also address the theoretical or conceptual framework that underlies the research if this is relevant to the study. According to Grant & Osanloo (2014), the theoretical framework is one of the most important aspects in the research process, “yet is often misunderstood by doctoral candidates as they prepare their dissertation research study. The importance of theory-driven thinking and acting is emphasized in relation to the selection of a topic, the development of research questions, the conceptualization of the literature review, the design approach, and the analysis plan for the dissertation study” (p. 12). Using a metaphor of the “blueprint” of a house, the authors explain that the “bones” around which the doctoral candidate pitches his or study is grounded in theory. The doctoral candidate is obliged to apply theoretical framework to his or her dissertation problem statement.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Once chapters one and two are written and all literature reviewed, the doctoral candidate is positioned to describe in detail the methods of the study. As the traditional dissertation option is for Ed.D. students particularly interested in producing knowledge in response to a research problem from within a disciplinary or theoretical perspective, the methods by which one chooses to investigate his or her problem are critical. In Chapter 3, the doctoral candidate explains his or her research design and why it is appropriate as a design.

In a traditional approach, the quantitative, or qualitative, or mixed methods design will be used, depending on the wording of the research questions. The quantitative research dissertation may seek to test or generate hypotheses or to establish generalizable propositions. The qualitative research dissertation may seek to explain phenomena or events by exploring multiple meanings experienced by individuals, to explore and advance theory, or advance an argument. Mixed methods research dissertations involve both collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data to provide a better understanding of a research problem through more comprehensive evidence than if either dataset had been used alone.

Quantitative Research

How does a doctoral candidate know which design is appropriate for his or her study? In general, a doctoral student frames questions for the study that will then dictate the design. Quantitative research aims to numerically:

- describe a phenomenon of interest (descriptive research);
- explore relationships among variables (comparative or correlational research); or
- manipulate variables in order to measure the effects (experimental research).

One consideration to discuss with UDC Chair is the ability to identify and control for variables in an experiential design in education. For example, it is often difficult to control variables by matching for age, gender, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, language, time in school, number of schools attended, previous experience of a task, or other variables, that might affect performance in the study. In any experimental design, failure to isolate the controlled variables compromises internal validity. This failure may lead to confounding variables ruining the experiment by not being trustworthy. Therefore,

educators are more likely to use quasi-experiments or single- or multi-case design, which still require a unit of analysis and a set of variables.

Qualitative Research

There are many types of qualitative research designs, usually case study in nature. Whether ethnography or phenomenology or some other qualitative design (interview/focus groups), the qualitative researcher is generally attempting to describe situations, organizations, events, phenomena, or people. It is a disciplined inquiry to help understand or explain whatever it is being described.

Mixed Methods Research

A mixed methods study may include features of both such as a researcher surveying teachers about their perceptions and then conducting focus groups to better understand the nature of the feedback received from the surveys.

Whichever method of inquiry is used, Chapter 3 is a detailed, objective description of the proposed study (at proposal stage) and a detailed, objective description of the study methods used at final dissertation stage. At proposal stage, Chapter 3 is written in future tense. At final defense stage, Chapter 3 is written in past tense (since the study has already been conducted). Other than tenses, the research methods should not change, as once a doctoral candidate declares his or methods and has UDC and IRB approval, he or she must follow the methods as described in Chapter 3. If protocols as stated must change, it is imperative that the doctoral candidate meet with his or her UDC to explain why and to decide if amendments to IRB need to be submitted before proceeding with the study.

Participants

The Participants section should include detailed information about WHO provided the data for the study. Demographic information about the number of participants, their backgrounds (as relevant to the study), the school district(s) or educational settings targeted must be described. If there is more than one group of participants who were involved in the study (for example, teachers, principals and parents), describe each group of participants and their backgrounds as relevant to the study separately.

Procedures

The Procedures section should fully describe HOW the study was carried out by the researcher. Include all information about how participants were selected, the timeline involved for the implementation, how the data was gathered by the doctoral candidate, what instructions were given to participants and what deadlines were imposed for completion. Within this section the doctoral student should also address issues such as any preparatory steps that were taken to gain approval for the study, and how issues of participant confidentiality were guaranteed. The Procedure section should mention the tools which the doctoral candidate plans to use (or did use) to gather data but more complete information about the instruments should be described in a separate Instruments section which typically appears in the next section. As a rule, the most effective strategy for checking whether the Procedure section has been written with enough clarity is to allow an outside reader to provide feedback. If this individual were asked to replicate the study, would he/she be able to do this without asking additional questions? The doctoral candidate may want to add more description based on this feedback.

Instrumentation

The instruments section of the manuscript should appear as the third section of Chapter 3. The doctoral candidate should describe fully all tools (surveys, questionnaires, interview questions, tests, observation forms, etc.) that will be used in the study to collect relevant data. In many cases multiple instruments (or versions of the same instrument) might be used and these should each be explained accordingly. Information about survey construction, scoring items, coding focus group responses, etc. should appear in this section. If the doctoral student plans to use an already published instrument, he/she must cite the references for the original author. If a published instrument is being modified for the current study, the previous author must still be cited and the doctoral student must note how the instrument has been revised. As a rule, each instrument discussed in Chapter 3 should appear in the Appendices section so that the reader has the opportunity to see a “clean copy” of each tool that was used to collect data.

Data Analysis

The final section of Chapter 3 usually includes a brief discussion by the doctoral candidate about Data Analysis. It is recommended that the Research Questions bulleted in Chapter 1 be restated in this section with an explanation of how each question will be answered. For example:

- To what extent do newly hired teachers (3 years or less) have defined perceptions about the role of teacher leadership in schools compared to experienced teachers (5 or more years)?

Surveys collected by the researcher will be sorted into two categories (less than 3 years) and (more than 5 years) and total survey scores and separate item analyses will be compared to determine whether significant differences in perception exist between the two groups. The researcher will take the Qualtrics survey results and convert to SPSS data file to conduct data analyses using t-tests for Independent Samples statistical procedures.

Doctoral students will be guided by their chairs to determine the appropriate methodology for their study and decisions about what type of study (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and what type of data will be needed can be determined once the doctoral candidate has formulated his/her research questions.

For information purposes, the information requested in the IRB Protocol that will be submitted by the doctoral student to the university’s IRB Committee largely comes from Chapter 3. Doctoral candidates can often copy/paste portions of their Chapter 3 into the actual IRB protocol once the doctoral proposal has been approved.

High Point University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

Doctoral candidates must submit requests to IRB for approval to conduct any needs assessments and/or to implement the action plan in the Dissertation-in-Professional Practice, as the candidate will be working with human subjects and may seek to publish his/her experiences in the future. Specific compliance guidelines and forms may be found on the website. <http://www.highpoint.edu/irb/>.

Some educational research is considered “exempt from review;” however, this designation must be confirmed by the IRB. Most likely, the study may qualify for “expedited review.” The completed IRB form must be reviewed and signed by the candidate’s UDC Chair prior to submission. If the Dissertation-in-Professional Practice is certified exempt by the IRB, the candidate need not resubmit the project for continuing IRB review as long as there are no modifications in the exempted procedures. The letter from the IRB giving approval to complete the Dissertation-in-Professional Practice must be included as an item in the Appendix of the final Dissertation-in-Professional Practice. Prior to graduation, the candidate is also expected to submit a closure report with High Point University’s IRB.

- Student IRB certificates from CITI are only good for one year. The CITI certification must be submitted with your IRB protocol.
- Be sure to read the HPU student researcher’s guide to the IRB (HPU website).
- Very few projects will meet the exempt status – expedited is the most likely selection. The expedited process will take about 2 weeks.
- You must attach all surveys/tests/and/or interview questions that will be used in your research.
- Rarely is there “no risk.” If employees are supervised/evaluated by the researcher, then they could fear some sort of retribution if they did not participate or respond in a particular way.
- Permission can be granted by participants completing an on-line survey by including the permission description on a page that includes a box at the bottom of the page where the participant can select “I agree” or “Next.” Clicking this selection will take them to the survey. On the IRB protocol, the waiver of written, signed consent form section should be completed.
- Signed consent forms must be kept for 3 years on HPU property – a secure location in the School of Education must be identified.
- Any paper surveys must have a signed consent form.
- Even though you have authority to review confidential records in your role as an administrator in your school district, you must still seek IRB approval if you are using this information in your dissertation in professional practice.
- Include approval from any district IRB process. At a minimum, a letter from the district approving the study must be included with your IRB application.

Chapter 4: Results

In the traditional dissertation, results of the study are presented in Chapter 4. The accuracy of reporting from statistical analyses is critical, as “just the facts” is the mantra for Chapter 4. The doctoral candidate will want to be very familiar with the way to format tables and figures, and he or she will need to decide what needs to be included in Chapter 4. Too many tables and figures can be distracting, but essential tables and figures help to illustrate the narrative reporting of results of the study.

Chapter 4 can be lengthy in qualitative and mixed methods studies and rather short in quantitative studies. In general, doctoral candidates do not discuss or comment on results in Chapter 4, as the discussion in Chapter 5 is demonstration of the doctoral candidate’s ability to make sense of the results of the study.

It is helpful to begin Chapter 4 by restating the problem and purpose for the study. Although it seems repetitive, many readers will want to read results of the study without reading other chapters. Therefore, in two-three sentences, begin with problem and purpose and then describe how Chapter 4 is organized.

Within each section that follows, it is best to follow a pattern of reporting results. For example, if the doctoral candidate decided to report by research question, he or she would first state the general response to the question based on results of the study. Then, the doctoral candidate would provide detailed narrative to state exact results for each of the major research questions which were posed. Then, he or she would add a table or figure that depicts exact data or evidence. By following this pattern for each research question of the study, the results are declared, the detailed description of results are described, and the evidence that illustrates the results is clear. The doctoral candidate is methodical in reporting results. Please be sure to consult the newest APA style edition for information on Table and Figure formatting. Tables and Figures should not appear on their own separate pages but rather should be embedded into the narrative itself.

Chapter 5: Summary and Discussion

Finally, the moment has arrived where the doctoral candidate is fully prepared to enter the Academy as a scholar. Therefore, he or she writes Chapter 5 almost as a standalone article that can be submitted for publication. The outline the doctoral candidate uses in Chapter 5 summarizes the story of the study-from problem statement to findings and discussion. It is suggested that Chapter 5 include the following sections:

- Summary of Problem and Findings
- Discussion of Implications of Results for Each Research Question
- Flaws and Limitations
- Recommendations
- Suggestions for Future Research

In interpreting, the doctoral candidate as scholar should not make bold claims or a giant leap from findings of his or her study to meaning. The doctoral candidate will want to include general findings from Chapter 4 and make sense of them as they converge and diverge from prior literature. The scholar voice of the doctoral candidate, while acceptable as he or she discusses the meaning of his study, cannot be “loud” with bold assertions which the evidence does not justify. Sentence stems in the discussion section include such phrases as, “This finding suggests ...” and “the study supports the ...”

In discussions with the Chair, it is crucial to discuss the outline of the discussion section, as not only the doctoral candidate’s scholarly reputation is at stake but also the Chair’s reputation. The discussion section is all that some stakeholders may read, as they want to know what the study means. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to be clear and concise, while also honoring the contribution of the study to scholarship.

Final Formatting of the Traditional Dissertation

The doctoral candidate must follow Norcross Graduate School’s *Guidelines for Developing and Submitting the Culminating Project*. Doctoral candidates must pay particular interest to the section of *Norcross Guidelines*, “Required Elements of the Culminating Project.” No degree will be awarded until the doctoral candidate submits an acceptable dissertation to the Graduate School and receives confirmation that he or she has followed protocols described at their website.

<http://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/files/2015/07/Thesis-Capstone-Dissertation-Guide.pdf>

University Doctoral Committees

In the explanation of the five-chapter format of the traditional dissertation, many references were made to the doctoral candidate’s “Chair.” The University Doctoral Committee (UDC) Chair plays a key role in the dissertation process. The doctoral candidate develops, with the guidance of Chair, a proposal and final manuscript which must be defended at two stages. It is the Chair who makes the decision as to the doctoral candidate’s readiness for proposal defense and final defense. The doctoral candidate shall discuss research plans and progress with his or her Chair. Failure to communicate and respond to Chair requests may result in major delays of Ed.D. Program completion.

In the School of Education, a list of faculty and administrators who have been granted “Graduate Faculty Status” by the university appears below. Only these faculty members are able to serve as UDC Chairs and with each cohort, a “meet and greet” event will be held so doctoral candidates can learn more about faculty, their backgrounds, research agendas and availability. A doctoral candidate will want to select a SOE faculty member to serve as UDC chair who has interest and knowledge in his or her problem topic. A likely outcome of the dissertation process is the opportunity for doctoral candidate and Chair to author a manuscript to be considered for publication or professional presentation. Also, the UDC Chair should be consulted about forming the UDC. The doctoral candidate should be prepared to discuss selection of other faculty to serve on the UDC with his or her Chair before approaching other faculty.

2019-200 Approved Graduate Faculty Status

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University Doctoral Committee (UDC) Membership

Once a Chair has been secured, it is essential to form the full UDC. The recommended size of the University Doctoral Committee (UDC) is three members; however, the committee may include up to four members. The Chair must be a faculty member in the SOE with graduate faculty status, while other UDC members may be selected from High Point University graduate faculty at-large. While doctoral candidates seek a Chair who has both interest in and knowledge of his or her research topic, it is with expertise in mind that other committee members are also selected. For example, if the doctoral candidate is considering a qualitative study and the Chair is a quantitative researcher, a selection of a second member may be one with expertise in qualitative study. With the assistance of the Chair, the doctoral candidate selects second and third UDC members from High Point University graduate faculty. A fourth UDC member may be selected from the candidate's organization to sit on the committee, however, that member will be a non-voting member. All voting UDC members must have applied and been appointed as members of the Graduate Faculty of Norcross Graduate School.

While the candidate should look to his or her Chair to guide the defense process and should ultimately follow recommendations of his or her Chair, input from all UDC members is critical. It is extremely important for a dissertation proposal and final defense to be scheduled only when all committee members may be present. Therefore, it may be helpful to have a tentative timeline of the candidate's plan to complete the dissertation available when seeking UDC members.

Changes in UDC Membership

Any changes that occur during the dissertation process must be approved by UDC Chair, and many processes require that forms be filed in Norcross Graduate School. In the case of UDC membership, a formal process must be followed in order for any committee member to be added, removed from, and/or replaced. Adding and removing a committee member should only occur with good cause. Committee members should not be replaced based solely on his/her challenge of the candidate's work. If a doctoral candidate wishes to add or remove or replace a committee member, the candidate should first meet with his or her Chair, and then meet with the committee member out of professional courtesy. Sometimes, a committee member may choose to resign from his or her position on the UDC. Illness and job changes are major reasons a committee member may choose to resign, and the candidate needs to be prepared to make changes in committee membership **with consultation from his or her Chair**. It is unlikely that a candidate will ask to remove a committee member, but in the case where a committee member is impeding the dissertation process, or declares his or her inability to meet often and frequently, it may be that the doctoral candidate wishes to change committee membership. It may also occur that the candidate wishes to add a UDC member after initial approval of the committee.

Dissertation Defenses: Protocol

The term “defense” is used in referring to the proposal and final dissertation oral presentations. The first defense is a proposal defense. A doctoral candidate writes a manuscript that posits a position or proposition that a person (as a candidate for entry into The Academy) advances and offers to maintain by argument. The purpose of the proposal defense is to allow the candidate to posit his or her argument related to the need for a study on a clearly stated problem, as well as a method for studying the problem. It may be scheduled after the candidate has successfully written (to the satisfaction of his or her Chair) Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

The purpose of the final defense, to be scheduled after completion of all five Chapters and appendices, etc., is to present findings of the study and make sense of them in a scholarly manner. This section of the handbook explains the protocol for the two defenses that each candidate will hold, including a proposal defense and a final dissertation defense. A few rules are standard in both defenses.

1. Doctoral students are to schedule defenses according to the SOE and Norcross Graduate School Ed.D. checklist guidelines. <http://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/dissertation/>
2. Both the proposal and final defenses are to be conducted live in person on campus in the presence of the doctoral candidate’s UDC and invited guests. UDC members “sit” for the defenses, which means they come prepared to question the candidate about his or her study.
3. Defenses should not be scheduled until the UDC Chair has provided sufficient feedback to which the candidate has responded. ONLY after the Chair has confirmed that the manuscript is ready for a successful defense may the candidate schedule defenses.
4. Dissertation proposal and final cannot occur in the same semester. If a proposal defense occurs in Fall, a final defense may occur the following spring semester, summer or later. Deadlines for completing defenses and submitting final manuscripts to the graduate school are established each semester. <http://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/calendar/>
5. Six semester hours of dissertation (EDU 8300 and EDU 8400) are required. Extension courses 8300a and 8400a will be required if the doctoral candidate does not have successful defenses while enrolled in EDU 8300 and EDU 8400, respectively.
6. Doctoral candidates are expected to make revisions in a timely manner after a defense, in cooperation with the Chair.
7. Doctoral candidates, if unsuccessful at a defense, will be allowed only one repeat of each defense.
8. All defense materials must be in the hands of all UDC members at least two weeks before defense takes place so that everyone has time to mark the manuscript for questions and suggested revisions.
9. Once the UDC receives a copy of the manuscript, the doctoral candidate should send no further copies or make changes to the manuscript in hand.
10. Doctoral candidates are encouraged to consult the Ed.D. Website for up-to-date forms that need to be completed at each stage of the dissertation and also for resources to be used in preparing for proposal and final defenses. <http://www.highpoint.edu/education/doctorate-in-educational-leadership-2/>

Dissertation Proposal Defense

The successful doctoral candidate will schedule a proposal defense after the UDC Chair has determined the readiness of the candidate to defend Chapters 1-3. The members of the candidates' UDC receive the manuscript at least two weeks in advance, and the candidate prepares an oral presentation and PowerPoint to include information from all three chapters. At the beginning of the proposal presentation, it is also suggested that the doctoral candidate take a moment to describe how he or she is personally connected to the topic and why the topic is something they wanted to study. At a minimum, the doctoral candidate's proposal presentation includes:

- An introductory discussion of the problem
- A statement of the problem and purpose of the study and the research questions to be answered;
- A statement about significance and why this study is needed;
- A review of major findings from a review of literature;
- A description of the proposed methods, including the design, why the design is appropriate to the study, participants and/or sampling procedure, and instruments to be used;
- A discussion of how data will be treated and analyzed; and
- A timeline showing when the doctoral candidate anticipates completing each phase of the study.

The doctoral candidate should be prepared for 30 to 45-minute oral proposal defense, and an additional 30-45 minutes for questions by the UDC. The role of the Chair of the UDC is to convene members and the doctoral candidate to discuss the proposal. The UDC must make an assessment as to whether: (a) the proposed study is feasible and (b) the methodology suggested is appropriate. The Committee may make recommendations to enhance the quality, rigor, and integrity of the study that may be addressed by the doctoral candidate a few weeks after proposal defense. It should be noted that a final dissertation defense must be presented and approved by UDC and that many specific questions raised regarding the proposal may be re-addressed at the final defense.

The specific proposal defense meeting protocol is as follows:

1. The Chair convenes the meeting of UDC members and the doctoral candidate.
2. The Chair welcomes everyone and states the purpose of the meeting and the UDC's principle tasks. The UDC must make an assessment as to whether:
 - a. The proposed study is logically and rationally presented;
 - b. The proposed study has developed an efficient and effective review of literature;
 - c. The methods have been thoroughly documented and presented in a manner that permits the completion of the study; and,
 - d. the study is of sufficient depth and rigor to insure contribution to the field of Educational Leadership.
3. The Chair will allow the student 30-45 minutes to present the proposed study to the UDC. This presentation should be based on the major sections of the two chapters.
4. The role of the Chair is not only to conduct the proceedings, ensure fair treatment of the individual by members of the UDC, and to assess the pertinence of questions and comments, but to also take notes on recommendations offered by UDC members (section by section).

5. UDC Questioning protocol generally follows a format with rounds of questions. In round 1, questions pertaining to the topic, theoretical lens, literature/research may be asked. In round 2, questions pertaining to the research design, feasibility of the research, methodology, data analysis may be discussed. Round 3 provides focus on questions pertaining to linking candidates research to educational practice. The last round includes additional questions not answered through Rounds 1-3. At the close of the discussion, the Chair will ask the student to leave the proposal defense room.
6. After the candidate exits the room, the Chair will ask the UDC whether or not:
 - a. the proposed study is feasible; and,
 - b. the methods suggested are appropriate.

The UDC will assess the extent to which:

- The proposed study is logically and rationally presented;
- The proposed study has developed an efficient and effective review of literature;
- The methods have been thoroughly documented and presented in a manner that permits the completion of the study; and,
- the study is of sufficient depth and rigor to insure contribution to the field of Educational Leadership.

If the UDC votes “yes,” the Chair will invite the doctoral candidate in to inform her/him of the affirmative vote and oversee that all required signatures are affixed to appropriate forms. The doctoral candidate’s proposal becomes the written contract between the candidate and his or her UDC. Since this proposal becomes a continuing contract between the doctoral candidate and UDC, major modifications must be reviewed and approved by all concerned parties, particularly UDC. The doctoral candidate may proceed to secure IRB approval after a successful proposal defense. If the vote is “no,” the Chair will invite the doctoral student into the proposal defense room and inform her/him of the vote and what options are open. If the UDC elects to suspend their vote, the UDC will be required to develop a specific set of recommendations for corrective action and a time-line for their completion before they convene for the formal vote.

- The Chair will debrief the student at the close of the defense meeting and discuss how to improve the dissertation proposal.
- The Chair will provide appropriate University officials with all signed documentation required for official acceptance of the dissertation proposal. The Committee may make recommendations to enhance the quality and conduct of the study that may be addressed by the student during the coming months. It should be noted that the formal dissertation must be presented and approved by the Committee at a later date.

Final Defense Protocol

Very similar to the proposal defense, the doctoral candidate must defend the final dissertation, following all Norcross Graduate Schools rules and regulations (<http://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/dissertation/>).

The final defense is a formal event that requires an oral presentation on campus. The successful doctoral candidate will schedule a final defense after the UDC Chair has determined the readiness of the candidate to defend Chapters 1-5. The members of the candidates' UDC receive the manuscript at least two weeks in advance, and the candidate prepares an oral presentation to include information in many sections. At the beginning of the final defense presentation, it is also suggested that the doctoral candidate take a moment to describe how he or she is personally connected to the topic and why the topic is something they wanted to study. The candidate should prepare a PowerPoint presentation that will guide him/her through the following components:

- An introduction of himself/herself
- An introductory discussion of the problem as a gap in literature;
- A statement of the problem and purpose of the study with hypotheses to be tested or research questions to be answered;
- A statement about significance and why this study is needed;
- A review of major findings from a review of literature;
- A description of the methods, including the design, why the design was appropriate to the study, participants and/or sampling procedure, and instruments that were used;
- A discussion of how data were treated and analyzed;
- Results of the study
- Discussion of meaning of results
- Next steps
- Questions by the UDC Committee

The doctoral candidate should be prepared for a 30 to 45-minute oral final defense, and an additional 30-45 minutes for questions by the UDC.

The role of the Chair of the UDC is to convene members at a scheduled final defense meeting. The doctoral candidate must be prepared at this meeting to present and answer UDC questions regarding the content of the final five-chapter manuscript. The UDC may make recommendations to enhance the quality, rigor, and integrity of the final manuscript. It should be noted that specific questions raised regarding the proposal may be re-addressed at the final defense.

The specific final defense meeting protocol is as follows.

1. The Chair convenes the meeting of UDC members and the doctoral candidate.
2. The Chair welcomes everyone and states the purpose of the meeting and the UDC's principle tasks. The UDC must make an assessment as to whether:
 - a. The final study is logically and rationally presented;
 - b. The final study has developed an efficient and effective review of literature;

- c. The methods were thoroughly documented and presented in a manner that permits replication of the study;
 - d. The findings are reported as results with sufficient data and evidence to support;
 - e. The summary is brief but comprehensive;
 - f. The discussion section relates findings of study to literature;
 - g. The recommendations and next steps make sense in logic and relevant gap in literature;
 - h. The abstract is of appropriate depth to alert researchers to value of the present study and how it was conducted.
 - i. The study is of sufficient depth and rigor to insure contribution to the field of Educational Leadership.
 - j. The candidate was able to respond to questions by UDC members regarding the various components of the presentation including the rationale, literature, methodology, results and implications of the study.
3. The Chair will allow the doctoral candidate 30 to 45-minutes to present the final study to the UDC. This presentation should be based on the major sections of the five chapters.
 4. The role of the Chair is not only to conduct the proceedings, ensure fair treatment of the individual by members of the UDC, and to assess the pertinence of questions and comments, but to also take notes on recommendations offered by Committee members (section by section).
 5. UDC questioning protocol generally follows a format with rounds of questions. In round 1, questions pertaining to the topic, theoretical lens, literature/research may be asked. In round 2, questions pertaining to the research design, feasibility of the research, methodology, data analysis may be discussed. Round 3 provides focus on questions pertaining to linking candidates research to educational practice. The last round includes additional questions not answered through Rounds 1-3. At the close of the discussion, the Chair will ask the doctoral candidate to leave the final defense room.
 6. After the candidate exits the room, the Chair will ask the UDC whether or not the candidate passes or fails. A census vote must be achieved based on the UDC assessment in items in #2 stated above. If the UDC votes "pass," the Chair will invite the doctoral candidate in to inform her/him of the affirmative vote and oversee that all required signatures are affixed to appropriate forms. The doctoral candidate's final manuscript, after a final, edit, must be submitted to Norcross Graduate School based on guidelines in Graduate Handbook.

If the vote is "fail," the Chair will invite the doctoral student into the final defense room and inform her/him of the vote and what options are open.

If the UDC elects to suspend their vote, the UDC will be required to develop a specific set of recommendations for corrective action and a time-line for their completion before they convene for the formal vote.

7. The Chair will debrief the student at the close of the final defense meeting and discuss next steps.
8. The Chair will provide appropriate University officials with all signed documentation required for official acceptance of the dissertation proposal.

Ethical Responsibility

What a privilege and responsibility a doctoral candidate has at this stage of his or her professional growth. The traditional dissertation stage usually means that a doctoral candidate is at the point in his or her formal education that results in conferring of a terminal degree, which in the School of Education is the Ed.D. Doctoral candidates, as professionals, always thank and acknowledge UDC members' contributions to their development and study. Because doctoral candidates as researchers are in a position of responsibility and power, it is essential that each doctoral candidate understands and remains committed to ethical implications related to research and The Academy.

In general, as a researcher, doctoral candidates are answerable to the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) associated with High Point University and school districts, members of the University Doctoral Committee, and ultimately to one's own integrity for ethical decisions and ethical codes of the profession. Every doctoral candidate needs to know what plagiarism is and avoid it, as violations may result in not being able to continue in the Ed.D. Program. By earning the CITI certificate, every doctoral student must adhere to ethical protocols related to each step of his or research, particularly as it relates to informed consent from research participants and respecting confidentiality as it relates to IRB protocol. Ethical violations in the dissertation phase may result in the doctoral candidate's dismissal from the Ed.D. Program, as integrity and trust are essential in the research process. So important in fact, that the old adage applies— "no second chance to make a first impression." The High Point University Honor Code may be located at <http://www.highpoint.edu/studentconduct/university-honor-code/> All doctoral candidates are honor-bound and trusted to use ethical considerations in their decision making during all phases of doctoral work, including the dissertation phase.

Scholarly Writing and APA Style

APA is the style in which all scholarly writing for the Ed.D. Program must be submitted. All work must adhere to style guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA). It is also expected that ALL submitted work and correspondence with faculty be well-written and free of grammar and spelling mistakes. When corresponding with anyone related to the dissertation, it is of utmost important to use standards of writing and professional manners and language. Both in the field and within the University environment, it is acceptable and expected that doctoral candidates speak and write well.

For doctoral candidates at High Point University, if you would like or need extra help with your writing, please use the University Writing Center services or consult with your personal librarian. Another valuable resource is Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*. It is a classic reference for writing, and it is available for free online at <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>. In addition, Purdue University also has an excellent Online Writing Lab (OWL) tool for APA style and format, found at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>

Suggested Timeline for Dissertation Completion

In the third year of the doctoral program candidates should register for EDU 8300 in the spring semester along with EDU 7300 (DiPPs only). Candidates should work with their UDC chairs in the spring to develop chapters 1-3 (the Dissertation Proposal). The proposal must be successfully presented by the end of the spring grading period in order for the doctoral candidate to earn a grade of CR in EDU 8300. With guidance from the chair, a doctoral candidate may elect to continue working on dissertation proposal during the summer. In this case, the candidate would receive an IN (Incomplete) in EDU 8300 and would register for EDU 8300a during the summer. This option is only available if the UDC chair is agreeable to this arrangement and it is strongly recommended that the doctoral candidate discuss the timeline for completion with his/her chair during the spring semester. Doctoral candidates have until the end of the Drop/Add week of the next immediate semester to successfully present their dissertation proposals. If a candidate is able to present the proposal by the end of Drop/Add in the first week of the next immediate semester, he/she will be permitted to enroll in EDU 8400. If a doctoral candidate is unable to meet the deadline for presenting the dissertation proposal by the end of Drop/Add, he/she will be required to register again for EDU 8300a. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Once the candidate is enrolled in EDU 8400, it is expected that data collection will begin. Under no circumstances can a doctoral student begin data collection until IRB approval has been received. Candidates are reminded that many districts have their own IRB process and it is likely that additional approvals for conducting research may be required.

If the candidate is enrolled in EDU 8400 during the fall semester (typically in the fourth year of study), he/she is required to successfully defend the dissertation and submit the final manuscript to the Norcross Graduate School by November 15 in order to be a December degree recipient. If the candidate is unable to meet this deadline, he/she will enroll in EDU 8400a during the spring semester of the fourth year. (Special Note: Candidates who have successfully completed their dissertation defense after the December 1 deadline and are able to submit their final manuscript to the Graduate School by the end of the Drop/Add period in the spring semester (usually the end of the first week of classes), will NOT be required to register for EDU 8400a. These candidates will be designated as May graduates (NOT DECEMBER) but will not need to register for additional coursework in the spring semester.) Candidates are required to successfully defend the dissertation and submit the final manuscript to the Norcross Graduate School by April 15 in order to be May degree recipients. If the doctoral candidate is unable to meet this deadline, he/she will continue to register for EDU 8400a until the dissertation defense and manuscript has been submitted.

Grading Guidelines for EDU 8300/8400

EDU 8300: CR or IN or NC

Candidates must complete chapters 1-3 (the dissertation proposal) during the course of their enrollment in EDU 8300. UDC chairs will distribute the candidate's written draft of these chapters to committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduling of the proposal presentation. If the committee feels the paper is acceptable, the candidate will be permitted to move ahead and schedule the proposal presentation. If the candidate holds a successful proposal presentation of Chapters 1-3 and the performance of the candidate during the presentation is deemed "proficient" by the UDC Committee, the candidate is awarded a grade of "CR" (CREDIT) for EDU 8300. The candidate is eligible then to register for EDU 8400 for the following semester. Candidates have until the last day of the official HPU Drop-Add period of the next immediate semester to complete the proposal requirements and therefore be permitted to register for EDU 8400.

If the candidate has presented a rough draft of Chapters 1-3 to his or her UDC Chair and the chair or entire committee feels the draft is insufficient and requires substantive revisions, the dissertation proposal presentation will not be scheduled and the candidate will be awarded a final grade of "IN" (INCOMPLETE). The candidate will be expected to register for the continuation course EDU 8300a. The candidate is NOT eligible to register for EDU 8400 for the next semester, as enrollment in EDU 8300a and EDU 8400 cannot be concurrent.

If the candidate has completed little work towards completion of Chapters 1-3 (less than 50% of expectations have been met), the candidate will be awarded a grade of "NC" (NO CREDIT), and the candidate will be required to register for EDU 8300 (repeats the course) for the following semester. As an example, the candidate who has only produced a rough draft of Chapter 1), will be required to repeat the course.

Candidates cannot be approved for graduation until a course with a grade of NC is retaken and earns a grade of CR.

For EDU 8400: CR or IN or NC

Once a candidate satisfactorily completes EDU 8300, he or she may register for EDU 8400. The candidate will be expected to follow all Norcross Graduate School Guidelines found in THESIS, CAPSTONE PROJECT, & DISSERTATION GUIDE,

<http://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/files/2015/07/Thesis-Capstone-Dissertation-Guide.pdf>

1. During enrollment in EDU 8400, the candidate has to meet the following conditions to receive "CR" (Credit) for EDU 8400:
 - a. First, the candidate must be enrolled in EDU 8400 and in good academic standing to continue work on his/her dissertation. In order to schedule the final oral defense of the dissertation the candidate must meet the following guidelines:
 - b. All program requirements have been met to date. No grade of "Incomplete" in any previous coursework is noted.
 - c. The UDC Chair approves the scheduling of the final defense only after reviewing the final manuscript along with other committee members. All committee members must receive the

final paper no less than two weeks prior to the final oral defense and agree that the final defense can be scheduled.

- d. The Chair of the Department and Dean of the School of Education must approve the scheduling of the final dissertation defense. It is the candidate's responsibility with his/her UDC Chair to get all required signatures and paperwork filed in the Norcross Graduate School prior to publicizing the event to the HPU campus community and other public settings.
 - e. Once approved, the UDC Chair should publicly notify the campus community and send invitations, at the candidate's request to educational colleagues and peers as appropriate.
 - f. The UDC Chair is responsible for scheduling the final defense. The oral defense should be scheduled for approximately 2 hours with the expectation that the presentation from the candidate should last approximately 30 to 45-minutes followed by questions and discussion with the UDC Committee for approximately 30 to 45-minutes. Deliberations by the UDC should follow with the candidate not present.
 - g. On the date of the final dissertation defense or the first business day after the final defense, the UDC Chair must submit the "Defense Evaluation" form to the Graduate School.
 - h. The candidate, with approval of the UDC Chair, must submit (electronically a PDF copy or a flash drive delivery to Norcross) the revised and completed post-presentation copy of the final manuscript with the signed Checklist for acceptance to the Graduate School before the deadline. Email submission address graduate@highpoint.edu
 - i. Once the final manuscript is approved by the Norcross Graduate School, the candidate will be notified via email. It is the candidate's responsibility to submit a PDF copy of the final manuscript to the Graduate School. The candidate may hand deliver the document to the Graduate School on a flash drive or may send it via e-mail to graduate@highpoint.edu.
 - j. Along with the electronic copy of the manuscript, the candidate must also submit a signed copy of the Signature Page. This page must be printed on the bonded paper provided by the Graduate School. All materials should be submitted to the Graduate School office prior to the final graduation date for the semester.
2. If any one of the following conditions exist, the UDC Chair should recommend that the candidate delay scheduling the final dissertation defense and candidates will be recommended to register for EDU 8400a for the following semester. A grade of IN (INCOMPLETE) will be awarded:
 - a. The candidate simply cannot meet the deadline of April 15 to complete the dissertation defense and/or final submission of the dissertation manuscript.
 - b. The candidate has presented a draft of Chapters 1 - 5 and the UDC Chair or the committee feels substantial changes are still needed. to be made, the candidate will be asked to continue work and delay the final defense. The candidate will be expected to register for EDU 8400a the following semester.
 - c. If the final submitted manuscript does not fully meet the standards of the Graduate School, it will be returned to the candidate. If required revisions cannot be made by the deadline imposed at the end of the semester the candidate will be awarded a final grade of "IN" (INCOMPLETE) and will be expected to register for EDU 8400a the following semester.
 3. If the candidate has completed little work towards completion of Chapters 4 and 5 of the dissertation, then the candidate will be awarded a grade of "NC" (No Credit), and the candidate

will be required to register for EDU 8400 (repeat the course) for the following semester. For clarification, the candidate who has completed less than 50% (only has produced a rough draft of Chapter 4, for example) will be required to repeat the course. Candidates cannot be approved for graduation until a course with a grade of NC is retaken and earns a grade of CR.

Graduation Requirements

Candidate must have submitted the application for graduation one semester prior to, or a minimum of one month after, the start of the semester in which the candidate expects to complete his or her degree requirements.

Dissemination of Works

All doctoral candidates are expected to complete research of publishable, quality, and to submit the material for presentation at state, regional, national and/or international conferences.

Dissertation Defense Day Preparation Checklist

_____As a doctoral candidate it is your responsibility to communicate with the Graduate School to determine all university deadlines.

_____Please be sure to communicate with the University bookstore to determine needs and deadlines associated with graduation regalia.

_____When Chapters 1-5 are ready to be defended, complete the form titled: "Scheduling of the Thesis / Dissertation Defense." Gather the appropriate signatures and deliver the form to Tammy Hines.

_____Process your dissertation through "Turn It In" and look for issues that may appear to be plagiarism and look at the original content percentage. Once you review these two areas, move forward with the process or make adjustments and involve library services as needed. Match scores should not exceed 25% when the Turn It In Report percentage score is received (this implies too much of your work "matches" what has been written in the literature and it not in your own words).

_____With your UDC Chair's approval, strive to email your committee with your final manuscript approximately two weeks prior to the defense. The UDC will assess the likelihood of your "readiness" for passing the final defense. If the likelihood is high, you will be permitted to move forward. If the likelihood is not high, your UDC chair will recommend canceling the defense and rescheduling as appropriate.

_____Please let the School of Education Office know in advance if you will be having guests attend your dissertation defense. These can include co-workers, family and other students. The School of Education advertises each defense and the university community is invited.

_____ It is a good idea to prepare folders for each UDC member for the dissertation defense presentation that includes an agenda, a copy of the PowerPoint, copies of any instruments that were used to collect data, and any other items (really important data, pen, paper, etc.) you want to include.

_____ Prior to the defense, print 3 copies of the dissertation signature page. (After the defense, provides copies to Heather Slocum)

_____ Once the dissertation has been successfully defended, complete the "Thesis / Dissertation Defense Evaluation." Fill in the appropriate blanks and gather the required signatures.

_____ It is the responsibility of the UDC Chair to complete and deliver this form to the Graduate School on the day of or the day after the defense of the thesis/dissertation.

_____ Provide the student with the Graduate School final checklist for editing titled, "Required Elements of the Culminating Project."

APPENDIX A

Required Elements of the Culminating Project

Structural Formatting

Typing

- Typeface is a standard font (e.g., Times New Roman) and 11- or 12- points in size.
- Selected font is used consistently throughout the document.
- Print is laser quality.
- Document is typed in black ink only.
- Printing is single sided.
- No page begins or ends with a single line of a paragraph.
- All words fit in their entirety on a line; no word is divided by a hyphen.

Spacing

- Double spacing is used consistently throughout the document.
- Single spacing is used only for long quotes, tables, and figures.

Margins and Justification

- Left margins are 1.5 inches.
- Top margins are one inch.
- Right margins are one inch.
- Left margins are justified.
- Right margins are not justified.
- No page is short because of a table or figure; body text must occupy blank spaces around inserted tables, figures, or images.
- Figures, tables, maps, pictures, and other media fits within the established margins.

Pagination

- Each page of the manuscript, except the title page, is assigned a typed number.
- Lowercase Roman numerals (ii, iii, iv, etc.) are used on all pages preceding Chapter 1. The title page counts as page i, but the number does not appear.
- Typed Roman numerals begin with the signature page.
- Roman numerals are centered ½ inch from the bottom edge of the page.
- Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) start with Chapter 1 or the introduction (if applicable) and are used for the remainder of the thesis/capstone/dissertation.
- The first page of the text begins with "1".
- Arabic numerals are centered ½ inch from the bottom edge of the page.

Tables and Figures

- Each table or figure is incorporated at the appropriate place in the text.
- All tables and figures are referred to by number.
- When more than one table or figure is introduced on a page of text, each follows in the order they are mentioned in the text.
- Short tables or figures do not stand alone on an empty page.
- Table or figure schemes conform to the style guide mandated by the student's program and are consistent throughout the document.

Citations

- In-text citations conform to the style guide mandated by the student's program.
- Works by the same author(s) with the same year of publication are consistently differentiated by a suffix after the year (e.g., 2005a for the first publication, 2005b for the second publication, etc.).
- All authors' names are included in the first instance of a citation with multiple authors. Thereafter, the first author's name may be used and followed with et al.
- Authors' names are listed without titles (e.g., Dr., Mr., Mrs., or Ms.).

Organization of the Thesis/Capstone/Dissertation

Unless marked as "optional," the following pages should be included in the written project in the order shown below. Incorrect formatting will result in the writing project being returned to the student for corrections, which could delay the graduation date.

- Title Page
- Signature Page
- Copyright Page (optional)
- Abstract (300-350 words)
- Distinction Award Page (optional)
- Dedication Page (optional)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables (if applicable)
- List of Figures (if applicable)
- List of Maps (if applicable)
- List of Abbreviations (if applicable)
- List of Symbols (if applicable)
- Text, divided into chapters
- Appendices
- End Notes (if applicable)
- References

Title Page

- The title page consists of:
 - Full title of thesis, capstone, or dissertation.
 - The full name of the student.
 - The type of project being submitted (thesis, capstone, dissertation).
 - The degree being earned (e.g., Master of Arts, Doctor of Education, etc.).
 - The program from which the degree is being earned.
 - The school and department (if applicable) from which the degree is being earned.
 - The month and year on which the student graduated.
- The title of the thesis, capstone, or dissertation is set two-inches from the top of the page.
- The title is centered on the page.
- The title is written in all capital letters.
- Long titles are double-spaced between lines.
- The full name of the degree and the program issuing the degree is used.
- The full legal name of the student is used.

Signature Page

- The title of the thesis/dissertation is consistent with the title page.
- The correct name of the department or school is used.
- The name of the student is consistent with the title page.
- The name of the degree program is consistent with the title page.
- The signature lines for all committee members are aligned flush right.
- The names of the committee members and their position on the committee (e.g., Chair, Member) are written beneath each signature line.
- The signature line of the head of the Graduate School is positioned beneath the signature lines of the committee and aligned flush left.
- All signatures are original and written in black or blue ink.

Copyright Page (optional)

- The copyright symbol (©) and the year of graduation are listed first.
- The student's name is listed second and is consistent with the title page.
- The phrase, "ALL RIGHTS RESERVED" is listed third.
- All three lines are centered both horizontally and vertically on the page.

Abstract

- The heading, "ABSTRACT" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first line of text.
- The full title of the thesis/capstone/dissertation is written in all capital letters, is centered at the top of the page, and is consistent with the title page.
- The name of the student is consistent with the title page.
- The month and year on which the student graduated is consistent with the title page.
- The degree being earned (e.g., Master of Arts, Doctor of Education, etc.) and the program from which the degree is being earned are consistent with the title page.
- The full name of the committee chair is used.
- The abstract is no longer than two pages.
- The abstract includes succinct statements of the problem, methodology or procedure, and conclusion or major finding(s) in the thesis/capstone/dissertation.
- The first line of each paragraph is indented ½ inch.

Distinction Award Page

- The heading, "[THESIS/CAPSTONE/DISSERTATION] DISTINCTION AWARD" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first line of text.
- Title of the thesis/dissertation is consistent with the title page.
- The correct name of the department or school is used.
- The name of the student is consistent with the title page.
- The name of the degree program is consistent with the title page.
- The signature line of the dean or program director is aligned flush left.
- The name and title of the dean or program director are written beneath the signature line.
- All signatures are original and written in black or blue ink.

Dedication Page (optional).

- The heading, "DEDICATION" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first line of text.
- The first line of each paragraph is indented ½ inch.

Acknowledgments (optional)

- The heading, "ACKNOWLEDGMENTS" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first line of text.
- The first line of each paragraph is indented ½ inch.

Table of Contents

- The heading, "TABLE OF CONTENTS" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- Typing is double-spaced, except when entries run to two or more lines in length. In these situations, single-space between the continued lines.
- All sections of the manuscript that occur after the table of contents are included.
 - List of Tables (if applicable)
 - List of Figures (if applicable)
 - List of Maps (if applicable)
 - List of Abbreviations (if applicable)
 - List of Symbols (if applicable)
 - Each chapter in the main body of the document
 - Each subsection of each chapter
 - Appendices (if applicable). Each appendix is listed separately.
 - End notes (if applicable)
 - References
- All main headings of the manuscript are aligned flush left.
- All first-order headings are indented ½ inch. Second- and third-order headings (if applicable) are indented an additional ½ inch each.
- Leader lines connect each entry in the table of contents with its associated page number.

List of Tables (if applicable)

- The heading, "LIST OF TABLES" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- All entries are aligned flush left.
- Typing is double-spaced, except when entries run to two or more lines in length. In these situations, single-space between the continued lines.
- Tables are listed by number, title, and the page on which the table is located in the document.
- The title of the table matches that in the text.
- Leader lines connect each entry with its associated page number.

List of Figures (if applicable)

- The heading, "LIST OF FIGURES" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- All entries are aligned flush left.
- Typing is double-spaced, except when entries run to two or more lines in length. In these situations, single-space between the continued lines.
- Figures are listed by number, title, and the page on which the figure is located in the document.
- Leader lines connect each entry with its associated page number.

List of Maps (if applicable)

- The heading, "LIST OF MAPS" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- All entries are aligned flush left.
- Typing is double-spaced, except when entries run to two or more lines in length. In these situations, single-space between the continued lines.
- Maps are listed by number, title, and the page on which the table is located in the document.
- Leader lines connect each entry with its associated page number.

List of Abbreviations (if applicable)

- The heading, "LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- All entries are aligned flush left and listed in alphabetical order.
- The abbreviation is separated from its full text description by 1 inch.

List of Symbols (if applicable)

- The heading, "LIST OF SYMBOLS" is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- All entries are aligned flush left.
- The symbol is separated from its full text description by 1 inch.

Footnotes

- If required by the style guide mandated by the student's program, footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page separated from the text by a solid line two inches long.
- Footnotes are aligned flush left, directly below the solid line.
- Footnotes that are more than one line long are single-spaced.
- One single-spaced line separates each footnote.
- All footnotes are numbered with Arabic numerals. Footnotes may be numbered consecutively within each chapter starting over with number 1 for the first note in each chapter, or they may be numbered consecutively throughout the entire document.
- Footnote numbers precede the note and are placed slightly above the line (superscripted). There are no spaces between the number and the note

Appendices

- The heading, "APPENDIX A", "APPENDIX B" (etc.) is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the material in the appendix.
- Material in the Appendix matches the font in the body of the document;
- Each new appendix is presented on a separate page.

References

- The heading, "REFERENCES", "BIBLIOGRAPHY", or "WORKS CITED" (depending on the conventions of the style mandated by the student's program) is written in all capital letters, is set 1" from the top of the page, and is centered on the page.
- Two double-spaced lines separate the heading from the first entry.
- All references are aligned flush left and conform to the style guide mandated by the student's program.
- All references are single spaced and separated from each other by a double space.

- All citations included in the body of the document appear in the reference list.
- Reference list entries are arranged in alphabetical order by the surname of the first author.
- Two or more references by the same author(s) lists the earlier study before the later study.
- References with identical authors and dates are arranged in alphabetical order by the first letter in the title of the work.
- Long website addresses are broken with a hyphen (as appropriate).

We affirm that the named student's thesis/dissertation is high quality, adheres to an acceptable manuscript styles and meets the requirements of the Graduate School.

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Committee Chair

Date

Submit this signed checklist with final draft of the culminating project to the Norcross Graduate School office for approval.

APPENDIX B

HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
Norcross Graduate School

**Appointment of the Thesis/Capstone/Dissertation Course Chair
and Committee**

It is the responsibility of the thesis/capstone/dissertation course Chair to return this completed form to the Graduate School prior to the student registering for the first thesis/capstone/ dissertation course. All requested information must be provided.

Student's Name _____

Student's E-mail _____

Degree Program _____

Concentration _____

Proposed Term/Year of Registration
in the Thesis/Capstone/Dissertation Course _____ Term: [] Fall [] Spring [] Summer

Proposed Title of Thesis/capstone/dissertation Project _____

Approval Signatures

School Dean

Date

Department Head

Date

Committee Chair

Date

APPENDIX C

HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
Norcross Graduate School

Scheduling of the Thesis/Capstone/Dissertation Project Defense

It is the responsibility of the Thesis/capstone/dissertation Chair to complete and return this form to the Graduate School prior to the date of the thesis/capstone/dissertation project defense.

Student's Name _____

Degree Program _____

Concentration _____

Date of defense Year: _____ Term: [] Fall [] Spring [] Summer

Title of Thesis/capstone/dissertation Project _____

By signing below, we confirm that the thesis/dissertation is fully written and fully acceptable for delivery to the Graduate School immediately after the thesis/capstone/dissertation project defense.

Approval Signatures

School Dean

Date

Department Head

Date

Committee Chair

Date

APPENDIX D

HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
Norcross Graduate School

Thesis/Capstone/Dissertation Project Defense Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the Thesis/dissertation Chair to complete and deliver this form to the Graduate School on the day of or the day after the defense of the thesis/dissertation.

Student's Name _____

Degree Program _____

Title of Thesis/capstone/dissertation Project _____

Defense: _____ Date _____

Time _____

Location _____

Committee's Evaluation of the Thesis/capstone/dissertation Project Defense

- Pass
- Fail (List Reason)

Approval Signatures

Committee Chair

Date

APPENDIX E

KEY EVIDENCE #4: Traditional Dissertation Proposal

Overview:

Advanced candidates in the Ed.D. Program will have an opportunity to practice many of the theoretical skills in leadership, communication, and research applications during the three-credit hour internship **EDU 7300: *Practices in Executive Leadership***, which occurs during Year 3. This experience will provide applications of the practices of educational leadership and allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to consult with other professionals regarding a leadership problem identified in literature. This effort will be grounded in strong research as a scholar and in dialogue with others as a scholarly practitioner. One product that the candidate is expected to generate during the internship is a log of activities that demonstrate practical application of the candidate's: (1) ***strategic planning skills***, (2) ***use of data to impact teaching and learning***, (3) ***ability to build and use relationships*** toward the same end, and (4) the ability to successfully ***apply theory to practice***. Two video segments of leading a team are also expected. The rubric listed below for KEY EVIDENCE #4 will be applied during the candidate's traditional dissertation proposal presentation, as part of enrollment in EDU 8300.

Directions to Candidate and Requirements:

During EDU 7300, the candidate will engage in a series of tasks which are designed to prepare the candidate to write and present a traditional dissertation proposal, Chapters 1 and 2, to present to the university doctoral committee (UDC).

1. The candidate will engage in designing a comprehensive literature review focused on current and significant educational issues in conjunction with his or her chosen topic.
2. In order to receive reaction and feedback, the candidate will convene a group of key people to share the synthesis of findings in literature. One or more video clips of these convenings may be submitted to the internship coordinator.
3. In his or her activity log, the candidate will write his or her reflections of the conversations at convenings and findings in literature as they pertain to the context of where he or she works and the setting of the proposed study.
4. In his or her activity log, the candidate will address challenges and arguments found in research, as well as how research is linked to strategies and processes in practice.
5. In his or her activity log, the candidate will address relationships formed in the process of designing a study to strengthen the discipline of educational leadership.
6. In his or her activity log, the candidate will provide evidence of dialogue with various district (or site-based) leaders and stakeholders about leading researchers and seminal studies related to his or her topic of study.
7. In his or her activity log, the candidate provides evidence of working with others to gather feedback to apply in strengthening the current literature review and planning appropriate methods for the study.
8. The internship coordinator will assess the internship activity log to determine the candidate's level of performance related to tasks as stated in 1-7 above. The candidate will receive credit (CR) for the internship based on 150 hours of work and evidence of proficient or accomplished performances in the field. On the evaluation form, each candidate must reach a score of 3 or 4 as part of the requirements for CR for EDU 7300.

EDU 7300 for Traditional Dissertation Internship: Evaluation Form

Instructions:

The University internship coordinator will complete this form based on evidence provided by the intern. The internship coordinator will place check beside the descriptor that best describes the intern’s performance during the internship experience and write comments where appropriate. The evaluation form will be sent to the UDC Chair, who will use the data from the Internship Evaluation form for element 5 in the rubric below.

Descriptor Comment	Performance in Field				
	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Proficient (3)	Accomplished (4)	Not Observed (0)
1. Works with others to engage in a comprehensive literature review focused on current and significant educational issues in conjunction with their chosen topic. <i>Comment:</i>					
2. Effectively communicates the current literature from a variety of sources. <i>Comment:</i>					
3. Effectively articulates the core beliefs and viewpoints represented in the current literature. <i>Comment:</i>					
4. Works with others to dialog and receive feedback. <i>Comment:</i>					
5. Effectively communicates a comprehensive view of the related literature and how it relates to educational issues. <i>Comment:</i>					
6. Effectively articulates any information, problems, and solutions of the current literature and how it relates to the district’s framework. <i>Comment:</i>					
7. Works with others to systematically review and when appropriate challenge guiding assumptions, strategies and processes linked to the literature. <i>Comment:</i>					
8. Works with others to use the feedback to potentially fill a gap in the literature. <i>Comment:</i>					
9. Works with others as they model effective working relationships with various members and stakeholders. <i>Comment:</i>					
10. Uses feedback to expand current theory or knowledge related to the literature review. <i>Comment:</i>					
11. Works with others to engage in consistent, sustained and open dialogue with various leaders and stakeholders about potential gaps in the literature and how to add to the literature. <i>Comment:</i>					
12. Works with others to showcase current literature which is both rigorous and linked to higher levels of effectiveness.					

Comment:					
13. Effectively focuses the discussion on potential findings and how they connect to current theory.					
14. Effectively communicates with selected stakeholders the perceived successes and shortcomings connected to the literature. Comment:					
15. Works with others to use the dialog and feedback to suggest a plan for strengthening the current literature review and future methodology. Comment:					

**Electronic Evidence #4
Leadership Plan
EDU 7300 for Traditional Dissertation Internship Rubric**

Evidence Descriptors and Evaluation Tool

Highlighted yellow text below describes how the evidence specifically addresses each of the descriptors. The rubric will be used for UDC evaluation of the dissertation as it is related to the course grade, as well as for gateway assessment for the unit's comprehensive assessment plan for CAEP.

Alignment with the NC Superintendent Standards			
The Leadership Plan is designed to provide evidence of the candidate's performance relative to the following standards and elements:			
Standard I- Strategic Leadership – Focus on “working with others” to strategically re-imagining the district’s vision, mission, and goals and creating a climate of inquiry that challenges the community to continually re-purpose itself by building on the district’s core values and beliefs about the preferred future and then developing a pathway to reach it.			
<i>Standard 1.A: District Strategic Plan IA.1 Works with others to create a working relationship with the local board of education that results in a shared vision for the district of the changing world in the 21st Century.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
1. The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 utilizes research-based practices to address a problem identified in educational leadership literature.	The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 does not utilize research-based practices to address a problem identified in educational leadership literature.	The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 adequately utilizes research-based practices to address a problem identified in educational leadership literature. Evidence is also provided that the candidate conceptualizes research and field-based practice to form a vision of how research can be used to improve practice.	The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 expertly utilizes research-based practices to address a problem identified in educational leadership literature and is able to articulate connections that include research and practice to create a shared vision that is inspirational for all stakeholders.
<i>IA. Works with others to convene a core group of district leaders to engage in a strategic and comprehensive district planning process focused on student learning and targeting short-term goals and objectives.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
2. The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 provides evidence between the proposed problem and how research findings may have indirect or direct	The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 does not provide evidence between the proposed problem and how research findings may have indirect or direct impact on improved student learning. No evidence exists that input from others or research has	The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 provides evidence between the proposed problem and how research findings may have indirect or direct impact on improved student	The candidate's development of Chapters 1 and 2 provides clear evidence between the proposed problem and how research findings may have indirect or direct impact on improved student learning. Evidence exists that input

impact on improved student learning.	been used to support the proposed methods and goals of the study.	learning. Some evidence exists that input from others or research has been used to support the proposed methods and goals of the study.	from others and research have been used to support the proposed data collection, data analysis, and goals of the study.
<i>IA.3 Effectively communicates the strategic and comprehensive district planning process to principals and other stakeholders.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
3. The candidate's proposal to his or her committee effectively communicates the plan of the proposed study.	The candidate's proposal to his or her committee does not effectively communicate the plan of the proposed study.	The candidate's proposal to his or her committee effectively communicates the plan of the proposed study.	The candidate's proposal to his or her committee effectively communicates the plan of the proposed study and the presenter is accomplished in using visuals as part of the effective communication.
<i>IA.4 Effectively articulates the core concepts and beliefs that define the district's value frameworks.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
4. The candidate demonstrates integrity of educational leaders by espousing how teachers, students, families, community members, leaders, and key partners are ultimate beneficiaries of the research process, which must be conducted by ethical standards and excellence as defined by the American Psychological Association.	The candidate does not demonstrate an awareness of professional values and personal commitment to excellence by espousing how teachers, students, families, community members, leaders, and key partners are ultimate beneficiaries of the research process, which must be conducted by ethical standards and excellence as defined by the American Psychological Association.	The candidate demonstrates an awareness of professional values and personal commitment to excellence by espousing how teachers, students, families, community members, leaders, and key partners are ultimate beneficiaries of the research process, which must be conducted by ethical standards and excellence as defined by the American Psychological Association.	The candidate demonstrates an awareness of and application of how professional values and personal commitment to excellence are linked to teachers, students, families, community members, leaders, and key partners. The research proposal provides evidence of the application of ethical standards and excellence as defined by the American Psychological Association.
Standard 1.B: Leading Change 1B.1, 1B.2, 1B3. <i>Works with others to systematically review and when appropriate challenge guiding assumptions, strategies and processes and implement change focused on improving student learning of 21st Century knowledge and skills.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)

<p>Standard 1.C: Distributed Leadership 1C.1, 1C.2. <i>Works with others to implement structures to distribute leadership and decision-making among faculty/staff members throughout the district.</i></p> <p>Standard V.C: Systematic Communication VC.1, VC.3 <i>Works with others to assure that district faculty, staff, stakeholder groups, and board members receive and exchange information in a timely manner.</i> <i>Participates in and helps lead various advisory groups to improve external and internal communication.</i></p>			
<p>5. The Internship Evaluation Form is completed by the internship coordinator to provide an evaluation of the candidate’s ability to “work with others” in the field as he/she collaborated to create his or her proposal (chapters 1 and 2).</p>	<p>The candidate scores less than proficient on one or more items on the form.</p>	<p>The candidate scores proficient or accomplished on all elements of the form.</p>	<p>The candidate scores accomplished on all elements of the form.</p>
<p>Standard III: Cultural Leadership: Superintendents understand the people in the district and community, how they came to their current state, and how to connect with their traditions in order to move them forward to support the district’s efforts to achieve individual and collective goals. While supporting and valuing the history, traditions, and norms of the district and community, a superintendent must be able to “reculture” the district, if needed, to align with the district’s goals of improving student and adult learning and to infuse the work of the adults and students with passion, meaning and purpose.</p>			
<p>Standard III. A1. Focus on Collaborative Work Environment <i>Works with others to design elements of a collaborative and positive culture throughout the district.</i></p>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)</p>	<p>Proficient 2 (80-89%)</p>	<p>Accomplished 3 (90-100%)</p>
<p>6. The candidate is capable of convening core constituents to strengthen his or her work from an appreciative inquiry perspective.</p>	<p>The candidate was not successful in convening core constituents to strengthen his or her work from an appreciative inquiry perspective.</p>	<p>The candidate is capable of convening core constituents to strengthen his or her work from an appreciative inquiry perspective.</p>	<p>The candidate is adept at convening core constituents to strengthen his or her work from an appreciative inquiry perspective. Evidence of reflection on feedback strengthened his or her research proposal.</p>
<p>Standard III. A2.</p>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1</p>	<p>Proficient 2</p>	<p>Accomplished 3</p>

<i>Works with others to build the capacity of principals and other district leaders to develop data-based strategies for creating and maintaining collaborative cultures</i>	(Below 80%)	(80-89%)	(90-100%)
7. The candidate's Chapters 1 and 2 provide an opportunity for reflection of leadership capacity. The candidate's reflection includes his/her perceptions of how the collaborative process impacted the proposal.	The candidate's reflection is largely superficial in that it does not provide enough depth or insight into the nature of the collaborative process and its impact on the proposal.	The candidate's reflection provides insight into the nature of the collaborative process and offers an acceptable level of introspection regarding the candidate's leadership and participation in the collaborative process.	The candidate's reflection is deeply insightful and provides a depth of understanding about the nature of the collaborative process that occurred during the development of the proposal. The reflection offers significant introspection from the candidate regarding his leadership and its influence on the collaborative process. The candidate provides a realistic view of his own leadership strengths and weaknesses and offers potential areas of needed "growth" in more than one area of leadership.
Standard III.C.1 <i>Works with others to implement strategies that build efficacy and empowerment among principals.</i>			
8. The candidate's proposal provides clear evidence that the selected problem is one of significance and high-leverage. Its impact on students and schools is addressed as it relates to problem significance.	The candidate's proposal provides unclear evidence that the selected problem is one of significance and high-leverage. Its impact on students and schools is not addressed as it relates to problem significance.	The candidate's proposal provides clear evidence that the selected problem is one of significance and high-leverage. Its impact on students and schools is addressed as it relates to problem significance.	The candidate's proposal provides clear evidence that the selected problem is one of significance and high-leverage. Its impact on students and schools is addressed as it relates to problem significance. The significance of the study is clearly written to demonstrate a link to leadership of school(s).
Standard IV – Human Resource Leadership Superintendents ensure that the district is a professional learning community with processes and systems in place that result in the recruitment, induction, support, evaluation, development and retention of a high-performing, diverse staff. Superintendents use distributed leadership to support learning and teaching, plan professional development, and engage in district leadership succession planning.			
IVA.3 <i>Works with others to support ongoing professional development activities throughout the district that are intended to</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)

<i>improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.</i>			
9. The candidate's proposal organizes data into potential areas of focus. The significance section of the study clearly articulates how findings of the study may impact students, teachers, curriculum, policy development, and/or practice of leaders.	The candidate's proposal is incoherent regarding substantial data in critical areas. The significance section of the study is unclear as to how findings of the study may impact students, teachers, curriculum, policy development, and/or practice of leaders.	The candidate's proposal organizes data into potential areas of focus. The significance section of the study clearly articulates how findings of the study may impact students, teachers, curriculum, policy development, and/or practice of leaders.	The candidate's proposal organizes data into potential areas of focus. The significance section of the study clearly articulates how findings of the study may impact students, teachers, curriculum, policy development, and/or practice of leaders. The candidate does not over promise, but provides scope and background information to indicate the context of the problem in relation to theory, research, and links to practice.
Standard VI: External Development Leadership A superintendent, in concert with the local board of education, designs structures and processes that result in broad community engagement with, support for, and ownership of the district vision. Acknowledging that strong schools build strong communities, the superintendent proactively creates, with school and district staff, opportunities for parents, community members, government leaders, and business representatives to participate with their investments of resources, assistance, and good will.			
Standard VI. B Federal, State and District Mandates VI.B.1 <i>Works with others to routinely and consistently assess the progress of district compliance with local, state, and federal mandates and adjusts as necessary.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
10. The candidate's chapters 1 and 2 provides a review of the literature related to the proposed problem, as well as a review of federal, state and district policies related to the topic of the study.	The candidate's chapters 1 and 2 inadequately provide a review of the literature without any reference to federal, state and district policies related to the topic of the study.	The candidate's chapters 1 and 2 provide a review of the literature related to the proposed problem, as well as a review of federal, state and district policies related to the topic of the study.	The candidate's chapters 1 and 2 provide a review of the literature related to the proposed problem, as well as a review of federal, state and district policies, standards, mandates, proposed legislation, etc., related to the topic of the study.
VI.B. 2 <i>Works with others to interpret federal, state, and district mandates so that they are viewed as opportunities for the district.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
11. The candidate's interpretation of federal, state, and/or	The candidate's interpretation of federal, state, and/or district mandates and policies are not	The candidate's interpretation of federal, state, and/or district	The candidate's interpretation of federal, state, and/or district

district mandates and policies are concise, on point, and explicitly related to the topic of study.	concise, on point, or explicitly related to the topic of study.	mandates and policies are concise, on point, and explicitly related to the topic of study.	mandates and policies are concise, on point, and explicitly related to the topic of study. The candidate designed a structure that resulted in clear connections between mandates, policy/proposed policy and the topic of study.
---	---	--	---

Total Score from All Standards	Total Score Emerging/Developing	Total Score Proficient	Total Score Accomplished
---------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------	---------------------------------

Grader(s): _____

Date: _____

Follow-Up Needed (Comment if Necessary):

APPENDIX F

KEY EVIDENCE #5: Leading With Influence (Dissertation in Practice)

Overview:

While leadership is about influence and getting results, it also requires continuous growth in the process of leading. The self-actualized leader reflects on personal mastery and excellence. As the culminating experience that demonstrates the scholarly practitioner's ability to solve problems of practice, the Dissertation in Professional Practice (DIPP) showcases the doctoral candidate's ability "to think, to perform, and to act with integrity" (Shulman, 2005). The activities described in this evidence are aligned with the courses, **EDU 8300/8400: The Dissertation-in-Professional Practice: Implementation and Evaluation of Problem Solution** and **EDU 6610: Applied Strategic Communication Skills**. The *Leading with Influence* evidence places the candidate in a leadership role to implement a series of short-term "next-step" interventions which have been identified previously during the strategic planning process as well as to evaluate each one's overall effectiveness and potential for expansion. Along with other pertinent discussions, the candidate will also present a final strategic communication plan at the conclusion of the DIPP which is designed to provide a compelling argument for continuing with certain interventions based on short-term data analyses and findings. The "strategic communication plan" (developed by the candidate in COM 6610) should present information suitable for sharing the results of the DIPP with key stakeholders (principals, parents, faculty/staff, school board, community leaders, county commissioners, etc.). The written communication plan should be in the form of an *Executive Summary*.

Directions to the Candidate and Requirements:

The Dissertation in Practice (DIPP) is a formal demonstration of the doctoral candidate's knowledge, skills and behaviors, scholarship, and dispositions of educational leadership. It is intended to serve as a demonstration that the doctoral candidate is capable and prepared to provide extraordinary leadership. The DIPP is a strategic plan to solve a problem of practice with the preliminary steps "next steps" of implementation and evaluation of potential solutions. It involves working with a college-level or district-level leader (superintendent or designee) on a problem, or opportunity, that is of mutual concern to them. The DIPP serves to provide major evidence of leadership performance, leadership capacity, and leadership thinking.

The candidate should be aware that the DIPP must be a practical application of the candidate's: (1) strategic planning skills; (2) use of data to impact teaching and learning; (3) ability to build and use relationships toward the same end; and (4) ability to apply theory to practice. These four cornerstones emanate from the framework of four key strands of High Point University's Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership: *Strategic Leadership*; *Data and Learning*; *Building Collaborative Relationships*; and *Theory, Application and Practice*. The assessment of the DIPP is guided by the rubric below which evaluates the candidate's proficiency in knowledge, skills in oral and written communication, leadership, and dispositions as they are applied to the evidence or product produced by the candidate.

The DIPP will ultimately be a manuscript with ten sections and Appendix with required documentation. The presentation format of the required "manuscript" may vary from project to project; however, all DIPP must include evidence of the following:

- The **definition of the problem of practice** from both a local and state context (Problem selection must address these six components:
 - The DIPP problem must be a contemporary educational issue and have an educational leadership component in its analysis. Find the "problem" through talking with others in the organization, in the data of the organization, and in the practices of the organization. In thinking as a social scientist and design thinker, what system is the problem in as it relates to the structural frame of the organization, the human resources frame, the political frame, and/or the symbolic (cultural) frame?
 - The DIPP problem must be high leverage, which means the problem must be sustainable. It must sustain the interest, creativity, and imagination of the candidate as a practitioner and researcher. It cannot be solved

easily. It is rather complex, with multiple solutions possible. If it is addressed, it will make the organization better.

- The DIPP problem must be manageable in size and complexity. The scope of the problem implies that, working diligently, the doctoral candidate can lead a team to know the problem and work on a plan to ameliorate it, implement some “next step” interventions, and evaluate the interventions to make recommendations for potential expansion of various initiatives over a period of twelve months.
 - The DIPP problem must be within the practitioner’s range of competence. In other words, the candidate must be grounded in knowledge and practice as it relates to the “problem.”
 - The educational organization must desire a “solution” to the existing problem. Also, the problem solution must hold potential for contributing to improvement in Educational Leadership practice. The problem “solution” must be situated in the mode of improvement science so that implementation can be monitored and tweaked as necessary.
 - The capstone problem must provide the doctoral practitioner with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of both strategic planning methodology and the content/context of the topic.
- The **political and legal issues** that impacted the identification of the problem
 - A description of (1) how consensus was developed around the problem of practice, (2) what potential problems were identified, and (3) what strategies the candidate implemented to manage conflict in the strategic planning process; and (4) reflections of the process
 - The **role of each district level strategic planning team member** including how these individuals’ various points of view on the problem of practice influenced and shaped the identification of specific strategies and initiatives to include and/or exclude;
 - The **Review of Literature** on best practice, dialogue, discussions, open forums, etc. that framed the problem in context of local, state, and federal mandates.
 - The **relevant data** as it related to national, state, and district-level research for problem identification and solution.
 - The **input/influence of various stakeholders** (i.e, community, political, and business leaders in the district), principals and other district leaders in the identification, implementation and evaluation process.
 - A description of how relationships with individuals and business partners in the district, as well as state and community partners, impacted the problem solving process
 - To provide clear narrative and **relevant data** describing the process of **problem of practice “implementation”, problem of practice “evaluation”**.
 - To provide a **strategic communication plan** for delivering the findings to all necessary stakeholders in the form of a final *Executive Summary*.

Evaluation:

The rubric for assessment of Electronic Evidence #5 (*Leading With Influence: Dissertation in Practice*) appears below and will be used by university doctoral committee chairs assigned to supervise **EDU 8300/8400: The Dissertation-in-Professional Practice: Implementation and Evaluation of Problem Solution and EDU 6610: Applied Strategic Communication Skills**. These courses are offered as co-requisite requirements and will include Evidence #5 as a co-assignment spanning the last two semesters of the candidate’s enrollment. As part of the DIPP, candidates are also required to generate an *Executive Summary*, which will be completed in COM 6610: Applied Strategic Communication Skills. The *Executive Summary* will constitute 25% of the final grade in COM 6610.

Electronic Evidence #5
Leading with Influence: Dissertation in Practice
Project Rubric

Evidence Descriptors and Evaluation Tool

Highlighted yellow text below describes how the evidence specifically addresses each of the descriptors. The rubric will be used for the instructor’s evaluation of the project as it related to the course grade as well as for gateway assessment for the unit’s comprehensive assessment plan for CAEP.

Alignment with the NC Superintendent Standards			
The Project on Leading With Influence is designed to provide evidence of the candidate’s performance relative to the following standards and elements:			
Standard I- Strategic Leadership – Focus on “working with others” to strategically re-imagining the district’s vision, mission, and goals and creating a climate of inquiry that challenges the community to continually re-purpose itself by building on the district’s core values and beliefs about the preferred future and then developing a pathway to reach it.			
Standard 1.A: District Strategic Plan IA.3 <i>Effectively communicates the strategic and comprehensive district planning process to principals and other stakeholders.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
The candidate’s <i>Executive Summary</i> communicates an effective and strategic message regarding the potential for problem solution with data and other supporting evidence of interest to all stakeholders.	The message in the <i>Executive Plan</i> provides a summary that communicates the major content/substance of the strategic plan and recommendations ineffectively to the leaders of the organization. The plan is somewhat disorganized and unclear regarding the process, the recommendations, and/or data to support initial interventions that appear promising for expansion. It is written to appeal to narrow set of stakeholders.	The message in the <i>Executive Plan</i> provides a summary that communicates effectively the major content/substance to the leaders of the organization. The plan is adequate regarding the process, the recommendations, and data to support initial interventions but still a bit vague regarding future ideas for expansion. It is written for most stakeholders.	The message in the <i>Executive Plan</i> provides an excellent summary and that communicates effectively and efficiently the major content/substance to the leaders of the organization. The plan is thorough, organized and clear regarding the process, the recommendations, and data to support initial interventions that appear promising for expansion. It is intentionally written to appeal to a variety of stakeholders.
IA.4 <i>Effectively articulates the core concepts and beliefs that define the district’s value frameworks.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
The candidate’s strategic leadership plan and DIPP utilizes needs assessment data and a focus for district-level improvement that is aligned to the	The candidate’s focus of the strategic leadership plan needs assessment and resulting data presented in the strategic leadership plan provide little connection to	The candidate’s focus of the strategic leadership plan needs assessment and resulting data presented in the strategic leadership plan provide a clear connection to the	The candidate’s focus of the strategic leadership plan needs assessment and resulting data presented in the strategic leadership plan provide thoughtful and clear connections to

district's core concepts and beliefs.	<p>the district's core concepts and beliefs.</p> <p>There is an unclear link between the strategic plan and the interventions chosen for the DIPP.</p>	<p>district's core concepts and beliefs.</p> <p>There is a clear link between the strategic plan and the interventions chosen for the DIPP.</p>	<p>the district's core concepts, beliefs and mission. It is evident that the candidate's selection of a "problem of practice" was based on careful consideration of these factors as well as the interventions chosen during the DIPP.</p>
<i>Standard IB.2 Works with others to use the results of evaluation to adapt existing processes and to develop and implement new processes for ensuring student learning.</i>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)</p>	<p>Proficient 2 (80-89%)</p>	<p>Accomplished 3 (90-100%)</p>
<p>Within the DIPP, the candidate is required to provide clear narrative and relevant data describing the process of problem of practice "implementation" and problem of practice "evaluation".</p>	<p>The candidate's data does not support the interventions proposed and the options provided in the DIPP seem simplistic in that they are familiar from everyday experience and more tailored to routine decision-making.</p> <p>The alternative interventions seemingly will have potential for little impact on practice, policy, and ultimate improvements in student learning.</p>	<p>The candidate's data supports the interventions proposed and the options provided in the DIPP seem complex, in that solutions require a strategic/tactical plan of action involving others. Problem has significance to ultimate improvements in student learning.</p> <p>The alternative interventions seemingly will have potential for impact on practice, policy, and ultimate improvements in student learning.</p>	<p>The candidate's data supports the interventions proposed and the options provided in the DIPP seem are complex, in that solutions require a strategic/tactical plan of action involving others. The problem has significance to both external and internal stakeholders devoted to improvements in student learning outcomes. The alternatives interventions recommended are situated both in scholarly and practice contexts, with potential to change practice and inform literature of significant change., with potential to change practice and inform literature of significant change with regard to student learning outcomes.</p>
<i>IC.3. Works with others to engage in consistent, sustained and open dialogue with principals, faculty, and staff members about how policies and practices relate to the district mission and vision.</i>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)</p>	<p>Proficient 2 (80-89%)</p>	<p>Accomplished 3 (90-100%)</p>

<p>The candidate is required to detail and reflect on how the input/influence of various stakeholders (i.e. principals, faculty/staff and other district leaders’ various points of view on the problem of practice influenced and shaped the identification of specific strategies and initiatives to include and/or exclude</p>	<p>Candidate’s descriptions and reflections about working with others to develop sustained and open to elicit various points of view is vague and incomplete. And/or: It is also unclear how these dialogues contributed to shaping the direction of the strategic leadership plan and which initiatives (interventions) to include or exclude</p>	<p>Candidate’s descriptions and reflections about working with others to develop sustained and open to elicit various points of view is considered complete. And: It is clear how these dialogues contributed to shaping the direction of the strategic leadership plan and which initiatives (interventions) to include or exclude</p>	<p>Candidate’s descriptions and reflections are insightful and informative in providing feedback about the nature of the dialogues leading to problem identification and selection of initiatives. And: The candidate provides an organized framework of understanding to connect the process of the planning to the outcome (plan for implementation and evaluation). The DIPP implementation and evaluation reflects the value of this prior input.</p>
<p>Standard III: Cultural Leadership: Superintendents understand the people in the district and community, how they came to their current state, and how to connect with their traditions in order to move them forward to support the district’s efforts to achieve individual and collective goals. While supporting and valuing the history, traditions, and norms of the district and community, a superintendent must be able to “reculture” the district, if needed, to align with the district’s goals of improving student and adult learning and to infuse the work of the adults and students with passion, meaning and purpose.</p>			
<p>III.B.III. Efficacy and Empowerment Effectively communicates with selected stakeholder groups the successes and shortcomings of the district.</p>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)</p>	<p>Proficient 2 (80-89%)</p>	<p>Accomplished 3 (90-100%)</p>
<p>The DIPP definition of the problem of practice from both a local and state context is identified by the candidate that includes A description of (1) how consensus was developed around the problem of practice, (2) what potential problems were identified, and (3) what strategies the candidate implemented to manage conflict in the strategic planning process.</p>	<p>The problem that is being addressed is vague and does not really address a local and state context And-or The problem focus has not been sensitively communicated or discussed adequately with district leaders And-or: The candidate’s ability to empower others is questionable in that the conflicts noted do not seem to have been addressed or managed effectively.</p>	<p>The problem that is being addressed is clear and addresses both a local and state context And: The problem focus has been sensitively communicated and discussed with district leaders And: The candidate’s ability to empower others is apparent and any conflicts noted seem to have been addressed or managed effectively.</p>	<p>The problem that is being addressed carefully addresses both a local and state context and the final selection of a topic for the DIPP is made through careful and ongoing communication with primary stakeholders which specifically address district-level shortcomings. The candidate’s ability to empower others is apparent and conflicts were minimal as a result. The candidate provides evidence of strategies that were effectively utilized during the strategic planning process—there is data provided in the DIPP</p>

			to support these strategies were successful.
<i>III.A2 Works with others to build the capacity of principals and other district leaders to develop data-based strategies for creating and maintaining collaborative cultures</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
The candidate's Strategic Leadership Plan provides an opportunity for reflection of leadership capacity throughout the strategic planning process. The candidate's reflection must include his/her perceptions of how the collaborative process impacted the overall district culture.	The candidate's reflection is largely superficial and too descriptive in that it does not provide enough depth or insight into the nature of the collaborative process and its impact on the district's overall culture. The candidate does not do an adequate job of reflecting on how his leadership impacted the collaborative process.	The candidate's reflection provides insight into the nature of the collaborative process that occurred during the development of the strategic plan. The reflection offers an acceptable level of introspection regarding the candidate's perceived leadership and influence on the collaborative process. The candidate provides some reflection of his own leadership strengths and weaknesses.	The candidate's reflection is deeply insightful and provides a depth of understanding about the nature of the collaborative process that occurred during the development of the strategic plan. The reflection offers significant introspection from the candidate regarding his leadership and its influence on the collaborative process. The candidate provides a realistic view of his own leadership strengths and weaknesses and offers potential areas of needed "growth" in more than one area of leadership.
<i>III.C.1 Works with others to implement strategies that build efficacy and empowerment among principals.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
The candidate's strategic plan must provide clear evidence that the selected problem of practice is one of significance and high-leverage. Its impact on students, schools and the district must be addressed as it relates to problem significance.	The candidate's strategic plan outlines a problem but the scope of the problem is either too narrowly defined or too general to have impact at all three levels—on P-12 students, on principals at the school level and the district. Empowerment of all stakeholders is questionable.	The candidate's strategic plan outlines a problem of sufficient scope that it will clearly have impact at least two of the three levels (P-12 students, on principals at the school level and the district). Empowerment of stakeholders is evident.	The candidate's strategic plan outlines a problem of significant scope and leverage. It will clearly have impact at all three levels—on P-12 students, on principals at the school level and the district. The efficacy of the strategies to be utilized will clearly empower all stakeholders.
<i>III.C.2 Works with others to monitor the climate of the district to evaluate changes in the sense of efficacy</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)

<i>and empowerment of all stakeholder groups.</i>			
The candidate's DIPP must provide clear narrative and relevant data describing the process of problem of practice "implementation" , problem of practice "evaluation" .	Data provided by the candidate is weak, inaccurate or does not adequately monitor the "cultural" changes that are apparent as a result of implementation of problem solutions.	Data provided by the candidate is adequate, generally accurate and does seem to monitor the "cultural" changes that are apparent as a result of implementation of problem solutions.	Both quantitative and qualitative data provided by the candidate provides a critical picture of how the implementation of changes within the district are also impacting climate and culture. There is a definite attempt by the candidate to include measures of efficacy for multiple stakeholder groups.
<p>Standard V: Managerial Leadership Superintendents ensure that the district has processes and systems in place for budgeting, staffing, problem solving, communicating expectations, and scheduling that organize the work of the district and give priority to student learning and safety. The superintendent must solicit resources (both operating and capital), monitor their use, and assure the inclusion of all stakeholders in decisions about resources so as to meet the 21st Century needs of the district.</p>			
<p>Standard V.B.2 Conflict Management and Resolution <i>Demonstrates awareness of potential problems and/or areas of conflict within the district and proposes possible solutions.</i></p>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)</p>	<p>Proficient 2 (80-89%)</p>	<p>Accomplished 3 (90-100%)</p>
The candidate's DIPP addresses all six required components in the section on the definition of the Problem of Practice	The candidate's DIPP does not address all six required components or more than one required component is addressed inadequately	The candidate's DIPP addresses all six required components sufficiently.	The candidate's DIPP addresses all six required components with depth, insight and care to ensure that the identified problem and its prescribed solutions will be meaningful and impactful.
<p>Standard VI. B. 1 Federal, State and District Mandates <i>Works with others to routinely and consistently assess the progress of district compliance with local, state, and federal mandates and adjusts as necessary.</i></p>	<p>Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)</p>	<p>Proficient 2 (80-89%)</p>	<p>Accomplished 3 (90-100%)</p>
The candidate's Briefing Paper and DIPP includes review of the literature related to Federal, State and District Mandates as	The limited information on any relevant state and/or district mandates to support the need for problem solution. The connection offered by the candidate	The DIPP provides a discussion of relevant state and/or district mandates to support the need for problem solution. A connection is offered	The DIPP provides a thorough discussion of relevant state and district level data to support the need for problem solution. A clear connection is

they relate to the proposed problem of practice and the interventions, which were implemented.	between the data and the focus of the problem is vague.	by the candidate between the data and the focus of the problem.	made by the candidate between the data and the focus of the problem as it pertains to the district in which the study is being carried out.
<i>VIB.2 Works with others to interpret federal, state, and district mandates so that they are viewed as opportunities for the district.</i>	Emerging/Developing 1 (Below 80%)	Proficient 2 (80-89%)	Accomplished 3 (90-100%)
The candidate's <i>Briefing Paper</i> and DIPP includes a review of the literature related to the proposed problem of practice as well as relevant information on federal, state, and district mandates that provide a relevant framework for the proposed problem of practice.	The DIPP provides limited information on any relevant federal, state, and/or district mandates that could provide a needed framework for the proposed problem of practice.	The DIPP provides relevant and useful information on federal, state, and/or district mandates that could provide a needed framework for the proposed problem of practice.	The DIPP provides a thorough discussion of relevant federal, state, and district mandates that could provide a needed framework for the proposed problem of practice. A clear connection between the mandates and the proposed problem is made by the candidate.